2012-10-11

The resettlement experience of African refugee single mothers in Canada: what helps and what hinders

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The Resettlement Experience of African Refugee Single Mothers in Canada:

What Helps and What Hinders

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

DIVISION OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

CALGARY, ALBERTA

SEPTEMBER, 2012

Abstract

Successful resettlement of all refugee groups is a matter of interest to both the host society and the newcomers. The current study was designed to explore the resettlement experience of African refugee mothers who are relocated to Canada/Calgary with children and without a spouse/partner. The design took a qualitative approach in which seven refugee single mothers from Africa participated in semi-structured interviews. The Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan 1954), supplemented by Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), was used to conduct data analyses. Several categories (Support, Self Preservation, Adjustment to Canadian Ways, Awareness of Personal Limitations, Housing, Education, Finances, Parenting, Sexual Assault) and themes (Hopes and Dreams, Changes, Benefits, Psychological Distress, Looking to the Future, Advice for Those Considering Relocation) were formulated to describe the experience of making Canada home. The findings are discussed in relation to existing literature and implications for theory, research, and practice are presented.

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CHAPTER 0NE: INTRODUCTION

Living as we do in a country such as Canada, one can only imagine what it must be like to be forced out of home due to civil strife, usually in the middle of the night and having to run without knowing where one is going. Imagine families getting separated, husbands being captured and taken away without a trace, women and girls subjected to all manner of harassment as they try to reach safety, and then having to navigate the refugee claim system. Now fast forward several years to the day the mothers and their children finally arrive in the country of refuge for resettlement as refugees. Sounds like the end of all trouble, doesn't it? I thought so too until I started listening to the stories of women who did not imagine but lived the experience of displacement and resettlement. I invite you, the reader to journey with me as I explore the post resettlement experience of seven single mother refugees resettled in Canada from various countries in Africa.

Figures from the 2006 census indicate that more foreign born individuals are taking up permanent residence in Canada than ever before and there are higher percentages of people arriving from non- traditional sources of Western Europe (Statistics Canada, 2009). While in the past most newcomers have tended to settle in the larger metropolitan centers of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal, recent trends indicate that a sizeable percentage of recent immigrants are choosing to settle in smaller cities with 5.2% of those entering the country in 2006 settling in Calgary (Statistics Canada, 2009).

Many new immigrants are coming from regions affected by ethnic and sectarian conflict and are allowed into the country on humanitarian grounds as refugees (Schmitz, Jacobus, Stakeman, Valenzuela, & Sprankel, 2003).

The transition from homeland to a new country is a stressful experience for all categories of newcomers and for refugees fleeing their homeland under circumstances of persecution and/or oppression, the stressors they face can often be more complex (Schmitz et al, 2003). Although a large number of those accepted into host countries as asylum seekers tend to be male, every year substantial numbers of women seek and are granted asylum (Guerin, Allotey, Elmi, & Baho, 2010).

There is evidence that women refugees are more likely to have been victims of violence in their homelands (Hagan, Raymond-Richmond, & Palloni, 2009). Many may have been subjected to atrocities of war such as being tortured and/or witnessing torture and/or killing, being victims of rape and sexual abuse, and facing starvation and other forms of deprivation during flight as well as while living in refugee camps. In addition, many women become separated from their partners/spouses as a consequence of conflict and are re-settled with their children as a lone parent under the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)'s "Women and girls at risk" program (Guerin et al, 2010). In a recent report the UNHCR (2011) indicated that of the approximately 100,000 applicants granted asylum and resettled in developed countries as refugees in 2010, about 10% were women and children. Statistics Canada (2009) has reported that in recent years Canada has been receiving approximately 12,000 people as refugees annually. It can therefore be assumed that about 10% or about 1,200 of these refugees are likely to fall into the category of women accompanied by children and without a spouse/partner.

Much of the research done on the resettlement of refugees has tended to deal with two-parent families, partnered men and women, unaccompanied men, unaccompanied youth (Este & Tachble, 2009; Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson, & Rana, 2010; Murray, Davidson &

Schweiter, 2010; Stoll & Johnson, 2007), and there is not much research on the resettlement experience of women refugees who arrive in the country of resettlement as lone parents. Research findings indicate that being married is one of the supports that provide a buffering effect to the stressors associated with settling in a new country (Alvarez, 1999; Chueng, 2008). Since this resource is not available to single mothers, what is the experience of resettlement like for them?

Research has reported poor outcomes for refugee women in general and their children in terms of mental health, social economic status (SES), and education attainment among others (Murray, Davidson, & Schweiter 2010; Guzder et al., 2011; Mawani, 2008). In addition, research has reported poor outcomes for children who grow up in single-mother households (Ambert, 2006; Marks, 2006). In studies done with unaccompanied refugee men, participants have reported that they deal with the stressors associated with resettlement by being involved in religious activities (Stoll & Johnson, 2007). It appears that the resettlement experience of refugee women who are resettled with children without a spouse/partner and the coping strategies they adopt has not received much attention in research. As there is a dearth of research exploring what resettlement looks like for refugee single mothers, the experience of resettlement for this population remains unclear. Therefore, further research on the resettlement experience of refugee women who come to Canada accompanied by children and without a spouse/partner, seemed warranted.

Why I Chose to Study Resettlement

I was born and brought up in a rural community in Kenya, East Africa. Community was always a big part of life in my home country, and people supported each other in all areas of life. Practically every life event was a community affair; the happy

events such as births, weddings, building a house, working the land as well as the less happy ones such as deaths and burials. There were hardly any government funded social services available in my home area so family members, relatives, neighbours and groups such as clans and churches provided support as required.

About 15 years ago, my family (my husband, children and I) left my home country for a temporary stay in Europe that turned into permanent migration to Canada some ten years or so ago. In choosing to leave my home country to move to the West, I had certain expectations about living in a developed country, some of which turned out to be realistic and others not so realistic.

What I was not aware of and was totally unprepared for was the loss of community that we would experience as a result of immigrating. For my family and I the greatest challenge we faced was the lack of a social network from which we could receive support, more so for me because I spent most of my time at home. Those first months in Canada were so difficult in terms of loneliness and isolation that many were the times I considered returning home. I believe that it was my husband's presence and support that saw me through those difficult days. I also believe that being proficient in English was an asset as I could access information from the public domain and also ask others about things I wanted to know. From discussions with other immigrant families, I found out that lack of support networks was a shared experience. As I became more familiar with issues relating to immigrants and their settlement in Canada, I found that although generally new Canadians did tend to experience difficulties in getting settled, some communities tended to fare worse than others and I began to wonder what factors might be at play. I also found out that while children from some new-comer communities appeared to be doing very well at school and

literally setting the standards for performance, other children, particularly children of African immigrants, appeared to lag behind at school. I started to question this. When I learned that individuals admitted to Canada as refugees did not have to meet the educational and language requirements that other immigrants had to, I became curious about their resettlement, especially as language is such an important tool for accessing information and services.

I have been curious to know how single parent newcomers navigate these and other challenges associated with resettlement. I believe understanding these challenges and how this population deals with them could assist the caring professions particularly counsellors, in offering more appropriate services to this population. In my search of existing literature I have found that there is information on outcomes for immigrants and refugees as well as female lone parents (i.e., single-mother households) but little information on the experience of resettlement and outcomes for refugee single mothers and their children. My interest in exploring the experience of refugee single mothers has grown from the realization that although this is a group that is likely to have a resettlement experience specific to them, few research projects have explored that experience and offered suggestions about appropriate services.

Purpose of the Current Study

In undertaking the current study I sought to contribute to the understanding of the resettlement (i.e., the cross-cultural transition) of African refugee mothers in Canada accompanied by children and without a spouse or partner. Furthermore, I wanted to understand the experience from the perspective of those living through it as opposed to seeking the views of others such as resettlement agencies. In order to avoid concentrating only on deficits, I designed the current study to elicit what helped or hindered their

resettlement and how this population thought their experience might be enhanced. Specifically, in the current study I wanted to explore the following:

1. What occurrences enhance or hinder the resettlement of African refugee single mothers and what actions do they take that are helpful or hindering of the process of resettlement?

2. What resources pertaining to the resettlement process, do they find helpful particularly in the absence of a partner/spouse?

3. What resources do they wish they had but did not have that may have enhanced their experience of resettling in Canada/Calgary?

As there is a paucity of research regarding how this particular population understands their resettlement, and considering that this group could potentially make up 10% or more of all refugees entering Canada in any given year, through the current study I sought to add to existing knowledge and suggest possible future research in this area.

Significance of the Study

Until such a time that conflict ceases to occur and peaceful co-existence becomes a reality for all peoples, it can be assumed that the need to seek and be granted asylum will continue. The purpose of offering asylum to individuals whose lives are under threat from whatever sources should not only be to physically remove them from imminent and real danger but also to offer them the opportunity to rebuild their lives. While physical removal from unsafe situations is a necessary first step in this process, successful resettlement as measured by personal and economic variables ought to be the greater goal. The refugees are only likely to achieve success in their resettlement when the host society provides them with the material support and other resources deemed necessary for dealing with the challenges

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associated with resettlement. How lone women refugees experience resettlement could impact outcomes not just for the mothers but for their children as well. After arriving in this country these lone mother refugees and their children form part of the users of social services including those provided by mental health practitioners. Mental health service providers would benefit from having a better understanding of this population's resettlement needs and hopefully they would incorporate the information in planning interventions.

In much of the literature on refugee issues as well as the documents from agencies that deal with refugees such as the UNHCR, refugees are portrayed as a helpless group in need of protection (Guerin et al, 2010). At times, this view of refugees persists even after they have been removed from the situation that may have been dangerous. In the current study I was interested in understanding what actions the refugee mothers took to deal with situations that they considered to pose challenges, in order to explore their agency. I was interested in understanding not just outcomes but also any strengths they might bring to their experience. Non-partnered refugee mothers would have had to overcome many challenges associated with caring for children on their own. A goal of this study was to unearth some of the strengths and inner resources these women possess and apply to their situation.

Until such a time that civil strife ceases to occur, it can be assumed that there are likely to be individuals seeking asylum and it is likely Canada will continue to be a destination for some refugees who will most likely continue to include single mothers. It is therefore prudent for research to seek to identify what resources make for successful resettlement for this population so as to maximize benefits for the refugees and the host communities.

My Assumptions Prior to Undertaking the Study

Due to the class of immigrant under which my family was admitted into the country (i.e., skilled foreign workers), we received little support in settling. Prior to beginning this study, I had little information on the kinds of services that would be available to persons who are brought to Canada as refugees but I made the following assumptions: (a) that refugees have access to affordable housing on arrival, (b) that refugees may access government funded education opportunities to whatever level they choose, (c) that refugees receive adequate funding to meet their needs until they are able to enter the workforce, and (d) that single parent families are under a different funding model from two parent families so that their single parent status is taken into account. By undertaking this journey to explore how refugee single mothers who are resettled in Canada/Calgary with children and without a spouse/partner understand their resettlement experience, I also hoped to find out which, if any, of my assumptions were accurate. I invite you, the reader, to journey with me.

Thesis Overview

This thesis has five chapters. In Chapter One, I introduce the reader to issues relating to civil unrest, the resulting displacement and the need to seek asylum. I make an argument for why refugee resettlement should be of concern to us in Canada and why the experience of female single parents should be of particular interest. The chapter concludes with my invitation to the reader to travel with me on this journey.

In Chapter Two, I provide a critical review of existing literature on the various issues relating to the current study. I begin with a review of literature on armed conflict and the effect of armed conflict on non-combatant populations, paying special attention to women and children. Next I review literature on female lone parents, on refugees, and on refugee

single mothers. I follow this with a review of literature pertaining to theories of transition and acculturation before I present the rationale for the current study.

In Chapter Three, I discuss the methodology I applied in carrying out the current study. I begin the chapter by addressing the purpose of the study and giving an introduction to qualitative inquiry. I then discuss the critical incident technique giving details about the method in terms of historical background, progressive modifications, the rationale for its use in the current study, and a detailed explanation of how it was applied to the current study.

In Chapter Four, I present the findings of this study. I begin by presenting 11 themes I formulated from contextual questions. I then present nine categories I formulated from critical incidents identified by refugee single mothers from Africa about their resettlement experience in Canada. Next, I present findings pertaining to the resources these women accessed in the absence of a spouse/partner. Finally, I present six themes I created from additional information that the participants provided and that were deemed important to the research questions.

In Chapter Five, I discuss the findings of the current study. I begin the chapter by discussing the findings in relation to the existing literature. I then present what I see as the implications of the findings for theory, research, and practice. I conclude with a summary and a brief description of what this journey has been like for me.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I review existing literature as it relates to refugees and issues that exert their influence on refugees. I begin the chapter by giving an overview of armed conflict. I then review literature on how armed conflict might affect the non-combatant populations with particular focus on displacement and outcomes for women and children. Next, I review literature on female lone parents followed by a review of literature on the resettlement of refugees in Western nations. I then review literature on theories of transition and acculturation. I conclude with a summary of the literature review followed by a summary of the chapter.

Overview of Armed Conflict

Although there has not been a war or armed conflict of the magnitude witnessed during the world wars since the end of World War II in 1945, conflict has not ceased to occur nor have populations been free from the adverse effects of war. The world continues to witness both inter-state (fighting between nations) and intra-state armed conflict (fighting between different groups within the same nation also referred to as civil wars). Many of these conflicts lead to loss of life, the destruction of property and displacement of some sections of the population. According to the records of the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), a total of 232 conflicts were recorded worldwide between 1946 and 2006 (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2007). Although some of these conflicts may be considered minor because less than 25 lives were lost as a direct consequence of the conflict, others have resulted in the loss of many more lives. Several conflicts have been reported since the end of the last world war that were considered major wars because they were directly linked to the loss of more than 1000 human lives (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2005).

Although Western Europe, Japan, and parts of North America, which were the site of much of the fighting during the World Wars, have been spared the experience of widespread fighting since 1946, things have been different for many other parts of the world. Parts of Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, and Africa have all experienced both inter-state and intra-state conflicts that have resulted in the death, maiming, and displacement of large sections of their populations. In the two decades spanning 1989 to 2009, there was a total of 47 major wars, each of which was reported to have been directly responsible for the death of more than 1000 persons (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2010). Reports indicate that as recently as the year 2010, there were about nine active wars worldwide (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2011). About half of the wars currently listed as active are taking place on the continent of Africa (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2011) and are mostly intrastate conflicts (i.e., civil wars). In considering the reported numbers of casualties, it is worthwhile to bear in mind that the numbers reported may be much lower than the actual figures as it is not always easy to account for the non-combatant casualties, yet major conflicts tend to inflict a high death toll on the non-combatant population.

Armed Conflict and the Non-combatant Populations

The greater tragedy of war or any armed conflict is not so much about the battleground deaths but rather about the large numbers of non-combatants who are killed or maimed by these conflicts. It has been reported that about nine out of every ten persons killed by armed conflict are non-combatant civilians (Hayes, 2004). Although it is still not very clear exactly how many people have been killed as a direct result of armed conflict since 1946, the number is estimated to be in the tens of millions. For example, some reports have quoted figures as high as five million killed as a result of the war in the Congo alone (Human Security Report, 2009/2010). Collins (2007) reported that the civil war in the Sudan has resulted in the death of over two million

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people and many millions more have been displaced with some fleeing to other parts of the country such as Darfur and others crossing national bounders into neighbouring countries such as Egypt, Kenya, and Ethiopia as refugees. Unfortunately, armed conflicts continue to inflict death and displacement on large portions of the world's population more than half a century after the formation of the body that was mandated with bringing an end to wars in our world namely, The United Nations.

Another tragedy of war is the large numbers of people who are displaced from their homes as a result of armed conflict. Whether they remain within the national borders of their own state as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or move across national borders to become refugees in neighbouring states, their displacement is at times so large as to serve as a precursor of human disasters. For example, the mass movement of people displaced by war from Somalia across the border into the Northeastern part of Kenya was associated with the severe famine (a disaster) that occurred in that part of Kenya in 2011 (Brown, 2011).

Although a large number of those displaced by conflict tend to remain within the boundaries of their own country, many others cross national borders into neighbouring countries in search of safety. Individuals who cross national borders and are unwilling to return home because they have reason to believe it would be unsafe to do so are considered to be refugees. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees' (UNHCR) defines a refugee as follows:

> A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable

or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations Convention 1951 as cited in Martin, 2004).

The UNHCR has established three different options for the resettlement of displaced persons who seek protection and assistance from the agency. The three options include (a) repatriation back to their home country on condition that their safety can be guaranteed, (b) resettlement in the country where they first sought refuge and which is likely to be a state neighboring their own, and (c) resettlement in a third country which is likely to be in the developed world (Martin, 2004). According to Martin (2004), the first option is considered the most favourable so long as the safety of returnees can be guaranteed. Martin states that resettlement in a neighbouring country is often the second option explored and the third option is only considered when the first two are deemed untenable. About 100,000 persons are granted asylum and resettled in third countries through the UNHCR each year and about 10% of these refugees (i.e., about 10,000 per year) are women with children who are relocated as lone parents under the UNHCR's "women and children at risk" categories (UNHCR, 2011).

Effect of Conflict on Women and Children

As discussed earlier in the chapter, civil war has become the dominant form of armed conflict. Forster and Forster (2010) reported that in civil wars women and children always fare worse than other members of the society because of the use of gender specific violence against females and changes in the social fabric as a result of war that negatively affect women more than men. Sackellars (2005) has posited that women are often on the receiving end of targeted torture probably due to their role as child bearers and rearers. Although bombs and weapons of modern war kill and maim civilian women in equal numbers to civilian men, McKay (1998) posited that a unique harm of war for women and children is the trauma inflicted through the

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following: (a) sexual exploitation and gender-based violence, (b) unavailability or inadequacy of public health services, and (c) displacement of women and children in refugee camps.

Sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. During armed conflict, sexual abuse, including acts such as rape, other forms of forced sexual activity, mutilation of sexual organs, forced pregnancy, and prostitution are used as an extension of the war (McKay, 1998). In fact, the use of sexual violence against women and girls as weapons of war has become so common in modern day civil wars that the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) established a secretariat to deal with the issue. Indeed the use of sexual violence against women and girls as a weapon of war has been so widespread that it has been described as the lasting legacy of the war currently taking place in the Congo (UNFPA, 2008). This is because long after the fighting has been declared ended, survivors of these atrocities continue to deal with their effects. In addition to the traumatic psychological effects from sexual abuse including but not limited to flashbacks and difficulty re-establishing intimate relationships, the women may be exposed to and become infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted infections or may become pregnant as a result of rape (McKay, 1998).

Some women who become pregnant as a result of rape may even bear children of the aggressors. According to McKay (1998), women forced to carry and bear the children of their aggressors suffer serious mental, physical, and spiritual harm. In some societies such women and girls may be ostracised by their communities including their husbands, which means that the women would have to deal with the trauma of the abuse as well as the loss of social support. As is the case with other forms of aggression, the long-term psychosocial effects of rape can be difficult to resolve. Reporting on the war in the Congo, Notar (2006) noted that at times women and girls who were survivors of rape turned to prostitution in order to meet their basic needs.

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According to Notar, the girls reported negative self-image (as of no value since no man would marry them) and saw prostitution as their only means of survival. Comas-Díaz and Jansen (1995) posited that violent acts committed against women tend to have traumatic effects on the physical health, mental health, self-esteem, and overall functioning of women. Whereas the visible effects of the violent acts may capture the attention of spectators such as medical service personnel and possibly be dealt with promptly, the invisible and long-lasting effects are at times never recognised or acknowledged and when they are, it is likely to be after a long time. The effects of violence against women may include severe trauma, grief, despair, and hopelessness, which may manifest in an array of ways such as through feelings of discomfort and anger to physical complaints and more severe clinical diagnoses such as depression, rape trauma syndrome, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Comas-Díaz & Jansen, 1995). The psychological effects of abuse against women affect not only the individual victims but also extend to their families and communities, and especially to their children when present (Comas-Díaz & Jansen, 1995). There is a likelihood that these effects may take time to present or the circumstances under which the women are likely to be living at the time may be such that the effects cannot be acknowledged or dealt with at the time even if their presentation is acknowledged. At times, the psychological effects of violence and abuse may present after the women are resettled in countries where they are granted asylum.

Unavailability or inadequacy of public health services. Public health depends on several basic and essential conditions such as the availability and quality of food, water, and access to health services (McKay, 1998). During times of armed conflict governments tend to reduce the provision of public health services so as to focus on the war effort and these services may often be in low supply or unavailable altogether, particularly in refugee camps. McKay

posited that when women cannot carry out their normal responsibilities, cannot protect and feed

their children, or are malnourished and starving themselves, they are less physically and

psychologically available to their children. Evidence available from the UNCHR indicates that

most refugees remain in their region of origin, rather than seeking refuge in faraway countries.

By the end of 2010, three quarters of the world's refugees were residing in a country

neighbouring their own (UNHCR, 2011). In view of the fact that many civil wars occur in

developing nations, it follows that the neighbouring countries to which the displaced persons (the

majority of whom are women and children) move are likely to have inadequate public health

services for their own population. This means that the refugees are likely to be at high risk for

receiving even less adequate services themselves.

   Displacement of women and children in refugee camps. The UNHCR (2012) reports

that there were about 15.7 million refugees worldwide in 2011, the majority of whom women

and children. Displaced women and children are threatened by deprivation of home and goods

and services. Prior to becoming refugees, women often suffer sexual violence as a form of

political persecution (McKay, 1998). Many may have been subjected to other atrocities of war

such as being tortured and/or witnessing torture and/or killing, facing starvation and other forms

of deprivation in their homes and during flight (Guerin, Allotey, Elmi, & Baho, 2010). McKay

(1998) also reported that within refugee camps, women and adolescent girls frequently

experience sexual assault and other forms of violence because of family breakdown and general

lack of protection as they carry out everyday requirements of life (e.g., when there is poor

lighting around latrines or when they are followed into the bush when they go to collect

firewood). Although in many developing countries women are likely to have already been the

ones responsible for sourcing and preparing food for their families, what may be challenging is

that once in refugee camps they are expected to fulfil many of the same daily demands of living with limited resources (Comas-Díaz & Jansen, 1995).

Widows of war and women refugees are particularly vulnerable to poverty, prostitution, the extortion of sex for food by post-war peacekeepers, and higher risk for illness and death in the post-conflict period (Hayes, 2004). This is likely due to the fact that they can often not access the resources that were previously available to them because resources such as home-grown food may have been destroyed in the fighting or were left behind when the women were displaced. Because in many societies women are the primary child caregivers, when they are affected by war, so are the children. In many cultures, mothers, older sisters, aunts, and grandmothers share responsibility for children's physical and psychosocial development (McKay, 1998). Many women who become widows of war are likely to also be mothers and therefore take on the role of being the sole provider for the children as a lone parent. This unintended role change may carry the potential for exacerbating psychological challenges such as depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental disorders. These gender-specific effects of war are compounded by the lifelong social, economic and psychologically traumatic consequences of armed conflict (McKay, 1998). This also means that should such a woman apply for and be granted asylum in a western country such as Canada, she is likely to deal with the challenges associated with resettlement and as well as the long term effects of war trauma as a single mother refugee without the support of her regular social support network (spouse, extended family, and community at large). Being resettled as a refugee who is also a female lone parent would mean that the woman is likely to be dealing with the challenges common to refugees, the challenges of being a newcomer, and also the challenges of being a lone parent all at the same time.

<center>**Female Lone Parents**</center>

In this section I review existing literature on lone-parent families in regards to (a) who and where they are in Canada, (b) economic situation and other social markers, and (c) children's outcomes as regards education attainment.

Who and Where They Are

Results from the 2006 Canadian national census, showed that there were just over 1.41 million lone-parent households in Canada. Of these, 1.13 million or about 93% were headed by females (Statistics Canada, 2008). The census data show that lone-parent families are a growing trend in the country as they comprised 16% of all families in 2006 as compared to 13% in 2001, showing an 8% increase (Statistics Canada, 2008). In terms of national distribution, Statistics Canada (2008) reported that one in four or 25% of all families in the territories (i.e., Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) fell into this category in 2006. In contrast, the percentage of all families headed by a lone parent was fairly close to the national average of 16% in all the ten provinces, with the figure ranging from a high of 17% in Nova Scotia, Quebec and Manitoba to a low of 14% in Alberta. According to Statistics Canada, one-parent families account for a relatively large percentage of all children in Canada as 18% of all children under the age of 15 were reported to have been living in lone-parent families in 2006.

Social-Economic Status and Other Social Markers

Wu and Schimmele (2003) reported that female headed one-parent families (OPF) are more likely to live in poverty or near the poverty line than two-parent families or male OPFs. Ambert (2006) reported that more than half of all female OPFs are likely to live at or below the poverty line. It then follows that those OPFs that are headed by females are often not able to accumulate financial resources or assets and often continue to live in poverty, particularly if the

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mother came from an OPF and has a low level of education (Ambert, 2006). Ambert also

reported that OPFs tend to spend a larger proportion of their income on housing than other

family types leaving them without financial resources to spend on other needs and leisure. The

off shoot to this state of affairs is that many of these households may lack other necessities, such

as food and often may live in less desirable neighbourhoods (Ambert, 2006) where they may be

at higher risk for being victims of crime or getting involved in criminal activity. Living in less

desirable neighbourhoods could also increase the likelihood of the children getting involved in

criminal activity and/or truancy.

In terms of behaviour, Ambert (2006) reported that on average children from female

OPFs are more likely to exhibit behavioural problems including but not limited to hyperactivity,

externalizing tendencies such as aggression, and hostility. Once they are older, adults who have

grown up in female OPFs are more likely to be unemployed and be of lower social-economic

status (SES), are more likely to have committed serious offenses against persons and/or property,

and are more likely to experience difficulties in their relationships (Ambert, 2006; Mance & Yu,

2010). When these female heads of OPFs are refugees, these kinds of outcomes should create

even more concern for the receiving society as they portray possible failure to achieve the

anticipated outcomes of relocating the refugee family. Inability of families to achieve upward

economic mobility and independence by implication creates a burden for society.

Another, albeit less talked about outcome Ambert (2006) posited, is that an increasing

number of children living in an OPF are placed in foster care and later into group homes. This,

added Ambert, is not just more costly to society but also increases the likelihood of these

children experiencing more negative outcomes than other children in relation to delinquency,

mental health, and criminality. On average, children who live in foster care and then group

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homes are at higher risk for criminal behaviour and incarceration in adulthood according to

Ambert. Biblarz and Raftery (1999) argued that economic deprivation is a mitigating factor in

these outcomes because low incomes are associated with deprivation of the activities that

enhance performance in a multitude of areas.

Educational Attainment for Children

It has been reported that on average children growing up in female OPFs are more likely

to do less well in school, are more likely to repeat grades, and are also more likely to leave

school sooner than those who grow up in other types of families (Ambert, 2006). These children

tend to have low school level attainment and to be at higher risk for being suspended or expelled

from school (Mance & Yu, 2010).   Ambert (2006) also reported that overall, adults who spend

their childhood years in female OPFs are more likely to be found to have achieved lower levels

of education than adults who spend their childhood years in other family types. Unless the OPF

was occasioned following widowhood or divorce, the mothers may have left school early and as

such may not be equipped to assist the children with school requirements contributing to the

likelihood that the children leave school early too. Other researchers (see Mance & Yu, 2010;

Marks, 2006) have described findings from their studies suggesting lower academic

achievements, particularly completion of grade school by children from single-parent families.

Ambert (2006) cautioned the reader to be aware that available research has tended to

focus on deficits and as such, there is a dearth of information in regards to whether children from

OPFs tend to show any particular strengths. Ambert also decries the lack of research that has

addressed the experience of these children from their perspective except for children from OPFs

that result from divorce. Ambert posited that outcomes might differ based on the point at which

the child/children entered the OPF, the length of stay in the OPF, as well as what occasioned the

OPF itself. Biblarz and Raftery (1999) argued that economic deprivation is a mitigating factor in these outcomes because low incomes are associated with deprivation of the activities that enhance performance in various areas of growth and development. If the greatest challenge facing OPFs is poverty, then putting measures in place that increase access to resources might positively alter these outcomes.   However, Marks (2006) reported low education completion rates for children from OPFs even after controlling for factors such as social economic status meaning that factors other than those directly associated with economic resources may have contributed to the findings. As these findings were not based on research with refugee female OPFs, it is unclear what factors influence outcomes for this population. How are outcomes for refugee OPFs the same as or different from those of the host population? What factors affect outcomes for their children?

