The Lived Experiences of Jamaican Barrel Children: A Qualitative Study

Annette Clarke Jones

DISSERTATION
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New York

The committee for this doctoral dissertation consisted of:

Advisor's Name: Dr. Shannon Lane
Committee Member: Dr. Laurie Blackman
Committee Member: Dr. Kathryn Krase

Abstract

The study examined the overarching question of what were the childhood experiences of adults who were left-behind in Jamaica while their mothers emigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (0 to 18 years old). Fourteen participants (11 females, 3 males) ranging in age from 22 to 72 years of age (*M*=45.6 years; *SD*=2.74) completed focused interviews containing open-ended questions designed to explore the feelings and effects of maternal emigration from Jamaica to the U.S. Participants ages at the time their mothers emigrated ranged from 2 to 17 years of age (*M* = 8.07; *SD* = 5.28), with the length of separation from their mothers ranging from 3 to 16 years (*M* = 8.54; *SD* = 4.54). Thematic analysis of the results revealed three major themes, specifically: a) participants have generally positive childhood memories and experiences before maternal immigration to the U.S.; b) participants have generally negative childhood memories and experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S.; and c) the impacts of maternal immigration are significant. In particular, the findings revealed substantial effects on mental health and the mother-child bond that persisted into adulthood and which were not always remediable. The findings of this study underscore the importance of social workers and others working in the field of immigration being aware of the population of left-behind children and their families and the impacts of parental migration during the formative years. More study needs to be undertaken with this population.

Keywords: left-behind children, maternal migration, maternal immigration, Jamaican barrel children, barrel children of the Caribbean, left-behind children of the Caribbean

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my heavenly father, who has been the source of my strength. To my amazing, supportive husband, Farrell Jones, you are the epitome of support and dedication, and I am blessed to have you in this dance called life. I could not have completed this dissertation without you. It’s me and you and me, babe. I love you so much. I dedicate this to my parents, Ruby and Vincent, who taught me to keep God at the center of my life and strive for excellence. To my HBCU family, Oakwood University, and Alabama A&M University, I am better because I walked those hallowed grounds.

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Chapter One: The Lived Experiences of Jamaican Barrel Children: A Qualitative Study

Overview

The study examined the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. The study undertaken was a qualitative phenomenological study. According to Creswell and Baez (2021), phenomenology is rooted in philosophy. It is grounded in the idea that the individual's lived experiences include both the subjective and objective experiences of people they share something in common. The data was collected using Zoom interviews, including demographic and open-ended questions. The data analysis was conducted utilizing thematic analysis to identify major themes and subthemes, which are reported herein.

The following values in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (2021) are relevant to the proposed research: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the individual, and the importance of relationships (NASW Code of Ethics, 2021). Guided by these values, social workers are able to effectively work with clients from a cross-cultural perspective, which often includes marginalized and oppressed people who are members of a vulnerable population (Micek, 2014). It was important to study the experiences of Jamaican families, who are often overlooked, so that social workers can amplify the voices of individuals who otherwise would be ignored.

The role and responsibility of the researcher was to examine and interpret the impact the research subject matter has had on the lived experiences of the research participants (Alase, 2017). According to Anderson and Hemez (2022), the 2019 U.S. Census stated that 82.6% of U.S. children live with at least one foreign-born parent compared to 20 years ago when the study was completed. The work of Suarez-Orozco et al. (2002) was referenced in an article by Lu et al.

(2020), which sheds light on the fact that there have been few studies comparing the well-being of immigrant children who are separated from their parents with those who migrate with their parents. The research indicates that immigrant children who have been separated from their parents are more likely to exhibit anxiety and depressive symptoms than those who had never been separated (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). While there is little recent research that explores the impact of immigration on children, a study conducted twenty years ago noted that 20% of U.S. children lived in immigrant households (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). Eighty-five percent have been separated from their parents due to the immigration process, which can be complicated and take several years (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002).

Some children were left as infants and some as late adolescents (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). During the separation of child and parent, children go through immense, complex changes and both parents and child separate from the nuclear family (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). The length of the separation period depends on the financial status of the immigrant parent and the immigration laws of the host country; reunification can take place over a two-to-five-year period or longer (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). Clinical accounts obtained suggest that children of immigrant parents exhibit deviant behaviors after being reunited with their families, along with feelings of abandonment and detachment from their parents (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). According to Lu et al. (2020), there is very little written on the subject of comparing the well-being of immigrant children who are separated from their parents to those who migrate with their parents, and what is written is very dated. The majority of previous research has relied on clinical and qualitative studies with small samples, mostly based on reports of children who went to the doctor, with a few prominent exceptions (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). This work of (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002) future sheds light on the dearth of this need for future research.

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 1998), Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, Revision 1, a long-term migrant is defined as a person who moves to a country other than his or her country of usual residence for at least one year (12 months), making the destination country his or her new country of usual residence. From the viewpoint of the country of origin, the individual is a long-term emigrant, but from the perspective of the country of destination, the individual is a long-term immigrant. Serial migration is the practice of sending some family members to seek a new life in the U.S. to ultimately bring over the family members who remained in their native country (Cervantes et al., 2010). According to Crawford-Brown & Rattray (2001), serial migration is seen mainly among the working class, who emigrate to improve their family's socioeconomic status. Caribbean immigrants tend to emigrate, leaving their children behind. While families with more financial security typically emigrate together.

In the absence of the parents, family members, and extended relatives will serve as surrogate parents in the absence of the latter; the normal reunification process between the child and parents may take two to ten years (Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 2001). However, the process could take five to nineteen years. It is common for family members and extended relatives to care for the children as the birth parents take measures to secure themselves financially and physically overseas. While many children are cared for physically by family members and relatives, the emotional support needed may be lacking. Children who are separated from their parents deal with feelings of anger, fear, rejection, and resentment (Dillon & Walsh, 2012; Wickham, 2017). The severing of this parent-child bond leads to depression, hostility, withdrawal, and other troubling behaviors. During the reunification process, children experience a plethora of emotions, including frustration and disappointment, based on the expectations that

were not fulfilled, as they expected to live happily ever after (Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 2001; Dillon & Walsh, 2012).

The primary motivation for Jamaican immigrants is the desire to better themselves as well as the opportunity to improve the socioeconomic status of their families (Carranza, 2022: Lashley, 2000). Jamaicans have a long history of migrating and staying abroad, both temporarily and permanently, and they lead the migration of Caribbean nationals to North America and Europe, where it is common practice (Thomas-Hope, 1999; Wickham, 2017). More importantly, many seek to reunite with the children they have left-behind. However, the process of reunification can be drawn out and difficult to navigate at times. This research will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and encourage mental health practitioners to take into account the socioeconomic and the unique cultural challenges this population faces when developing evidence-based treatment modalities for this demographic (Frances, 1994; Thomas-Hope, 2018).

Statement of Purpose

This study examined the experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind as children by a mother who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. More specifically, the study will investigate how Jamaican adults, who were left-behind as children, processed the phenomenon. The topic of adults who were left-behind as children by a parent(s) has been given little attention as to the impact it has had on this population. There is a dearth of research available on this subject; therefore, it makes it difficult for the experiences of this population to be understood. As a result, knowledge of this population is sparse, leading to a lack of understanding of the lived experiences of Jamaican families and their left-behind children. Also, there is an absence of cultural inclusion and sensitivity throughout the literature and its impact on adults left-behind by a parent. Hence, more research needs to be conducted to better understand the experiences of

adults who were left-behind and the role culture plays in this population. It is imperative that this population be studied so that possible risks can be minimized and that the necessary protective factors are in place that will reduce harm. This population requires more research on the subject (Budiman, 2021; Zhou et al., 2020)

Significance of the Study

There is a long history of immigration to the U.S. on the part of Jamaican families (Fletcher et al., 2018). Yet, there is a paucity of written material that discusses the experiences of individuals who were left-behind by a parent in Jamaica. It is very common for Jamaican parents who immigrate to separate from their children in order to begin a new life elsewhere (Fletcher-Anthony et al., 2018). There has been, and will continue to be, a consistent influx of new immigrants into the U.S., and this number is expected to continue to increase over time (Salas-Wright, 2020). While this research is specific to Asia and Latin America, Jamaicans were not mentioned in this article. As the number of immigrants increases, it is expected that the number of children separated from their parents will also increase. Little is known about the impact this separation will have on the children and their families who were left-behind. Furthermore, less is known about the long-term impact of these decisions on those children in their adulthood.

The literature indicates that a significant number of children who have been left-behind and separated from their parents for extended periods have experienced difficulties in their academic performance as well as psychological and behavioral issues (Dai et al., 2018). These issues can have a negative effect on a child's ability to function socially, which can put a strain on both the child and the parent. Many families are ill-prepared to address the issues associated with separating from their children. Much of the literature on left-behind children are mostly from China and does not cover participants from Jamaica, which means there is a dearth

of literature on immigrants from Jamaica. Therefore, it is pertinent that the experiences of Jamaican left-behind children and their families are examined. This will afford a better understanding of how they describe their experiences before, after, and as a result of a parent(s) migration.