There is a dearth of research on outcomes for refugee single mothers and their children. It is likely that refugee women may become single mothers for different reasons (e.g., the husband willingly joining the war effort, being forcibly conscripted, being murdered; the family getting separated during flight) than non-refugee women. Even when refugee mothers are unemployed or underemployed, the reasons for this may be different from those of members of the host population (e.g., they may be well educated but not proficient in the official language; they may encounter problems associated with recognition of foreign credentials). Based on the different experiences of refugees compared to those of other groups, it may well be that outcomes for refugee female OPFs may also be different and, by implication, require different interventions than those for other groups..

Refugees

In this section I review existing literature on the state of refugees in terms of the extent of the problem of refugees and outcomes for refugees and their children after they are resettled in countries where they are granted asylum.

The Extent of the Refugee Problem

Reports indicate that there are currently nearly 11 million refugees worldwide and there are at least twice as many who are displaced within their own state and are therefore IDPs (UNHCR, 2012). The UNHCR (2011) gives the following as the distribution of the refugee populations among the different regions of the world: Africa excluding North Africa, 2.2 million; North Africa and Middle East, 2 million; Asia and Pacific, 3.8 million; Europe, 1.65 million; and Americas, about half a million. This means that the developing nations hosted about 80 percent of all refugees in 2010 despite not having adequate service provision for their own nationals.

The UNHCR reports that in 2010 about one million persons applied for asylum in the refugee accepting countries of the developed world (Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand) through the agency and about 10 percent or 100,000 persons were approved for resettlement as refugee class immigrants. In terms of gender, about 47% of all refugees in 2010 were reported to be girls and women (UNHCR, 2012).

Outcomes for Refugees

For those refugees who are granted asylum and settled in a third country, the resettlement process presents a different set of challenges from those faced by their compatriots who may have either been repatriated to their countries of origin or resettled in a neighbouring country. Some of the challenges they have to deal with include but are not limited to (a) acculturative

stress, (b) mental health outcomes, (c) parenting, (d) career and work, and (e) social support, due to the fact that relocation often means undergoing a cross-cultural transition.

Acculturative stress. One of the first experiences that people moving into a new culture often contend with is culture shook (also referred to as acculturative stress) because of the adjustments they are required to make as a consequence of encountering cultural norms that are different from their own (Arthur, 2001). Culture shock is the consequence of strain and anxiety that is likely to result as a consequence of coming into contact with a new culture as when individuals experience the loss of familiar social-cultural cues (Winkelman, 1994). Once they arrive in the new country, refugees have to learn to navigate an entirely new community, language, and cultural system, while at the same time they are learning to cope with the loss of homeland, their family, and the way of life they were accustomed to (Murray, Davidson, & Schweitzer, 2010). Winkleman (1994) posited that the acculturative stress responses may cause both psychological and physiological reactions. Psychological manifestations of culture shock might include depression, social withdrawal, difficulties with concentration and clear thought processes, loneliness or even anger and hostility (Arthur, 2001; Winkelman, 1994). For refugees, culture shook may be heightened by the fact that they are unlikely to have made adequate preparations for the resettlement owing to the forced nature of their relocation (Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1987). Those refugees who also happen to be single mothers may still be dealing with the loss of their spouse/partner, which poses the potential for complicating their situation even further.

Dow (2011) reported that many socially undesirable behaviors, such as violence and substance abuse, among immigrants and refugees are linked to acculturative stress. According to Dow many immigrants experiencing acculturative stress may suffer from a higher level of

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anxiety and alienation. At low levels of acculturation there is more stress related to the anxiety of dealing with an unfamiliar environment for all migrant groups. Differences in the levels of acculturation between parents and children have been reported to be factors in increased parent-child conflict in immigrant families (Birman, 2006). In families of refugee single mothers there may be a greater possibility of an acculturation gap between the mother and the children particularly because children are generally more immersed in the host culture through the school system. In situations where the mother is not proficient in the host language, the gap may be even wider and subsequently be a source of more conflict.

Mental health outcomes. There is evidence that women refugees are more likely to have been victims of violence in their homelands (Hagan, Raymond-Richmond, & Palloni, 2009). Many may have been subjected to atrocities of war such as being tortured and/or witnessing torture and/or killing, being victims of rape and sexual abuse, and facing starvation and other forms of deprivation during flight as well as while living in refugee camps. Compared to refugee men, refugee women report greater numbers of traumatic events, exposure to torture, and more psychological and social problems (Halcóna, Robertsona, & Monsena, 2010). Women often live in poverty and isolation and may find it more difficult to reduce stress levels through supportive networks within the extended family than they did before immigration as many are separated from family and friends as a consequence of the resettlement. This has the potential to threaten their overall health and quality of life (Halcóna, Robertsona, & Monsena, 2010). Murray, Davidson and Schweiter (2010) posited that refugees' experiences of persecution, physical and emotional trauma coupled with forced relocation are factors that predispose many of them to symptoms of psychological disturbance before and following resettlement. Murray et al. also suggested that current refugee policy which affords refugees time-limited access to

services following resettlement may not offer sufficient support to enable successful resettlement.

In Canada, higher levels of psychopathology particularly anxiety and depression are reported in refugees when compared to the Canadian born population (Guzder et al., 2011; Mawani, 2008). Krahn and Maximova (2010) reported a tendency for the mental health of refugees to decline faster following their arrival in Canada. This appears paradoxical in that resettlement is intended to provide refugees with safe and better living conditions. In the refugee population, this decline may be associated with their pre and post migration experience of forced migration and exposure to trauma. Higher levels of psychopathology (e.g., anxiety and depression) may also be related to unfavourable conditions such as low employability and living in poverty in the country of resettlement. Despite reporting higher levels of psychological distress, there is low utilization of mental health services by immigrants and refugees (Gudzer et al., 2011; Sepali & Collins, 2008). This may be related to different attitudes towards mental illness and accessing mental services in their countries of origin. In some cultures (e.g. In Africa), the practice is for individuals to seek support in dealing with distress from family and friends instead of mental health professionals and this may be the reason why immigrants appear not to utilize mental health services. That is because it may not be appropriate in their culture to speak about what they consider personal matters with strangers. It may also be the case that in their cultures of origin, there is stigma attached to suffering from mental illness and seeking counselling may be seen as an indication that one is dealing with mental illness, which might result in stigmatization by their ethnic community.

Parenting and outcomes for children. Differences in parenting styles between the culture of origin and the host culture can be sources of disagreement between parents and

children and pose challenges to effective parenting. André, Renzaho1, Green, Mellor, and Swinburn (2010) gave the example of the expectation in African cultures that the authority of elders would be unquestioningly respected by children but on immigrating, the family may find that in the host culture questioning of parents' authority by children appears to be accepted. Should the children elect to start questioning their parents' authority, parents may find this unacceptable, yet not know how to deal with the situation. Another major difference that André and colleagues have pointed out is that of sharing responsibility in raising children by the community thereby reducing the burden on the parent. In many cultures all adults share the responsibility of rearing all the children of the community but in Western cultures this is considered a family's private affair unless those living near a family have concerns related to child abuse in which case they may choose to report their concerns to the relevant authorities.

When immigrants and refugees arrive in the host country, they are likely to find that parenting is the responsibility of individual parents. Yet their ethnic community may still retain expectations on how to raise children with the result of being judged as a poor parent if their children do not turn out as the community expects (André et al. 2010). Another challenge to parenting is the change in gender roles that parents experience when they are resettled. In their home country, it may well be that the father's role was to be the disciplinarian and teacher of family values to his children and that of passing on knowledge to the next generation. The mother's role may have been that of being the nurturer, responsible for sourcing and preparing family meals, attending to the needs and safety of the children, and being the first contact person the children would engage with when they wanted to communicate an important issue to the family (André, et al. 2010). Some families may try to maintain the same gender roles, at least in the early phases of resettlement, which may or may not be practical particularly as it is often

easier for women to enter into the workforce than men. For refugee single mothers there is not even the possibility of keeping things the same as she would be a lone parent. This means that the mother must take on the roles of both parents. At times she may find this challenging with the result that the children do not receive the kind of parenting they need.

Once refugee and immigrant families arrive in the country of resettlement, they begin the process of acculturation. Children tend to adjust more easily to the new culture and new ways of being and doing than adults and this is often a source of conflict in parent-child relationships (Lazarus, 1997; Morantz, Rousseau, & Heyman, 2012; Tardiff-Williams & Fisher, 2009). Substance abuse tends to be higher in children of immigrants and refugees when compared to children from the host communities. In their study, Unger, Ritt-Olson, Soto and Baezconde-Garbanati (2009) associated the higher incidence of substance use to different levels of acculturation between immigrant parents and their children.

Education attainment. Although children of refugees like those of other immigrants tend to acculturate to the new culture faster than their parents, this appears not to happen soon enough or to a level that allows them to be as successful within the education system as the children of the host society or those of immigrants. In a study that examined the needs of refugee children in Canada, Walsh, Este, Krieg, and Giurgiu (2011) argued that refugee children tend to experience difficulties transitioning into formal school systems due to having little experience with the school system, having had their schooling interrupted, or lacking sufficient knowledge of the language of instruction. Findings from a study conducted by Okitikpi and Aymer (2003) found that refugee children in the United Kingdom reported experiencing problems with accessing education and being successful at school.

Career and economic issues. There is a dearth of literature as regards refugee single mothers' economic situation. Available information is based on the examination of the lives of female lone-parents and all immigrants without specifying whether they arrived as refugees or other classes of immigrants. Research indicates that of all family types, the female lone-parent family is at higher risk for living in poverty (Ambert, 2006; Wu & Schimmele, 2003; Yarber & Sharp, 2010). These families were also reported to have higher percentages of unemployed mothers, many of whom cited lack of or inadequate childcare as the reason for being unemployed (Craig, 2005). Research findings have indicated that immigrants in Canada tend to be over represented among the poor and their poverty rates are particularly high in larger cities, which have larger concentrations of immigrants. Among immigrants, visible minorities, who are mostly recent immigrants, tend to experience even higher levels of poverty (Kazemipur & Halli, 2001). The economic situation and career progress of refugee female OPFs in unclear but it can be assumed to be no better than that of other newcomers of the same ethnicity and may even be worse based on factors related to pre and post migration experiences as well as their level of education attainment and inability to work due to difficulties with access to child care.

Research suggests that international migration has a negative impact on the working lives of immigrant women. Employment effects include downward occupational mobility, decreases in income and damaged career prospects, career redirection such as re-training, and under or unemployment. Moreover, employers often demand that new employees be in possession of local employment experience, a requirement which places migrants in an impossible situation as they cannot obtain employment because they lack local experience, and they cannot obtain local experience because employers will not hire them (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2000; Meares, 2010).

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Immigrants also face employment barriers due to problems related to local language competency, problems in transferring credentials between countries, lack of familiarity with educational and employment systems in their new country, and systemic racism in social and employment practices (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2000). There are internal barriers (e.g., low self-esteem, lack of career information, inappropriate career decision-making skills), and external barriers (e.g., social expectation, inadequate educational preparation, untrained career personnel) that negatively impact the career development of immigrants (Arthur, 2000). Refugees are at an even greater disadvantage as they are often unable to provide proof of previous career experience and/or education credentials because at times some may lose their documents during flight either due to the destruction of their homes in war or having to flee without being able to take any belongings with them. Other refugees may have been victims of harassment and the confiscation of their valuables including documentation by fighting forces or theft during escape or in refugee camps where many often reside prior to resettlement in a third country. Since refugee claimants are not subjected to language and education attainment levels in the same way other immigrants are, often refugees face greater challenges of official language proficiency and lack of adequate formal education in addition to the foregoing challenges (Connor, 2010).

Even without the complication of being recent immigrants or refugees, single mothers may face economic challenges particularly if they don't receive adequate support and are either unemployed or underemployed (Yarber & Sharp, 2010). Yarber and Sharp (2010) reported that single parents' ability to find and maintain paid employment is often affected by child care issues. Childcare issues are likely to present an even bigger challenge to the employment of

refugee single mothers as they are unlikely to receive support from extended family and/or community as many of them are likely to not have family living close by.

Social support. Another challenge faced by refugees in general and single mothers in particular relates to the fact that most of them are relocated alone, accompanied only by their children. Although efforts are made to either keep families together or re-unite new arrivals with relatives already residing in host countries, at times families are separated during relocation. Ortiz (2008) reported that social isolation is a common phenomenon among refugees due to the fact that resettlement often separates them from their social networks. Social isolation may also occur due to low official language proficiency, which creates difficulties in socializing with members of the host community (Ortiz, 2008).

Findings from a study by Weine and colleagues (2011) indicated that families who engaged in secondary migration (moving within the country they are resettled in) did so in order to live close to family members or members of their ethnic community because that is how they were able to feel more at home, to access affordable housing, and to access greater employment opportunities. It can therefore be concluded that families moved within the country in their efforts to enhance family and community support and as their means of reducing the effects of perceived shortcomings in resettlement conditions (Weine et al. 2011).

For refugees who may not have family or friends close by and for whom secondary migration is not an option because of the absence of these networks in other parts of the country, involvement in religious and ethnic community groups appears to be a source of social support and also to mitigate the effects of acculturative stress (Finch & Vega, 2003). Many refugees and immigrants arrive from regions of the world where religious affiliation and/or spirituality are

considered an integral part of wellbeing (Collins, 2008), so it is no wonder that they would seek social support through involvement in religious activities.

Many immigrant and refugee women find themselves faced with the challenge of having to deal with the loss of their regular social support networks through resettlement since most relocate with only the immediate family. Refugee single mothers are more likely to face an even greater challenge since they relocate without an adult companion. Lowered social support remains a concern for many immigrant and refugee women (Mawani, 2008), particularly early on in their resettlement while they are in transition.

Refugee Single Mothers

There is a dearth of information regarding the resettlement experience of refugee single mothers either in Canada or anywhere else. There are, however, studies exploring various aspects of the resettlement of African refugee women in various countries (see Baker, 2007; Chilongo, 2010; Leigh, 2009; Vongkhamphra, Davis, & Adem, 2011). In a study of the resettlement experiences and mental health needs of Somali Bantu refugee women (Baker, 2007), some participants identified themselves as lone parents, but the study did not specifically deal with refugee single mothers. It is unclear how accurately findings from research involving women who are relocated as refugee mothers accompanied by a partner/ spouse may be extrapolated to refugee single mothers. In a study conducted to explore the relationship between the lived experiences of trauma, migration and settlement among government-sponsored African refugee women from war-torn countries in the Greater Vancouver Area (GVA), Wasik (2006) reported that economic insecurity and isolation in Canada constitute the two largest forms of trauma for black African refugee women in the GVA. Although Wasik acknowledged that a disproportionate number of African refugee women in the GVA are single mothers, and reported

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that three out of eight participants in the study had been widowed overseas due to political violence, the effect of single parenthood was not investigated or reported in the study.

Clarke (2009) studied the adjustment and acculturation process of Liberian single mothers resettled as refugees in the United States. In this study, a four person reflecting team examined the refugees' post-immigration experiences, attitudes, and behaviors employing a phenomenological approach. Clarke formulated seven themes (opportunity/progress, responsibility, family reunification, relationships as resources, spirituality, conflict, and cultural maintenance) to explain the process of adjustment and acculturation of Liberian refugee single mothers. More research on the resettlement of refugee single mothers would add to available literature and help create a greater understanding of their experiences and more appropriate services for this population in the countries of their resettlement.

Transition Theories

In this section I review literature pertaining to theories that explain the concept of transition. In everyday language, a transition may be defined as passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another. Transition speaks of a movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another. Transitions involve a process in which individuals experience a shift in their personal assumptions about themselves and the world around them (Arthur, 2001). Arthur (2001) posited that the process of transition usually involves loss because familiar ways of operating, routines, beliefs, and settings are left behind so as to adapt to changing circumstances in life. During transition, the central concern for those going through it has to do with their identity. Individuals are required to have effective coping resources for managing the issues that emerge (Arthur, 2001). I start by reviewing Bridges' transition theory

followed by Schlossberg's theory of transition before reviewing literature specific to cross-cultural transition and acculturation.

Bridges' Theory of Transition

It is a paradox that "in order to achieve continuity, individuals as well as organizations have to be willing to change" (Bridges, 2001). Without change, the things we wish to see continue in perpetuity would be doomed to destruction, yet humans usually tend to display an aversion to change (Bridges, 2001). According to Bridges (2001), what individuals and societies resist is not change but transition. Bridges defined change as a situational shift such as getting a new boss or receiving a promotion. He then defined transition as the process of letting go of the way things used to be and taking hold of the way things have become as a consequence of the change. Bridges postulated that it is possible for an individual or an organization to experience change without necessarily undergoing a transition. The failure to undergo transition renders the change mechanical, superficial, and empty meaning that the change occurs but the individual or individuals remain mentally and emotionally as they were before the change. In other words the change may be deemed to have failed to work or exert the possible effect (Bridges, 2001).

Bridges (2001) explained that transition is a three-phase process in which a chaotic but potentially creative "neutral zone" exists between the letting go of the old and the taking hold of the new. Bridges posited that when individuals resist change, it is one or more of these three phases of transition they resist not the change per se. According to Bridges, transitions may occur as a result of external changes whether elective or forced and also as a result of the natural inner unfolding of aspects of who we are and how we are meant to be, for example the developmental changes that happen as one grows from childhood into adolescence. Bridges

posited that the different kinds of transitions are all characterized by the same three phases- an ending, a neutral zone, and a new beginning.

In the ending we lose or let go of our outlook, our old reality, our old attitudes, our old values, and our old self-image. We may resist this for a while and when we do give in we may experience feelings of sadness and anger (Bridges, 2001). Bridges gives three reasons as to why as human beings we may resist transition. They include (a) not accepting that we have to let go of a piece of ourselves that we have to give up when and because the situation has changed, (b) transition takes longer than change and so leaves us in limbo, a "neutral zone", while a replacement reality and a new self are gradually formed, and (c) transition sets up resonance between the present and painful experiences of the past.

In the neutral zone we find ourselves between the old and the new. This is a confusing state and a time when it feels as though our lives have broken apart. This "in-between" period has the potential to be a creative time if one views it as an opportunity to explore possibilities that were left unexplored before (Bridges, 2001).

In the final stage of the transition we take hold of and identify with some new outlook and some new reality, as well as attitudes and a new self-image. We feel that we are finally starting a new chapter in our lives and life feels as though it is back on track. We gain a new sense of ourselves, a new outlook, and a new sense of purpose and possibility (Bridges, 2001).

In trying to explain the transition that an individual who arrives in a new country as a refugee is likely to go through, it would be helpful to consider the large number of and the complexity of the issues that are likely to influence how they respond to the change and how the transitions might play out for them. For example, the fact that refugees are likely to have left their home country due to a real risk to their lives and often without any prior preparation would

probably affect how they handle change and the duration they remain in transition particularly in the neutral zone. It may well be that there are individual characteristics and societal/systemic factors that come into play as individuals move through transitions that play a significant part in whether the change is successful or not. In his description of this theory of transition, Bridges (2001) did not discuss issues relating to the factors that may be likely to influence how the transition occurs once the change has taken place. It is therefore unclear what individual as well as systemic factors determine whether the change will work to produce successful transition in a particular situation or not. Other theorists such as Schlossberg (1981) have put forward explanations that discuss how personal individual and contextual factors are brought to bear on the process of transition.

Schlossberg's Theory of Transition

A transition may be defined as any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Non-events refer to the non-occurrence of anticipated events such as not receiving a promotion when it was expected. According to Goodman et al. (2006), transitions often require new patterns of behavior and may be life events that involve gains as well as losses. They also posited that a transition ought to be regarded as one only if it is so perceived by the individual going through it. That is to say that an event or non-event may be regarded as a transition for one individual and not for another. However, an event or non-event may be regarded as a transition only if it results in change (Goodman et al., 2006). Goodman et al. defined three possible types of transitions: (a) anticipated, (b) unanticipated, and (c) non-events. Each is briefly described.

Anticipated transitions. Included in this category are normative gains and loses or major alterations of roles that predictably occur with the normal unfolding of life such as

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marriage, starting a first job, a child leaving home and retiring (Goodman et al., 2006). Goodman et al. (2006) indicated that some adults find that having an opportunity for role rehearsal can ease an anticipated transition.

Unanticipated transitions. Goodman et al. (2006) explained that these include the "nonscheduled events" that are not predictable. They further explained that these transitions usually involve crises, eruptive circumstances, and other occurrences that are not the result of the normal unfolding of life. Events such as being laid-off and losing one's home due to a natural disaster are examples of unanticipated transitions (Goodman et al., 2006). Other examples of unanticipated transitions may include events such as having to flee one's home country and to become a refugee as a result of armed conflict and/or persecution dues to one's political or religious views.

Non-event transitions. These include those events that an individual had expected to happen that did not happen, and this altered one's life (Goodman et al., 2006). Examples include events such as a marriage that did not happen, a child that was never born or a promotion that was never granted. The realization that the anticipated event has not and will not happen might cause individuals to alter the way they see themselves and the way they behave (Goodman et al., 2006). Other non-events may include the realization that an anticipated improvement in one's living standard through attainment of higher education and/or better paying work has not happened and is unlikely to happen. The latter is more likely to be the experience of immigrants and refugees who arrive in countries of resettlement having much hope of attaining a high social economic status, which often does not happen for various reasons. For such individuals the geographical transition may be understood as an event and the economic transition as a non-event.

Adaptation to transition. Individuals differ in their ability to adapt to transition and the differences exist not just between individuals but differences also exist between how the same individual might adapt to different changes or to the same change at different points in time (Schlossberg, 1981). According to Schlossberg (1981), adaptation to transition is affected by (a) characteristics of the transition, (b) characteristics of pretransition and posttransition environments, and (c) characteristics of the individual.

Characteristics of the transition. The characteristics of the transition that affect how one adapts to it include (a) the kind of role change accompanying the transition, whether a role gain (such as taking a job) or loss (such as retiring); (b) the kind of affect (i.e., positive or negative) that the change generates; (c) the source of the change (i.e., internal or external); (d) timing of the change (i.e., on-time or off-time); (e) the nature of the onset (i.e., gradual or sudden); (f) the duration of the change (i.e., permanent, temporary, or uncertain); and (g) the degree of stress involved in the transition, which is somewhat related to the foregoing six characteristics (Schlossberg, 1981).

Schlossberg (1981) posited that both role change, whether loss or gain, and the kind of affect (positive and negative) accompanying the change are associated with some level of stress in adaptation. According to Schlossberg, when the change is a result of deliberate choice by the individual, they perceive a level of control and adaptation is likely to be accompanied by less stress as are transitions that are perceived to have occurred on time and those whose onset has been gradual. The level of stress accompanying a transition that may be associated with the duration of the transition is dependent on other factors such as whether the transition is pleasant and anticipated or painful and undesired (Schlossberg, 1981). Less adaptational stress is likely to

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accompany a pleasant anticipated transition than one that is unpleasant and undesired

(Schlossberg, 1981).

Characteristics of pretransition and posttransition environments. Schlossberg (1981)

defined environment in broad terms to include (a) interpersonal support systems, (b) institutional

support, and (c) the physical setting. Schlossberg suggested that interpersonal support is

considered essential to successful adaptation as it provides an environment in which individuals

offer and receive support. Schlossberg specified three different types of interpersonal support,

which include intimate relationships, the family unit, and the network of friends. Adequate and

stable interpersonal support systems are a major determinant in how well individuals manage

transitions (Schlossberg, 1981). Schlossberg stated that the category of institutional support

includes occupational organizations, religious institutions, political groups, social welfare

groups, and other community support groups and that the availability and access to these

supports is likely to ease the stress associated with transitions. The physical setting, including

climate and weather, urban or rural location, neighbourhood, living arrangements and the

workplace may contribute to stress, sense of well-being, and general outlook and may play a role

in adaptation to transition (Schlossberg 1981).

Characteristics of the individual. Schlossberg (1981) discussed psychosocial

competence, sex and sex role identification, age and life stages, state of health, race/ethnicity,

social-economic status, value orientation, and previous experience with a similar transition as

individual characteristics that may have a role in how an individual adapts to transition.

Schlossberg suggested that scoring high on the construct of psychosocial competence predicts

successful adaptation to transition. Schlossberg asserted that the effects of sex and sex-role

identification, age and life stage, state of health, race/ethnicity, and social economic status on

adaptation to transition are somewhat complex and appear to be mitigated by other factors such as the timing of the change, value orientation, and cultural norms. According to Schlossberg, values may be valuable or dysfunctional dependent on the ease with which they can be translated into goals and behavior and successfully pursued. Also a value system that contributes to adaptation in one transition may be dysfunctional in another. Schlossberg suggested that individuals who have weathered a transition in the past will probably be successful at adapting to another transition of similar nature.

Although Bridges and Schlossberg have both put forward theories that explain how transitions generally occur, these theories do not provide the reader with much information about how transitions may be influenced by the cultural context in which they occur. Cross-cultural psychology has been able to demonstrate that there does exists a relationship between the behavior of individuals and the cultural context in that individuals behave in ways that are responsive to cultural influences and expectations (Berry, 1997). As Berry (1997) posited, this knowledge raises questions as to how individuals who have grown up in one culture behave when they relocate to settle into a different culture. Cross-cultural psychology has sought to answer this question by putting forward a theory on acculturation.

Acculturation Theory

During cross-cultural transitions, it is exposure to norms and behaviours that contrast one's own culture that poses challenges for an individual about how they understand themselves and their assumptions about others, as well as their beliefs about the world (Arthur, 2001). Arthur posited that the nature of cross-cultural transitions can be characterized by whether or not they were voluntary, how much difference exists between original and new culture, and the

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permanence or brevity of the transition. A forced relocation to permanently reside in a culture that is very different from one's own would hold the potential for a more stressful transition.

Some individuals embark upon cross-cultural transitions voluntarily in pursuit of what they perceive as better opportunities for social upward mobility. For other individuals such as refugees, cross-cultural transitions occur as a reaction to unwanted threats to safety that require them to leave familiar surroundings and move to geographical areas where they are assured of protection and safety. In the case of refugee single mothers, the cross-cultural transition often occurs as a last resort after other options such as repatriation back to their home countries or resettlement in the neighbouring countries where they had sought refuge have been deemed untenable by the UNHCR. The transition also happens following other loses such as the loss of their spouse/partner through death, joining the war effort, or being separated during flight.

Acculturation has been described as the process of coping with a new and largely unfamiliar culture. It is a continuous process by which strangers are resocialized into a host culture so as to be directed toward greater compatibility with or fitness into a host culture (Dow, 2011). This process is influenced by both variables related to the individuals undergoing acculturation and the interpersonal or environmental factors (Arthur, 2001). The context in which acculturation occurs may either be supportive or provide challenges for individuals as they seek to reconstruct their identity and world view (Horenczyk, 1997). How the host society views the immigrants as demonstrated through policy and attitudes may strongly affect the newcomers' adjustment with positive and socially supportive policies and positive attitudes enhancing acculturation. Less favourable attitudes may contribute to newcomers feeling disoriented, disappointed, and frustrated (Horenczyk, 1997), making for less satisfactory acculturation.

According to Dow (2011), when people move from one culture to another, they may find the experience bewildering, confusing, depressing, anxiety-provoking, humiliating, embarrassing, and generally stressful in nature. This stress is negatively related to acculturation and can affect individuals enormously and have disruptive effects on their psychological and physiological well-being. Depending on how different the new culture is from an individual's culture of origin, the extent of the demands placed on the individual by the new culture, and the individual's capacity for learning new ways of responding, acculturative stress may be experienced as minor adjustment problems or as serious physiological (e.g., sleep disturbance, gastrointestinal problems) or psychological disturbances (Arthur, 2001).