This study sought to better understand the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a mother who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. during the child's developmental years (ages zero to 18 old). This qualitative research utilized a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences of these adults.

Social Work Values

Understanding the lived experiences of adults who were left-behind as children in Jamaica while their parent(s) immigrated to the U.S. is imperative, and incorporating the core values of social work into practices relating to their experiences is of utmost importance. Social workers have a professional duty to provide service to various populations, including the most vulnerable, thus treating all they serve with dignity and worth. By understanding the problems facing Jamaican immigrants as well as their left-behind children, clinicians can learn about the complexities of the Jamaican family structure and the impact this structure can have on immigrants as they adapt and function in the host country.

Social workers are expected to display knowledge of a variety of cultures and an appreciation that there are positive aspects to every culture (de Anda, 2008). Armed with this information, they are able to provide services that are culturally informative, which can empower clients from a diverse range of backgrounds. They should demonstrate a sense of cultural awareness by engaging in the practice of humility while also being conscious of their own prejudices and making a commitment to self-correct (NASW, 2021).

Racism and discrimination are psychosocial stressors that affect the health of minority populations (Pachter et al., 2018). While discrimination has been associated with poor mental health, being a minority in a racial or ethnic group contributes to poor physical and mental health. It is important that social workers are culturally competent and understand the unique needs of the Jamaican community. Using evidence-based interventions to meet the requirements of this population will strengthen the therapeutic alliance and minimize client harm.

Research Questions

Overarching Research Question: What were the experiences of adults who stayed in Jamaica while their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (0 to 18 years old)?

1. Research Sub-Question #1: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time before their mother's immigration?
2. Research Sub-Question #2: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time during and after their mother's immigration?
3. Research Sub-Question #3: What do these individuals see as the lasting impacts of their mother's and their own immigration journeys?

Methodological Summary

Summarily, this study will use a qualitative design as it seeks to investigate the adult immigrants who were left-behind as children while their parents immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. A qualitative analysis will be used because it contextualizes the data by using words rather than numbers. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) seeks to closely study human lived experience (Eatough & Smith, 2017). IPA is a branch of phenomenology that studies subjective experience. Additionally, it is idiographic, illustrating how people in certain contexts understand events. The theoretical foundation of IPA is hermeneutics, and Edmund Husserl is

the source of the IPA's fundamental concepts. This enables the interviewer and participants to use interpretative phenomenological analysis, or IPA, to investigate more thoroughly and comprehend more clearly. Using the IPA approach in a qualitative research study thus reinforces the idea that its main purpose and essence are to examine the research participants' "lived experiences" and enable them to narrate the research findings from their "lived experiences" (Smith et al., 2009; Alase, 2017).

Recruitment for this study occurred by the researcher advertising through flyers in spaces where potential respondents were identified who were from transnational communities. Both purposeful sampling (homogeneous) and snowball sampling were employed since they are focused and strategic methods that may be used to reach people who are hard to reach.

The interview questions were left open-ended so that respondents could describe their individual experiences. To ensure that all participants received questions and probes consistently, the questions were written, contextualized, and followed by probing. The researcher then emailed prospective participants individually and then contacted them by phone to screen them for eligibility based on the inclusion criteria. Once participants were deemed to fit the inclusion criteria, the interview times and dates, as well as the manner of conducting the interview, were determined. Interviews ended up being conducted through Zoom. Participants were advised that their names would not be used for identification and a number would be used in lieu of their names.

The researcher interviewed each participant for approximately 90 minutes. This methodical approach ensured that all relevant information was gathered, and that time was used efficiently. The list of questions included prompts to obtain optimal responses. At the end of

each interview, the interviewee was asked if there was anything else they wanted to discuss so that any relevant information not obtained by the interview may be communicated.

The findings of the data analysis were as follows:

1) Participants reported overwhelmingly positive experiences prior to their mother's immigration to the U.S.
2) Participants reported overwhelmingly negative experiences after their mother's immigration to the U.S.
3) Direct, individual, family, and community impacts were reported as a result of the participants' mothers' immigration to the U.S.

Chapter Two: The Study Problem

The primary motivation for Caribbean immigrants is the desire to better themselves, as well as the opportunity to improve the socioeconomic status of their families (Lashley, 2000). Like its Caribbean neighbors, Jamaica is susceptible to hurricanes, floods, and climate change. It is a country with moderate economic development, massive public debt, and external shocks. Jamaica has long-standing budgetary problems (Bakker et al., 2022: Mooney, 2018). Two oil crises and a downturn in bauxite prices led to the economy's decline in the 1980s. The 1990s financial crisis caused a debt crisis. Interest payments peaked at 17% of the Gross Domestic Product, GDP in 2009, while debt reached 142% of the GDP.

In two International Monetary Fund (IMF) programs, Jamaica improved its fiscal balance from a deficit of 11.2% of GDP to a surplus of 1.2% between the fiscal year 2009/10 and fiscal year 2019/20 (Bakker et al., 2022; Mooney, 2018). Given that the poverty rate in 2017 was 19%, issues including young unemployment, education, and social cohesion must be addressed in order to reduce crime and violence. Three decades of debt and little growth have plagued Jamaica.

The pandemic affected Jamaica's economy (Bakker et al., 2022; Mooney, 2018). An early closure in the spring of 2020 helped decrease COVID-19 cases, but the economic impact was significant, especially in the tourism and transportation industries, with real GDP plummeting by 10% (International Monetary Fund [IMF], 2020). Indicators of development, such as poverty rates, income equality, the informality of the economy, and the health of the private sector, have not changed much in the last few decades. Jamaica continues to lag behind its neighbors. There seems to be significant potential to accelerate the pace of financial sector

growth and to increase access and inclusion in light of recent enhancements in institutional capacity, policy discipline, and structural reform.

Caribbean family relationships are some of the most intricate foundational institutions within Caribbean society, where it is common practice for parents to leave their children behind in their home country with family members (Lashley, 2000). Consequently, many Jamaican families who have left their children behind are separated for a long period of time. An emphasis on promoting ethical considerations related to immigration practices and policies that impact Jamaican immigrant families further explores the role of historical trauma on economic viability, particularly for immigrant families. Jamaican families find themselves among those from immigrant communities, leaving their children behind in search of a better life in the U.S. of America so they can have the opportunity to improve their families' socio-economic status.

The term "barrel children" was coined by Claudette Crawford-Brown, a professor at the University of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica (Crawford-Brown, 1999). She first characterizes the phenomenon of "barrel children" as children whose parents have migrated to North America and the United Kingdom (UK) and whose parents send them material resources in the form of clothing and food instead of direct care. All this happens while the children wait to reunite with their parents overseas. Jamaicans represent the largest English-speaking Caribbean nation in the U.S. (Crawford-Brown, 1999; Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 1994). There are parallels between Jamaica and the U.S., such as the English language, which makes integration easier (Zong & Batalova, 2019). Jamaica and the U.S. have long-standing relationships, especially when it comes to Jamaicans migrating to the U.S. to work, whether temporarily or permanently. Most Jamaicans are black and of African descent (Deason et al., 2012). There are several parallels between Jamaica and other Caribbean nations, but the researcher is not arguing that all

Jamaicans are identical. However, their immigration will be influenced by their racial identity and language skills (Deason et al., 2012; Zong & Batalova, 2019). Due to the fact that this is a qualitative research study, the researcher concentrated on Jamaica alone and not the other Caribbean nations. Still, it is important to examine this issue throughout the rest of the Caribbean. It is hoped that future research will provide opportunities to compare and contrast the similarities and differences across other Caribbean islands (Zong & Batalova, 2019).

Problem Statement

People around the world emigrate from their country of origin in pursuit of increased family well-being and stability, which includes Jamaicans. Little is known about the lived experiences or impact parental immigration has had on Jamaican adults who are left-behind. More specifically, not much is known about the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a mother who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. and the impact that the immigration of their mother had on them as barrel children, as well as on them as adults who have immigrated to the U.S. Therefore, this study examined the lived experiences of Jamaican adults who were left-behind when their mother migrated to the U.S.

Some of the important concepts in this research are described as follows: Caribbean, West Indians, transnational, remittance, left-behind children, and barrel children.