Berry's Acculturation Framework

Berry (1997) contended that although acculturation may occur in both the newcomers as well as the host, the tendency is for more change to be induced in one group more than the other, usually the newcomers. Berry posited a model of acculturation that proposed four strategies by which individuals involved in cross-cultural transitions adapt. The four strategies proposed by Berry include assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization.

Assimilation. In defining assimilation, the focus is on the non-dominant group. When members of the non-dominant group appear not to want to maintain their original cultural identity but instead appear to seek to interact with other cultures, this is defined as the assimilation strategy, creating the notion of a "melting pot" (Berry, 1997). If, by contrast, this state of affairs is enforced by the dominant culture, Berry (1997) proposed that the reality would be more like a "pressure cooker" than a "melting pot".

Separation. The strategy is defined as separation when individuals appear to value holding on to the values of their original culture while at the same time trying to avoid

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interactions with members of other cultures. If instead of the non-dominant group or individual opting for separation, the situation were forced on them by the dominant culture, then the situation would be more appropriately termed segregation (Berry, 1997).

Integration is said to be the strategy employed by those members of the non-dominant group who retain certain aspects of their original culture while at the same time seeking to be part of the new (dominant) culture regularly (Berry, 1997). Integration, Berry (1997) posited, is most likely to be selected when there is mutual accommodation as a result of the non-dominant groups adopting the values of the dominant culture while the dominant culture adapts its institutions to meet the needs of all including the non-dominant groups.

Marginalization. When circumstances such as being forced to give up own culture creates a situation where members of the non-dominant culture are not able to maintain their original culture and at the same time, they have little interest in adopting the dominant culture as a result of exclusionary practices such as discrimination, then marginalization is defined (Berry, 1997). Berry (1997) posited that individuals do not choose marginalization; rather it is always forced on them by the dominant culture through forced assimilation coupled with exclusion.

According to Berry (1997), this framework of acculturation was developed based on an assumption that minority groups do possess and are able to freely exercise choice in selecting a particular strategy during the acculturation process. According to Navas and colleagues (2005), this model is used to investigate acculturation by considering acculturation attitudes, accompanying changes in behaviour, and the stress associated with acculturation and does not consider personal and/or environmental factors that might affect variables.

While acknowledging the contributions of the model, several authors have suggested different ways to enhance it. Lazarus (1997) argued that individuals "relocate for many different

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reasons and face many stressors that are only partly connected with the task of shedding one culture and acquiring another" as Berry's frame work would appear to suggest. Lazarus argued that the framework as presented did not cover all the processes that are involved in dealing with the adaptational challenges encountered by immigrants and suggested modifying the framework by incorporating stress, coping, and individual differences and the social context in which the adaptation occurs. The notion that the inclusion of the stress and coping model would enhance the acculturation framework was also supported by Ward (1997). Ward argued that the stress and coping model recognizes that any change could be stressful and require individuals to engage coping strategies and therefore its inclusion potentially enhances our understanding of cross-cultural transition. Pick (1997) suggested the inclusion of the immigrants as actors who live and interpret their own reality. This inclusion, Pick argued, would explain the process by which individuals describe, explain, or understand their world while at the same time recognising their role as creators and perpetuators of social phenomena. Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, and Senécal (1997) proposed applying an Interactive Acculturation Model, which explains more clearly the interactive nature of the relationships between the immigrant and host communities. Bourhis and colleagues argued that the resulting acculturative strategy is influenced by the views each group holds on acculturation as well as integration policies put forward by the government.

Another addition to Berry's model was put forward by Navas and colleagues (2005), who proposed what they termed the Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM). RAEM examines acculturation by considering different associated domains (i.e., political, work, economic, family, social, religion and ways of thinking). The model differentiates between what the groups in contact consider the ideal acculturation attitudes and the attitudes that the two groups actually adopt. RAEM also takes into account the ethnocultural origin of the immigrants

in addition to considering the prevailing sociocultural reality in which the acculturation takes place.

Berry (2006) acknowledged that by examining the two sets of phenomena comprising intercultural relations (acculturation and ethnic relations) separately, researchers may have missed important aspects of intercultural relations that result from their intersection. In order to deal with this shortfall, Berry developed "The International Study of Attitudes Towards Immigration and Settlement" questionnaire, which has been used to examine the views of members of different ethno-cultural groups on the acculturation and ethnic relations in different countries.

Ward (2008) suggested three new lines of research on acculturation that would add to and enhance the dimensions put forward by Berry. In the first one, theory and research on ethno-cultural identity conflict (EIC) are developed. EIC refers to the situation where individuals may find that they take on different ethnic identities at different times based on prevailing circumstances as part of their acculturation and they experience conflict when these identities become incompatible with each other. Secondly, Ward proposed adding the examination of the concept of ethno-cultural continuity in the context of long-term acculturation. This, Ward argued, would provide a new perspective on the relationship between individual and group level factors in the acculturation process. The third proposal suggested by Ward was to extend the classification of groups so that it incorporates tourists and then examining intercultural relations between tourists and hosts.

Research on acculturation has reported a positive relationship between acculturation and psychological as well as physical health problems. Findings also offer support for the importance of developing ethnic support systems in the enhancement of the immigrants' ability

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to cope with acculturative stress (Dow, 2011). Several factors including but not limited to lack of official language proficiency, under or unemployment, and lack of social support have been reported as barriers to successful acculturation (Jafari, Baharlou, & Mathias, 2010).

Purpose of the Current Research

There is research investigating both transitions and specifically cross-cultural transitions. However, much of the research on how those who move permanently into a new culture adjust to the demands of the new culture has tended to group all newcomers together irrespective of their class at the time of arrival. Authors (see Berry, 2006; Bourhis et al., 1997; Lazarus, 1997; Navas et al., 2005; Ward, 2008) have recognised that pre and post relocation experiences of immigrants are likely to have an influence on the acculturative strategy that they adapt.

There is research that has reported findings on outcomes for OPFs and it appears that living in a female headed one parent family, predicts poorer outcomes on several important variables such as socio-economic status, education attainment and mental health (see Ambert, 2006; Mance & Yu, 2010; Marks, 2006). As posited by Amert (2006), much research on OPFs has tended to focus on deficits and so there is a dearth of information on any strengths that these families and/or their children possess. Research on refugees has reported poor outcomes for refugee families and their children in terms of mental health, socio-economic status, and acculturative stress, (see Guzder et al., 2011; Hagan, Raymond-Richmond, & Pallon, 2009; Halcóna, Robertsona, & Monsena, 2010; Mawani, 2008). There is a paucity of research reporting outcomes for refugee female OPFs.

Resettlement as a refugee single mother is a unique form of cross-cultural transition as this population is likely to be dealing with both the challenges associated with female OPFs as well as those faced by refugees.   Although theories of acculturation appear to capture factors

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that relate to the resettlement of immigrants, it is not clear whether looking at the experiences of refugees and immigrants as a single group captures the acculturation experience for both. It may well be that different factors assume different levels of salience based on whether the newcomers arrive in the host society as refugees or other classes of immigrants. It is unclear how the duality of being both refugees and single mothers influences how this population experiences cross-cultural transitions once they are resettled in Western countries. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to gain an understanding of the resettlement experience of refugee mothers who resettled in Canada/Calgary without a spouse or partner. The specific group to be studied were African refugee women.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed literature pertaining to armed conflict and the effect of armed conflict on non-combatant populations with particular emphasis on women and children. I have reviewed research findings on one-parent families (OPFs), looking at female OPFs in more detail. I have reviewed literature on refugees generally and single mother refugees specifically. I then reviewed literature on transition and acculturation theories. The review of all of the above literature may be summarized as follows:

1. Ongoing civil wars continue to cause many people to become refugees large numbers of whom are women and children. Many of them are granted asylum in developed nations such as Canada and resettled as refugee OPFs each year.

2. There exists a relatively large body of literature on outcomes for female OPFs and for refugee families and many of them have reported poor outcomes for both groups with respect to the main markers of health, education, and SES.

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3. There is a dearth of research investigating resettlement outcomes for refugee single mothers and their children, yet it may well be that living in OPFs that are both female-headed and refugee status presents different challenges and opportunities for the mothers and children.

More research exploring what this duality of being a refugee single mother might portend for resettlement and other related phenomena is warranted and would serve to build on the little information that is currently available.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I describe the method I used in the current study. I begin by stating the purpose of the study and introducing qualitative inquiry. I then discuss the critical incident technique (CIT) by looking at its historical background, development, and modifications and explain my rationale for using the CIT in this study. Following this, I explain how I applied the five-step method used in the CIT in the current study. Finally, I conclude with a brief summary of the chapter.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the resettlement experience of African refugee mothers who resettled in Canada/Calgary without a spouse or partner. Accordingly, the primary research question guiding the current study was "What is the resettlement experience of African refugee women who come to Canada accompanied by children and without a spouse/partner?" This primary question was addressed by exploring three questions, which constituted the domains of the inquiry:

1. What occurrences enhance or hinder the resettlement of African refugee single mothers and what actions do they take that are helpful or hindering of the process of resettlement?

2. What resources pertaining to the resettlement process, do they find helpful particularly in the absence of a partner/spouse?

3. What resources do they wish they had but did not have that they think may have enhanced their experience of resettling in Canada/Calgary?

Given the purpose of the study and the limited literature available on the topic of resettlement experiences of refugee single mothers coming to Canada, I decided upon a qualitative approach for this exploratory study.

Qualitative Inquiry

In qualitative research, the investigator serves as the instrument for data collection, usually collecting data via interviews and observations. The units of data are the words of the participants, which are gathered from subjects in their natural environment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) posited, by its very nature qualitative research tends to be exploratory, seeking to understand phenomena not necessarily explained by existing theories. Furthermore, data analysis is executed in an inductive manner, with a focus on the meanings and subjective perspectives provided by the participants (Creswell, 2012). When done well, the qualitative process allows for a holistic approach to a problem and the population being studied. The qualitative method provides rich, detailed accounts of individual experience (Koert, Borgen, & Amundson, 2011). Open-ended questions allow participants to frame information in a manner that best describes what they are attempting to communicate without the restriction of pre-determined answers. After considering several approaches that could be employed in a qualitative inquiry, I chose the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) (Flanagan, 1954) as I believed that this method of qualitative inquiry was well suited to address the purpose of the current study since participants were to be asked to speak about their experience, as they understood it.

The Critical Incident Technique

In this section I discuss the Critical Incident Technique as a qualitative research methodology. I examine its historical background and its evolution over time. I then discuss my rationale for using this approach in the current study.

Historical Background

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) approach was first described by John C. Flanagan based on work he and his collaborators had carried out as part of the studies in the Aviation Psychology Program of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) in World War II (Flanagan, 1954). The USAAF was the military aviation arm of the United States of America during and immediately after World War II, and the direct predecessor of the United States Air Force. The CIT was initially developed to identify effective pilot performance during World War II and was later used to determine the requirements for success in a number of jobs across a range of industries. As such, it began as a task analysis tool, rooted within industrial and organizational psychology and a predominantly quantitative research tradition, and it is still used in that way today. At the same time, the CIT has developed beyond its original use to become a qualitative exploratory and investigative tool (Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Maglio, 2005).

Since its introduction with its emphasis on behaviour, the CIT has been extended to include a "focus on critical events, incidents, or factors that help promote or detract from the effective performance of some activity or the experience of a specific situation or event" (Butterfield, Borgen, Maglio, & Amundson, 2009, p. 266). It can be used in the study of psychological states or experiences (Butterfield et al, 2005). This expansion in focus along with an increased emphasis on retrospective self-report and the use of interviews to collect data is reflected in the following description of the CIT:

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The CIT is a qualitative interview procedure that facilitates the investigation of

significant occurrences (events, incidents, processes, or issues) identified by the

respondent, the way they are managed, and the outcomes in terms of perceived effects.

The objective is to gain understanding of the incident from the perspective of the

individual, taking into account cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements (Chell as

cited in Gremler, 2004).

Flanagan (1954) stated that the CIT "does not consist of a single rigid set of rules

governing such data collection. Rather it should be thought of as a flexible set of principles that

must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand" (p. 335). Although the CIT

is an outgrowth of the research done within industrial and organizational psychology as part of

the Aviation Psychology Program of the USAAF during World War II (Flanagan, 1954), this

flexibility appears to have allowed for innovative and insightful research studies in many

different fields. It has been successfully adapted not only for job analysis using expert

observation of critical incidents, but also for counselling psychology, communication, education

and teaching, marketing, social work, and nursing using self-reports of psychological concepts

(Butterfield et al., 2005).

A number of additional adaptations have been made since Flanagan (1954) introduced the

CIT in 1954. Butterfield and colleagues (2005) introduced the idea of adding contextual

questions at the beginning of the interview. Another enhancement consisted of collecting what

Butterfield et al. (2009) called "wish lists", by asking participants to discuss resources they had

hoped for that were not available. These wish list items allow for a richer understanding of

participants' experience in terms of expectations. Flanagan (1954) described the CIT as

involving a five-step process: (1) determining the general aims of the activity being studied, (2)

developing plans and specifications, (3) collecting the data, (4) analysing the data, and (5) interpreting the data and reporting the results. Although the CIT has been used extensively since its inception, researchers have adhered to these steps to greater or lesser degrees (Butterfield et al., 2005; Butterfield et al, 2009). Other adaptations that have been made include variations in the way the data are analyzed and the development of standards or checks for establishing the credibility or trustworthiness of the results of a CIT study in keeping with a qualitative approach to research (Butterfield et al., 2005). More detailed descriptions of the history of the CIT and its use as a robust research method particularly within counselling psychology may be found in Butterfield et al. (2005) and Butterfield et al. (2009).

Rationale for Employing the CIT

There are several strengths of the CIT and advantages in using it that rendered it suitable for the current research, particularly since this was an exploratory study into an area where there appears to be a lcak of information. My reasons for using the CIT in the current study are presented hereafter.

My first reason for electing to employ the CIT approach is based on the method of data collection. The data are collected from the participant's perspective in his or her own words which allows participants to determine which incidents are most important and therefore critical for them (Gremler, 2004; Laeger-Hagemeister, 2011). This allows participants freedom in selecting what incidents they talk about, resulting in a wide range of responses to each question. Participants may include as much detail as they wish within the research framework (Gremler, 2004). If the people interviewed enjoy sharing their stories, they tend to appreciate the opportunity interviews provide for sharing their stories with attentive listeners (Laeger-

Hagemeister, 2011).   This has the potential to increase the richness of the data as participants

give detailed explanations of the activities under investigation.

Second, because the CIT is inductive in nature, it is especially useful for studying topics

such as the current one where there is little or no existing information. This is especially so since

the CIT does not consist of a rigid set of principles to be followed but has a flexible set of rules

that can be modified to meet the requirements of the topic being studied (Flanagan, 1954;

Gremler, 2004). No hypothesis needs to be formulated before the study is carried out as

categories are developed from the collected data. This rendered the approach appropriate for the

current study, as I did not intend to propose hypotheses prior to the study.

Third, the CIT is useful for generating an accurate and in-depth record of events

(Gremler, 2004). In order to understand a phenomenon such as resettlement, it is useful to gather

as much information as possible from those who have undergone the experience. This allows

researchers to generate new information that may not be accessed if standardized questionnaires

are employed. The CIT can also capture abstract constructs such as motivation (Laeger-

Hagemeister, 2011). This approach was therefore deemed appropriate for the current study as

one of the aims was to gather as much information as possible on all aspects of the experience

including psychological constructs such as distress should participants talk about incidents that

they appraised as distressing.

Fourth, the CIT can provide a rich set of data, as participants are able to provide details of

first hand experiences (Gremler, 2004). Audio-recording, as was done in the current study,

allows researchers to vividly capture the emotions expressed by participants that accompany

their description of the experience they are speaking about. According to Gremler (2004), the

CIT can be described as "a powerful tool, which yields relevant data for practical purposes". I

hoped that information gathered from the current study would be used to enhance the resettlement experience for this population by influencing refugee resettlement policy and the development of appropriate counselling interventions. I also hoped that the information would inform the design of future research and possibly influence development of resettlement theory. The CIT was therefore considered an appropriate approach.

Fifth, the CIT has been described as a "culturally neutral" approach that is well suited for use with participants from different cultures (Gremler, 2004). This is because unlike in standardized interviews, which ask participants to indicate their responses to researcher –initiated questions, CIT participants are asked to speak to their own experiences and perceptions (Gremler, 2004). In this approach the participants and not the researcher determine what will be important enough to be discussed. This fits well with the aim of the current study, which was to have the participants speak to their experiences, as they perceived them. CIT allows for participants to use expressions that are appropriate within their culture. It was therefore appropriate for use in a study with participants from diverse cultures that are different from each other and also different from the dominant culture.

Sixth, CIT allows for the identification of rare events that might have been experienced by as few as one participant and that might have been missed by other methods (Laeger-Hagemeister, 2011). In the current study, incidents were reported based on their "keyness" to the research questions as determined by the researcher, not according to how many participants reported them. This implies that a single occurrence reported by one participant, may be reported based on its "keyness". The CIT was therefore deemed appropriate for the current study.

Finally, in this study, participants were to be asked to recall and talk about past experiences. The CIT was considered a suitable approach, as participants were more likely to remember incidents that they appraised as significant.

Applying the CIT Five-Step Process

As mentioned previously, Flanagan (1954) described the CIT as involving a five-step process: (1) determining the general aims of the activity being studied, (2) developing plans and specifications, (3) collecting the data, (4) analysing the data, and (5) interpreting the data and reporting the results. What follows is a description of each step together with an explanation of how it was implemented in the current study.

Determining the General Aims of the Activity

Once the topic area, purposes of the study, and domain of the inquiry are clarified, the research question is developed, and the CIT is determined to be the most appropriate research method to use, the first step in using the CIT is to decide on the general aims of the activity being studied (Butterfield et al., 2009; Flanagan, 1954; Twelker, 2003; Woolsey, 1986). Butterfield et al. (2009) posited that understanding the general aim of the activity to be studied is intended to reveal (a) the objective of the activity being studied and (b) what the person who engages in the activity is supposed to accomplish. The aim needs to be stated in a simple and clear form by making use of simple everyday language to convey meaning (Woolsey, 1986). It is important to note that the aim of the activity being studied is not the same as the purpose of the research project. In the current study, the general aim of the activity was to resettle well in Canada/Calgary.

Setting Plans, Specifications, and Criteria

The second step in using the CIT involves setting the plans, specifications, and criteria for the information to be obtained. Following Woolsey (1986), I engaged in deciding who would observe and report on the activity being studied, who and what would be observed, and which behaviours or experiences would be observed.

The observers. As noted by Woolsey (1986) and Butterfield et al. (2009), people can report on themselves or others. As I embarked on this project, I was aware that my plan to explore the resettlement experience of African single refugee mothers as they appraise it would only become a reality if I were able to find individuals who met specific criteria and were willing to share their life stories with me. Being an African mother myself presented opportunities for recruiting prospective participants who might otherwise not have participated. As being proficient in at least one official language is not a requirement for refugee status immigrants, I was particularly interested in interviewing individuals who might have found resettlement difficult due to challenges associated with language. However, I believed that these participants probably would not have been able to participate in a study like the current one due to barriers associated with language proficiency. As a result, I put in place participation criteria that I believed would allow me to attract such individuals to participate.

In order to be eligible to participate, an individual had to meet eight criteria, which included (a) was a woman of African descent, (b) had been resettled in Canada as a refugee for reasons other than for reasons associated with need to escape domestic violence, (c) had been married or in a common law relationship in her home country, (d) had arrived in Canada without a spouse/partner, (e) was the mother of at least one accompanying child, (f) had been resident in Canada for a period of not less than two years, (g) was willing to talk with me about her

resettlement experience, and (h) was able to comfortably communicate in English, Kiswahili, Kikuyu, Kimeru or a combination of these languages and dialects (all of which I speak).

The observations. According to Woolsey (1986), "plans for the observations need to include a description of the individual, activity or group to be observed" (p. 246). If deemed appropriate, the time, location, and conditions under which the observations are to be made should also be specified. As outlined previously, eight criteria for participation in the current study were used to determine selection of participants, who would each report on their own experience of resettlement retrospectively. All of the participants were to be asked about their experience of resettlement in Canada/Calgary from a country of origin in Africa. They were to be asked about their experience from the time they left their country of origin until the time of the interview. All participants had to have been resident in Canada for a period of not less than two years.

The specific behaviours or experiences. As noted by Woolsey (1986), an essential part of the CIT planning process involves developing a description of the general type of activity and the specific behaviours or experiences to be reported on. In the current study, I decided that participants would be asked to speak about their experience of resettlement and more specifically, about occurrences that they thought helped or hindered their resettlement in Canada/Calgary. They would be asked to speak about the actions they or others had taken that they thought were helpful or hindering of their resettlement process. Furthermore, they would be asked about what resources pertaining to the resettlement process they found helpful and also about the resources they thought they would have found helpful had they had them.

Another aspect of the planning process involves deciding how the importance and relevance of a behaviour or experience to the general aim of the activity is to be determined

(Butterfield et al., 2009; Woolsey, 1986). Flanagan (1954) specified that a criterion for identifying an incident as critical is whether or not it makes a significant positive or negative contribution to the general aim of the activity. In the current study, any incident that participants reported as making a significant positive or negative contribution to their resettling well in Canada was deemed to be a critical incident.

Collecting the Data

The third step in using the CIT is to collect the data. This is generally done by means of interviews but even when written responses are used, many of the guidelines for collecting interview data can still be applied (Woolsey, 1986). Butterfield et al. (2009) recommended using an interview guide, which includes contextual questions at the beginning of the interview as well as wish list items.

Researchers determine how much data they will collect. According to Twelker (2003), this decision should be based on the complexity of the issue under investigation and the amount of information the researcher is able or wishes to handle. What really matters is not how many participants there are but the number and exhaustiveness of incidents that are collected. Investigating more complex issues would likely require that more incidents be collected. However, the number and range of incidents collected needs to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest. Flanagan (1954) suggested that incidents should be collected until a point of exhaustion is reached, the point at which no more new incidents are being reported. More recently, Butterfield and colleagues (2005) posited that the researcher should determine the point at which enough incidents have been collected by ensuring that the entire content domain of the activity in question has been captured and described. Audio-recording and then

transcribing interviews is recommended to ensure that as much of what respondents say as possible is captured and used in the analyses (Woolsey, 1986).

In this section I discuss how the data were collected in the current study. First, I present information on the recruitment procedures used. Next, I describe the sample of participants recruited. Following this, I explain the interview procedures followed including the types of information I wanted to gather in the interviews and the kinds of questions I asked.

Recruitment methods. As I designed the current study, I was aware of the fact that refugees would usually have come from unsafe environments. Many understandably fear and are vulnerable to coercion by people who they perceive to have the power to affect their status and well-being. This understanding presented challenges in that the conduct of ethical research among refugee populations necessitates a sensitive approach, including securing introductions through trusted contacts and conducting interviews in environments that refugees perceive to be safe (Simich, 2003).

I decided to use several methods in recruiting participants including (a) directly appealing for volunteers through announcements at scheduled African community events/gatherings, (b) appealing for help from personal contacts in the different African communities residing in the city of Calgary, (c) posting information on noticeboards in community halls in neighbourhoods noted for a high percentage of immigrants among residents and on noticeboards of several post-secondary institutions such as Bow Valley, Devry, and Colombia colleges, and (d) snowballing. The procedures I engaged in to recruit participants are described in more detail here.

Direct appeals. Through the assistance of my contacts in the various African communities, I gathered information about planned community activities and contact information for the leaders of the different groups. I then contacted the leaders, briefly explained

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my study to them, and requested an opportunity to make a short presentation about my study during the scheduled function. At the conclusion of my presentation, I invited interested women to contact me after the function so I could answer questions and provide more information. I generally followed a similar structure for all the presentations I made (see Appendix A for appeal speech). I took telephone contacts from those who expressed an interest in learning more and contacted them later to give more detailed explanations, answer any questions, and invite those who met the specified criteria to participate in the study.

Personal contacts. I also tried to recruit participants by talking with personal friends and acquaintances about the study and my need to speak with individuals who met the criteria. After explaining participation criteria, I requested the said individuals to pass my telephone number and/or University of Calgary email address to those they thought might be interested in participating or those who might know individuals who might be interested. Some of my contacts did get back to me with telephone numbers of women who requested me to contact them. I followed up with these individuals, answered any questions they had, and invited those who met the study criteria to participate.

Notice board postings. I posted recruitment posters (see Appendix B for a copy of recruitment poster) on the notice boards of several local colleges including (a) Bow Valley College, (b) Devry College, and (c) Colombia College. These are local colleges where newcomers are known to attend language, grade school upgrading, or training classes. I also placed copies of the recruitment poster on community notice boards in the North East and North West quadrants of the city of Calgary.

Snowballing. Believing that those with whom I had already conducted interviews were likely to know others in their communities who might be willing to participate, at the end of each

interview I extended an invitation to the interviewee to tell others about the study and to pass on my telephone number and email contact to them. I also requested them to ask prospective participants permission to pass a contact telephone number to me, so that I could initiate contact with them.

Initially, I made telephone calls to about 22 prospective participants to explain the study and answer any questions they had. I made follow-up calls and visited with those who indicated the possibility of participating. I visited with some of them several times in order to establish rapport so that they would feel comfortable enough to trust me and tell me their stories. After much effort and many cancelled appointments as well as unreturned phone calls to prospective participants, I was able to recruit seven individuals who met all the criteria for participation and who were willing to tell me their stories. The fact that I am also an African mother is likely to have played a role in building rapport and getting those who elected to tell me their stories to do so as it created a sense of belongingness between us.

Once an individual confirmed that she would participate, we set up a meeting during which the interview would take place. Participants were given the option of selecting times that were convenient for them. Together we selected locations that were convenient for them and deemed safe by both them and me. Since I was aware that some individuals might opt not to participate based on low English proficiency, I informed prospective participants that I would be willing to have a conversation in whatever language they and I had in common and in which they were reasonably fluent. All the participants elected to have interviews conducted in their own homes and I agreed. Three of the interviews were conducted in the middle of the morning, two in the early afternoon, one in the evening and one at night based on participants' availability. All

participants indicated that they wished to remain anonymous with the information they provided being treated as confidential.

The participants. As it is important to ensure that the confidentiality and anonymity of participants is respected, I report demographic characteristics in a general format rather than for each participant individually. Interviews were conducted with seven participants of African descent who identified Sierra Leone, the democratic republic of Congo and Sudan as countries of origin. Their ages ranged from 29 to 53 years. The mean and median age of the sample was 39. The number of children accompanying the mothers at the time of arrival in Canada ranged from one to five. The youngest child was aged three at the time of arrival while the oldest was 15 years.

By the time of the interviews participants had been resident in Canada for periods ranging from just under three to over ten years. Two participants reported that Calgary was their designated city of landing while the other five had landed in various other cities within the country and had elected to relocate to Calgary for various reasons. Some had relocated to be closer to relatives already residing in Calgary. One had relocated here because of concerns over official language knowledge. Another participant relocated to remove her children from what she viewed as the negative influence of the peer group they had become part of in the city in which they were residing. The last reason that participants gave for relocating was the perceived availability of better opportunities for employment in Calgary. Two participants were fully proficient in English at the time of arriving in the country. Of the remaining five, two had passed the basic level English as a Second Language (ESL) assessment test at the time of interview. Two others had acquired conversational English and the last one was still attending English

language classes and was not yet able to adequately communicate in either official language at the time of these interviews.

The interviews. On the day the interview I began by explaining clearly to each woman what participation would entail based on a document I had prepared for the purpose (see Appendix C for a copy of the document). To put participants at ease with the interview process, I collected each participant's demographic information before embarking on asking open-ended interview questions pertaining to the main focus of the study. The latter questions focussed on three aspects of participant experience: (a) background and context, (b) resettlement, and (c) wishes (see Appendix D for interview questions). These open-ended questions covering the three areas were used as a guideline and follow-up questions were asked to clarify information until the researcher was satisfied that the occurrence had been exhaustively discussed. I audiotaped, translated if necessary, and transcribed the interviews before carrying out the analyses. Each aspect of the interview process is explained in more depth hereafter.

Informed consent. I emphasized that participation was completely voluntary, that the participant was free to discontinue participation at any time, and that neither participating nor not participating would have any effect on the services she might currently be receiving or might require in future from any agencies. Participants were informed that should they opt to discontinue participating in the study, any information they had volunteered until then would still be reported. Participants were also informed that the information was being collected for the purpose of writing a Master's thesis, that the report would eventually be widely available, and that they could choose how they wanted the information they provided cited. Three choices for how information might be cited were suggested including (a) remaining anonymous, in which case the researcher would allocate each participant a unique number or a pseudonym for

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reporting purposes, (b) selecting a pseudonym by which a participant would be cited, or (c) being

cited by name, in which case her personal information would not be anonymous. All the

participants elected to remain anonymous and so they have been cited by pseudonyms selected

by the researcher. I explained to participants that in order to be sure that my report was an

accurate representation of their experience, I would prefer that each of them reviewed what I

would be reporting about our conversations before I wrote the thesis. Each participant was given

the choice to either review the report via email or in person. At the review participants would be

able to correct or totally remove data they might view as inaccurate, from the report. I informed

each participant that should she opt not to review the report, her information would still be

included in the final document. I also emphasized that my study was not associated with any

service agency. Based on the assumption that my interview had the potential to somehow upset

participants, attention was drawn to the availability of community counselling services from

which they could seek therapy if and when required. I explained the informed consent

requirement (see Appendix E for consent form) and each participant signed two copies of the

form, one for her to keep for her records and one for my records. I had translated a copy of the

consent form so that each participant who was interviewed in a language other than English had

a copy of the form in the language in which she was interviewed. Of the seven interviews

conducted, five were conducted in English, one was conducted in a mixture of English and

Kiswahili and one was conducted in Kiswahili. Since interviews were conducted in English or

Kiswahili or a combination of English and Kiswahili, only a Kiswahili translation of the consent

form was utilized (see appendix F for the Kiswahili translation of consent form). Duing the

interview, the interviewees seemed to gain comfort with the interview process from what they

perceived as a similarity between themselves and the interviewer (i.e., both the interviewees and

the interviewer were African mothers). They often pre-fixed their answer with comments such as "you know how we Africans…", or "even you you know that we African mothers…", or "you know the way back home we…". Suggesting that they thought I, as an African mother, would be able to understand them.

Demographic and background information. The personal information obtained from each participant consisted of (a) current age, (b) length of stay in Canada, (c) level of education at time of arrival, (d) official language proficiency at time of arrival, (e) country of origin, (f) city of landing, (g) number and ages of children at time of arrival, (h) state of relationship with spouse, (i) whether she had lived in a refugee camp prior to relocation and if so, for how long, and (j) whether she had lived in an intermediate country and if so, for how long.

Contextual questions. While this study is not about the pre-migration experiences of African refugee women, it was considered necessary to establish the reasons for participants' departure from their home countries as background information. In order to capture this, participants were asked to speak about the occurrence(s) that made it necessary for them to leave their homes. Participants were also asked to explain what being a refugee means to them.

Resettlement questions. Next participants were asked to talk about what happened while they were in the country where they first sought refuge that resulted in their relocation to Canada. They were asked about what actions they or others took that resulted in their being relocated. Participants were also asked about occurrences and actions that they thought were helping or hindering to the process of seeking and being granted asylum. They were asked to speak about the actual journey from the country where they first sought refuge to Canada including the reception they got on arriving at their city of landing. Participants were also asked to speak to their experience from the moment of arrival in Canada (not necessarily Calgary as some had

resided in other Canadian cities prior to moving to Calgary) to the time of interview in as much detail as possible. Participants were asked to speak about incidents that called for specific action as well as what actions they took that helped or hindered their experience of settling in Canada. In order to answer the second research question (i.e., what resources pertaining to the resettlement process, do they find helpful particularly in the absence of a partner/spouse?), participants were also asked to speak to any resources they had found helpful to their resettlement process in the absence of a spouse/partner. When participants spoke about incidents that were a source of psychological distress to them, they were asked what they did in order to deal with the distress.

Wish list questions. As follow-up to the answers the participants provided to the resettlement questions, participants were asked about resources they did not have that they would have liked to have, which they thought would have enhanced their experience, had they been available. This was done in order to identify "wish list" items.

Analysing the Data

The fourth step in using the CIT is to analyze the data. As mentioned previously, a number of adaptations have been made in the CIT since Flanagan (1954) introduced the method. Included in these are variations in the way the data are analyzed and the development of standards or checks for establishing the credibility or trustworthiness of the results of a CIT study in keeping with a qualitative approach to research (Butterfield et al., 2005). In analyzing the data in the current study, the CIT was supplemented by the use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) method of thematic analysis. More specifically, data obtained through answers to the contextual questions were analyzed using thematic analysis. Data obtained through answers to the resettlement questions were analyzed using the CIT to identify helping and hindering critical incidents and wish

list items. Additional information that participants provided in the course of the interview that was not necessarily included as a contextual theme or as a critical incident was also subjected to thematic analysis (Braun &Clarke, 2006). The analysis of the data in the current study is described further in the following sections.

   Analysis of contextual information. Information obtained from the contextual questions was analysed using a thematic analysis approach as discussed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke defined thematic analysis as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes from qualitative data. As this is an inductive process, it frees the researcher from the constraints of a pre-existing theoretical framework. The researcher creates themes from the data by reading through the transcripts and recognizing recurring patterns. The researcher or researchers have the responsibility of deciding what constitutes a pattern. According to Braun and Clarke, a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set. However, Braun and Clarke also warned that prevalence of an instance does not necessarily render the incident crucial so as to be considered a theme. Instead they posited that the researcher should decide what constitutes a theme based on the 'keyness' of what the instance represents in relation to the research question. I considered this approach appropriate, as this was an exploratory study.

   In order to formulate themes, I read through each transcript several times making notes along the edge of the page as to what ideas I was identifying from the data. I generated codes by grouping segments of data that appeared to portray the same meaning together. A name was then selected for each segment that best represented the perceived meaning of the segment. These names formed the themes. This was repeated with all the transcripts. Segments were

added to existing themes and new themes formulated as was deemed necessary. The themes were reviewed to ensure that they were definitive of the data and also distinctive enough to be considered as independent themes.

Analysis of the resettlement information. Information about participants' resettlement experience was analyzed using the CIT. The objective of data analysis using the CIT is to provide a detailed, comprehensive and valid description of the activity studied (Woolsey, 1986). Data analysis is considered to be the most important and difficult step of the CIT due to the difficult task of classifying and categorizing what can at times be several hundred incidents (Butterfield et al., 2005; Butterfield et al., 2009). The purpose at this stage is to create a categorization scheme that summarizes and describes the data in a useful manner, while at the same time sacrificing as little as possible of their comprehensiveness, specificity, and validity (Flanagan, 1954). The data obtained from participants' responses to the questions about their resettlement experience were analyzed according to the three step process of analysis put forward by Woolsey (1986) and Butterfield et al. (2009), which includes (a) determining the frame of reference, (b) formulating the categories, and (c) determining the level of specificity or generality to be used in reporting the data. Each of these is described in turn along with its application in the current study. This is followed by a discussion of measures taken to establish the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings from the CIT.

Determining the frame of reference. There are numerous ways in which a given set of data may be categorized. The frame of reference (i.e., the lens through which the data are analyzed) is generally determined based on the use that is to be made of the data (Butterfield et al., 2009). The frame of reference may be determined based on a theoretical model but the choice of a specific frame of reference may potentially limit the use of the CIT in exploratory

studies (Woolsey, 1986). The frame of reference is determined based on the purpose of the study. The purpose of the current study was to gain an understanding of African refugee mothers' experience of resettlement in Canada/Calgary without a spouse or partner. The results of this study may be used by policy makers in understanding how current systems are helping or hindering resettlement and what might be done to enhance the experience. Counsellors may use the findings as a guide in planning and delivery of interventions for this population. However, since the current study was exploratory, no particular frame of reference was adhered to in the analysis.

Formulating the categories. The process of formulating the categories may be regarded as a step in which the researcher's subjectivity is likely to play a vital role. The researcher reads through each interview transcript identifying critical incidents and sorting them in a format that makes sense based on the research question. Critical incidents that appear to be related in terms of the ideas they represent are grouped together to form categories. The researcher selects a name for the category that best represents the ideas that the incidents encompass.

In the current study, I first identified the critical incidents following the criteria suggested by Butterfield et al. (2009). I analyzed the transcripts one at a time. First I read through the transcript and identified text that appeared to be a critical incident. An occurrence was determined to be a critical incident if there was supporting antecedent and outcome information for it, if its meaning or importance was captured, and/or if the participants had provided an example (Butterfield, 2006). Consistent with the approach proposed by Butterfield (2006), if it was unclear at the time of analysis whether a particular occurrence met these criteria, I listed it as unclear and sought clarification from the participants during the return visit after formulating the

categories. The occurrence was included as a critical incident or left out based on whether or not enough supporting information was given by the participant during the second visit.

Using Microsoft Word, I tabulated a list of all incidents and indicated the following for each incident:

1. Where the incident occurred (i.e., whether the incident occurred in the country of temporary residence, on the journey to Canada, or in the country of permanent resettlement, that is, Canada).

2. Who initiated the incident (i.e., whether the incident was initiated by the participant or by a force other than the participant)?

3. If the incident was not initiated by the participant, then who initiated it? Was it initiated by an agent representing an external system? If it was initiated by an agent of an external system, was it the formal system (i.e., a recognized agent of government such as a refugee or resettlement agency) or was it the informal system (e.g., community group or a church)? If the incident was initiated by someone other than the participant and it was not an agent of an external system, then I coded it as being initiated by friends and/or acquaintances. Some incidents were found to have been initiated by more than one person/agent and that was reflected in the coding.

4. Whether the incidents were helping, hindering, or wish list items.

I formulated categories by grouping together incidents that appeared to be related and selecting a term that appeared to best describe what the incidents were about. For example, incidents about a participant attending language classes and/or attending meetings scheduled by her children's school and/or finding someone to help her children with homework were placed into a category labelled "education". I found that as I progressed through the transcripts,

incidents were added to the existing categories. I created new categories as required, when a new incident did not appear to fit into an existing category. This was done until all the transcripts were coded. The categories were examined to determine (a) their exhaustiveness in explaining participants' experience and (b) the distinctiveness between them. At this stage I deemed it necessary to expand some categories by creating subcategories so to be able to provide a clearer explanation of the category/subcategory. Returning to the example on education, earlier I had a category on "education" but I decided to create two subcategories, one for "children's education" and a separate one for "participants' education" as it appeared that participants' education was understood and dealt with in ways that were somewhat different from children's education. I renamed some categories as I deemed the earlier terms were not descriptive enough or appeared not to capture the meaning as I intended.

Determining the level of specificity or generality to be used in reporting the data. As part of the analysis, the researcher must decide whether to include a few general behaviours or several dozen quite specific behaviours in reporting the data (Butterfield et al., 2005). The level of specificity or generality is determined by practical considerations such as budget and the extent of the usefulness of the incidents being considered (Butterfield et al., 2009). The analysis should be summarized and the data described efficiently so they can be used for practical purposes (Butterfield et al., 2005) based on the purpose of the research. Butterfield et al. (2005) suggested a 25% participatory rate for incidents to be grouped as categories (i.e., only incidents mentioned by at least 25 % of all participants may be reported as separate categories). In contrast to this, Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that the number of incidents that might comprise a category should be determined based on the researcher's appraisal of the 'keyness' of the incident. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the decision to formulate a category that

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includes as few as a single incident or several incidents should be based on whether the incident captures something important in relation to the research question.

I elected to follow Braun and Clarke and therefore did not set a participation rate. This allowed for incidents to be reported based on their perceived "keyness" as opposed to a particular participation rate. As this was an exploratory study, I decided that all incidents that had a bearing on the research would be reported and not just those that met specific levels of recurrence. This was done so as to ensure that the results included as many reported incidents as possible, even if only one participant reported a particular 'key' incident.

Determining credibility and trustworthiness. Butterfield et al. (2005) proposed a total of nine credibility checks that may be used in establishing the soundness of the results for those undertaking a study using the CIT. The nine checks include (a) having a second person independently extract a number of critical incidents from approximately 25% of the interview transcripts, (b) incorporating a second interview after incidents have been extracted and categorised during which participants are given a chance to confirm that the categories adequately represent their experiences (Participants are allowed to change or delete categories as they deem fit.), (c) having an independent person place incidents into categories that have been tentatively formed by the researcher, (d) tracking the point at which exhaustiveness is achieved by noting the point at which no new categories emerge from the data, (e) submitting the categories that are formed from a data set to two or more experts in the field to seek their opinion on the appropriateness of the same, (f) creating categories based on a 25% participation rate, (g) subjecting the study to theoretical validity by researchers checking for agreement between the assumptions they make in their study and existing literature, (h) audio taping interviews to

ascertain accuracy of the account, and (i) having an expert in the CIT listen to a sample of the interview tapes.

Of these nine credibility checks, the following five were applied in the current study: (a) audio taping interviews to ascertain accuracy of the account, (b) tracking the point at which exhaustiveness is achieved, (c) incorporating a second interview after incidents have been extracted and categorised, (d) having a second person independently extract a number of critical incidents from approximately 25% of the interview transcripts, and (e) having an independent person place incidents into categories that have been tentatively formed by the researcher. Butterfield et al. (2005) recommended a match rate of 80% and suggested that the higher the level of agreement between the coders, the more credible the categorization. After I had identified incidents and created themes, my supervisor, Dr. Sharon Robertson examined two transcripts (about 29%) to identify incidents and create categories. In comparing the incidents she identified and categories she formulated, we achieved agreement rates of over 85% on both transcripts.

Analysis of wish list information. While analysing participants' answers to the questions about how they perceived their resettlement experience for helping and hindering critical incidents, I also identified wish list items. According to Butterfield and colleagues (2009), "wish list items are those people, supports, information, programs, and so on, that were not present at the time of the participant's experience, but that those involved believed would have been helpful in the situation being studied" (p. 267). I created a list of resources participants wished they would have had and linked them with the corresponding incident. These have been reported as wish list items within appropriate categories in Chapter Four.

The information participants provided to the second research question (i.e., the resources they had found helpful in the absence of a spouse/partner) was subjected to thematic analysis as put forward by Braun and Clarke (2006), the details of which were discussed earlier in this chapter and findings are reported in a designated section following the report on the critical incidents and wish list items in Chapter Four.

Additional analyses. Additional information that participants provided in the course of the interview that was not necessarily included as a contextual theme or as a critical incident and was not associated with resources they accessed as a consequence of their single-mother status, was also subjected to thematic analysis as put forward by Braun and Clarke. Themes were created to represent this information and were then reported in a designated section in Chapter Four.

Reporting the Findings

The final step in using the CIT method is to interpret the findings and report the results of the activity being studied. Woolsey (1986) suggested that categories and subcategories should be given self-explanatory titles. Descriptions of categories should be rich enough to convey the picture of the kind of incidents included in the category while remaining simple and as brief as possible. Woolsey also suggested that using participant quotes might enhance clarity. Limitations of the study should be discussed in the report (Woolsey, 1986). Recent enhancements to this step include reporting on information obtained from the contextual questions asked at the beginning of the interview as well as wish list items (Butterfield et al., 2009).

Results obtained from analysis of answers to the contextual questions and analysis of additional information that was provided by participants have been presented as themes while

those from the critical incidents have been presented as categories in the report in the next

chapter. Themes and categories were given simple, self-explanatory titles and their descriptions

were enriched by use of participants' quotes. Limitations of the study have also been presented

in Chapter Five.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I provided a rationale for using a qualitative research method, CIT, to

address the purpose of this study and answer the research question. I discussed the historical

roots and continuing modifications to the CIT as well as the advantages of using this approach in

the current study. I explained the five steps of CIT and described how I applied this five-step

process in the current study, including how credibility and trustworthiness were enhanced. I also

explained how the CIT process of data analyses was supplemented in the current study through

the use of thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the findings of the current study beginning with a description of participant profiles. In order to show how the participants met some of the criteria for participation in the study, I then report on the women's reasons for fleeing their country of origin as well as their understanding of what being a refugee means. Next, I present the findings pertaining to the main research question, the women's resettlement experience, based on the CIT analysis and following this, I describe the resources these women accessed in the absence of a spouse/partner. I then report additional findings pertaining to the women's resettlement experience arising from a thematic analysis of other information shared in the interviews. Finally, I conclude with a summary of the chapter.

Participant Profiles

The following is a brief description of each participant. In keeping with their option to remain anonymous, the participants have been identified by the pseudonyms Jane, Pamela, Florence, Esther, Monica, Susan and Edith that were selected by the researcher.

Jane

At the time of relocation Jane was assigned to be settled in Calgary and had resided in the city since she arrived. With respect to formal education Jane attended elementary school in her home country but had no proficiency in any of the official languages of Canada. She indicated that neither official language was taught in the school she had attended. At the time of the interview, Jane had lived in Canada for just under three years after having lived in an intermediate country for three years. She had not resided in a refugee camp. Since her departure from her home country, Jane had not heard from her spouse or from anyone else with information about him and as such, she had no information about his whereabouts. Jane had

not entered the workforce as she was still enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at the time of the interview. The interview with Jane was conducted in Kiswahili and translated prior to transcription and analysis.

Pamela

Pamela's designated city at the time of arrival was Edmonton from where she relocated to Calgary after several years. Pamela holds an undergraduate degree from a university in her country of origin and was fully proficient in English at the time of her arrival in Canada.   At the time of the interview she had been residing in Canada for over ten years. Pamela had resided in privately rented accommodation in an intermediate country for over three years prior to resettlement. She did not reside in a refugee camp. After several years in Canada she was re-united with her spouse via telephone and they have held telephone conversations sporadically. At the time of the interview she was not engaged in paid employment but was volunteering for newcomer focussed agencies in assisting immigrant women particularly those dealing with domestic violence. The interview with Pamela was conducted in English.

Florence

At the time of the interview Florence had resided in Calgary for five years and Calgary was her city of first landing. When Florence left her country of origin, she was enrolled at a local university but had very low English language proficiency as English was not the medium of instruction in the schools she had attended prior to coming to Canada. She had resided in an intermediate country for about five years but not within a refugee camp. Florence had not been in touch with the spouse she had had prior to leaving her country and she did not have information regarding his whereabouts at the time of the interview. She had remarried in

Canada. At the time of the interview, Florence was in full time salaried employment in the service industry. The interview with Florence was conducted in English.

 Esther

Esther first landed in the city of Winnipeg seven years ago from where she relocated to Calgary. At the time of leaving her country Esther had not acquired any formal education. After leaving her country of origin, Esther resided in a refugee camp in an intermediate country for five years prior to relocating to Canada. She attended literacy classes in the refugee camp but did not learn English or French so she did not speak, read or write any of Canada's official languages at the time of arrival. Esther had not had any contact with her spouse since leaving her country of origin and she did not have any information about his whereabouts. At the time of the interview, she was not in salaried employment. The interview was conducted in English.

Monica

Monica had been a resident of Canada for the previous eight years. Monica had attended elementary school in her home country and acquired basic literacy and numeracy skills in her ethnic language but was not proficient in any of Canada's official languages at the time of arrival. After leaving her home country Monica resided in a refugee camp for three years in an intermediate country before relocating to Canada. She first landed in the city of Montreal but relocated to Calgary soon after landing. Her spouse was murdered in their country of origin before Monica left. At the time of interview, Monica worked in the hospitality industry as a housekeeper and also provided hairdressing services out of her home. The interview was conducted in a mixture of English and Kiswahili and was translated before transcription and analysis.

Susan

Susan first landed in St. John's Newfoundland and relocated to Calgary after a few years. She holds a college diploma from her country of origin and was fully proficient in English at the time of arrival. Susan resided in an intermediate country for about three years but she did not live inside a refugee camp prior to immigrating to Canada. By the time of interview she had resided in Canada for ten years and was re-united with her spouse some years after her arrival. At the time of the interview, Susan worked in healthcare. The interview with Susan was conducted in English.

Edith

Edith had arrived in Canada five years prior to the time of interview. Edith had no formal education before leaving her country of origin but attended literacy classes during her stay in a refugee camp. She could not communicate in any official language at the time of arrival. She was resident in a refugee camp in an intermediate country for five years before immigrating to Canada. Edith first landed in the city of Toronto but later relocated to Calgary. She had not been in contact with the spouse she had before leaving her home country and she did not have any information regarding his whereabouts. She had re-married in Canada. At the time of the interview, Edith was not engaged in salaried employment. The interview with Edith was conducted in English.

At this juncture I would like to inform the reader that the interview with Edith was ended prematurely after her current spouse arrived home and elected to sit in on the interview and be a participant. Despite my attempts to have him excuse Edith and I to continue with the conversation, I was unsuccessful in getting him to leave the room. When contacted later about the possibility of continuing the interview, Edith declined. In accordance with the information

provided to participants prior to signing the consent form, information already gathered from individuals who opted to withdraw from the study at any point was to be used in the study. Accordingly where appropriate, information obtained from Edith has been reported.

Contextual Results

I asked participants two contextual questions: (a) to decide whether they met the UNHCR criteria for classification as refugees under the "women and children at risk" category and (b) to determine their understanding of who refugees are. Based on a separate thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) of the women's responses to each question, I created themes associated with their reasons for fleeing arising from the first question and themes related to the state of being a refugee arising from the second question.   These themes are presented in the following sections.

Reasons for Fleeing

Six themes were developed to describe why the women decided to leave their homes: (a) the presence of violence in the country of origin, (b) active involvement of husband in the conflict, (c) attack and/or intimidation by forces, (d) murder or capture of husband by forces, (e) sexual violence, and (f) fear for safety. In order to provide a more detailed account of their reasons, I will discuss each theme in turn.

Violence in the country of origin. All the women reported that the presence of war or civil unrest in their country of origin prior to their departure was a reason for their flight. hey were aware of war going on in their country before they were personally affected by it. Some were aware of what the war was about and what factions were involved and others were not too clear about the causes of the war at the time but were aware of an ongoing war all the same. For example, Monica responded, "How I left my country was because of the war. You know about

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the war between the government soldiers and the ones opposing" and Jane stated, "… there is this war in our country. We were hearing about fighting, how some people were fighting the government."

Active involvement of the husband in the conflict. A number of the women indicated that their husbands were actively involved in the conflict in some way. Their spouse voluntarily became engaged in the conflict and as a result, exposed the family to attack and/or suspicion, which, for some, eventually played a role in their decision to leave. A couple of the husbands were very involved in helping to organize the liberation forces as indicated by Pamela, "My husband had left home to go join them to help organize how they can fight the government." Although some of the husbands worked for part of the rebel movement, this was not necessarily the reason why their wives left the family home. As Esther described, when the war intensified, all the younger men including her husband had left their families to join the war effort: "so my husband and other men, even my uncle's sons they join the fighting."

Attacks and /or intimidation by fighters. All respondents experienced attacks and/or intimidation by those involved in the fighting. In some cases their areas were attacked by the fighters and their homes destroyed as a result. Others had not expected the fighting that was going on to affect them and they indicated their surprise when they found out that their houses had been burned down. Florence reported that she had felt intimidated and unsure of the intentions of the fighters because of inquiries about the whereabouts of her husband who had joined the war effort on the other side by those around them. Esther responded: "So you know how it is, sometimes the soldiers will just come and set your houses on fire. (R. Ooh). So one day it was our place they burn". Another example comes from Susan's statement:

We didn't expect that the people fighting could come into town. Then one day when we were at work some people came from the estates where we lived saying that fighters were setting houses on fire. We were caught by surprise.

Murder or capture of husband by the fighters. Monica's husband was shot dead by fighters and so she fled the country to stay safe. Soldiers came to the home of Florence and her family at night and took her husband away. She did not know where he was or whether he would return to his family. She feared for her safety and that of her children and decided to leave her country.

Sexual assault. Jane was sexually assaulted and raped. She was afraid of what might happen if she remained in her home and decided to seek protection outside her home country so as to prevent a repeat of the experience and that was how she became a refugee.

Fear for safety. No matter which of the aforementioned themes explained the experience the women had gone through, that experience appeared to have created fear in each of them. Each participant was afraid for her own safety and that of her child or children and this appeared to be the final condition that prompted her to decide to leave, which eventually resulted in her becoming a refugee.

What it Means to Be a Refugee

Following an analysis of the responses participants gave to the question about what it means to them to be a refugee, I created the following five themes: (a) experiencing threat to life, (b) having personal property destroyed (c) needing protection, (d) being settled in another country, and (e) seeking a better life. I will now elaborate on each of these themes.

Experiencing threat to life. All respondents had dealt with a situation or, for some of them, several situations in which they experienced the possibility of losing their lives. Armed

men broke into Jane's family home one night and beat them up, raping her and taking her husband away with them. She spoke about concerns that they might return to kill her. For Jane this threat to her life was part of being a refugee. In another case fighters shot Monica's husband dead when he was not able to give them any more money. She was concerned that the same people might return to kill her too. That led to her decision to leave her country eventually becoming a refugee. Monica explained the threats she faced as follows:

> the fighters had come to ask for money again and my husband told them we didn't have any money so I was told that they shot him…When I returned to the house I was afraid they would come again and you know when these men come and find a woman they take money and then they "work on you" and they can even kill you.

Having personal property destroyed. The loss of their property contributed to the women becoming refugees. Two who witnessed the burning of their homes appeared to view that loss as pivotal in their gaining refugee status. For example, Susan explained what happened to her and her family: "Our house was burned with everything in it. We were all made to run away from the town we lived in and there was nowhere for us to go. We were refugees so we came to Canada as refugees". Esther described how she and her family lost everything when she said, "so you know how it is, sometimes the soldiers will just come and set your houses on fire. So one day it was our place they burn. So we have to run away and become refugees".

Needing protection. Another theme was that of the need to be protected. The need to be protected from the war itself and the need to be safe was part of the refugee experience for the women. They felt vulnerable to attacks after their spouses left their homes to be involved in the fighting. Florence relocated to a bigger town with her children only to soon find out that people were asking why a woman was living alone. When those people found out that her husband was

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involved in the fight against the government, she decided to seek protection outside her home country and by so doing became a refugee. In describing how she became a refugee she said:

> my husband is working for part of the rebel, … so when people come together, sometimes gathering at my house so they suspect that he is one of the rebels…that time we become suspects so sometimes they are taking him to ask him wanting to know why those people are coming to the house… Then someday when they took him, he didn't come back, I was afraid what they can do to us so that made us take off.

Being settled in another country. Being settled in a country other than one's country of origin was another way the women understood the refugee experience. Esther had been a refugee twice over because she was a refugee in a neighbouring country where she resided in a refugee camp and then became a refugee again by being settled in Canada. In explaining who refugees are Jane responded with the following: "Refugees are people like us who came from Africa to live in Canada".

Seeking a better life. Another theme was that refugees are people who are seeking a better life. For these women being a refugee if it results in being resettled in another country can be mean access to better education for the children and even the parents, access to good healthcare as well as the opportunity to work, earn a decent wage, and be able to buy whatever one wants to buy. Florence explained thus, "We are in trouble because of the war plus all that wishing for better place. Yea so we came to Canada and that is how we be refugee".

Based on their responses, all participants demonstrated a clear understanding of who may be considered a refugee. Each gave examples from her own experience of becoming a refugee satisfying criteria for inclusion in the current study.

Categories Based on Resettlement Experience Questions

Questions about the women's resettlement experience were asked after learning about the context of their flight and becoming refuges. As discussed in Chapter Three the purpose of the study was to gain an understanding into the resettlement experience of African single-mother refugees resettled in Canada/Calgary as understood by them. This was done by asking questions regarding; (a) how participants understand their resettlement experience, (b) what occurrences enhanced or hindered their resettlement and what actions they took that were helpful or hindering of the process of resettlement, (c) what resources they found helpful particularly in the absence of a partner/spouse, and (d) how they thought their experience could have been enhanced.