The Caribbean. According to the World Resources Institute (2008), the Caribbean is a large region that stretches from the Gulf of Mexico to the Caribbean Sea and includes a total of 35 countries and territories, including the oceanic island of Bermuda (Meylan, 1999). The Caribbean Sea lies south of the U.S. and is home to a collection of island nations known as the West Indian Islands. They are typically divided into three groups: the Greater Antilles, the Lesser Antilles, and the Bahamas, which are made up of 3,000 distinct islands and reefs. Cuba, Jamaica,

Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico are among the larger island nations that make up the Greater Antilles (Crowder, 1999; Buddington, 2002). The Leeward Islands and the Windward Islands make up the group of smaller islands known as the Lesser Antilles, which lie along the line separating the Caribbean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean. St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Montserrat, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands are among the Leeward Islands (Crowder, 1999; Buddington, 2002). St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Dominica, Grenada, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, the Cayman Islands, Martinique, St. Martin, Dutch St. Martin, Curacao, Buen Ayre, Aruba, St. Eustatius, Saba, Danish St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix are among the Windward Islands (Crowder, 1999; Buddington, 2002). Belize (formerly British Honduras) in Central America and Guyana (formerly British Guiana) in South America are also typically included despite not being islands because they have a similar colonial history and cultural traditions (Hilaire, 2006).

West Indians are primarily descended from Africans and can be found living in Caribbean countries that were formerly under British colonial rule (Crowder, 1999; Buddington, 2002). The term *"transnational*" was coined to characterize the massive movement of people, goods, ideas, and images beyond national boundaries during globalization (Conway, 2019). The migration discussed in this paper is transnational because it moves from Jamaica to the U.S. *Remittance*, often defined as money or products sent by migrants to family and friends in their home countries, are frequently the most direct and well-known relationship between migration and development (Levitt, 1998). Remittance appears to be a significant concept in transnational migration, and it was one of the topics discussed in the interview.

Left-behind children are defined as children with one or both parents who have left home to work elsewhere and have left the main responsibility of childcare to the other parent or other

relatives (Ding et al., 2021). The term left-behind children is a concept discussed in the literature that addresses parent and child separation and was discussed in the interview. The term *"barrel children"* was coined by Dr. Claudette Brown-Harris, and it theorizes that children receive goods and kind in barrels instead of affection and attachment from their parents who are living overseas (Crawford-Brown, 1999; Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 1994). Barrel children is a term addressing children who are separated from their parents, particularly in Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean.

History of the Problem

Caribbean Immigration

The immigration process can be challenging, and moving to a new country requires one to follow the rules and guidelines to adapt to a new way of life. Caribbean immigrants emigrate to the United States with aspirations for better lives and access to educational and employment opportunities that are not available in their countries of origin. However, people from the Caribbean have immigrated to improve their family's socioeconomic status for many years. The roots of immigration run deep and go back to the legacy of slavery. The results of centuries of colonial rule continue to dominate the islands' primary resources, agriculture, and continued reliance on world powers, financial institutions, and companies leaving many of its citizens dependent on migration as a means of economic empowerment (Louis, 2017). Many Jamaican families emigrate for this purpose.

Two major migration waves occurred on the islands of the Caribbean (Smith et al., 2004). Caribbean workers working abroad went as far back as the early twentieth century. Firstly, workers were instrumental in providing labor to expand European investment initiatives in the Caribbean. Many laborers were mainly unskilled, while some had technical skills; the

laborers worked on jobs closely connected to foreign investments in the region. Secondly, the 1960s came with sweeping immigration laws in North America and the United Kingdom. Many men and women were influenced by the opportunity to improve their economic status by working abroad and the chance to improve financially. The global community is more connected, and the opportunity to travel, work, and live abroad has made the world more accessible, especially with the long history of people from the Caribbean seeking employment in the U.S., Great Britain, and Canada.

Many Jamaican workers work as guest workers, which provides the opportunity to work low-wage jobs. The need for nannies, maids, servers, and housekeepers has increased in wealthier countries, which has led to the feminization of the guest worker program and the guest worker program becoming more feminized. Thus, more women are leaving their children behind in their home country as they work abroad to provide opportunities for their families (Fink, 2013).

Feminization of Migration

Migration has become increasingly feminine (Lu et al., 2020; Pottinger, 2005; Thomas-Hope, 2002). Throughout the years, and even to current times, men and women of the West Indies have been a part of various migrant streams. The direction of Jamaican immigration was changed in the 1960s by changing immigration laws in typical receiving nations. The United Kingdom passed restrictive immigration regulations at the same time as legislation elevating education and abilities above race and nationality became law in the United States and Canada. The United States became the primary destination for skilled migrants from Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean starting in the late 1960s (Glennie & Chappell, 2010). According to Pottinger (2005), in the 1960s, a large number of West Indians workers went worldwide searching for

economic opportunities in Britain, Canada, and the U.S. When a child lacks protection from a parent or parents, the danger of abuse grows. Gender roles in Caribbean culture may thus be able to account for the various implications that the gender of a migrating parent may have on the family and a child's security. When the mother migrates, the risk of physical, mental, and emotional abuse increases (Williams, 2022). When a woman migrates, it disrupts the lives of the children, and this disruption is common in developing countries. Over the years, many West Indian mothers sought employment in the U.S., and many immigrated to work as caregivers, leaving their children behind in the care of relatives and family. This trend continues, and it includes Jamaican mothers traveling abroad to make a better life for themselves and their children (McCallum, 2019). With a high demand for labor and wealthy countries needing workers, many people immigrated in pursuit of a better life so that they could send remittances to their family and friends (Pottinger, 2005).

Many who emigrated overseas were unsure what their fate would be in the new country. However, they felt that taking the opportunity to live overseas would allow them to improve their family's standard of living and the chance to support their families. Caribbean immigrants wanted improved living and economic opportunities, so many favored residing in cities with a network of Caribbean communities (Waters, 1994). Over the years, this trend has continued, and many workers from the Caribbean continue to seek work abroad to provide for their families, leaving the children behind. There has been a particular increase among West Indian women immigrants, both married and single. Women are usually more educated than their male counterparts, and many have gone overseas. Thus, many Jamaican mothers send remittance back home to provide for their families (McCallum, 2019).

While there are opportunities to improve their financial situation, this means leaving their children at home while traveling abroad for work. It was common for workers from lower economic classes to work overseas for short periods, while some migrated for an extended period (Lu et al., 2020; Pottinger, 2005). Those who migrate long-term hope to reunite with their children by having them join them in the host country where they reside, as noted earlier. It is common practice to leave the children behind with family members, such as grandparents and aunts, or board them out with friends or even persons the children barely know.

Migratory separation, the process of children separating from their parents due to migration, is familiar to many Jamaican families. Strong kinship networks among the working class allow mothers to migrate, and they can leave their children in the care of relatives, friends, or neighbors; an accepted practice in the communities, and the children are loved and cared for without shame and stigma (Pottinger, 2000; Thomas-Hope, 2002; Waters, 1999). Many West Indian immigrants often do not emigrate as a family unit. When the parent leaves, many children have to cope with being away from their parents, which mentally strains the parent-child relationship despite the caregiving measures put in place (Crawford-Brown & Rattray, 1994).; Lashley, 2000; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). Children can be separated for several years compared to other groups who emigrate as a family unit (Suârez-Orozco et al., 2011).

The seminal work of (Suârez-Orozco et al., 2011) was cited by Lu et al. (2020) as exceptional in the work of immigrant children separation. The migration period of separation for Jamaican parents and children is between three and ten years, leading to issues of grief, loss, and attachment (Crawford-Brown, 1999; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2002). Reunification usually happens after several years of being apart, as it takes the parent several years to establish themselves as

legal residents in the new country, which prolongs the parent and child's separation (Lashley, 2000). This practice continues to be a phenomenon among many immigrant families today.

Relevance to Social Work

The International Federation of Social Workers defines social work as a profession concerned with human rights (Mapp et al., 2019). Jamaican families are woven into the fabric of U.S. society. Therefore, it is pertinent that social workers are able to meet the needs of a wide range of clients from various backgrounds and cultures. The following (NASW Code of Ethics, 2021) are relevant to the proposed research: service, social justice; dignity and worth of the individual; and the importance of relationships. Social workers across the board may encounter this population; however, those working in schools, child protection, healthcare, immigration, and the judicial system. Social workers are able to effectively work with clients from a cross-cultural perspective because they are guided by these values. Their clients often include individuals who are marginalized or oppressed and include parts of a population that is vulnerable. It is vital to examine the experiences of Jamaican families who are frequently disregarded. By doing so, social workers can magnify the voices of people who would otherwise be ignored. Therefore, there are many reasons why it is important to investigate the experiences of these families.

Policy

The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 is the current law used today to determine eligibility for entry into the U.S. The Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 ended an earlier quota system determined by an individual country of origin (Kennedy, 1966). This law established the fundamental principles that are still utilized in the regulation of immigration today. For the first time, it established quotas for immigration from countries within

the Americas and implemented a preference system that prioritized family reunification and employment and brought skilled workers to the U.S. Thus, changing the ethnic makeup of America with increased legal and unauthorized immigration.