The interviews yielded a total of 258 items broken down as follows: 144 (56%) helping critical incidents, 56 (22%) hindering critical incidents, and 58 (22%) wish list items. During data analyses seven potential incidents were flagged for follow-up during the second visit with participants. These were occurrences mentioned by participants for which there was not enough information to determine whether they should be included as critical incidents or not. During the second visit, five of these were confirmed to be critical incidents broken down as four helping critical incidents and one hindering critical incident. The five confirmed incidents were added to the list. Two potential incidents were discarded as non-incidents because participants did not give antecedent or outcome information or provide an example as required. The total number of incidents included in the data analyses from which the discussed categories were derived was 263 broken down as follows; 148 (56%) helping critical incidents, 57 (22%) hindering critical incidents, and 58 (22 %) wish list items.

Second visits were held with six of the seven participants. A meeting could not be arranged with one woman due to circumstances beyond our control. During the second visit the six respondents expressed their agreement that the categories formulated were a reasonable representation of the interview held with them and three individuals provided more information about five of the seven incidents that were flagged during analyses. As discussed in Chapter Three, categories were included based on the perceived 'keyness' of the incident to the purpose of the study as determined by the researcher. As such, some categories might include a single critical incident or only a few critical incidents that were reported by as few as one participant. Other categories might include multiple critical incidents reported by many participants. The nine categories I formulated following data analyses are; (a) support, (b) self-preservation, (c) adjusting to Canadian ways, (d) awareness of personal limitations, (e) housing, (f) education, (g) finances, (h) parenting, (i) sexual assault. A summary of the categories is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of Categories from Critical Incidents

Category	Total Critical Incidents	Helping Critical Incidents	Hindering Critical Incidents	Wish List Items
Support	78	50	9	19
Self-preservation	23	23	0	0
Adjustment to Canadian Ways	32	20	7	5
Awareness of Personal Limitations	26	16	5	5
Housing	19	8	6	5
Education	45	19	11	15
Finances	28	10	11	7
Parenting	10	2	6	2
Sexual Assault (Rape)	2	0	2	0
Total	263	148	57	58

Each category is discussed through the following format: (a) the name of the category; (b) the total number of incidents reported in the category; (c) a breakdown of the number of representative incidents in terms of whether they were helping, hindering, or wish list items for the category; (d) a definition of the category; and (e) representative participant quotes for the helping, hindering, and wish list items for each category as applicable. Whenever appropriate, the time period of the occurrences (i.e., whether in the country of temporary residence, during the journey to Canada, or after arriving in Canada) is reported.

The first time period deals with participants' experience as they waited to find out which of the three UNHCR resettlement options was to be applied to their situation. The three options are (a) settlement in the country where the displaced first seek refuge, (b) repatriation back to their home country, or (c) resettlement in a third country. All participants were slotted into the third option and were resettled in Canada as refugees. The second time period, "Journey to Canada", covers those incidents associated with the actual move from the country of temporary refuge to Canada, the aeroplane connections where those were mentioned and the reception participants received on arrival at the prospective airports. This period formed a bridge between participants' two homes so to speak and contains few critical incidents as it focusses on the actual journey and the initial welcome to Canada. The third period covers the time between when participants arrived in Canada until the time of the interview. It therefore has many more incidents and most of the report is based on incidents that occurred within this time period.

The order in which the categories are reported is not chronological nor does it have any ordinal value. The ordering is random and should be understood as such.

Category 1: Support

The support category had a total of 78 items broken down as follows: 50 helping critical incidents, nine hindering critical incidents, and 19 wish list items. Support includes help and assistance the women received from different sources starting at the time they arrived in the country of first refuge until the time of interview. Three sources of support were identified: (a) support from friends and acquaintances, (b) support from the informal system, and (c) support from the formal system.

Support from friends and acquaintances. Friends and acquaintances included people respondents had known prior to flight such as family members or friends with whom they had escaped from their homes and   individuals from their country of origin living in the country of first refuge. The women received support from friends and acquaintances in the country of first refuge and while living in Canada. I first report on support received while in the country of first refuge followed by while living in Canada.

In the helping critical incidents, respondents received information and help from friends and acquaintances about registering as asylum seekers. Some respondents who resided outside refugee camps receiving help in finding housing and Florence and Pamela even found work in the country of first refuge. The positive outcomes included being able to find the services they required, which they might otherwise not have found. Another positive outcome was that finding support made it possible for participants to achieve goals such as being able to engage in paid employment.

The main type of support received was information that was instrumental to both their survival and eventual resettlement. Some mothers received practical help as well. Examples of such information included the need to register as asylum seekers, where to register and how to make claims for asylum. Those who resided outside refugee camps were supported in finding rental housing while those who resided inside refugee camps received help to construct "houses". This is how Jane and Esther explained how friends and acquaintances supported them:

I found other people who had arrived before us… and they helped me find a house.

They also advised me to register as a refugee and took me to the offices. The people at

the office took my story and gave me a card so I could get things like food or go there if we are sick (Jane).

Yea, there were very many people from… also. They helped us. Telling us where to find this and that. Yea, you get there you register your name. The people tell us it is better if I register alone with my kids and my uncle and aunt and their kids alone, like that. Yea…They help us we build paper houses (Esther).

After arriving in Canada friends and acquaintances included persons they had known either from their home country or the intermediate country, members of their ethnic community they met in the cities where they resided as well as people from the host communities. Helping critical incidents included being given information on where to find ethnic goods and receiving help with transportation to go shopping and/or attend other activities. Members of their ethnic community assisted the women in finding their first job in Canada. A friend Susan had known from her home country assisted by reading textbooks to her when they were preparing for tests because Susan had been unable to do it herself due to exhaustion. Esther and her family received gifts from members of the host community soon after arriving in Canada (the family arrived during the Christmas season). The following quotes from participants illustrate the kinds of support they re3ceived from friends and acquaintances after arriving in Canada:

So there were some people from my country living there. I ask them for everything I want like how to go shopping, where are the stores, which bus to take. They become my friends, they take me everywhere. That is how I manage. Yea. (Edith)

And then after a short time as I was walking just near there where we lived, I met some people from my home country who were living not too far away from us and they

helped us with things like where to find African food and you know how it is difficult to find oil for the hair… So those people showed me stores in the Northeast where I could buy things like those and because they had cars, they would drive us there to shop. They became our friends (Monica).

I just find some people from my community, yea, so they helped me find a job in the warehouse where I don't need a lot of English cos after that they say there something like benefit you can get if you don't have full time job (Florence).

Hindering incidents included receiving advice that was unhelpful. For example, some of the respondents were advised not to continue taking classes but to find work instead. The negative outcome from this was that these women were only able to work in the unskilled job market. Here is what Monica said about support she perceived as hindering:

So I talked with some people in my community and they told me, forget about going to school. These days you know enough English to work, what do you think more school will do for you and you have three children? Even if you stay in school you will not get a high school diploma and they will not let you go to college without passing high school. You will study and study and in the end it will not help you. What you need now is a job. If you want we can help you find a job with a cleaning company.

Support from the formal system. This category includes occurrences in which support was received either from a government agent or a designated non-governmental organization that deals with matters pertaining to refugees and/or immigrants. The women received support from the formal system during all three time periods (i.e., in country of first refuge, during the journey and while living in Canada).

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While in the country of first refuge an example of such organizations was the UNHCR. Support from the formal system comprised of services such as being provided with basic needs after being registered as an asylum seeker, being interviewed for placement as a refugee and receiving whatever assistance was deemed necessary. Other examples included help with relocation and resettlement (orientation to Canadian way of life, provision for basic needs and education etc.) once in Canada.

Helping critical incidents included being interviewed for resettlement and receiving food rations and medical care through the UNHCR. Jane's application for asylum was expedited after informing the agents how people sympathetic to the rebels in her home country had accosted her and sexually assaulted her while living in the country of first refuge. Positive outcomes were that participants received protection and had their basic needs met while they waited for the outcome of their application for asylum. The following words capture the kinds of support the mothers received from the formal system in the country of first refuge:

> …you get there you register your name… Then every week they give us food and if you get sick they have like a clinic where you go… then the people they tell us now you are going to Canada as refugee because this place is not good for you and your kids (Esther).

> Those people at the office asked me a lot of questions about our life. About the children, about their father about what happened before we left …, issues like those. They told me that they would try to see where they can get us a country that will accept us to live among their people so we are safe from the people who killed the children's father (Monica).

The helping incidents that occurred while on the journey to Canada included the government making arrangements to transport respondents and their children from their residence in the country of first refuge to the airport on the day of travel. Respondents were met by individuals mandated by the government in the various airports to assist them with transferring between connecting flights, were met at the final destination and received help in filling-out immigration paper work as well as being driven to the welcome house. Individuals who arrived in Canada during the winter were welcomed and provided with winter clothing at the airport. The following words capture the kinds of support participants received:

> Yea, so when we come to airport, there was people there. They bring us winter coats for me and my daughter, cos we come in winter, I think it was January. They take us to reception house, there were others there (Edith).

> The journey was good. I was happy and excited to be travelling by plane. The people in the plane took good care of us. They gave us good food and I was happy. When we arrive at the (an) airport we found people waiting for us. We had papers to show who we were and there were people at different airports meeting us and taking us where we needed to go, like to wait for and board the aeroplane. Then we arrived at the airport I found it was Calgary. Someone came to meet us and filled the forms for us. We didn't experience any difficulties finding our way (Jane).

Hindering incidents included finding out that family networks were broken because members were designed to different cities of landing. Some newcomers were designated to a French speaking city while no one in her family spoke or understood French. For example Edith was taken to Toronto with her child while her cousins were designated to settle in Calgary and Regina as these quotes by respondents illustrate:

I came to Canada with some of my cousins but the worst thing, they take some to

Calgary, some to Regina and me and my daughter we go to Toronto… I stay in Toronto

only four month then I know I can move where I want in Canada. I tell the counsellor

my relatives are living in Calgary can you do my papers so I go there? (Edith).

We were taken to Montreal. And there they are speaking French. I think because we

are from … they think we speak French. So the people who came were speaking to me

in French and I dint know any French (Monica).

In Canada, examples of the formal system from which the women received support

included government funded refugee and immigrant focussed agencies such as the Centre for

Newcomers and government departments such as Alberta Works. Support from the formal

system in Canada comprised assisting the women with matters such as opening and operating a

bank account, sourcing housing, enrolling the children in school, and language classes for the

mothers, orientation in terms of where to shop, board a bus, see a doctor and any other daily

routines that were specific to living in a Canadian city and therefore new to them.

Helping incidents included having a designated caseworker allocated to the participant.

Some women were advised to apply to the resettlement agency to connect them with a member

of the host society to be a mentor/host to them. Those who lacked official language

proficiency were allocated an interpreter from their language group. Others received

instruction on how to parent children in the Canadian cultural context. Having a "host" was

particularly helpful as the mothers received help with tasks such as grocery shopping for longer

periods of time than participants those without one. Following are examples of support from

the formal system as explained by Pamela, Esther and Florence:

So when we arrived there, we were received and put in a reception house for 3 weeks. There was one of the counsellors allocated to us as our counsellor. We were trained how to go shopping, where were the shopping centres, where were the malls, the schools and all that. Yea, we had the directions. Then they rented us the apartment where I lived with the kids. (Pamela)

And when we came, some people who come to get us at the airport and they take us to reception. Yea, and I think we stay for one month or more than that, I don't know, I have forgotten because it is a long time. Yea, and eeh then there was that person who show us how to go shopping. The cheaper that we have to buy, which store is good for us and eeh to find a house, that person help us to find a house and everything and yea. (Esther)

So I try my best at that time when I'm in immigration, some people came to give me some Canadian experience. We find a lady to be a family friend (host) they ask me, why do you want a lady to help? I say I am a single mum, I don't have a man to help me and these kids I don't know how to deal with them here cos this place is different. … So we come with that lady, she enter our life so when we have parents meeting, sometimes she help me to go and discuss what is happening in school… she ask things for me how they are doing. So we live like that not that bad for two or three years. (Florence)

The hindering incidents had to do with finding that the counsellor and/or the volunteer host were not available when participants required their assistance. Some women did not receive support when they needed it because no one was available to help with tasks such as grocery shopping or taking a sick child to the doctor. In some instances the services of the

counsellor and host were withdrawn after one year even though the women thought they still needed help. In other instances support from the resettlement counsellor was withdrawn as soon as the family was moved into their first home. The negative outcome was that respondents felt neglected and some reported regretting their decision to come to Canada. This is how Jane and Pamela explained their experience:

> The counsellor doesn't come to you after finding you the house, only the volunteer can come. The volunteer comes for just one year, only one year. After one year all help is taken away, the counsellor, the volunteer all of them.
>
> I sometimes would call the volunteer to ask for help and she was not able to come. You see, the volunteer is not paid so she will come to help if she doesn't have her own things she is doing.
>
> You know that lady is a volunteer she can't come all the time. Sometimes she was not available so I just stayed and waited. (Jane)

> Then they rented us the apartment where I lived with the kids. But the worst thing was that we arrived when it was almost winter time. No transport, nothing. We were just thrown there... We were just forgotten.
>
> …Then I said, oh my God am I going to survive in this place? It was so difficult. I regretted coming. Honestly, I regretted coming despite all the disaster in my country I regretted coming. I asked myself, now why did I come here? That is the question I asked myself, yes. (Pamela)

The wish list items included the desire for continued support from the counsellor and the volunteer until such a time that the mother no longer required the assistance. Some women spoke about not knowing what bus to take to classes or shopping and wishing there was

someone there to help them find their way. Other wish-list items included finding someone

from their ethnic community who was familiar with the Canadian system to guide the mothers

in finding and accessing the required resources. Some mothers spoke of a desire to be

connected with people like them (i.e., mothers of African descent) who would know where to

find help and who would be willing to pass that information on to them. The following quotes

indicate how Pamela and Florence voiced their wishes:

> I think really coming to totally different environment where you did not even expect, I
>
> wish there were at least several people to guide you, to be there for you. To help you
>
> right away. Whatever you needed you would just call them or they would just show up
>
> at your door to ask how are you, how are you faring, what do you need? You know,
>
> just to make you a little bit more comfortable. To make you more acquainted to the
>
> place and the environment. (Pamela)
>
> Another thing I hear they say here that when you see the single mums that are here,
>
> may be cos they know where to go and get benefit, they seem ok. I didn't get all that
>
> opportunity, may be cos I didn't know, may be if there is somebody could have told
>
> me. You know there's a difference between somebody from your community or
>
> someone that is working or your neighbour or your sister that will give you info. It not
>
> like someone from the government giving you full information to know. (Florence)

Support from the informal system. This category pertains to receiving different kinds

of help from organisations that are not officially/formally associated with refugee and immigrant

services particularly religious organizations. All the reported incidents occurred while

participants were already living in Canada. In some instances, the informal sector initiated the

contact that resulted in mothers receiving support and in other instances the mothers reported that

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they sought the support. Support from the informal system consisted of assistance with transportation, providing a place for participants to practise their faith and just being available to assist in whichever way the participant might have required. An example of this was a meeting Jane had with the leader of a church (pastor) who visited the reception house and offered support (a place to pray and meet other people from Africa) to the newcomers. She recalled calling the pastor to solicit the church's support after moving into a rental house:

> It would have been tough for me if I had not met the pastor. He had been passing near
>
> the Welcome house when we first arrived… He wrote his telephone number on a piece
>
> of paper for us. I kept mine safely. So when they got us into this house, I called him.
>
> He has been very helpful especially with things like shopping and even arranging for
>
> me to go to the church before I knew how to take the bus. (Jane)

In another case the women spoke about just walking outside, seeing a church building and going in to ask for help and the church becoming an important support network to them as described by this respondent:

> So I was totally just left to venture by myself. So I went to church, luckily enough
>
> there was a nearby church. So I went to pray and I introduced myself. Some people
>
> came to us to ask, so when did you come and where are you from and all that. So that
>
> is where I got one of the friends, an old man, partially blind. He was from Srilanka. He
>
> became one of our closest friend. He guided me even with his blindness. He was able
>
> to take me where I needed to go… It was the church. As I would go to pray I would
>
> meet different people and some of them would ask how they can help. I was really
>
> lucky. Yea, I fell in good hands right away. (Pamela)

Susan also spoke about how finding the church enhanced the resettlement experience for her family:

In fact once we found the church even the kids were happy because they found other children to play with. The people in that church were very good to us. You know, they would give us things and all that. They helped us a lot.

Category 2: Self Preservation

There were 19 incidents for this category. All the incidents cited were helping critical incidents. This category included occurrences when participants were involved in actions that helped preserve their lives and those of their children in the country of temporary residence and while living in Canada.   No incidents in this category occurred during the journey to Canada. First I report participants' actions related to their survival and that of their children while they were living in the country of temporary residence and then while living in Canada.

Registering with the UNHCR as refugees and interviewing for resettlement were the first actions towards self-preservation as doing so meant that the UNHCR provided protection and provisions. All participants took part in interviews aimed at determining their suitability for being granted refugee status. Some respondents sought and found paid work while living in the countries of first refuge. This is how Florence described the actions she took:

So I went to Egypt… We find that there is a place to register with the UN … So we registered and wait… So we made exam, then we succeed because when you register you don't even get help till you pass their exam… then you get the card… then you are safe cos you have UN … We stay down there and we are working and so we have money for food and other things with my son only. At that time my two nieces were not with me.

The main challenge to life that the mothers faced after arriving in Canada had to do with cold weather and the risk to health posed by Canadian winter to them and their children. Pamela spoke about her fear about their survival during the cold season when it turned to winter soon after they arrived in Canada. She narrated how she found someone to drive her children to and from school that first winter as explained by the following:

> But the worst thing was that we arrived when it was almost wintertime. No transport, nothing…I feared for our lives. I got one of the neighbours who could drive them every day. Pick them up, bring them home for lunch, take them back again and bring them after school. That is how we survived that first winter. (Pamela)

Category 3: Adjustment to Canadian Ways

The "Adjustment to Canadian Ways" category had a total of 32 items broken down as follows; 20 were helping critical incidents, seven were hindering critical incidents, and five were wish list items. The category contains incidents that demonstrate actions respondents taken to adjust to living in Canada such as learning the language as well as learning cultural mores and expectations within the Canadian social fabric. All the occurrences for this category happened while participants were living in Canada.

The helping category included incidents in which the women attended various classes as required. After finding out that everyone can go to school in Canada, the mothers attended classes to acquire official language proficiency and Canadian credentials. Others attended different courses and gained a lot of knowledge since arriving in the country. They did not have access to education in their home country. The positive outcomes of adjusting included learning conversational English, which made it easier to communicate with individuals from other cultures particularly, members of the host society who form the bulk of service providers.

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Other positive outcomes included being able to find and access services more easily as well as the opportunity of getting into the workforce. The following comments by Jane and Edith portray their views about access to education:

> I am going to class and I want to continue with school. To finish language school and then get a course to help me so I can find work. I think it is really good for everyone to get an education that can help them find work. There's no need to remain in Canada if a person is not studying. (Jane)
>
> So I start to go to class, LINC (i.e. language instruction for newcomers to Canada) class cos they say that my English not good enough for ESL. My cousins they help me find an apartment and I start to go to class. Yea so I do LINC and then ESL. Then I find a job. (Edith)

The hindering incidents included realising that credentials from the country of origin were not recognized in Canada and prospective employers required employees to demonstrate experience in the Canadian workplace. Some mothers were discouraged from pursuing education goals because of remaining at the same level in language school for long periods of time. Others dropped out of school before attaining the level of education that would help them find the kind of work they wanted to do. Still others found fitting-in at work challenging due to low English proficiency. The negative outcomes of this were that some respondents trained for careers that were not of their choosing and other experienced downward career mobility. The following statements exemplify the kinds of adjustments the mothers were making:

> You see back home I was a social worker by profession but when I applied for a job after the government stopped the money after one year, they told me that they needed

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Canadian experience which I didn't have. So I think, how can I have Canadian experience if you don't give me a job? It was so difficult, filling these forms, filling that form. So I have to go to school too myself to maybe gain some Canadian experience. I did a course in healthcare aid and after I had the certificate I didn't even like the job cos it wasn't in my field but I just took it but I didn't even look for a job in that field. (Pamela)

Now I can't go to school and pay loan, yea, I find work. Housekeeping. Yea cos after one year the money from government is cut, you get only little money and they ask you to pay the travel loan, then I decide I need to work so I can pay loan and buy all the stuff for my daughter. But I didn't want to be housekeeping, no I want teaching or hospital work. (Edith)

… I go to work. It's like housekeeping. People they treat me bad cos they think my English is not good. cos what I am telling them, they think maybe I telling them is something bad. Or I talk badly cos I talk like my voice (high pitch) or maybe I don't talk like polite cos it is not my first language or I don't have good English. They get mad at me and they say you don't talk good. And I just leave. (Esther)

Wish list items centred on the desire for more education and better job opportunities. Respondents expressed their desire to gain more education credentials which means going into the workforce later and finding work in line with their wishes. They also expressed the desire to be permitted to enter the work force sooner if that is what they want to do. Others spoke about the need to get connected with mentors with similar backgrounds (of African descent) to teach them how to adapt to the Canadian school system. Florence and Esther expressed their desires by saying:

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I really wanted to go to class. I thought that coming to Canada I can go to university

here and get degree before I work. But that was not possible cos I have language

problem so I don't go university I have to do LINC class. I tried. So I try to come to

LINC classes but the money is not enough… So I started work and quit the school…

But if government give enough money I stay in school. (Florence)

Maybe they can give me a job I don't want, I don't love that. May be they can say, like

now if you want to take a course, maybe healthcare course or something for hospital or

something like that. They have to tell me to do this. May be it's not my dream you

know. (Esther)

Category 4: Awareness of Personal Limitations

There was a total of 26 items for this category broken down as follows; 16 were helping

critical incidents, five were hindering critical incidents, and five were wish list items. This

category deals with those occurrences when participants reported being aware that there were

things they ought to do but they did not have the wherewithal to accomplish those tasks. The

incidents include actions taken that showed they were aware of their inability to accomplish a

particular task by themselves. All the incidents reported occurred while participants were

living in Canada.

 In the helping category respondents sought help from members of their ethnic

community about things they could not do for themselves or do on their own. Pamela acted as

an interpreter for other mothers and Monica who was not proficient in any official language

asked her child to explain their needs to government officials. Other respondents sought

members of their ethnic community to assist them in finding the first job. The positive

outcomes were that women were able to deal with the challenging situation as the following quotes illustrate:

> Well we were three of us single mums. We were actually four but the fourth one remained here in Calgary and the three of us went to Edmonton. We realized we cannot make it in this country if we don't stick together. We were able to stay in touch and I was helping them to translate cos they didn't know the language. So I was all the time in touch with them, then we became best friends. We used to meet each other all the time and that is how we supported each other. (Pamela)

> I was saved by that child, my daughter. She was speaking English, not a lot but she was going to school even in Africa so she explained to the people in reception house that mama doesn't speak French or English. I told the girl to tell them to take us to where they are speaking English. (Monica)

In the hindering incidents the mothers elected not to return to the reception house or to call members of staff from the agencies that had assisted them when they first arrived in Canada or simply chose to do nothing and wait the situation out. Some women were under the impression that caseworkers or resettlement counsellors did not expect them to call for assistance and as such they (the women) looked for support elsewhere or did nothing as the following narratives indicate:

> Do you mean the reason why I never returned to the office to ask them to help me? (Researcher. yea) Oh, really Lucy, it is not easy to go back to ask for help after they have told you that now you will be alright. You really don't know if you can ask for help again or not. (Pamela)

I didn't do anything. I just stayed in the house and hoped that tomorrow will be better.

There is no one to help you because they said now everything is good because you have

a house and the children are in school. I knew there was nothing I could do. (Jane)

Wish list items included participants' desire for the counsellors to be available longer.

Others wished they could be connected with members of the host community in informal

settings such as homes and /or community halls where they can learn English and Canadian

culture by association. This is how Esther expressed her wishes:

And the very important thing they have to make sure if the people come like

immigration people or refugees people they have to be responsible and to know to learn

how to speak English. Even if they give them someone to help them at home or in the

community hall just for talking… And then at home, they teach you other things also

like how to do like Canadian way.

Category 5: Housing

The "housing" category had a total of 19 items broken down as follows; eight were

helping critical incidents, six were hindering critical incidents, and five were wish list items.

The category includes occurrences pertaining to what participants did to access housing as well

as occurrences where other people's actions affected the respondents' housing situation. This

category includes occurrences where participants reported experiences pertaining to access to

housing in the country of first refuge and also after arriving in Canada.

All incidents reported during their stay in the country of first refuge were helping

incidents. Respondents who resided outside of refugee camps rented accommodation privately

in the towns where they lived. Esther built a temporary shelter out of plastic papers in the

refugee camp. In speaking about her housing situation Jane said, "No. I did not live in a

refugee camp I just got a house/a room in one of the places there". Esther who lived in a refugee camp, said of her house in the camp, "We build paper houses, not a big place, just like a small place to sleep, we cook outside".

While living in Canada, helping incidents included participants moving out of the reception house and into their first home. Some moved into subsidized housing right away and others were assisted by the resettlement counsellors to find private rental houses and were allocated subsidized housing after some time. Pamela bought her own house within a few years of arrival. This is how Susan described her housing situation soon after arriving in Canada:

> Then they find you a house within a few days and school for the kids, like my older one
>
> the boy was already in primary school… Anyway, so they put him in the school near
>
> where they put us in a government house and the sister went to daycare nearby.
>
> (Susan)

For Pamela, achieving home ownership demonstrated her desire for her children to have a good life as illustrated by the following quote:

> Even after three years I was able to have a mortgage. I had a mortgage after three years
>
> in Edmonton. I was determined to let my children have the best there is in life, the best
>
> life for my children, a good house. (Pamela)

The hindering incidents in this category centred on the difficulties the mothers experienced associated with moving into a house/apartment. Some mothers moved into houses that were more expensive than they could comfortably afford. Others moved into neighbourhoods they considered unsuitable. Some women waited too long for subsidized housing they felt they needed. Women who moved into subsided housing and were in paid

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employment found social services' requirements on those living in the subsidized housing burdensome and challenging for them to abide by, particularly the requirements that residents of such residences account for all the money they earn. The following explanations by some of the women express these sentiments:

> Ok. So we came and we found a place and the money they were giving us about $1000, I think. And the house was almost 1000 dollars. The rent was almost all the money… but the money is not enough… Life became really tough… And we apply for government house,… since we left immigration… I have waited but up to now they don't tell me anything. (Florence)

> Secondly we were taken to the neighbourhood where the African immigrant children mixed up with the native children. They just picked up very bad habits; you know, drinking, partying and smoking and all what have you. So those boys fell through the crack. That was the counsellor's fault because they find us refugees houses in bad neighbourhoods. That is also another reason why I decided to move. (Pamela)

> You see in this country you can decide to stay at home and get welfare and live in Calgary housing. But the problem with that kind of life you become a slave of social services… I'm telling you I lived in Calgary housing just a few months and then I got tired of their questions…. .So I moved out of Calgary housing and rented this one. Now I have peace. (Monica)

In the wish list items for this category women who were not yet in salaried employment expressed the desire to be housed in subsidized housing when they leave the reception house. Other mothers wished that the agencies involved in finding and/allocating subsided housing would keep them informed about the progress of their application and the length of time they

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were likely to remain wait-listed so they could plan accordingly. Other mothers looked

forward to purchasing better houses for themselves. Jane explained:

> I think they could have prepared better housing for us, you know houses here are not
>
> cheap. If they could have given us a place in Calgary housing right when we arrived
>
> from Africa it would have been much better. You know they would have put us in
>
> government housing right away instead of putting us in private housing like this one.
>
> This is the one thing I really wish for. (Jane)

Florence expressed her frustration at not knowing when or if she would move into

subsidized housing:

> (speaking about Calgary housing) I am always there but I never get even now. I don't
>
> get anything. I am always there and I don't get any result. They ask me where do you
>
> want a house? I tell them any place I can go. I have no place I want, any place will
>
> do… Since I come, I am still waiting, yea, till I give up. But they never call me to ask
>
> what is going on?... It is good they call me and say, you will get Calgary housing this
>
> time and that time. But no. (Florence)

Category6: Education

For this category there were a total of 45 items broken down as follows 19 helping

critical incidents, 11 hindering critical incidents, and 15 wish list items. The category reports

occurrences that related to participants' interaction with the education system either for their

children or for themselves. The report includes actions by the women as well as other people's

actions that related to education for the women and their children. Education was said to be

good both for the mothers and their children. Acquiring a good level of Canadian education

would help adults as well as their children in accessing all the resources available to Canadians

and the mothers were taking different actions towards education acquisition for them and their children. In order to better explain this category, I will first report on incidents and wish-list items pertaining to children's education and then report on the mothers' education.

Children's education. This was formulated from the incidents in which participants reported actions that they or someone else took that related to their children's education while in the country of first refuge and in Canada. Examples of occurrences include respondents visiting children's school to see what was going on and participants receiving telephone calls from the school informing them that their child/children were absent from school on a certain day. The report includes actions that helped or hindered the children's schooling.

Incidents that occurred in the country of temporary refuge were hindering incidents. Pamela and Florence found out their children were not allowed to attend public schools in the country of first refuge (both participants had escaped to the same country) and did not have the financial resources to enrol them in private school so the children did not attend school for the period the families resided in that country.

In reporting about education for their children after arriving in Canada, participants noted that Canada is a country where all people irrespective of their ethnic origin can have a decent level of living if they are well educated.

The helping category included incidents children were able to attend school in Canada unlike their home countries. The mothers made sure their children attended school by paying unscheduled visits to the children's school. Participants attended parents' meetings at their children's school as a way of helping the children in their education. They regularly encouraged their children to do their homework so that they may do well academically. The positive outcomes arising from this included children remaining in school and appearing to

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work hard as advised by their mothers.   When Florence and Pamela spoke about education for their children, these were their words:

> Yea, one is the children got to go to school. You see one difference between Egypt and here is that there the kids stayed at home. So here they are lucky you can find anybody is in the class. There is no differentiating between immigrant, refugee, or born here. All are in the class together. (Florence)
>
> The good thing was that my kids went to school. The kids were in school and that was my happiness… I try my best even to attend teachers-parents meetings. I try even to pop in school during the day to make sure if my child is in school, if she is not there then I have to find out, where did she go? Or else just to pop in to see what the teachers are doing with my children… So I have to work very hard with the teachers in the school and I have to get a private teacher to volunteer for them in the house. (Pamela)

The hindering incidents included children getting involved with the wrong group and children missing and/or dropping out of school. The negative outcomes arising from these hindering incidents included strained relationships between children and parents as indicated by the following quotes:

> The second reason was for my kids. They were at the age of falling apart. All because of the group. Their group was so much trouble. Like the other one was almost leaving school, cos she stopped going to school. (Pamela)
>
> You can see your kids growing just like that. You can see your kid is just like that. Sometimes they are missing school, the school is calling… as a mother or guardian, what are you to do... What responsibility do you have to the kids and if you say something or do something for the kid and the kid get out of the house or run or call the

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police on you and these, so sometimes you become an enemy to that kid and they don't

tell the kid that, no you are not right. (Florence)

Wish list items in this category focused on participant's desire to get support in helping

their children stay in school and to be successful at their studies for example by allocating

more funding to the mothers for their own schooling so they are able to assist their children.

Respondents spoke of their desire that their children would receive accurate information about

the need to acquire a good Canadian education. Others spoke about their desire that their

children would pursue further education after graduating from high school. The following

quotes exemplify the mothers wishes:

> … if we had a support system in place even if the parents didn't know the language,
>
> there would be someone there who could help. Someone to rescue the children so they
>
> can stay in school. (Pamela)
>
> Yea, see sometimes the counselling they get is the easy one… but why are they not
>
> telling them that … things cost money and you need an education to get the money... So
>
> the government needs to help us by giving the kids good counselling about life. I see
>
> that even at school the kids are not told the real things. (Florence)
>
> So the boy is 22 now. He has been working since he graduated high school. So I have
>
> been telling him he needs to find a course to go to. You know to get trained and get a
>
> career… we can't all be doctors or lawyers or engineers and I don't tell him he has to
>
> be one of those but I tell him he needs to get training… I tell him there is no reason for
>
> one not to be able to afford a comfortable life in Canada. (Susan)

Participants' education. In this section I report on occurrences related to the mothers'

education and the actions the mothers or others took that either enhanced or hindered their

schooling. Examples include remaining in language class despite not having money and deciding to leave school and find work. Incidents were reported in the country of first refuge and while living in Canada.

Some respondents attended classes for short periods of time while residing in a refugee camp. Edith was one of those who attended classes in the refugee camp where she resided. Although she did not stay in the classes for long because she needed to take care of her child, the classes were helpful because they gave her the first opportunity to learn a few words in the English language. Janet also attended adult literacy classes when she resided in a refugee camp and she found the classes helpful, although she did not learn any English as the classes were taught in her language and the official language of the country the refugee camp was situated in.

After arriving in Canada, participants attended language classes and remained in school despite facing challenges associated with transportation and being new in the city/country. Jane decided to stay in school while Edith hoped to return to school and both planned to continue attending classes until they have gained enough knowledge to enable them to join the labour market as can be deduced from the following quotes:

> I am still trying to get my schooling done so I can find a job….. I think things will be better when I finish my language classes and find a job. I have to do LINC and then ESL and then one of the courses (Jane)

> I want to get a good education and go back home and get a good job at home. I hope my kids will also have good education so we can go back and have a good life. (Edith)

> In the hindering category participants found it difficult to stay in school due to

reduction in funding after their first year of residence in Canada. Respondents were

discouraged from continuing in class due to lack of progress in acquiring the requisite language skills, attributing this to what they perceived as their teachers' lack of commitment to their job. Edith and Esther explained:

> … then eeh, I think I still want to go to school… Because I want to do ESL but no LINC, LINC, only LINC… then they stop the money… they put you in school for 12 months and after the 12 months that is all. They tell you, money is all… (Esther)
>
> Yea, so I do LINC and then ESL. Then the government they send me a letter asking I start to pay the travel loan. Now I can't go to school and pay loan, yea. I find work…. Housekeeping. Yea, cos after one year the money from government is cut, you get only little money and they ask you to pay the travel loan, then I decide I need to work so I can pay loan… but I really wanted to stay in school and get diploma. (Edith)
>
> Yea, they just want to make their money. Because the problem is that they don't want to lose those people. They want to keep you there because they have to make their money for one thing not to teach you because you have to learn no, no it's not like that. (Esther)

The wish list items for this category dealt with participants' desire to acquire better education. Participants spoke about the desire to find someone to practice the words they learned in class with them outside the classroom so that they can learn the language faster. Others spoke about the need for the government to allocate more funding so that they can remain in school until such a time that they acquire enough education to enable them gain admission into a college. Florence spoke about her desire to return to school and complete a university degree that she had started while still in her home country. As noted by these respondents:

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For me I wish I could find someone to help me revise my words outside of school.
That is how I think I can be more successful. Then I can learn English quickly so I can
take a course and then go to work. (Jane)

Actually, the hope that I had, I say that when I come here I'll go to school and graduate
college…... but I hope that one day I hope I still will go to university and get a degree
here in Canada. I still hope one day. (Florence)

Category 7: Finances

The "finances" category had a total of 28 items broken down as follows helping critical
incidents, 11 hindering critical incidents, and seven wish list items. This category includes
respondents' experiences with accessing and using financial resources and what actions they or
others took that affecting their financial wellbeing or lack thereof. The reported incidents
happened while respondents were living in Canada.

The helping category included incidents where the government of Canada paid the
transportation costs for mothers and their children. Other helping incidents included receiving
adequate financial support to aid in the initial resettlement through purchasing of the household
items that they needed. The positive outcomes from receiving adequate financial support were
that the mothers were able to relocate to Canada even though they did not have financial
resources in the intermediate country. Participants were also able to move into rental houses
and buy basic household equipment. For example Pamela said that "the government buys you
plane tickets at the time you are relocated", and Jane indicated that "when we first came, the
money was kind of enough for the things I needed to buy. That was enough, it was not bad".

The hindering category included incidents where participants received telephone calls
from government agents about a year after arriving in Canada asking them to commence

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repayment of the travel loans. Other incidents included the termination of federal government transfers to respondents also occurring about one year after arriving in Canada. The negative outcomes included participants electing to remove themselves from class before acquiring their desired level of formal education in order to work so as to repay the loans. Other outcomes included participants not having enough money to meet the financial needs of their family. Following are examples from the conversations with some of the women:

Then it is one year and the government cut the money. They start giving me half. And then that time when the money if half, I get a letter from the government saying, start paying back the money for your ticket to Canada. I asked to myself, how am I going to pay all that money, pay my rent and buy all the things the children need with only one thousand dollars? So I talked with some people in my community and they told me….if you want we can help you find a job with a cleaning company….I started working and now I am happy. (Monica)

Yea, the first year I was served with a letter asking for the money and I start paying right away. I paid every month until I finished paying in two years' time… I wasn't working. I started to pay with the money government gives you and then when I got a job I paid with salary. (Pamela)

 And we have our ticket loan, like $5000 and we have to pay... Alberta health we have to pay monthly…. but we don't know. So, when I received that letter I got so shocked cos I have $800 that I owe and I don't have some income coming… And at the same time, these kids they are underage so they say you have the kids' money too but they say this money you have to put to support them in school. But then we don't have enough for their needs so we start to use that money for needs. So we don't have

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money to put away for them for school or to pay the ticket money. So I started work

and quit the school. I can't even go to school cos the rent and all the other things, life

became really tough and the money wasn't enough. (Florence)

Wish list items included respondents' desire to have the financial help from the federal

government extended for a longer period, possibly for about three years more. Some mothers

wished the government would financially support single-mother families for a longer period

instead of offering the same level/length of support to single-mother families as that given to

two-parent families. This is how Jane framed her wishes:

That one year is not enough. My view is that taking away the help after one year is a

really bad thing, they could let the help continue for longer, that would be helpful…. I

think if they had assisted me for three years.

They give me, a single mother the same as those women who have husbands. I

think it would be better for us single mothers if they can give us more money than those

who are two. You cannot work and look after the children when you are alone. (Jane)

Category 8: Parenting

The parenting category had a total of 10 items broken down as follows: two helping

critical incidents, six hindering critical incidents, and two wish list items. This category deals

with occurrences where participants reported what actions were taken by them or others that

helped or hindered them in their role as parents. All the incidents reported occurred while they

were living in Canada.

In the helping critical incidents Florence, attended a training session on raising children

in Canada and realized that there are differences and knew she needed someone familiar with

the Canadian way to help her. Esther indicated that she attended a parenting seminar through her children's school when she said:

> … And I think, the first time when they open school for my youngest one, they have a parenting class. You have to take a parenting class how you bring your kid up and they teach us when it is better right now when they are still young to be in school. (Esther)

In the hindering category, participants faced challenges in raising their children in Canada due to cultural differences. Having been raised in a culture where parents and guardians were permitted to spank their children as part of discipline, they found that spanking was not allowed in their new country and they did not know how to control their children's behaviour. Some attributed what they perceived as failure to excel at school by children of refugees from Africa to the parents' lack of knowledge about the appropriate form of discipline to apply within the Canadian context. Pamela and Florence noted:

> …I was raised with discipline but coming here there is a very big difference… If we put a hand to raise our children the way we have been raised, we cannot. So the system dictate you the way to raise them and you don't know the system, you don't understand the system. The system is falling apart and we are falling apart, so what is left? (Pamela)
>
> There is nothing bad with Canada but the way they can help us with our kids. Cos now we come with the kids then you can see your kids growing just like that. You can see your kids is just like that… What responsibility do you have to the kids and if you say something or do something for the kid and the kid get out of the house or run or call the police on you? (Florence)

Other challenges that the mothers faced related to prevailing expectations within Canadian culture that children over 18 are adults and expected to leave the parent's home to live independently. Some mothers were surprised when they were asked why their children were still living at home after they had turned 18 by members of the host society. Others were confused by the fact that law enforcement officers implied it is alright for an 18 year old child to choose to leave home against her mother's advice as noted by these respondents:

… Now I lost one of my girls, the younger one. She is out of the house for two years. She left… One day when I tried to ask her what's going on, she called the police, actually. When the police came they saw that there was nothing in the house, asked her what is the problem, the girl said she is 18, and wanted to leave the house and stay by herself. So the police say Ok, if she wants to go, let her go cos she is 18… So I don't know anything to say anymore. (Florence)

You see my son is 22 so sometimes people ask me, why is your son still living at home and he is grow up? And I tell them he is my son and this is his home… We Africans don't chase our kids out of their home just like that. That is how I deal with it. (Susan)

So our children are not going to school. They are drinking, smoking even "bangi" (Marijuana), but we can't raise a hand to discipline them. That is how they are falling apart. They are on the street, some in prison and the system that is refusing us to raise them responsibly is really doing nothing to help them become responsible. (Pamela)

In the wish-list items for this category, respondents wished that single mothers would receive counselling to help the children. Some wished there would be African mothers who have raised children in Canada to be mentors for the refugee single mothers on how to parent the Canadian way. Florence and Pamela noted:

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I see that even at school the kids are not told the real things, they say they are

counselling kids at school but what about the mothers? What is the relationship

between the counsellors and the kids and the mothers? How do the mothers learn how

to help the kids when they don't know how to? The people seem afraid of telling the

truth… Now the kids are becoming like our enemies. They are not learning to listen.

(Florence)

If only the single mums could have a kind of support system, a system of support may

be like for example having a group or having people who are interested in them as soon

as they come to teach them for example how do they expect the children to be raised, or

at least somebody who is stay here more who has experience of these children who are

brought here and they go astray, someone to tell them; that is a better school, that is a

better neighbourhood, you better go there to protect your children. If there was this

support, I think there would really a better chance for them (referring to children of

African refugee single mothers) for a better life. (Pamela)

Category 9: Sexual Assault

The last category that I formulated was that of "sexual assault". There was one critical

incident for this category that occurred in the country of temporary residence and it was

reported as a hindering incident. The category consisted of an incident where Jane was

sexually assaulted and raped by a group of men associated with a rebel group in her home

country (she had survived sexual assault by members of the rebel group prior to fleeing). She

reported the incident to UNHCR officials and they acted to protect her by relocating her and

her children to safer housing in the country of first refuge and expediting her refugee claim and

offering her refuge in Canada.

Resources Accessed in the Absence of a Spouse/Partner

As discussed in Chapter Three, data collected from participants concerning the resources they found helpful in the absence of a spouse/partner were subjected to thematic analysis as posited by Braun and Clarke (2006) and as discussed earlier. It was found that no resources specifically tailored to this population (refugee single mothers) were available through agencies that focus on offering services to the refugee and immigrant population (formal system). If these services were available, the participants in the current study were not aware of them. The absence of a spouse/partner was felt most in relation to parenting especially when it came to disciplining older children, work and finances, and companionship.

With respect to the challenges they faced as a result of being resettled without a spouse/partner, the participants reported that they dealt with the issues on their own or sought help from various sources.

Personal Characteristics

Pamela indicated that she relied on her individual character strengths of being hard working and having determination to achieve her goals. After noticing how relationships between refugee husbands and wives had changed after being resettled in Canada, she realized that the presence of her husband may or may not have been helpful to her and their children and so decided to do what she could on her own and be contented. The following words capture her sentiments:

> … but for me if I expect something then I will say to myself, how can you get it? Just leave it, know that it is impossible, just do what can and leave the rest and you will go to bed in peace. I have learned to tailor my expectations to my possibilities… Yea, I am

also determined and hardworking. My principle is that as a woman you can succeed if you want. Not that you can succeed if you have a man. (Pamela)

Downward Comparison

Respondents spoke about looking at individuals that they perceived as being worse-off than them and drawing encouragement from thinking that things could be worse for them. Monica explained how she copes with not having her spouse:

> I even got to know other single mothers like me some even have five even six children and the woman is in the house alone with all those children. That is where I started to see I am not the only one in this situation and I encourage myself. So I tell myself, others are struggling and they are managing even you, you can manage and see…I have.

Personal Belief and Religious Practice

Another helpful resource was going to church, practicing their beliefs and seeking help from people affiliated with churches as these responses by Monica and Susan indicate:

> My faith because I believed God will see us through… So I have faith that feeling lonely will also end and because here our life is not in danger I encouraged myself that loneliness is a passing cloud and I will get used to being alone… . (Monica)

> And once I found a church there in St John's I got the help I needed from the people in the church and then I prayed that God will give me strength to go on alone. After all that is what I was used to, if I have problems I pray and I find others to pray for me. (Susan)

The Presence of Children

Having children constituted a source of strength for the women in the study. They had kept going despite the challenges they faced because they knew their children needed them and the children were a source of companionship and support. In referring to the presence of children in her life, Jane stated:

Having the children is good because they talk with me, they make me feel I have to deal with my stress so I'm there for them. If I was alone and without their father, I could even go back where I came from. They help me, at least I have something to work for. It would be very bad if I was alone, eeeh.

Friends and Acquaintances

The Participants usually spoke with other refugee and immigrant mothers who were either dealing with similar challenges or had dealt with them in the past. They obtained advice from those with more experience on how to deal with the various challenges as demonstrated by this quote from Florence:

Well, when I become friends with Pamela, she become like a mother to me. She advice what to do about the children and things like that. She is very good to me. I speak with her when I have a problem and she help me.

Themes from Additional Information

As discussed in Chapter Three, participants provided other information in the course of the interviews that did not fit into the contextual or critical incidents domain but that was considered pertinent to the research question. In the following section I discuss the results of the analyses of this information. Themes were formulated for this additional information based on the process of thematic analysis as posited by Braun and Clarke (2006) and discussed

earlier. A total of six themes were formulated following the analyses: (a) hopes and dreams, (b) challenges associated with resettlement, (c) benefits of resettlement, (d) psychological distress, (e) looking to the future, and (f) advice on relocating. Each is discussed in turn. The ordering of categories is random and does not indicate any place value.

Hopes and Dreams

This theme reports the expectations that participants had for their relocation before they were resettled and what they had hoped the move portended for them and their children. The women spoke of resettlement in terms of; (i) fulfilment of childhood dreams, (ii) opportunity for a good education, (iii) opportunity for a good career for self, (iv) opportunity to acquire wealth, and (v) opportunity to live in safety. I have elaborated on each of these in turn.

Fulfilment of childhood dreams. Pamela she had always hoped that she would get the opportunity to live in a developed country and viewed her receipt of asylum in Canada as a fulfilment of her dream. She spoke of the opportunities resettlement had afforded her. However, as reported below she had been unaware of the challenges one might encounter in getting settled in the West. This is what she said:

> Sometimes I think moving here is a kind of adventure for me. I had been longing to come to the West since I was a girl but I didn't get the opportunity. And in a way coming here has really widened my horizon, a lot. I can never lie to say that I am the same. I am not the same. I have had a lot of experience here.

Opportunity for a good education. Jane, Esther, Monica and Edith indicated that they did not know anything about a country called Canada until officials working with the UNHCR informed them they had been granted asylum by the government of Canada. However, once they were informed they would be relocating to a country in the developed world, they hoped the

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move would provide the opportunity for them and especially for their children to acquire a world-class education.

Opportunity for a career for self. Florence and Esther who were younger at the time of relocation had hoped to attend school up to post-secondary level in Canada and enter into careers of their choice. This was Florence's experience:

Actually, the hope that I had, I say that when I come here I will go to school and graduate college and get a degree and then I find good job that I like but I couldn't cos I had to support the kids.

Opportunity to acquire wealth. The women had dreams of earning enough money to buy the kinds of things they perceived would make them happier such as better houses and vehicles as illustrated by the following statement by Esther:

… I can have a better house for my family, if I have my education, if I get something… Yea, I think like if I want to get something for my family, like if I have a good education, if a good job, I am going to get what my family wants, like good car, good house, yea.

Opportunity to live in safety. Some respondents had hoped that relocating to Canada would guarantee them the level of personal safety they longed for and yet could not find in their home countries or in the neighbouring countries where they first sought refuge. The following statement captures that hope:

The good thing I think is that Canada is a safe country. No war like Africa. Yea, so I think, there is a way we can have peace we can go to school we can work and all that, yea. (Edith)

Challenges Associated with Re-settlement

In getting settled in Canada, participants spoke about challenges associated with (a) official language proficiency, (b) cultural differences, (c) their single-mother status, and (d) their level of formal education. Each of these is described more fully hereafter.

Official language proficiency. The mothers appraised their resettlement experience as more challenging when they were not proficient in the official language. They experienced difficulties in trying to interact with members of the host society soon after arriving in Canada. Some avoided all but the most unavoidable interactions with members of the host society. Esther described how she dealt with members of the host society who volunteered to bring her family gifts:

> …they say we have to come home, we want to bring some things for you guys. But
> that time I don't even speak any English, I just know how to say hi. So I was just quiet,
> I don't listen what they say.

Participants who were proficient in the English language at the time of arrival in Canada credited that proficiency with more successful outcomes. When asked if she spoke English when she arrived in Canada, Pamela replied, "Yes, and that was my salvation. I cannot imagine what could have happened if I didn't speak English. What can I even say? It would have been really very difficult". Pamela helped other refugee mothers from her home country who were not speakers of either official language by acting as an interpreter for them.

Cultural differences. Cultural differences in how newcomers are received into neighbourhoods were cited as another challenge that participants encountered in trying to get settled in Canada. Participants experienced disappointment and isolation associated with the fact that it is not part of the Canadian culture for neighbours to inquire about the welfare of

individuals who are new to their neighbourhood as this quote from Judith illustrates; "…nobody is coming to help us again, the neighbours don't come to greet you and talk… living in that apartment alone with my daughter was horrible. I could cry all night".

Participants were also surprised at finding out that their new neighbours did not concern themselves with them by inquiring about their single-mother status as happened in their home country or the country where they had first sought refuge. A quote from Monica speaks to her concerns:

> So I was afraid, I didn't know if some people might know I am new here and I don't know anything and they attack us or anything like that. You know how it is to be new, you don't know anything. You don't even know that here in Canada people are not bothered about you especially if you keep to yourself. That is what they like, nobody wants you bothering them, if you keep to yourself then you are ok.

Single-mother status. The most common challenge participants reported they had faced due to their single-mother status, concerned disciplining their children particularly as the children approached adolescence. While the practice in their cultures was that mothers were responsible for the discipline of younger children, fathers or other male members of the extended family dealt with issues related to discipline of older children. The mothers found disciplining older children challenging in the absence of a male figure. Some mothers thought their older children were more likely to obey a father or father-figure than the mother making it easier for males to discipline them. Florence viewed her failure to stop her 18 year old child from leaving home as an indication that she had failed as a mother and questioned her wisdom in removing the children from their native home in Africa. She was not sure her children were benefiting from

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the high calibre education offered in Canada. The following statements capture the essence of the challenges the mothers faced:

Then when kids get big the father can discipline them and kids they fear the father more. So the kids they not miss school or talk badly to mother cos the man in the house he look at kids and they not talk back. (Florence)

But maybe when the kids got bigger he (her husband) could have helped me discipline them and they could have not joined the wrong group.

… it is tough raising kids alone cos you see in Africa even if the man is not there, anybody can discipline kids, here you are on your own and the system doesn't do anything to discipline them. (Pamela)

Respondents also faced financial challenges as a result of their single-mother status. Several experienced difficulties in making enough money to meet the financial needs of the family due to conflict between the need to stay with the children and the need to engage in paid work. In their home countries the mothers were able to leave children alone in the knowledge that neighbours and extended family members would watch the children. They were aware that in Canada it is an offence to leave children under a certain age in the house on their own and they found it challenging to fulfil the requirement as single mothers. As noted by these respondents:

So if my husband was here life would be easier. You see if it is money, two of us would be working so we would have more money and buy more things… . So I think if we had come together we would be very far… when the children were smaller I couldn't work evening or night shift, if their father was here, he would have been working all the

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time he wants, then when he comes home to sleep I leave him the children and I work.

Things would be really good. (Monica)

Yea, the problem with single mother in Canada is the kids. Who to look after the kid.

If you go to work you have no one in the house, you can't leave your kid sleeping, they

will call social services or police and your kid will be taken … Daycare is a lot of

money, more than they pay you. So how can you work? (Janet)

Level of formal education. How participants viewed their situation in terms of formal

education appears to have been influenced by the level of education they had acquired at the time

of arrival in Canada or by the time of the interviews. Respondents who had attained a college

level of education delivered in English before arriving in Canada reported a more enhanced

resettlement experience in terms of; communicating with others, finding paid work in their field,

or retraining.

In contrast, participants who arrived in Canada with minimal or no formal education

experienced difficult in resettlement and did not obtain credentials to enter the work force at

their anticipated level. Low level of education negatively impacted the mothers' ability to

integrate themselves and their children into Canadian society.

Benefits of Resettlement

According to the women the biggest benefit they perceived as accruing from their

relocation and resettlement in Canada was the opportunity their children had to attend school.

While some of them were concerned about their children's failure to thrive academically,

relocating was still beneficial because it had provided their children with the opportunity to

attend school. The threat to personal safety participants dealt with previously was eliminated

by relocating to Canada and that was helpful.

Psychological Distress

Respondents experienced distress associated with isolation, which for most participants had to do with adjusting to a new culture. The mothers felt lonely and even regretted their decision to come to Canada. Some felt overwhelmed by all the things they were expected to learn and remember within a short time such as bus routes and bus numbers. The women also dealt with feelings of deep sadness.

When asked about seeking counselling from a professional such as a counselling psychologist or a professional therapist, one respondent had sought the service but found it unsuitable for her. Most respondents were unaware of the existence of such services. Even if they had been aware of the service, the respondents would still not have sought the help of a professional counsellor/therapist for reasons including; (a) the perception that they were not expected to seek help, (b) concerns about seeking help from a stranger, (c) desire to keep personal matters private, and (d) not being proficient in English. Instead of seeking help from professional counsellors, participants talked about their psychological needs with others like them particularly members of their ethnic communities. When asked about seeking counselling services, Jane answered, "Talk with a person I don't know about my life? What language would they speak? I don't think", and Pamela responded:

> Lucy, you know back home in Africa we don't just talk about our problems with people we don't know. I really didn't know where to find a counsellor but I don't think I can talk with just anyone. When I needed help, I asked the people in the church or just did what I could. (Pamela)

Looking to the Future

Respondents expressed four expectations for the future, (a) the future as difficult, (b) little hope for the children of refugees who came to Canada with their parents, (c) expectation that they (the participants) would be able to return to school, and (d) hopes of returning to their country of origin.