Many Jamaican parents enter the U.S. through one of these categories, which determines the length of time the parent and child will be separated. Due to the serial migration nature of Jamaican immigrants, especially in single-parent homes, the parent travels to the new country for employment opportunities, leaving their children behind in their home country. One factor contributing to the phenomenon of serial migration is the uncertainty and financial difficulties in the home country (Smith et al., 2004). Therefore, the parent's immigration status in the U.S. plays a major role in determining how long the parent and child are separated.

Summary

The phenomenon of left-behind children exists in many world regions, including China, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Africa, and Southeast Asia (Hong & Fuller, 2019; Lu et al., 2020). Researchers argue that the challenges of growing up as a left-behind child can negatively affect the young child physically, psychologically, emotionally, and mentally. Therefore, more research is needed to reduce the negative impact on left-behind children. The next chapter (Literature Review) examines the existing literature pertinent to the study and the lived experiences of adult immigrants from Jamaica to the U.S. who were left by their parents. While some studies of this nature have been conducted, none have looked at the childhood experiences of adults who were left-behind by a parent that immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. Therefore, more research should be conducted to include Jamaicans.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

This literature review investigates the lived experiences of adult immigrants from Jamaica to the U.S. who were left by their parents and later reunited. Since there is limited information on Jamaica, this literature review also includes literature that refers to either the Caribbean or the West Indies. The literature uses the terms "West Indies" and "Caribbean." After the literature review, this portion of the study discusses the five themes that emerged from the literature. The literature review is focused around the themes of interest for the study: the impacts of migration on mental health, the impact of migration on behavioral problems, migration, and reunification, the impacts of trauma resulting from migration, and transnational parenting. The literature also includes research connecting the role of gender in migration and raising children who were left-behind and reunited. Additionally, this section will discuss the gaps in the literature as well as future research.

Literature Review Methodology

All of the articles came directly from searching electronic databases such as Ebsco and Google Scholar. While this dissertation focuses on Jamaica, there is limited information specific to Jamaica. The following search terms were entered into the databases: Jamaican barrel children, migrant barrel children, West Indian left-behind children, transnational families, left-behind children, barrel children, Caribbean left-behind children, and left-behind children.

Literature Findings

Twenty-four peer-reviewed articles emerged that were directly related to the topic. Given the limited number of articles on this topic, it was determined not to restrict the time period or geographic region covered by previously published studies. Given the limited number of articles on this topic, it was determined not to restrict the time period or geographic region covered by

previously published studies. The inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed English and academic journals. The initial search for Barrel Children using Ebsco Host and Yeshiva University Google Scholar yielded limited results. However, after reading several articles, some articles on Google Scholar Search were located, which led to left-behind children and transnational families. The articles fell into five main themes: the impacts of migration on mental health, the impacts of migration on behavior problems, the impact of migration on reunification, the impact of trauma resulting from migration, and macro factors (economics and culture).

Impacts of Immigration on Mental Health

The findings propose that parents immigrating and leaving their children behind had adverse effects on their children's mental and emotional well-being. Cebotari and Mazzucato (2016) conducted a quantitative study from 2010 to 2011, sampling respondents who were students at junior and secondary schools in Ghana (2,760), Angola (2,243), and Nigeria (2,168). The random sample comprised children and youth ages 11 to 21 with one or both biological parents living abroad. When the survey was conducted, the children lived in transnational families with at least one parent who had lived abroad for three months or more. The study compared children living at home with their parents with those living in transnational families in the same school; the cases were adequate for comparative reasons. The results of the study showed that there were no effects on children whose parents had migrated/divorced when children were placed in kinship care. International parental immigration accompanied by divorce and separation may indicate a decline in academic achievement (Cebotari and Mazzucato, 2016). These results were contrary to the previous research by Anagnostaki and Zaharia (2020), where participants shared that being separated from their parents had a profound impact on their mental

health both in their early lives and as adults. The study should be expanded to include left-behind children of the Caribbean.

Anagnostaki and Zaharia (2020) conducted a qualitative study on Greek children left-behind whose parents emigrated for work. For the study, adults were interviewed about their traumatic experiences as children who were left-behind. Fourteen participants were sampled: five men and nine women. The study participants ranged in age from 28 to 56 years old. Participants were left with relatives when their parents emigrated. The qualitative research method approach utilized the interpretive phenomenological analysis, which captured the rich lived experience of the left-behind participants. The results of the study showed that four themes emerged: intense emotions, effects on the parent-child relationship, defenses, and psychopathology. Many participants experienced three out of four of the themes, and the experience of being left-behind had a significant impact on most participants. Some participants shared that they had developed psychopathological symptoms. Participants said they learned that being separated from their parents in their early years, later in life, or both, had a profound impact on their mental health. The limitations support the need for further studies on the topic of left-behind children. This study did not address the lived experiences of Jamaican adults left-behind; thus, a phenomenological research study with adults left-behind children should be conducted in future studies.

Lu et al. (2020), used data taken from a nationwide survey of legal adult immigrants and their families called the New Immigrant Survey, which was conducted between 2003 and 2004 (for educational outcomes, age six to 12 years, N=876; for psychosocial well-being, age six to 17 years, N=1,084). The NIS is based on a sample of 4% of all immigrants granted permanent residence between May and November 2003. These immigrants are all adults (18+) who were

granted permanent residence for the first time during that time. The NIS study is the first national study to look at legal adult immigrants and their children when they first came to the United States. Children from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe took part in the research. According to Lu et al. (2020), in the NIS study, 22% of children have been separated from their parents at least once, 53% of children who have been removed from their parents and reunited with them have been separated for six years or less, and 47% have been separated for more than six years. Prior to their legalization, thirty percent of immigrant children who were separated from their parents were undocumented.

Latin American immigrant children (32%), African (25%), and Asian (19%) were the most common in the survey. Europeans emigrated as families. 62% of immigrant children were separated from their dads, 26% from both parents, and 12% from their mothers. Reunited immigrant children are twice as likely to suffer psychological issues as those who were not separated (Lu et al., 2020). Overall, children who were separated from both parents reported more psychological and behavioral issues than those who migrated with their parents. Findings indicate that children who were previously separated had a greater incidence of mental and behavioral issues and a decreased aptitude for learning as compared to children who were not separated. The children's issues were aggravated by the long period of separation and their parents' prior undocumented status. Exploring the separation and reunification of immigrant children could provide pertinent information considering the lack of research on the subject. The subject of separated immigrant families and the possible short and long-term effects needs further research.

International migration's parental effects and effects on left-behind children's mental health were investigated (Adhikari et al., 2014). Data from the Child Health and Migrant Parents

in Southeast Asia, Thailand, 2008 project were used. In this joint effort, researchers from Singapore and the UK focused on parental cross-border migration and the effects it had on children who were left-behind in (Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam). The sample of 1,030 children included both parents who had migrated and parents who did not migrate. Of the 1,030 sampled, 519 (50%) had transnational parents, and most of the parents were fathers. The results indicated that less than three percent of the children had both parents migrate, and only 10% of mothers had immigrated since having their child. One in five children experienced hyperactivity problems, one in six had conduct problems, and one in twenty had emotional and peer problems. Left-behind children scored a significantly higher percentage in abnormal hyperactivity compared to non-left-behind children. The mother's earlier migration history continued to impact both age groups of children negatively and had a major, independent connection to left-behind children experiencing mental health problems (Adhikari et al., 2014).

A limitation of the Adhikari et al. (2014) article is the need for further studies that include participants over the age of 18. The topic needs further investigation as it does not address the needs of people from other parts of the world, such as Jamaica, left-behind as children. Zhao et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study in a migrant rural community in China that sampled 25 children ages (7 to 14), 17 parents, 13 grandparents, 30 families, and 24 key people from the surrounding communities. The study finding showed that the primary reason for migration to the city was to earn more money, and this was the best way to survive and property for the family. Despite the finances and opportunities for growth, problems in the child's psychosocial well-being occurred because of long periods of parent-child separation. Parental migration leads to problems; adverse effects of parents migrating have also increased with other vulnerabilities such as parents' divorce and aging caregivers/grandparents. Some parents became concerned that they

returned home to care for their children, and they were willing to forgo the financial gain they would receive working away from their children. Limitations of the study included the number of participants who were left-behind by their parents (Zhao et al., 2018). Future research should include expanding the sample size of the left-behind children and their families in China. A future longitudinal study should be conducted to aid in providing evidence-based interventions that can benefit Jamaican left-behind children and their families.

Four in ten children in China are left-behind children living in rural areas where one or both parents have migrated to urban areas due to disparities between rural and urban economic development the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2016; Ye et al., 2013). Fu and Chen (2021) conducted a quantitative study with Chinese school-age students (N=227) from 13 schools, including 12 public schools and one private school. Parental migration experiences were explored, and their association with the children's mental health—namely, migration history, parental migration, and the migration of both parents. The children were asked about their parent's migration status in the last six months before the researchers collected the data. Children's responses fell into the following categories: parents with no migration history, parents who had migrated prior and have now returned, fathers who migrated alone, mothers who migrated alone, and both parents who migrated. The Chinese Making Sense of Adversity Scale (CMSAS) was used to measure of adversity how children made sense of adversity (Pan et al., 2008). The researcher approved the use of stress and coping to test the role of stress and sensemaking in the connection between mental health and parent migration (Fu & Chen, 2021). With both parents migrating, the left-behind child was more susceptible to depression, and almost all of the children had occurrences of depressive symptoms; thus, sense-making could reduce the damaging effects of daily stress on their mental health outcomes.

According to Fu & Chen (2021), the results of the study showed that when both parents migrated, the children would be at a greater risk of depression, but children who had a father who had migrated were less likely to have healthy mental health compared to children whose parents had not migrated. High levels of stress and poor mental health were associated with left-behind children. Thus, sense-making could help negotiate the high level of daily stress on mental health outcomes. Requiring social services to support left-behind children's mental health is imperative for decreasing daily stress and improving the children's coping mechanisms.

A future longitudinal study would help researchers better grasp the long-term effects of parental migration on the mental health of children left-behind. The school-based survey was designed to exclusively include students who were enrolled in school, omitting vulnerable and at-risk dropouts. A limitation of the study is that the participants were Chinese school children; however, this study could be duplicated with left-behind children in Jamaica.

According to Manyeruke et al. (2021), in a quantitative research study, they surveyed 57 children from left-behind families compared to 41 from two-parent households of children between the ages of eight and 14 using a cross-sectional study. Attachment styles, psychological well-being, and academic growth among participants from Zimbabwe were analyzed. Questions were administered to measure attachment styles. Children who had both parents migrate experienced higher developmental, behavioral, academic, and psychological challenges as a result of the lack of social support and familial connection. The age at which the parents leave is connected to how the child handles the ability to adjust to the parents' leaving. Thus, the impacts of parental migration differ from culture to culture depending on the nation of origin, public opinion of migrant parents, gender roles, and the economic reasons for parental migration.

Researchers found no significant difference in the attachment styles of left-behind children compared to children living with both parents. Secure attachment was the dominant attachment style for both left-behind and non-left-behind children, followed by anxious attachment and avoidant attachment styles (Manyeruke et al., 2021). The findings contradicted previous research by Zhao et al. (2018), which claimed that children who were separated from their parents for extended periods of time might develop negative emotions and struggle with attachment. The attachment styles displayed by the children mirror how they view parental migration. Limitations of the study included the small sample sizes between the groups. Attachment styles are viewed based on culture, and in this study, gender played a pertinent role as more fathers migrated and more mothers stayed home.

Research by Leskauskas et al. (2020) focused on the effects of parental immigration on emotional and behavioral problems in left-behind children in the city of Kaunas, Lithuania. The convenience sample method was used to poll 1292 teenage students in grades 5–12 from five urban secondary schools. The schoolchildren completed the self-reported study questionnaire, which included family structure, family relationships, and status items. Assessment of emotional and behavioral problems was done using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). The Child Conduct Checklist (CBCL) was used to assess risky behavior, which included questions such as subjective impressions and sentiments about changes in the relationship because of a parent's absence due to migration or divorce (Leskauskas et al., 2020). The findings confirmed that left-behind children had a profile of more risky behaviors, felt unloved, longed for the missing parent, and had thoughts of suicidal ideation or self-injury behavior. Behavioral and mental health problems were higher among left-behind children in comparison to children from divorced families. Adolescent males between the ages of 15 and 19 had more behavioral

and emotional issues. The findings propose that parents migrating and leaving their children behind had adverse effects on their children's mental and emotional well-being. Seventy-one percent of the left-behind children lived without their parents for over a year. Most of the parents who emigrated from both groups (71%) were fathers. Eight percent of left-behind children had both of their parents immigrated. Two out of three children shared that they communicated with their parents for a little over a half and shared that they observed that their mental health had not changed since their parent(s) emigrated. Children whose parents had emigrated were more prone to suicidal ideation. Researchers should expand the study into a longitudinal study that includes participants from rural and urban communities. While the study provides much-needed data on the plight of left-behind children in Lithuania, the study further confirms the need for similar studies on left-behind children in other parts of the world, such as Jamaica.

The findings of a mixed-method research study measuring depression markers emphasized the effect of parental migration on the Caribbean Island of Trinidad and Tobago's children (Jones et al., 2004). A population of 146 children ranging from ages 12 to 16 years participated in the study. Twenty-four children and their caregivers participated in well-structured, detailed interviews. The study revealed that children who were separated from their parents due to migration were two times more likely than other children to have mental health problems, even though their standard of living had improved. With one-third of the children having significantly high levels of depression or interpersonal challenges, Schooling was affected, and some participants experienced suicidal ideation; disparities were found in relation to gender and ethnicity (Jones et al., 2004). Fewer significant differences were found relative to gender and ethnicity.

In addition to separation via the immigration process, many children had to deal with experiencing several losses, which included bereavement, parent divorce, parent incarceration, or changes in caregivers. Belief in their family's reunification and academic performance were factors of resilience among the participants. The study sheds light on the importance of social work education and policy reform, as well as the implications for social work in the future. According to the findings of Jones et al. (2004), the methodology of this research, which places an emphasis on empowering individuals and putting theory into practice, should include more information regarding child-centered evidence-based practices. The study was limited by the small sample size, which meant that the findings could not be generalized. Due to the fact that this specific study only recruited individuals from Trinidad and Tobago, further research should include a larger sample size. Further investigation into the topic is required in order to expand the age range of participants and include people from other English-speaking Caribbean islands.

Impacts of Migration on Behavior Problems

An empirical study was conducted that studied the perceived difficulties and outcomes of young adults who were left-behind as children (Tripa et al., 2020). According to the National Authority for Child Protection and Adoption (NAPDCA, 2017), Romania is one of the leading countries in Europe that sends workers away to work in other countries, and they currently have 93,648 left-behind children. A quantitative study of 193 young Romanians between the ages of 18 and 40 (82.9% women, 17.1% males) found that 69.4% of those polled had never been left behind, while 36.6% had been left behind. There were found to be differences in poor school performances between those that were considered to be left-behind and those who were not considered to be left-behind, as stated by Tripa et al. (2020). Participants who had both of their

parents living overseas scored higher on the occurrences of difficulties, and they scored higher on five out of seven outcomes in the areas of adolescence, including self-injury, violence, drug misuse, and interaction at school. There were no significant differences found between the two groups in anxiety, depression, generalized self-efficacy, or self-perception. With both parents leaving to work abroad, the length of time they stayed away from their child and the age of the child when they went away may explain the different psychological issues left-behind children face and their connection to parents leaving their children to work abroad.

Left-behind children in some Eastern countries, such as China, have high rates of behavior problems (Wen et al. 2019). The purpose of the research was to investigate the effects of physical neglect and trauma on left-behind children as a whole, as well as the ways in which these experiences shape the children's behaviors. Wen et al. (2019) conducted a quantitative study in rural China with 776 children, including 600 left-behind children ages 12 to 16 years old, in 24 classes covering three grades from three junior high schools. The Childhood Trauma Questionnaire—Short Form and the Conners Teacher Rating Scale were used to look at physical neglect and behavior problems. Children with a history of mental illness diagnosis and children with divorced parents were excluded from the study. The study findings confirmed that left-behind children experienced greater incidents of physical neglect and were less attentive compared to non-left-behind children. Left-behind children who were physically neglected scored higher for behavior problems than those in the control group. The study revealed that left-behind children face challenges that need further study. The sample size is a limitation of the research; thus, the participant age range should be raised to 18, and a qualitative component should be included. Future cross-sectional research should investigate the relationships between the two groups. This research should be replicated with left-behind children in Jamaica.

Yang et al. (2021) investigated the effects of parental emotional neglect on left-behind children exhibiting behavior problems, negotiating the role of deviant peer affiliation and navigating the role of belief regarding adversity and its relationship to left-behind children exhibiting behavior problems. One hundred and sixty-three participants were sampled in a quantitative study of left-behind children from a rural junior high school in Taiqian County, China. The students completed four questionnaires: The Emotional Neglect Scale measured parental emotional neglect; The Deviant Peer Affiliation Scale was used to measure deviant peer affiliation; The Belief about Adversity Scale measured beliefs about adversity, and externalizing problem behaviors were measured using the Externalizing Problem Behaviors Scale. Researchers examined the outcome of parental emotional neglect on left-behind children. Overall, the average score of the calculated items indicated that the children had higher scores on all four scales, supporting the stress-buffering model. Left-behind children exhibited behavior problems that researchers could predict after controlling for demographic variables, such as parental emotional neglect, which was connected to deviant peer affiliation. The findings suggest the need for further research into the impact of parental emotional neglect and its repercussions on left-behind children who exhibit problematic behaviors.