The future as difficult. Participants who had been living in Canada for shorter periods of time (i.e. less than four years) expected to encounter difficulties in the future particularly relating to financial matters and what the children might do/become as noted by one mother:

> Well, the future, the future. I have heard stories, stories and they say life is tough in the future… Well, people who got here before me and they say that life is really tough, really tough. They say that once a person starts working life gets really tough because the support is reduced. (Jane)

Little hope for the children. Participants perceived the children of African refugees who came to Canada with their parents as a lost generation. Some children of the mothers as well as children from other families in their communities dropped out of school. Pamela was contented with what the future portended for her own children. However she was concerned that there appeared to be no hope of a good future for some of the children from her community, based on the number of children from the community who had dropped out of school and/or were engaging in illegal activities as the following quote illustrates:

> I don't know, I don't know, what the future really bonds for them. When I look at them (her children) as individuals, they might pick up somewhere. But thinking about them for example as a nation of their age now who have come to the West, there is very little hope. Very little hope for them. (Pamela)

Return to school. Some respondents were keeping their hope of acquiring formal education alive. Florence hoped to return to language school with the view to reaching the level of proficiency in English that would allow her to obtain a university degree. Esther had plans to relocate from Calgary to a city where she had been told the funding rules would allow her to remain in school longer until she could acquire the level of language proficiency required to enter a post-secondary institution to pursue the career of her choice. Esther's statement captures this hope:

> Yea, I think it's going to happen because I still, I have to go somewhere else to try to go
>
> to school… Like in Toronto and like in Ottawa the people who live there, they say that
>
> you have to go to school for all the year you want to go to school. (Esther)

Return to their country of origin. Several respondents hoped that in future they would return to their countries of origin. Some had the desire to save enough money while living in Canada and return to their home countries to engage in business ventures and take care of themselves and their relatives in keeping with cultural expectations. Other respondents expected to return to their home countries in their old age so as to avoid the possibility of living out their last days in a care facility in Canada. This is how Judith and Monica saw the future:

> I want to get a good education and go back home and get a good job at home. I hope
>
> my kids will also have good education so we can go back and have a good life. I not
>
> want to get old in Canada cos here they put you in home but in Africa you stay with
>
> your family. So I hope I go to school and go home before I am old. (Judith)
>
> I am just like many people from Africa, I think of the day I will have a lot of money
>
> and hope may be peace will return to our country and I will go back home to grow old
>
> there. But only God knows. (Monica)

Advice for Those Considering Relocation

The final theme formulated from the additional information centred on what the women would tell others from their home country considering seeking refuge in Canada specifically, or in the West in general. Participants indicated they would advise others to (a) wait out the conflict, (b) let the children grow up in Africa, and (c) consider coming only for the educational opportunities.

Wait out the conflict. It was respondents' view that it might be more helpful to do whatever one can to preserve their life and that of their children for the duration of the conflict in their home country instead of seeking refuge in the developed world. Some cited the challenges (e.g. loneliness and children's delinquency) associated with trying to settle in a foreign country as the reason they thought that for some individuals "waiting out the conflict" might be the better option. For example, women from some countries were of the opinion that the civil conflict that precipitated their departure from their home countries appeared to be subsiding. The women perceived those who had remained in the country as having better chances at being part of the rebuilding their countries than individuals like them who had sought refuge far away and so believed remaining home had been more helpful than resettling in Canada.

Let the children grow up in Africa. According to the respondents, t it is much easier to raise children up in Africa and they would advise mothers to "do their best to let their children grow up in Africa". Bringing their children to Canada had exposed them to a culture in which it had been difficult for them to grow into responsible adults and so they suggested it would be better for individuals and let their children attend school in Africa than bringing them to the

west. The advantages of having children grow up in Africa included the ability of parents to discipline and direct their children in familiar ways as noted by this respondent:

> If it was really not a desperate situation that the person really want to rescue, I wouldn't advice the person to come. Because if it is for school, there are good schools back in Africa, Kids can go to school there, they can be successful… I would really advice the person to really try their best to have children grow in Africa. (Pamela)

Come to the West only for better education. The women would not advise mothers to relocate with children but would consider advising young people who already had a high school diploma to seek refuge as a means of attaining a post-secondary education. They enumerated the many challenges faced by those who come to Canada without a high school diploma and so considered it better to come when the individual has a high school diploma. Participants thought those who come to Canada to attend post-secondary institutions stand a better chance of being successful as noted by Susan, "If someone wants to come I think they should come to university or college only aiming to get a good education and try and go back to help our country".

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Summary

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In this chapter I have presented the findings from the current study. I started by reporting on the nine themes formulated from a thematic analysis of the two contextual questions. Then I reported on the nine categories formulated from the analyses of the resettlement experience questions followed by findings about the resources participants accessed in the absence of their spouse/partner. Finally, I reported on the six themes formulated from the thematic analysis of additional information that participants provided in the course of the interviews.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this exploratory study was to gain an understanding of the resettlement experience of African refugee mothers who moved to Canada/Calgary without a spouse or partner. In this chapter I first discuss the findings of the current study by comparing them with relevant literature. I then discuss the limitations of the study. Following this, I discuss the implications of the findings for theory, research, and practise. I conclude with a reflection on my own journey through the study.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this exploratory study bring to light the very real challenges and courage of African refugee women who resettle in Canada/Calgary with their children and without a spouse/partner. Furthermore, these findings break new ground in understanding the resettlement experience of lone African refugee women settling in Canada with their children. In this section, I first discuss contextual information in terms of how the participants met the criteria of being refugees and their reasons for fleeing their homes. Following that, I discuss the experience of resettlement based on the nine categories I formulated using the CIT. Next, I discuss the experience of resettlement in terms of the six themes I developed from a thematic analysis of the additional information provided in the participant interviews. Finally, I discuss the findings of the current study in relation to theories of transition. The findings are discussed in relation to relevant literature from the fields of family research, transition and acculturation theories, cross-cultural transitions as well as immigrant and refugee research.

Contextual Information

As indicated in earlier chapters, the purpose of the contextual questions was to determine whether or not individuals met criteria for participation in terms of being refugees and the

reasons for fleeing their home countries. All seven participants in the study reported that they had left their homes due to armed conflict and had crossed an international border in search of protection. This is supported by existing literature that has reported civil conflict as the principal cause for displacement (Harbom & Wallensteen, 2005, 2007). Participants defined refugees as people who leave their homes due to **e**xperiencing threat to life, having personal property destroyed, being in need of protection, requiring to be settled in another country, and wanting to seek a better life. All these definitions are supported by existing literature particularly the definition put forward by the United Nations (United Nations Convention 1951 as cited in Martin, 2004).

That some participants reported "seeking a better life" as a reason why persons may become refugees may be understood in the context of the participants' countries of origin (i.e., all had been resettled from poor countries in Africa) and may also speak to the participants' expectation of the opportunities inherent in being resettled in the West for them and their children. This expectation has implications for practice in that the outcomes for refugees in terms of social indicators as measured by education and economic well-being do not appear to reflect a fulfilment of this hope.

The Experience of Resettlement using the CIT

The purpose of the resettlement questions using the CIT was to explore how African refugee single mothers who are resettled in Canada understand the experience of their resettlement. Specifically my aim was to identify what helped, what hindered, what resources participants accessed in the absence of a spouse/partner, and what resources participants' thought would have enhanced their resettlement experience if they had been available. Following analyses of the resettlement questions portion of the interviews I formulated nine categories: (a)

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Support, (b) Self Preservation, (c) Adjustment to Canadian Ways, (d) Awareness of Personal Limitations, (e) Housing, (f) Education, (g) Finances, (h) Parenting, and (i) Sexual Assault. I begin by discussing how each of the categories I formulated compares with existing literature.

Category 1: Support. In this category it was reported that participants received support from three sources: friends and acquaintances, the formal system (i.e., designated refugee and immigrant agencies), and the informal system (i.e., agencies such as religious organizations that gave support though not officially designated to do so). Each participant reported that either she had been in the company of relatives and/or neighbours when she arrived in the country of first refuge or she was able to quickly connect with individuals from her home country already resident in the country. Participants who did not already have contact with members of their ethnic community reported that they tried to get connected to such individuals soon after they were settled into a neighbourhood in Canada. The kinds of support that participants reported receiving from friends and acquaintances included (a) information on a wide variety of issues including registering as an asylum seeker in the country of first refuge; (b) accessing affordable housing, employment opportunities, and ethno-cultural products after arriving in Canada; and (c) practical support such as help with constructing the temporary house in the country of first refuge and being offered a ride to places they needed to go while living in Canada. It appears that friends and acquaintances played the roles that may have been played by family in the participants' home countries; in essence they became the family participants did not have.

As all these participants were of African descent, it would be normative for them to seek to quickly become members of a community because in the cultures of Africa, community living is preferred to individuals living independently. Existing literature (Clarke, 2009; Weine, et al., 2011) supports the idea that individuals would seek support from members of their ethnic

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community in the new country as living in close proximity to others like themselves was reported to make new immigrants and refugees feel more at home.

The support that the refugee women received from the formal system while they lived in Canada appears to have been more instrumental, measured, and at times inadequate. Support from the formal sector included services such as (a) registering the women as asylum seekers,issuing supplies such as materials for building shelter, and distributing food and medication as required in the country of first refuge; (b) organizing participants' freight from countries of first refuge to Canada as well as organizing reception at points of entry; and (c) orientating participants to the basics of living in Canada such as banking, healthcare, grocery shopping ,and schooling for mother and children. The women reported it was their perception that agency workers did not appear to be very concerned about their welfare and that of their children. Some participants reported that some agency staff appeared to give preferential treatment to mothers from their own ethnic origin to the detriment of the other mothers in the group. They expressed concern about being moved into houses that were too expensive for their income, not receiving adequate or appropriate information, and feeling abandoned by the system.

In the study by Wasik (2006), refugee women reported experiencing the trauma of feeling neglected by the system after being resettled in the greater Vancouver area. Participants in that study reported living in isolation and poverty. It appears that the same view was held by refugee women resettled in other cities as well since the women in the current study had been resettled in several different cities within Canada. The findings of the current study appear to be consistent with Wasik's report, even though the studies were conducted in different Canadian cities.

It seems that the support participants received from the informal system served to either replace or supplement what they should have received from the formal system. For example,

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participants reported that the services of the resettlement counsellor ceased to be available to them after the counsellor had helped them to move into their first house/apartment even though they (participants) still needed help. The women reported that they sought the support of the informal system at that point in the resettlement process usually because they felt abandoned by the system that had brought them here. Some of the religious organizations from which these refugee mothers received support also served as ethnic community organizations in that they were organized around the ethnic origins of the participants. Even when not identified as specific to a particular ethnic group, religious organizations particularly those based on the main world religions such as Islam and Christianity do tend to attract larger numbers of ethnic minorities and so provide a place where minority newcomers can start to feel more at home.

The finding of participants' impressions that they ought not to seek more support from formal agencies appears to be unique as it is not reported in the literature. If indeed it was the case that participants were expected to deal with issues such as shopping and travel within the city on their own after being shown what to do once, the situation presents implications for service. If, on the other hand, it is the case that the services were still available and the women did not know that they were, then the implications for practise still exist but are different. The challenge for service providers appears to be the need to find out how to make the services they offer more appropriate and/or accessible and to create the perception of that availability and accessibility for the service users.

That the mothers would seek help from religious organizations in particular has been reported by previous authors (see Collins, 2008; Finch & Vega, 2003). Collins argued that many refugees and immigrants come from societies where religious/spiritual affiliation is regarded as an integral part of wellbeing. It can therefore be expected that these newcomers are likely to

gravitate towards these organizations, particularly as they seek to restore balance in their lives. Finch and Vega (2003) have posited that for refugees and immigrants, religious and ethnic communities appear to provide the kind of social support that they would otherwise receive from the extended family network in their home countries. Clarke (2009) reported that the refugee single mothers in that study also indicated that they had received support from a church.

In the current study, the mothers appeared to have utilized these informal agencies not just as places to find social support but also as a resource for dealing with psychological distress. Religious activity appears to have been a coping mechanism for dealing with isolation and the experience of loneliness they reported. Lowered social support has been reported to be a main concern for immigrants and refugees particularly during the early part of the resettlement. Lowered social support is associated with the experience of loneliness due to isolation (Mawani, 2008). It would appear that having already gone through the experience of the loss of social support as a result of being displaced from their original homes, these mothers may have learned ways of quickly establishing new social networks that provided them with the support they required. Religious communities appear to be the groups of choice, at least for many in the current study, probably because these communities provide a sense of continuity for the newcomer.

A woman who indicated that she had received a referral for professional counselling due to perceived pre-migration trauma, reported that she preferred to undertake the religious ritual of prayer instead of attending therapy. This finding is supported by existing literature as it has been reported that despite the presence of higher levels of psychological disorders such as depression and PTSD among refugees, members of this population tend to report low levels of utilization of mental health services (Gudzer et al., 2011; Sepali & Collins, 2008).

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Category 2: Self preservation. The very act of leaving one's home and all that is familiar behind, often times without being sure where the road they have taken will lead, has to be the greatest act towards self-preservation. According to the UNHCR, a refugee is:

> A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations Convention 1951 as cited in Martin, 2004).

The above definition also implies that by taking the action of leaving their home countries to seek protection, the participants in the current study were engaged in exercises of self-preservation. In order to be considered a refugee and afforded provisions and protection including the possibility of third country resettlement by the UNHCR, an individual has to self-identify as needing this protection by applying to the agency and presenting oneself for interview. All the women in the current study reported that when they arrived either at the refugee camp (for the three who reported residing in a refugee camp prior to resettlement) or in the town where they resided in the country of first refugee, they were advised to register as asylum seekers. All registered and later presented themselves for interview in the hope that they would be granted passage to a safe country such as Canada.

Much reporting on refugees tends to focus on their perceived vulnerability and needs for assistance and protection. Refugees and especially refugee women are often portrayed as victims of the gross misdeeds of combatant and post-conflict peacekeepers in terms of sexual abuse, poor

services, poverty and disease (Forster & Forster, 2010; Guerin, Allotey, Elmi, & Baho, 2010; Hayes, 2004; Notar, 2006; UNFPA, 2008). The findings of the current study appear to portray the image of a group of women who despite experiencing much suffering and pain have purposefully taken certain decisive actions aimed at not just preserving their lives and those of their children but creating what they viewed as opportunities to escape from violence for the long term and opening new possibilities for upward social mobility.

Category 3: Adjustment to Canadian ways. This category included the actions that participants took as they tried to get settled in their new home (i.e., Canada) after arriving in the country as government sponsored refugees. Those participants who were not proficient in English when they arrived in Canada reported that they had registered in English language classes and done their best to acquire at least a working knowledge of the language that would enable them to access employment opportunities and ability to interact with the society. One mother who had resided in Canada for less than three years reported that she was still enrolled in language classes and was planning to remain in class until she gained a working knowledge of the language so that she could enter the workplace. Others reported that they had taken every opportunity to acquire knowledge in different areas.

While refugee women are expected to learn the language and a skill or trade to enable them to enter the workplace, it appears that there is limited funding for them to do so. Some of the women reported that low levels of funding had led to their decision to stop taking classes before they had attained reasonable levels of language proficiency. Those who had attained professional credentials from their home countries reported that they encountered difficulties with getting their foreign credentials recognized in Canada. One mother reported that she retrained in a field she was not interested in, decided not to seek employment in the field and

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then eventually got hired within her profession. Another reported that she had retrained for a different occupation and indicated that she felt she had no choice but to enter the occupation the adviser suggested because she knew that she was required to find work and pay bills.

These findings are supported by previous research in that refugees are reported to be at higher risk for experiencing the double challenge of having to learn a new language and non-recognition of foreign earned credentials. Independent class immigrants who have to meet language requirements as a precondition for admission into Canada still face challenges associated with foreign credential recognition (Alberta Network of Immigrant Women, 2000; Arthur, 2000; Kustec ,Thompson & Li, 2007; Li, 2008) but at least they already have the language capability.

Murray, Davidson and Schweiter (2010) reported that time-limited access to resources by refugees due to government policies may not be adequate for successful resettlement. This appears to have been the case for some participants in the current study as far as adjusting to the Canadian way of living is concerned. Even those participants who reported that they did not attend formal school or work in paid employment in their countries of origin or during their residence in the country of first refuge, reported their willingness to study and work because they perceived getting formal education and entering the workforce as basic requirements for being Canadian. There appears to be some disconnect between what refugee single mothers who are resettled in Canada would like to do/become and the resources provided that would aid them in attaining these goals. This has implications for their welfare, the welfare of their children and for the society in general as having a larger number of families dependent on social support will likely put a strain on national resources.

Category 4: Awareness of personal limitations. In the current inquiry, participants reported being aware that they would need to utilize external resources in order to meet certain needs. They engaged in various actions, such as using a daughter as an intermediary between the mother and service providers because the child was a speaker of English. Another way in which the women demonstrated an awareness of their own limitations was by finding members of their ethnic group to help in interpreting what was said. The use of children as intermediaries between parents and the host society has been previously reported by Giordano, (2007) as well as by Jones, Trickett, and Birman, (2012). A participant who was not a speaker of English reported that she requested the resettlement agency to provide her with someone to help with navigating the Canadian school system. These and other incidents are indicative of the resourcefulness of these refugee single mothers.

Category 5: Housing. The women's experiences and wishes concerning housing appear to have been framed by their situation as it pertained to the duration and the success (as defined by official language acquisition and/or earning power) of their resettlement experience. For those who had been residing in Canada for shorter periods of time and were not engaged in paid work, the high cost of private rental houses and lack of access were the main challenges they reported faced them in finding appropriate housing. For the three participants who indicated that they were engaged in regular full time paid work, access to adequate housing did not appear to pose any challenges as they reported being adequately housed. Indeed two out of the three participants indicated that they had previously resided in affordable housing and maintained that they had found the conditions (i.e., the requirements imposed by social services on those who reside in affordable housing) under which they lived in the houses stifling and they had elected to vacate these houses in favour of private rentals and/or purchasing a home. One woman reported

that she was unhappy with the location of her rental house and was saving money for a down payment so she could purchase her own home for the family in a more desirable neighbourhood.

Current literature supports part of this finding while larger parts are unsupported. It has been reported that refugee women tend to be at higher risk for poverty which includes poor housing (Wasik, 2006) and that refugees in general do face barriers (due to perceived high cost and discrimination) to accessing decent housing (Westerby, 2006; Philips, 2006). Ambert (2006) reported that female OPFs are at higher risk for living in undesirable neighbourhoods, for living in poverty and may not achieve home ownership. The report by Ambert appears to imply that this may not be a transient but rather a permanent situation for female OPFs but in the current study some participants had already achieved home ownership, others were actively involved in measures leading to home ownership, and still others appeared to envision themselves owning homes and indeed getting out of poverty in the future if they received appropriate support. The findings of the current study appear to point to possible differences between female OPFs from the host population and those who arrive in the country as refugee female OPFs and may suggest implications for theory and practice in terms of how well existing theory explains their situation and what interventions may be helpful for this group.

Category 6: Education. Some participants reported poor outcomes (e.g. dropping out of school, not achieving good grades though attending school regularly) for their children. They attributed these to their own lack of formal education as this limited their understanding of the material covered at school and their ability to help their children; cultural differences in terms of child-rearing, which left them unable to discipline their children leading to truancy and delinquency; and what they perceived as unwillingness of the society to adequately counsel their children on the value of good formal education.   The findings concerning poor education

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outcomes are supported by research for refugee families and for female OPFs (Ambert, 2006; Marks, 2006; Okitikpi &Aymer, 2003; Walsh et al., 2011). It is unclear whether female OPFs from the host population would attribute these outcomes in their families to the same factors that refugee female OPFs do, but findings from the current study suggest that refugee single mothers realized their own need for a good education and were seeking assistance in achieving that goal.

In the current study those women who arrived in the country without being proficient in English reported that they had only acquired conversational ability in the language. They attributed this to limited funding towards their education, the requirement for them to repay the travel loans, and the high cost of living especially the cost of housing when compared to their current income from government transfer funds.

Category 7: Finances. The women reported that they received adequate funding from the government at the time of arrival and for the following year. However, they expressed concern over reduction in funding after the first year in Canada, especially as most had not yet acquired the level of formal education they had planned to have and were not ready to enter the work force. Some of them reported that they opted to enter the workforce as unskilled labourers although that was not their original intention. Others appeared to be living on government transfers, which meant that they may have been living at the poverty line. In her report on the financial state of female OPF households, Ambert (2006) indicated similar findings. Living in poverty may have been related to some of the other challenges participants were facing such as difficulties with parenting.

Category 8: Parenting. Mothers reported the presence of conflict between themselves and their adolescent children, which for some had resulted in what they viewed as family breakdown. Some attributed this to, among other things, their lack of understanding of the host

culture in terms of the relationship between parents and children. This may well suggest the existence of differences in the level of acculturation to the host culture between children and their parents in this sample, with children adapting to the practices of the host culture faster than the parents and therefore creating discord. Morantz, Rousseau, and Heyman, (2012) and Tardiff-Williams and Fisher, (2009) reported that differences in levels of acculturation between the younger and older generations in the same family appear to be common in immigrant and refugee families and to be a source of child-parent conflict.

Participants also reported that they thought the absence of a male figure to handle the discipline of the children especially as their children grew older was contributing to the challenges they were facing in parenting. It is common in African cultures for the father and/or other males in the family to be custodians of social mores and to enforce these on the children (André, et al. 2010. The participants in the current study appeared to share the view that their older children would be less likely to exhibit improper behaviour if there was a father or a father-figure in their lives.

In discussing the findings of the current study I faced challenges as I attempted to compare findings from the study with existing literature because of a paucity of research specifically exploring the resettlement of this population.

Resources Accessed in the Absence of Spouse/Partner

Participants in the current study reported that they were not aware of any resources available to them as refugee single mothers that they would be able to access to mitigate the challenges they associated with having been resettled without their spouse/partner. This notwithstanding, they reported personal characteristics of determination and hard work coupled with a belief in the ability of a woman to be successful, downward comparison, personal belief

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and religious practice, presence of children, and friends and acquaintances as resources that they had relied on.

Existing literature cites resiliency as a personality trait that mitigates the stress that results from resettlement in African refugees (Khawaja, White, Schweitser & Greenslade , 2008; Sherwood & Leibling-Kalifani, 2012). This then supports the finding that in what participants perceived as the absence of services that were tailored to their specific needs, they would turn to their inner strengths. Clarke (2009) reported that refugee single mothers in the study who did not have family nearby indicated that they had learned to rely on themselves and be strong. Having children was also reported as a source of strength and the motivation to persist (Clarke, 2009). Other authors have reported the positive effect of religious practice in reducing the stress of resettlement for refugee women (Chilongo, 2010; Finch & Vega, 2003).

Resettlement Themes from Additional Information

As discussed in Chapter Four, participants provided other information in the course of the interviews that did not fit into the contextual or critical incidents domain but that was deemed pertinent to the experience of resettlement. Six themes were formulated: (a) hopes and dreams, (b) challenges associated with resettlement, (c) benefits of resettlement, (d) psychological distress, (e) looking to the future, and (f) advice on relocating. Each of these further adds to our understanding of the experience of resettlement and each is discussed in turn here.

Hopes and dreams. The first theme reported had to do with the womens' hopes and dreams about what the resettlement would afford them and their children that they harboured as they embarked on the journey to Canada. In particular, participants reported that they had hoped that relocation would provide them and their children with opportunity to obtain a good education, to find a good career for themselves, to acquire wealth, and to live in safety. Existing

research (Anjum, Nordqvist & Timka, 2012) has reported that hope, especially the hope for attainment of a good education and higher SES in the country of their resettlement, is common among newly resettled refugees. Some of the women in the current study reported that they viewed the attainment of a good education as the door to achieving all their other hopes. This may have been the same reasoning held by participants in the Anjum et al. (2012) study. If refugees arrive in the country of resettlement with the hope of getting a good education and the accompanying higher SES as literature and the current study appear to imply, then one might wonder what happens in the course of their stay that results in the poor outcomes as reported in current literature (Kazemipur & Halli, 2001; Okitikpi & Aymer, 2003) . These findings have implications for policy and research in that it would be helpful both to the refugees and their children and the host nation to understand and put interventions in place to reverse what appears to be the current trend, where refugees arrive in the country with high hopes that remain unrealised.

Challenges to resettlement. Participants reported facing challenges associated with proficiency in the official language, cultural differences between the host society and society of origin, single mother status, and their level of education. Lack of fluency in an official language and either lack of or nonrecognition of foreign credentials have been reported as challenges likely to influence the integration of newcomers into Canadian society (Alvarez, 1999). As well, the effects of cultural differences on child-parent relationships and parenting outcomes for immigrant and refugee families have been documented. What stands out however is the finding that these mothers are not satisfied with their current situation and they are doing what they can to deal with these challenges. What appears to be lacking is the external help they need so as to overcome the challenges they are dealing with. For example, education acquisition for the

mother is dependent on availability of sustained financial support to meet the cost of living and childcare so she can attend classes.

Benefits of resettlement. Participants reported the opportunity for their children to attend school and obtain a good Canadian education as the greatest benefit of relocating. Others reported that they considered the opportunity to live in a safe country a benefit of relocation. Participants in the current study appeared to be dealing with doubt in relation to whether their own children were/would actually benefit from the opportunities for a good education that the mothers perceived the children to have received by being relocated. They reported what they perceived as failure by children from their ethno-cultural group to do well at school. McBrien (2005), reported that while a western class education is an attraction for refugees, system and individual factors sometimes negatively affect education outcomes for their children. The kinds of barriers the mothers in the current study identified such as insufficient or inaccurate information given to their children have implications for practice. Career and school counsellors need to tailor services to meet the needs of the children of refugees as many of them come from homes where parents are not educated and therefore may not be able to counsel their children on matters pertaining to education achievement.

Psychological distress. Although participants reported experiencing distress associated with the stress of resettlement, most indicated that they did not seek counselling services. The reasons they gave for not seeking services included lack of knowledge about what counselling was and what therapy could do for them, the perception that participants were not expected to seek help, concerns about seeking help from a stranger, desire to keep personal matters private, and not being proficient in English. Gudzer and colleagues (2011) and also Sepali and Collins

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(2008) have reported the tendency for low utilization of mental health services by immigrants and refugees. These findings have implications for practice.

Looking to the future. In speaking about the future, the women painted two different pictures. On the one side, they talked about a gloomy future that they saw as likely to be difficult for them and their children where they appeared to see little hope for the children of refugees who came to Canada with their parents. However, some participants talked of a future in which they would be able to return to school to work towards attaining the level of education they had hoped to get by coming to Canada while others talked of returning to their country of origin in the future after acquiring education and wealth. That participants held out hope for a better future in spite of the challenges they were dealing with at the time, speaks to their resilience and determination, which have been reported in existing literature for instance by Baya, Simich, and Bukhari (2008). Participants' assessment about what the future holds for them and particularly for their children and indeed the children from other African refugee families calls for concerted and new approaches with respect to how the resettlement of these families is organized. These reports appear to suggest the necessity to institute change to the existing policy and practice.

Advice for those considering relocation. One of the most unexpected as well as surprising finding from the current study was the advice that participants reported they had for others from their countries of origin who may be considering relocating to the West. All participants reported that they would advise against relocating unless the individual/family was in "a very dire situation". Indeed, they reported that it might prove more helpful to relocate to a neighbouring country or to "wait out the conflict" in their own country than to relocate to the West, especially for those with children. One participant reported that her friends who stayed

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back home appeared to have better outcomes especially relating to children's education and general life achievement than those who were resettled in Canada. Those whose countries have returned to a semblance of peace since they were resettled spoke about missing out on being part of the rebuilding effort because they were living in Canada and their pre-resettlement hopes of acquiring a good education and building wealth have not materialized so they are unable to return home. A search of existing literature did not bring forth research in which similar findings have been reported. The implications for research are that further work would be helpful. In terms of policy and practise the above findings raise the question of where are we going wrong? How is it that five, seven, ten or more years after being resettled, these refugee mothers are yearning for the homes they fled? The yearning is not just about missing kith and kin; it is that they believe that they and their children have missed out on the benefits the resettlement had promised even if by implication.

Current Study and Theories of Transition

The findings of the current study may be understood in terms of Schlossberg's (1981) transition theory that was reviewed in Chapter Two and are discussed in that context here.

A transition may be defined as any event or non-event that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006) and may be anticipated, unanticipated, or non-event. In relating the experience of resettlement to these theories, it is clear that resettlement is complex and cannot be explained as a single change but as a series of many transitions. Some transitions such as the journey to Canada could be termed anticipated. Some, such as leaving one's home country without knowing where they are going, may be considered unanticipated, while many others, such as attainment of a good level of education, was a non-event for most participants in the current study.

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This theory appears to have the capacity to explain participants' experience of adapting to the transition as it takes into account characteristics of the transition, characteristics of pretransition and posttransition environments, and characteristics of the individual. In the current study the factors that appear to have exerted more influence on adaptation are the pre and post transition environments and the characteristics of the individual participant.