The research included a higher proportion of male participants than females (61.17% men and 39.83% females). Future research should close the gender gap and discover preventative and intervention strategies to reduce parental emotional neglect and behavioral issues in left-behind children. The way self-reporting individuals recollect their experiences may skew data collection. This research might be repeated with adults who were abandoned in Jamaica. Another theme that impacts this demographic that has come up in recent studies is migration and reunion, which is covered in the next section.

Immigration and Reunification

West Indians have a long history of immigrating to the U.S. However, most research studies usually focus on the experiences during the separation and the reunification of "barrel children" (Fletcher-Anthony, 2009; Gilkes, 2007; Gopaul-McNicol, 1993; Mitchell & Bryan, 2007; Navara & Lollis, 2009; Olwig, 1999; Waters, 1999). The research conducted by Best (2014) looked at the perspectives of mothers on their experiences of separation and reunification. These participants were from immigrant families that had been separated when one or both of the parents immigrated to the United States of America. They have since been reunited with the other parent or parents. According to Best's (2014) research, participants were recruited from churches in Queens, New York, that had a substantial number of West Indian members. The study found that a large number of these transnational immigrant women placed a significant amount of reliance on the church for assistance.

This research methodology illustrates the challenges transnational West Indian immigrant women experience (Fletcher et al., 2018). These cases were selected to highlight the disparity between the experiences of the mothers and the themes that arose from previous research. These situations were selected on purpose to illustrate how dissimilar the mothers' experiences were to those examined in previous research. The study's limitations were that the women in the study were remembering earlier events from years before and relied on memory, which may often be inconsistent and imprecise. Due to the limited sample size of the case study, the results cannot be extrapolated to all West Indian moms. The study could be replicated using a larger sample size that included the experiences of Jamaican left-behind children throughout the U.S.

Smith et al. (2004) investigated the possible impacts of long-term migration on the relationships between children and their parents as well as on the psychological well-being of

children in a research study. The author gathered information from 48 individuals who participated in a study experiment in Toronto, Canada. There were 20 male participants and 28 female participants. The researchers explored the possible psychological impact of migration on the parent-child relationship of left-behind children who reunite with their parents. The participants' mean age was 26.93 years, the mean age of separation was 2.94 years, and the mean age of reunion with parents was 14.43 years.

The majority of the participants were left-behind by their mothers, followed by both of their parents, and then their fathers. Moreover, half of the participants who took part in the study received care in their home country from either one of their grandmothers, both of their grandmothers, an aunt or uncle, a brother or sister, a father, or a neighbor. The number of mothers reunited with their children was the largest, followed by the number of parents and fathers. After moving to a new country, more than half of the participants established new relationships with members of their extended families, such as step-parents or step-siblings. Fewer significant differences were found in children with new family members who reported low self-esteem levels compared to those with their caregivers back home. Over half the boys reported a higher level of deviance when compared to girls at the time of the reunification. Boys were inclined to be less likely to adapt to their parents at reunification while exhibiting low self-esteem during that time. Participants were successful in conforming to the expectations of their caretakers; however, they were unsuccessful in conforming to their parents' expectations upon reunion, and there was decreased family inclusion. According to Smith et al.'s (2004) research, the longer the separation duration, the less the child associated with the parent, and at the time of reunification, the youngster showed less compliance. Future research should be replicated as a longitudinal study that looks at the impact of serial migration on the family structure of

Jamaicans and the successful reunification of left-behind children and their parents. This study could be used as a model to strengthen family reunification among parents and children. Conducting cross-sectional studies would provide information that could explore the various stages of the separation and reunion processes.

According to Suárez-Orozco et al. (2011), many transnational families experience a lengthy period of separation and reunion; therefore, it is challenging to determine the effect of family separation on adolescents. This research used a subset of data from the Longitudinal Immigration Student Adaptation Study (LISA), N = 407, or 53%, of the study's participants, were from China, Central America, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico. Participants had been in the U.S. for a third of their lives. Two hundred and eighty students reported having anxiety and depression outcomes for Years 1 and 5. Researchers discovered no significant differences in any of the factors studied when compared to the LISA final sample of 309. It was reported that almost 75 percent of the individuals who participated in the study said that when they were migrating, they were separated from either one or both of their parents. There were significant differences in how different ethnic groups coped with the separation of their families during migration. Children of Chinese descent were the least likely to be separated during migration (52%), while children of Central American and Haitian descent were the most likely (85%) to be separated from one or both of their parents. Seventy-five percent of the participants were separated from one or both parents for an unexpectedly long period. Some individuals reported being apart from their parents for their entire childhood. The students were enrolled in fifty schools in Boston and San Francisco, both of which have a large immigrant population (Suárez-Orozco et al. 2011).

The study's design did not provide a framework where family separation and reunification could be sufficiently studied, as the available data was not adequately designed to examine family separation. The mixed-method study provided a glimpse into the lives of transnational families dealing with separation and reunification. It also provided information on the countries of origin and the psychological challenges faced by the young participants. The findings of this study should be repeated in subsequent research with a sample size that is inclusive of Jamaican immigrant populations that were left-behind as children. In recent years, very little study has been done on the effects of immigration to the United States on children who were left-behind in other countries. Nonetheless, a study published over ten years ago came to the following conclusion. Contextualizing the timeframe of this article, there is little to no recent study on this subject. Even some of the most recent studies from Lu et al. (2020) are linked to the groundbreaking work done in this field by Suárez-Orozco et al. (2011).

The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (LISA) was carried out at Harvard University and studied 385 early adolescents from China, Central America, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico. Research on this group is often conducted in a clinical setting using a Western theoretical framework. This form of application is not necessarily the most effective one, but it is the one that is most commonly used. A large segment of the nation's children are being raised in households that are headed by immigrants, and a sizable portion of families have been separated for a substantial amount of time due to the geographical barriers that separate them from one another. Both of these trends are concerning for the future of the country. This study sheds light on the difficulties that are faced by this demographic and provides some insight into those difficulties. Eighty-five percent of those polled had been separated from their parent(s) for an extended period of time. Participants were ranked by gender

and country of origin, and they were between the ages of 9 and 14 when they began the study. They were recruited from 51 schools across seven districts in the cities of Boston and San Francisco, and they are being followed in a longitudinal study (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2002).

The interviews were designed to gather data from students and parents on migration, schooling in their home countries, opinions on American schools, mental health, family life, and social networks and relationships. The open-ended, narrative interview questions were translated into Spanish, Haitian Kreyol, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Participants had the option of being interviewed in their preferred language (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2002). Of the youth sampled, 85% were separated from their parents during the migration process. Researchers found significant differences among the ethnic groups involved in the study. Chinese families were found to be more likely to migrate as a family unit. In contrast, Haitian and Central American groups experienced more disruption during the migration process (96% for both groups). Chinese families rarely separated from their mothers, and if they did, it was for 2 to 4 years. Most Mexican youths were separated for less than two years, while 49% of the cases of Central American children were separated for over five years. The results of the study shed light on the challenges immigrant families face in the migration process.

The study's limitations were the grouping of the Caribbean countries into the category of Central America. The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (LISA) should be replicated to include Jamaica. Study participants were school-age children, so youths who were not currently enrolled in school should be included in future studies. In recent years, there has been a paucity of research on how immigration to the U.S. affects children who are left-behind in the Caribbean and even less on Jamaican left-behind children. It would be beneficial to replicate the research again with more current data on Jamaican LBC. The following was the conclusion

that was reached by a study that was published more than 20 years ago: taking into account the span of time covered by this article, there is very little to no research that can be considered current that addresses the long-term impact of separation on immigrant children. Even some of the more recent research and articles, such as Lu et al. (2020), make reference to the seminal works that were done in this field by Suárez-Orozco et al. (2002, 2011).

According to Lu and Brooks Gunn (2020), comparing the well-being of immigrant children who migrate without their parents to that of those who migrate with their parents has received less attention. This is in contrast to the situation of children who migrate with their parents. The bulk of earlier research focused on clinical and qualitative studies with small samples or solely doctor-visited youngsters, and there are a few notable exceptions. Suárez-Orozco and colleagues (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2002, 2011) evaluated 400 middle childhood and adolescent immigrant children from a few countries and regions (China, Central America, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico). The study found that immigrant children who had been separated from their parents were more likely to exhibit signs of anxiety and depression than those who had not been separated. This was especially true in the first years after reunification.

Crawford (2009) conducted a qualitative study on the immigration experiences of eighteen African Caribbean women living in Canada. Interviews were conducted with the participants who took part in the research, and the ages of those who took part ranged from 20 to 76 years old. The eighteen female migrants interviewed included those who had left their children behind in their home country, those who had sent their children to live with grandmothers or other relatives, and a grandmother raising a granddaughter. Ten mothers had migrated without their children, including five from Jamaica, four from Trinidad, and one from St. Kitts. Among the participants, ten children were left at age five or younger; six were under

age two, and the youngest was one year old. Five of the children left-behind were between the ages of 10 and 12. Separation of mother and child ranged from zero to three years, five to eight years, and nine to 12 years, and some women were never reunited with their children. The average age of separation between respondents and their children was 6.4 years, and reunions occurred between the ages of 5 and 19 years old.