Factors such as level of formal education and official language proficiency appear to be the environmental factors that most affected adaptation to the transition of resettling in Canada. Individuals who reported that they had attained post-secondary education and were proficient in English at the time of arrival reported better outcomes (i.e., showed better adaptation to Canadian society) in terms of SES and outcomes for their children. Level of formal education appears to be directly related to adaptation as the two participants who reported some level of formal education were engaged in paid employment at the time of the interview while those who had no formal education were unemployed and living on social support.

The individual characteristic that appeared to exert more influence on adaptation was psychosocial competence and value orientation. A participant who reported deciding not to concern herself with acquiring a lot of material goods (a value orientation) reported experiencing less distress associated with what goods she did or did not possess and not experiencing distress in relation to having to live on a reduced income.

Limitations of the Current Study

As with any exploratory study, there are limitations that need to be identified. The following are the limitations of the current study:

Firstly, since data collected relied on events as they were remembered by the participants, it was assumed that participants would be accurate and truthful in recalling and reporting such events. As it was not possible to test what participants remembered and reported, it may well be that their recall and reporting was not accurate.

Secondly, the reports were based on the participants' perception and memory. Consequently, there exists the possibility of selective recall based on the events being recalled and personality characteristics of the participant.

Third, because the approach to the study relied on recall, participants may have tended to emphasize unusual events and to miss more common ones and therefore the data collected may have been at risk of being skewed in favour of the more novel events.

Fourth, participants may not have been willing to recall certain aspects of an event based on their appraisal of its information. In particular, since the participants reported going through various potentially traumatic events, it may well be that they elected not to report those events.

Fifth, some of the participants had low language proficiency and this appeared to affect their understanding of questions and the depth of their answers. This was particularly so for participants who had learned English only since their arrival in Canada and for whom English was the only language shared by them and me.

Sixth, Butterfield et al. (2005) proposed a total of nine credibility checks that may be used in establishing the soundness of the results in a CIT study. I was able to implement five of these. Having access to two or more experts in the field to seek their opinion regarding the appropriateness of the categories formed from the data set would have enhanced the credibility of the findings.

Implications of the Findings

As noted in Chapter Three, the current study was exploratory in nature and therefore in this discussion on the proposed implications of the findings, I will take a broad approach so as to open different avenues for the application of the findings. I discuss the implications of these findings for theory, for research, and for practise.

Implications for Theory

Existing literature on theories of acculturation and cross-cultural transition has tended to come from research that has tested the theories on immigrants and refugees as a single group, yet there exist significant differences between these two groups that could influence how they experience resettlement. The possibility of differences that might affect resettlement may also exist between different categories of refugees (i.e., two-parent families, families without children, unaccompanied males, unaccompanied females, unaccompanied minors and adolescents, and single mother families) and so testing the theories on each of these groups is suggested. The participants in the current study have identified experiences (e.g., balancing childcare-study/work conflicts, children's discipline, and loneliness/isolation) that they believed were unique to them as a population that impacted their resettlement experience. Testing theories with this population would allow for determination of the suitability of the theories in explaining their experience and/or directions for modification.

Implications for Research

The current study was an exploratory study, the purpose of which was to explore the resettlement experience of African refugee single mothers who are resettled in Canada/Calgary. A search of existing literature revealed a dearth of research with this particular population pertaining to all outcomes, not just those specific to resettlement. Further research with this

population is warranted. Also, as this was an exploratory study, there is a need to develop the work further. For example, in future studies, it may be helpful to expand the study in its current form to include a larger group.

It is clear that there has been little research on the resettlement experiences of lone refugee mothers who arrive in the host country with children. Hence, the current study might be expanded to include not only a larger but possibly a more diverse (in terms of countries of origin, pre-migration education levels and SES, wider range of children's age in order to allow for assessment of outcomes for children) sample.

There appears to be a need to assess the validity of existing theories and models of acculturation and cross-cultural transition with this population. Models that may be tested include but are not limited to "The International Study of Attitudes Towards Immigration and Settlement" (Berry, 2006) and RAEM (Navas et al., 2005).

Participants in the current study reported that they were under the impression that they were not expected to seek support from the resettlement agency after they were moved into their first house/apartment in Canada. Some participants stopped seeking help from the agencies after only a few weeks, yet it has been reported that for refugees settled in Alberta, receiving a higher number of settlement services during the first year in Canada was associated with greater improvements in both mental and physical health status (Sherwood & Liebling-Kalifani, 2012). More research needs to be done to explore whether the understanding reported by the sample in the current study is representative or unique to the sample. Findings indicating similar perceptions from others might indicate the need for these resettlement agencies to better inform these clients (newly arrived refugee mothers with children and without a spouse/partner) in clearer terms what services the agency will continue to offer and for how long.

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The findings from the current study appear to suggest possible differences between outcomes for refugee female OPFs and female OPFs of the host population. This posed challenges in applying the existing literature to explaining outcomes for refugee OPFs. These differences may be rooted in the fact of the different paths to single parenthood between refugee women and those from the host society, or there may be other factors at play. This suggests that there is a need for research that focusses on outcomes for this group of female OPFs.

Implications for Practice

One of the advantages of the CIT as it was applied in the current study is that the method allows for participants to suggest how their experience may have been enhanced through the extraction of wish-list items. I believe the potential for effectiveness of a service increases when the needs and expectations of the service users are incorporated into the planning of that service. With this in mind, I have used information contained in the wish-list items that participants provided as the bases for the proposed implications. I discuss the implications for practice from a policy perspective and then from a counselling perspective.

Implications for policy. As Bourhis and colleagues (1997) argued, government policies can enhance or hinder the successful acculturation of newcomers into the host culture. Findings from the current study indicate that participants viewed some policies to have hindered their resettlement. In particular policies related to level and duration of services such as resettlement caseworkers, financial support for living expenses, credential acquisition, and travel loan repayments were noted for the negative impacts they were perceived to have had on the participants and their children. It would be helpful for policy to become responsive to the needs of these refugee single mothers with a view to providing a level of service that allows them to become self-supporting and productive members of the society instead of the status quo which

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appears to move a large number of those women and their families towards becoming dependent on social assistance.

Continued funding for education and child-care would be especially helpful bearing in mind that while a two-parent family may have options of alternating work/schooling with childcare between the two adults, refugee female OPFs do not have that option and often the mother opts to get out of school and work in order to care for children. The findings of the current study indicated that all the participants who had arrived in Canada without grade school education reported that they had anticipated the acquisition of a high school diploma and entrance into a career as a major benefit of resettlement. As of the time of the interview, only one of the participants had attained that goal and although some appeared to still hold out hope, others appeared to have decided that it might not be possible for them to achieve that dream.

Implications for counselling. The women in the current study reported a lack of awareness of the availability of counselling and mental health services that exist for them and their children. They reported being aware of the counselling services offered to students at school. When informed about the availability of counselling for psychological needs, the women expressed their misgivings about seeking counselling, citing cultural preferences about keeping family matters within the family as opposed to sharing them with strangers. They also expressed concerns that practitioners may not understand them (not just because of possible language barriers, but also because of perceived cultural differences) and appeared unsure how helpful therapy might be for them. It is imperative for practitioners to develop better ways to inform newcomers about the services we offer. It is also necessary for practitioners to acquire culturally appropriate skills so that they are able to offer services that a culturally diverse population would perceive as appropriate for them. In particular, practitioners need to be open to

exploring each individual's circumstances while taking care not to perpetrate stereotypes about any of the disadvantaged groups that a refugee single mother of African descent might possibly belong to (Gustafson (2008), such as single mothers, refugees, people of colour, low SES, and many more. It would also be helpful for practitioners to not only be aware that many newcomers come from societies in which religious rituals are part of wellbeing and wholeness, but also to be prepared to acknowledge and accommodate clients' views about religious affiliation and/or spirituality.

Participants reported challenges associated with parenting in the new culture. They wished that someone would organize groups composed of newcomer refugee single mothers and culturally similar women who have successfully raised children in Canada from whom the refugee mothers would learn parenting skills that are appropriate to the Canadian culture. Practitioners could consider running groups along the suggested lines and acting as facilitators.

Another challenge participants addressed was associated with poor outcomes for their children in terms of truancy and other problem behaviours. It appears that the mothers believe that their children are not well informed about what they are required to do in order to be successful (as measured by economic indicators of SES and education attainment) within Canadian society. One participant indicated that role modelling by people of African descent who have grown up in Canada and become successful could help the children of refugee mothers to become more determined to succeed. Practitioners working with refugee children whether in the community or within the school system may consider contacting and working with appropriate individuals as role models for the children of refugee single mothers. It may be helpful for practitioners to plan counselling aimed at imparting parenting skills to the mothers. It appears that the mothers were rather interested in seeing their children succeed at school and life

generally and tailoring services around the success of their children may attract more buy-in from the mothers than counselling for their own psychological distress.

My Journey through this Study

As indicated at the beginning of this thesis, I came into this project with a rather inaccurate impression of what the resettlement experience of refugee single mothers might look like. I was aware that official language and education level requirements are waived for this population but I was unaware of the many other challenges refugees deal with once they arrive in the country. For instance, I was surprised to find out that although the government arranges their travel, the cost of flights is a loan that the refugee is expected to commence repaying within the first year of arrival. I was unaware that there is a cap in terms of length of time (12 months in Calgary) refugees may access free language classes and was surprised to find that after their arrival in the country, immigration services do not necessarily review the refugees' position in terms of official language acquisition and education attainment or employability status before implementing cuts to funding. I was also surprised to learn that refugee single mothers are entitled to the same level of funding (less the fact that there is one adult in the family) as two-parent-families, yet it is obvious that raising children as a lone parent presents a different set of challenges to those faced by two-parent-families.

What stood out for me however and what I will remember more than the challenges these women have had to contend with since arriving in Canada is the courage I saw in them. Their resilience, their determination in the face of great challenges, and their desire for a better future for themselves and their children will always remain with me.

While some of the findings from current study appear to be in agreement with existing literature in as far as poor outcomes for refugees and for female OPFs are concerned, other

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findings point to a population that is doing all in their power to face off the challenges they confront. I could not say it better than Baya et al. (2008);

Despite the difficulties and marginalization they have encountered in the post-migration context the refugee women are agents making choices and taking into account the circumstances and contexts of their lives. They are resourceful, resilient, frequently exhibiting a philosophy of hope and optimism even when dealing with challenges that seem enormous and possibly overwhelming.

Summary

The findings of the current study appear to suggest that while refugee single mothers who are settled in Canada/Calgary are grateful for the possibilities that being resettled opened up for them and especially for their children in terms of education and social upward mobility, they are also aware that the possibilities may not come to fruition. They appear to have legitimate concerns about poor outcomes both current and projected particularly for their children and the children of other refugee families. Although their outcomes appear rather dismal at present, all is not lost as these mothers are a population that appears willing to do what it would take to enhance their lives and those of their children. All they seem to be asking for is adequate support. Within the current discussion suggestions have been put forth (mostly taken from participants wishes) as to how the resettlement experience of this population may be enhanced. It would be expected that with the projected looming shortfall in skilled manpower, we as a nation should be working to tap and develop human resources in our midst before looking over our borders to bringing in foreign workers.

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Appendix A: Appeal for participants

Good Morning/afternoon/evening everyone.

Thank you so much for giving me this chance to speak to you.

I am thankful to the president of your community association

(alternative; pastor of this church) for welcoming me among you and allowing me to speak.

My name is Lucy. I am a student at the University of Calgary, training to become a counsellor.

The reason for my visit with you today, is because I want to request help from some of you in

this room. As part of a research study I am doing in my program, I want to speak with women

who came to this country from Africa as refugees, who are raising children alone for whatever

reason. I want to ask them about what settling here has been like for them. If some of you here

fall into this group, I would really appreciate your help. I request those of you who meet this

criteria and would like more information or have questions about my request and those who

might be interested in helping me out to come over and meet me at ....(a point/room agreed

with the leaders) for a chat to find out more about my study. Alternatively, if you choose, you

could give me a call at xxx xxx xxxx(repeat the number a few times) at your own convenience

and I will be glad to tell you more and answer any questions you have.

I am aware that I will be taking your valuable time, so as a token of appreciation, any woman

who chooses to take part in this project will receive a $20.00 gift certificate.

I plan to learn this so that I speak other than read. I will speak in English and Kiswahili

ATTENTION!HELP

WANTED!

ARE YOU A WOMAN AND A REFUGEE FROM

AFRICA?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE

ABOUT WHAT GETTING SETTLED IN

CANADA HAS BEEN LIKE FOR YOU?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES, YOU AND I HAVE

SOMETHING IN COMMON AND I WOULD

LIKE TO HAVE A CHAT.

My name is Lucy. I am a student at the University of Calgary and I am looking for people like you to help me with a school research project. I need to speak with women like you about settling in Canada and would appreciate your help.

If you would like to find out more about what kind of help I am looking for, please call me at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email (my email address) You are invited to pass this information to others who might be interested.

Those who agree to be involved in this project will receive a $ 20.00 gift certificate as a token of appreciation.

Appendix C: Information for participants

The study you are being requested to participate in is being carried out as part of a thesis for an MSc in Counselling Psychology degree. The aim of the study is to explore in some detail, how refugee mothers who are resettled in Canada from Africa perceive their resettlement experience. In order to do this, I will meet with each of you individually at a place and time that we will agree on. I will ask you a few questions and will audio tape our conversation so I can analyse it later.

It is estimated that the whole meeting should last about one (1) hour and no more than two hours. You will be asked to talk about your own experience of getting settled in Canada in as much detail as you are able to. In particular you will be expected to talk about what resources (services, people, personal strengths) have been helpful, what has been unhelpful, and what you didn't have but wished you had had that would have made your experience better.

As this is your own experience as lived by you, there are no wrong answers so you do not need to have any special know-how to participate. The only thing you are being asked is that you answer the questions as honestly and in as much detail as you are able to. Also please note that you have a choice as to how you would like the information you provide cited (anonymously, by pseudonym or

your real name) so you do not need to worry that your story will be shared in a format you do not approve of.

I will transcribe our conversations and make a summary of the main points, then I will return to you with the summary so that you can confirm or correct as you deem necessary so that the information I write will be accurate.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time with no consequences. In appreciation of your input, should you agree to be interviewed, you will receive a $20.00 Wal-mart gift certificate after you have commented on the summary. Any Questions?

Contextual questions

- Tell me what happened in your life that necessitated your move out of your country
  Note to reader: Some participants provided answers that covered period the period spent in countries of first refuge.
  Answers were probed as necessary.
- You volunteered to speak with me because you identified yourself as a refugee. What does being a refugee mean to you?

Resettlement Questions

- Tell me what happened from the time you left your home country until you arrived in Canada.
- Tell me your story of what has happened since you arrived in Canada
- What kinds of things have helped you as you have been getting settled in Canada/Calgary?
- What kinds of things have made your resettlement difficult?
- How has having children and no spouse/partner affected your settlement?
- In your opinion, how could your resettlement have been made better/easier?
- What else would you like to tell me about your experience of settling here?

Notes to reader: The questions are just a guide to make sure that all required information is

collected. Participant answers were probed appropriately. Following are examples:

What was helpful/hindering about……?

What do you think would have made…..better if you had it?

Name of Researcher, Faculty, Department & Email

Lucy Amadala, BA. Masters Student, Educational Studies in Psychology area, Faculty of Education

Co-researcher and Supervisor

Dr. Sharon Robertson, Professor, Educational Studies in Psychology area, University of Calgary,

Title of Project:

What is the resettlement experience of African refugee mothers who are relocated to Canada/Calgary without a Spouse/Partner?

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read carefully and to understand any accompanying information. The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

Purpose of the Study

The study is concerned with understanding how women refugees who are resettled in Canada with their children and without a spouse/partner go about settling and how they view their experience.

What Will I Be Asked To Do?

This study will take place at a time and place that will be decided between you and the researcher as safe for both of us and convenient for you. It will probably take about an hour but no more than two hours. You will be asked to talk about coming to Canada and your settlement here. It is expected that you will speak about what that has been like for you. There will be no wrong answers so you will need to speak from your heart. I will audio tape my conversation with you and will translate it (if the interview is Swahili, not English) and then transcribe it. I will analyze the data and prepare a summary of it. Once the summary is written, I will make it available to you by email or in person so you can ascertain its accuracy

or make corrections. Should you choose to meet with me to review it, I would be pleased to answer any questions you have at that time. If you fail to return the summary to me within one (1) week of receiving it (if you opt to receive it by email), it will be assumed that you have nothing to delete/add and the information you provide will be included in the report.

Your participation in the study is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any point without penalty. Moreover, if you wish to terminate your participation prior to the completion of the study, you are free to do so. You are under no obligation to the researcher to continue participation, and do not need to provide a reason for your withdrawal. If you withdraw before the interview is complete, any data I have collected will be deleted and will not be used for analyses. Also please note that your withdrawal from the study will in no way affect the services you receive from the agency where you got the recruitment material or any other service you currently receive from your community organization.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to provide demographic (e.g. age, place of birth, marital status, number and ages of children) and background (education, previous circumstances) information. Because one of the aims of the study is to allow you to speak about your experience, you are asked to choose how you would like me to handle the information you provide when I write the report;

I wish to review the summary in person   Yes: ___ No: ___

I wish to receive the summary by email   Yes: ___ No: ___

                          Email address   _____

I wish to remain anonymous: Yes: ___ No: ___

I wish to remain anonymous, but you may refer to me by a pseudonym: Yes: ___ No: ___

The pseudonym I choose for myself is: _____

You may quote me and use my name: Yes: ___ No: ___

Your choice will be respected.

Are there Risks or Benefits if I Participate?

In signing this form I fully understand that I will have the opportunity to talk about my experience as I understand it. I am aware that talking about some of the experiences may cause me psychological distress. Should I feel the need to talk to someone as a result of participating in the study, I am aware that I may contact any of the counseling agencies listed below;

       The Distress Centre (24-hour Crisis line) - Free - 403-266-1605

       Eastside (Walk-in Counselling services) - Free - 403-299-9696

       Catholic Family Services - Sliding-Scale Fees - 403-269-9888

       The Calgary Counselling Centre - Sliding-Scale Fees - 403-265-4980

I understand that by accessing these resources my confidentiality and anonymity as a participant in this study may be compromised.

I understand that in appreciation of my participation in the study I will receive a $20.00 Voucher for Wal-mart stores.

What Happens to the Information I provide?

If you elect to be anonymous, your data will be identified by a code chosen by the researcher. Otherwise, your name or pseudonym will be used to identify your data as the case may be. The information you provide will be stored as computer files and transcripts. Computer files will be stored in a password secured computer. Print material will be stored in the investigator's office for a period of not less than five years following publication of reports. At that time, the data will be destroyed (i.e., paper shredded, audio tapes deleted and destroyed, and computer files destroyed from the computer).

The data will be used to write the researcher's thesis, may be presented at academic conferences and/or submitted for publication in scientific journals. It will be available to the supervisor who is also a co-researcher and may be discussed at research symposia with other researchers.

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SIGNATURES (WRITTEN CONSENT)

Your signature on this form indicates that you 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. If you withdraw before completing the interview, your data will be deleted and will not be part of the analysis. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant's Name: (please print) _____

Participant's Signature _____Date: _____

Researcher's Name: (please print) _____

Researcher's Signature: _____Date: _____

Questions/Concerns

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Lucy Amadala
or
Dr. Sharon Robertson, Professor

Educational Studies in Psychology area, Faculty of Education

If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact Russell Burrows, Senior Ethics Resource officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-3782; email: rburrows@ucalgary.ca
A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for you records and reference. The investigator

has kept a copy of the consent form.

Jina la Mtafiti, Idara Kitivo, & Email

Lucy Amadala, BA. Masters Student, Educational Studies in Psychology area, Faculty of

Education

Msimamizi:

Dr Sharon Robertson, Professor, Educational Studies in Psychology area, University of Calgary

Jina la Mradi:

  Ni nini uzoefu wa makazi mapya ya akina mama wa Afrika wakimbizi ambao walihamishwa

Canada / Calgary bila Waume zao ?

Fomu hii ambayo umepewa , ni sehemu tu ya mchakato wa ridhaa. Kama unataka maelezo zaidi

kuhusu habari zozote zilizotajwa hapa, jisikie huru kuuliza. Tafadhali chukua muda wa kusoma

kwa makini na kuelewa taarifa ifuatayo.

Bodi ya Utafiti katika Chuo Kikuu cha Calgary imetoa kibali kwa utafiti huu.

Madhumuni ya Mradi:

Utafiti huo unaelekea kuelewa jinsi wanawake wakimbizi wanaokuja kuishi Canada na watoto

wao bila mme / mpenzi wanaendelea na maisha mapya na maoni yao juu ya uzoefu wao.

Nitaulizwa nifanye nini?

Utafiti huu utafanyika kwa wakati na mahali ambapo pataliamua kati yako na mtafiti kama

salama kwa wote sisi na rahisi kwako kufika. Mkutono kati yetu unatarajiwa kuchukua yapata

saa lakini si zaidi ya masaa mawili. Utaulizwa kwa majadiliano juu ya kuja Canada na makazi

yako hapa. Inatarajiwa kwamba utazungumza juu ya maisha yako na watoto wako tangu mfike

Canada kwa jinsi vile mmeishi. Hakutakuwa na majibu sahihi wala majibu yatatkayoonekakna

kama kosa kwa hivyo unahitaji kusema kwa moyo wako vile mmeishi. Nita sikiliza na pia nishike mazungumzo yetu kwa mashine ya kushika sauti (audio-tape)na kutafsiri (endapo mahojiano ni Kiswahili, si Kiingereza) na kisha nichape. Nitachambua data na kuandaa muhtasari wa mazungumzo. Mara baada ya muhtasari kuandikwa, nitakutumia kwa email au niulete kwako ili uweze kuhakikisha usahihi wake au kufanya masahihisho. Ukichangua tukutane siku ile usoma mkutasari na kufanya marudio, nitajibu maswali yoyote utakayo kuwa nayo wakati huo. Kama utachagua kupata muhtasari kwa njia ya email ya ushindwe kuirudi sha kwangu ndani ya wiki moja (1) tangu kupokea, itadhaniwa kuwa wewe huna chochote ungetaka kufuta / kuongeza na kwahivyo taarifa zitakuwa kwwenye ripoti kama zitavyo kuwa kwa muhtasari.

Kushiriki katika utafiti ni kwa hiari na unaweza kuchagua kujiondoa katika hatua yoyote bila adhabu. Aidha, kama unataka kukatisha ushiriki wako mapema kabla ya kumalizika kwa utafiti huo, uko huru kufanya hivyo na huna haja ya kutoa sababu ya kujitoa kwaako. Kama utajiondoa kabla ya mahojiano kamili, habari yoyote nitakazokuwa nimekusanywa kwako zitafutwa na wala hazitatumika kwa ajili ya uchambuzi. Pia tafadhali kumbuka kuwa kujitoa kwaako kutoka kwa utafiti hakutaathiri kwa njia yoyote huduma onazopokea kutoka kwa shirika ambapo ulipata habari kuhusu utafiti huu au huduma yoyote ambayo unapokea kutoka kwa jumuiya yako.

Aina gani ya Habari za binafsi Zitakusanywa?

Ukikubali kushiriki, utatakiwa kutoa habari zakawaida zinazo kuhusu kwa mfano, umri, mahali pa kuzaliwa, hali ya ndoa, idadi na umri wa watoto, elimu, na kwenye uliiishi kabla ya kuhamia Canada. Kwa sababu moja ya malengo ya utafiti ni kwa kuruhusu kusema kuhusu uzoefu wako,

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unaulizwa kuchagua jinsi ungependa nishirikishe habari utakazonipa wakati wa kuandika

taarifa;

Napenda mtafiti aniletee muhtasari mwenyewe   Ndiyo: ___ La: ___

Napenda kupokea muhtasari kwa email   Ndiyo ___   La: ___

                        Anwani ya

email_____

Napenda jina langu lisitumiwe kwa repoti   Ndiyo: ___ La: ___

Napenda kutajwa jina ambalo nitachagua (pseudonym) : Ndiyo: ___ La: ___

Pseudonym niliyoichagua ni _____

Unaweza kutumia jina langu Ndiyo: ___   La: ___

Uchaguzi wako utaheshimiwa.

Je, kuna Hatari au Faida kwa Kushiriki?

Katika kutia saini fomu hii ninaelewa kwamba nitapata nafasi ya kuzungumza kuhusu uzoefu

wangu kama mimi ninavyouelewa. Ninatambua kuwa kuzungumza juu ya baadhi ya sehemu za

maisha yangu kunaweza kusababisha shida ya fikira. Nikihisi haja ya kuzungumza na mtu

kufuatia kushiriki katika utafiti, ninafahamu naweza kutafuta usaidizi kutoka kwa mashirika ya

ushauri kama;

The Distress Centre (24-hourCrisis line) huduma ya bure- 403-266-1605

Eastside (Walk-in Counselling services) huduma ya bure - 403-299-9696

Catholic Family Services – malipo hupungua vile unaendelea kuhudhuria- 403-269-9888

Calgary Counselling Centre - malipo hupungua vile unaendelea kuhudhuria - 403-265-4980

Ninaelewa kwamba kwa kupata rasilimali hizi siri yangu kama mshiriki katika utafiti huu

inaweza kuathirika.

Ninaelewa kwamba kama kipawa cha shukurani kwa kushiriki katika ufafiti huu nitapokea vocha ya $ 20.00 itakayo tumika katika duka la Wal-mart.

Habari niitoaya itafanyiwa mimi?

Kama utaki kutajua jina , data yako ikutambuliwa na alama itakayochaguliwa na mtafiti. Vinginevyo, jina lako au pseudonym itatumika kubaini taarifa yako kama au kwa jina kulingana na chaguo lako. Taarifa utakayoitoa itahifadhiwa kwa nakala computer yenyelindwa na password. Nakala zilizochapwa zitahifadhiwa katika ofisi ya mpelelezi kwa muda usiopungua miaka mitano baada ya uchapishwa kwa taarifa. Wakati huo, data itaharibiwa kwa namna zilizokubalika.

Data zitatumika na mtafiti wa kuandika Thesis, inaweza kuwasilishwa katika mikutano ya kitaaluma na / au kuwasilishwa kwa ajili ya uchapishaji katika majarida ya kisayansi. Inaweza tutolewa kwa msimamizi na inaweza kujadiliwa katika symposia za utafiti na watafiti wengine .

Saini (kutoa ridhaa)

Saini yako katika fomu hii inaonyesha kuwa wewe 1) umeelewa na kuridhishwa na taarifa zilizotolewa juu ya kushiriki katika mradi huu wa utafiti, na 2) unakubali kushiriki kwa utafiti. Sahihi yako haikuondolei haki zako za kisheria wala kutolea wapelelezi, wadhamini, au taasisi husika na majukumu yao ya kisheria na kitaaluma. Uko huru kuondoka kutoka mradi huu utafiti wakati wowote. Kama ukiuondoa kabla ya kumaliza mahojiano, data yako itafutwa na haitakuwa sehemu ya uchambuzi. Jisikie huru kuuliza ufafanuzi au taarifa mpya katika ushiriki wako.

Jina mshiriki: _____

Sahihi mshiriki _____Date: _____

Jina mtafiti wa: _____

Mtafiti wa Sahihi: _____Date: _____

Maswali / Wasiwasi

Kama una maswali yoyote au unataka ufafanuzi zaidi kuhusu huu utafiti na / au kushiriki kwako,

tafadhali wasiliana na:

Lucy Amadala

au

Dr Sharon Robertson, Profesa

Mafunzo ya Elimu katika eneo ya Saikolojia, Kitivo cha Elimu

Kama una wasiwasi juu ya jinsi ulivyochukuliwa kama mshiriki, tafadhali wasiliana na Russell

Burrows, afisa mwandamizi wa Rasilimali ya Maadili, Ofisi ya Huduma za Utafiti, Chuo Kikuu

cha Calgary katika (403) 220-3782, email: rburrows@ucalgary.ca

Umepewa Nakala ya fomu hii kwa ajili ya kuweka rekodi na kumbukumbu. Mpelelezi ataweka

nakala ya fomu za kuridhia.