Crawford is renowned for coining the phrase "barrel children," and her seminal work is often cited in several papers (Crawford, 2009). The researcher investigated the racialized experiences of transnational mothers who are female migrants in the global context and the intersectionality of gender, race, and class. The goal of the study was to find out what role international migration plays, how it affects gender roles, and how it affects female labor and the families of women who work around the world. Thus, the structure of the African Caribbean mother-child relationship differs from Euro-American expectations of the mother-child relationship, which differ for transnational mothers—gender lines where females nurture (private) and males provide (public). Support for the children came from their mothers abroad in the form of clothing, school supplies, remittance, and other household supplies. African Caribbean women's worker-mother role challenged the rigid dividing roles of typical middle-class families, as the mother had help from family, friends, and the community, who all played a role in caring for the left-behind child. The mother-child reunification among these women was based on various factors, such as immigration status, suitable housing, financial status, etc., in the host country.

Four questions were asked that explored class, race, nationality, settlement, immigration fears, and kinship connections utilized to support transnational families previously and currently in the reunification process (Crawford, 2009). Replicating the study with participants from other

Caribbean countries and increasing the sample size would provide data on Caribbean migration in Canada as well as reunification patterns over time. A large sample of other Caribbean countries would provide the study with a broader range of participants. The study provided pertinent information on left-behind children and their families. However, it did not focus on the lived experiences of adult left-behind children who were reunited with their parents.

The Trauma Impacts Resulting from Migration

Pottinger (2005) conducted a qualitative study that sampled 54 participants, ages 9 to 10 years old, in grades 4 and 5, who were left-behind children from inner-city communities in Jamaica. The sample of 54 respondents represents a larger sample of 90 children. Screening of the children assisted in identifying the students who had some form of parental loss. There were another 27 kids in the control group. Forty-four percent of those sampled had been separated from their parents for more than four years, and they were cared for by mothers, grandmothers, siblings, and family friends. Over half of the children in the migratory separation group had experienced child shifting in guardianship, which was twice that of the children in the control group (Pottinger, 2005).

According to Pottinger (2005), the children's unhappiness with migration was indirectly correlated with their academic performance, especially in mathematics. Being popular among their peers was associated with depressive symptoms and suicidal ideation. However, there was no association with behavior. There was a significant correlation between grief related to missing their parents and academic performance, and those who felt angry scored poorly, especially in the subject of mathematics. Contrary to expectations, there were no behavioral issues; however, being presently exposed to violence at home and in the community was associated with high scores on grief intensity. The study took place in the urban inner cities of Jamaica; the results

could be different if the research included children from across Jamaica from various backgrounds.

The limitations of the study suggested that children whose parents have migrated from violent, low-income, urban communities could be at increased risk for poor school performance and adverse psychological outcomes due to parental-child separation. A significant correlation was found between the children's performance in subjects such as mathematics and suicidal ideation. However, it may not be reliable due to the subsample that responded to the measures. The results support the need for further study of Jamaican left-behind children, which will generate hypotheses for future investigation despite the limitations of the study.

Hine-St. Hilaire (2008) conducted a qualitative exploratory study in the Metropolitan New York area, examining the experiences of twelve adolescent West Indian children who were separated from their mothers and later migrated to the U.S. The selected sample was from clients of community-based programs and churches. A total of 12 adolescents and their mothers responded to the in-depth interview, and their ages ranged from 12 to 21. The study looked at the effects of prolonged separation on children from their families due to immigration. The criteria for children included males ages 12 and 21, separated from their mothers for at least five years. The children had no mental health diagnosis before moving to the U.S., and they were from middle- to low-income families.

Results indicated that the children suffered physical abuse and sexual abuse at the hands of those caring for them (Hine-St. Hilaire, 2008). Some children shared that the caregivers were physically and emotionally present, and they had a good relationship with the caregiver, who was like a mother figure. Most mothers who participated in the study were mainly cooperative, while some shared freely. Some mothers were guarded in their responses, while others were limited;

however, they were willing to participate in the study once they realized how valuable sharing their experiences would be. The adolescents were more open compared to the adults in their responses. The children were left in the care of familiar relatives. The data stated that nine adolescents were securely attached to their mothers before they separated, and they had an attachment to the family member they were left with back in their home country. Three of the twelve children did not recall having a relationship with their mother before they were separated. However, these three adolescents shared that they had secured attachments with their other relatives. The longer the separations, the more challenging it was for the children to develop relationships with their mothers. These children had the greatest level of difficulty adjusting to living in the U.S. Seven of the 12 adolescents were separated over a period of six years. The children who were separated at an early age and experienced extended periods of separation from their mothers had the most difficulty reuniting.

The mothers in the study appeared resistant to answering questions connected to their children's behavior, which could have biased the study, which meant they may not have been forthright in answering the questions asked (Hine-St. Hilaire, 2008). The researcher may not have adequately captured the true sentiments of the adolescents' abuse, so the adolescents may not have been willing to speak openly about the abuse. The study was limited in that it only focused on adolescents and their mothers as participants. The qualitative study sample size was small; therefore, this study should not be used to generalize Jamaican LBC families.

Macro Factors (Economic and Culture)

Bohr and Tse (2009) conducted a qualitative study in Toronto, Canada, with 12 mothers who participated in a psychoeducational parenting group for Chinese-speaking parents who were contemplating sending their infants to China. The parents questioned whether or not to send their

infants to their home country to be reared by relatives. According to cultural tradition, the research examined a transnational lifestyle that is on the rise among North American immigrants who send their infants back to their native country to be raised by extended relatives. The average age of the parents was 26 (range = 24 to 36), and all were university educated and had migrated from mainland China. The children ranged from 5 to 15 months; the average age was ten months—a critical period for the attachment relationship. The families lived in Canada for an average of one to three years, and the average period in Canada was 11.5 years. Four fathers elected to participate in the interview. In keeping with the grounded theory method, the categories emerged from the interview compared to testing hypotheses. Initial findings confirmed that participants anticipated worries regarding interrupting the attachment relationship between child and parent while navigating deeply rooted financial needs and cultural viewpoints.

According to Bohr and Tse (2009), the participants' decision to split from their children was based on two factors: economic and professional considerations owing to a lack of daycare options, and the desire to preserve their native cultural values. These decisions profoundly affected the parents, who were still uncertain about how the process would go. These two principles grounded the parents' decision-making process; nonetheless, a central theme of profound ambivalence pervaded this process. According to the categories, parents struggle with the positive and negative aspects of the schemas and themes of sadness, suffering, guilt, and resignation or loss of control. All participants shared how challenging it was to start over and care for a child without the support of extended family or a social network that they had in their home country. Parents rationalize that they felt compelled to send their children away before age six due to mitigating factors. Some parents felt that their child would have attachment issues when reunited and that their returning child would have behavior problems. At the end of the

interview, two parents said they felt too connected to their children to separate from them, despite the good reason they had to do so.

Limitations of the study included the sample size, the study was exploratory, and the participants studied were children five months to ten months old with Chinese Canadian immigrant parents. The participants were only from Toronto, and future studies should be replicated on a larger scale to include Jamaican immigrant participants across Canada.

Conclusion

The term "barrel children" refers to children left in the care of relatives or friends when their parents relocate to another country for employment. They get tangible items in the form of shipping barrels and financial rewards, but they often lack emotional support from their parents (Crawford, 2009). For many families in the Caribbean, the practice of leaving children behind with family members and friends in a kinship setting while they emigrate to a foreign country for economic reasons has been happening for years. There is a dearth of literature addressing the population of barrel children; therefore, more research is needed on this population. In conclusion, the data from this study supports the need for culture-focused research that focuses on meeting the needs of left-behind families in a transcultural way. While this study does not cover all aspects of left-behind families, it provides insight into the outcomes of families who have made the difficult decision to leave their children behind. The gap that this research addresses is that of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a mother who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S.

Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is defined as the "blueprint" or guide on which the study is built. The framework is based on existing theory and explains how the research was conducted. The theoretical framework strengthens qualitative research measures and connects the academic and physical components observed in the data pertinent to the topic. This helped the researcher methodically convey the measure of the theory studied and apply it in a structured manner that aligns with the subject under observation (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

This study was informed by the following theoretical frameworks: New Economic Labor Migration (NELM) and the Transnational Feminist Theory (TFT). Both NELM and TFT emphasize the significance of women's rights across international borders, as well as the financial role that remittances play in assisting transnational families. Both describe the connection between individuals and family systems and how these connections guide decision-making. As a result, it is critical to examine TFT while considering the role of gender and parenting in this chapter. For this reason, there should be a great deal of care given to the examination of the role that migration and gender play in the lives of left-behind families. While these ideas address different areas of the research, they are interconnected since gender, social values, and beliefs might impact how children are reared, especially those abandoned by their parents.

New Economic Labor Migration (NELM) Theory

The NELM has its origins in the neoclassical economic theory school of thought, which is the oldest migration theory. According to this theory, wage differences across regions are a primary motivator for people to migrate. These types of wage discrepancies are a result of geographical variations in labor demand and labor supply. Thus, pay inequities are the main

reason for labor migration from nations with low wages to those with high wages (Borajas, 1989; Jennissen, 2007; Massey et al., 1993; Taylor, 1999). The NELM theory states that immigration and remittances alleviate market restrictions (such as income, capital, and insurance) experienced by impoverished families. Migration scholars were very divided for most of the 20th century, with neoclassical and historical-structural approaches to migration being the two main schools of thought. In response to migration, idealist theories seemed to be too rigid in handling the complexities of migration in terms of growth and connections. It is the school of thought known as "neoclassical economic theory" that is responsible for the origins of economic migration (Jennissen, 2007; Taylor, 1999). According to this view, income disparities between different regions are the most important factor driving individuals to migrate. Additional factors, such as worker productivity and the size of an employer's staff organization, play a role in determining salary disparities across different geographic locations. The NELM theory guided this study and posits that immigration and remittances address market constraints (income, capital, insurance) faced by poor households.

History

NELM was first presented in 1985 at the American Economic Association by Stark and Bloom (1985). NELM emerged in the 1980s as a response to migration. In this context, NELM positioned itself as a theoretical “third way” between the two latter methods and was asserted to be able to reconcile agency and structure in a manner that had previously been unachievable by either of the two approaches (Abreu, 2012). Oded Stark's NELM is the first complete theory of international migration that assigns a prominent role to remittances (Taylor, 1999). Stark and Bloom (1985) laid the groundwork, while Stark (1991) compiled most of the studies that developed the theory.

Labor Migration

The NELM occurs when poverty is concentrated inside the family or household rather than the individual (Stark, 1991). In other words, determining which family member would migrate in search of employment was a family choice and was not left up to an individual family member. Families looked for ways to increase their income and decrease their risks when the economies were unstable due to failing markets. Living in an unstable economy created opportunities for families who received remittances from their families living abroad, as well as opportunities for an increase in salary in comparison to the rest of their community (Stark, 1991).

Remittance

NELM connects the causes of migration to financial remittances and emphasizes the continuous connection between the migrant and the family in the home country. Remittance is a common money transfer payment method where migrants send money to families in their home country using traditional and nontraditional methods (Hagen-Zanker, 2015). Many people living in countries where they are experiencing poverty continue to benefit from remittance as a means to improve their families' lives. According to this theory, remittances have the potential to have a significant impact on the economies of countries and can act as a form of financial protection for many people living in developed nations who, in the absence of these funds, would not be able to provide for their families in their home countries (Taylor, 1999; Zuk & Zuk, 2017).

According to Levitt (1998) and Taylor (1999), migration and remittances are influenced by two extremes, each with its own set of assumptions: "the developmentalist" and "Dutch disease." The "developmentalist" extreme is associated with NELM, which contends that when families band together, they can generate funds for new projects and mitigate risk to production

and remittance, thereby alleviating the production and investment constraints people in developing countries face. Remittances, money, or products sent by migrants to family and friends in their home countries are frequently the most direct and well-known relationship between migration and development. Remittance provides additional income that can be used for more significant investments or expenditures that the family could not otherwise afford. Remittances, or the possibility of remittances, started an economic process by easing the investment and financing constraints that families in poor developing nations faced (Taylor, 1999). The other factor that influences extreme migration and remittances is the "Dutch disease." The "Dutch disease" or "migrant syndrome" (Reichert, 1981) perspective is at the other end of the spectrum. It contends that lucrative migratory activities drain labor and money from migrant-sending nations, restricting the local production of marketable commodities. The migration process is ongoing and self-directed. Massey et al. (1998) posit that regions and even countries have developed labor migration expertise over time. Due to the complexity of the migration literature, it is difficult to pinpoint the precise nature of the connections between international migration, remittances, and development. Therefore, migration is a complicated subject to theorize and research methodologically.

According to De Haas and Rodriguez (2010), in the NELM theory, remittances play a vital role since money earned from working may be sent home to aid the family in improving their financial status. As a result, the family would have a safety net in place and additional money that may be utilized for other investments or expenditures that the family can now afford. Motivation for migrating was a collective decision, not one made by individuals; instead, the decision was made by the family unit within a broader societal context (Stark & Bloom, 1985). NELM is based on the assumption that everyone in the family benefits and is dependent on the

belief that the members of the household are practical and committed to participating in this positive long-term financial plan.

The NELM theory is seen as a family unit response to the risk associated with income as migrant remittance functions as income insurance for households back home, thus serving as a buffer against unemployment, crop failure, and falling prices (Lucas & Stark, 1995; Stark & Bloom, 1985). Migration negatively affects those in sending communities because it promotes inequality. According to Lipton (1980) and Zachariah et al. (2001), the characteristics of migrants are those who are gainfully employed, better educated, and business minded. Therefore, remittance, along with other advantages, would benefit individuals who are already financially well off.

Many Caribbean migrants from lower socioeconomic groups seek jobs abroad in order to better their families' lives. This employment could be for a short or long period of time and have the potential to improve their financial situation, causing many parents to leave their children in the care of family members or friends while they are away (Pottinger, 2005). NELM proposed a more precise outlook on migration growth, with responses that are both progressive and unconstructive being possible (Taylor, 1999). This new method exemplifies migration as an opportunity to share information on household behavior. According to the NELM, moving to a new country can help families deal with the operational and spending constraints they face in an imperfect economy and connect them to income growth opportunities.

This theoretical framework sheds light on why individuals leave their home country when wage differentials are significant. Potential migrants discuss the possibility of increasing income with others in their social circle by comparing their relatives' aspirations to improve their financial status in life to those in their community. Migration is more prevalent among people

from communities where income is distributed equally (Stark, 1984). Jamaican immigrants have a long history of migrating to the U.S. in search of employment.

Transnational Feminist Theory

For several decades, women have been leaving their home countries to work overseas so they can provide economic opportunities for their families. The feminization of migration has resulted in a larger number of women moving abroad in search of employment opportunities rather than family reunification. Contributing factors to these trends include increased demand for cheaper laborers providing services in caregiving and healthcare, inequalities in wealth and opportunities between countries, and private recruitment agencies implementing policies that aggressively recruit new employees (Platonova & Geny, 2017). It is an analytical lens formed via the collaboration between scholars and activists from around the globe. Transnational feminism theory is a dynamic and changing framework (Tambe & Thayer, 2021).

History

TFT was initially introduced in 1994 by Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan in their landmark work "*Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices"* (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994). Transnational feminism is discussed alongside other concepts of feminism, modernity, and postmodernity. The word "transnational" refers to a concept that came into being as a method to characterize the significantly rising migration of people, commodities, images, and theories beyond the boundaries of a country in an age of global competition (Conway, 2019).

The initiatives to develop worldwide solidarity and collaboration among feminists, particularly those who have been marginalized, are key characteristics of transnational feminism (Fernandes, 2013). This approach is more inclusive and diverse, and it includes members of

marginalized groups whose work has widened knowledge of injustice at the local, national, and global levels. Weinbaum et al. (2008) argue that in order to successfully develop a constructive transnational, inclusive framework, feminists from wealthy countries need to demonstrate cultural humility. Feminists from the Global South and the Global North must collaborate to build a framework that is more accepting of diversity. The power structures that have often resulted in uneven relations between the two groups must be dismantled. The concept of "transnational feminism" referred to a strategy that relied on the formation of strategic and well-planned alliances amongst feminists residing in various regions of the globe. In addition to bringing attention to interactions that take place beyond international borders, transnational feminism investigated networks in an effort to get a deeper understanding of the unequal and complex ways in which power is exerted (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Weinbaum et al., 2008). Collins et al. (2019), Conway (2019), and Zerbe et al. (2021) posit that transnational feminism empowers women to be heard by males whose viewpoints are often ignored. Respect for diversity requires an understanding of global power imbalances as well as regional perspectives. The creation of effective international collaboration requires cultural humility on the part of feminists in the Global North.

A global feminist perspective is becoming more important as present realities become more complicated and unpredictable (Collins et al., 2019; Conway, 2019; Zerbe, 2021; Grewal & Kaplan, 1994). Gendered relationships and experiences in a geopolitical context are the focus of transnational feminist perspectives, which account for the diverse experiences of women who live within, between, or on the margins or boundaries of nation-states around the world. Transnational feminist perspectives transcend national-state boundaries and speak to a diverse range of interacting forces that influence gendered relationships and experiences in a global

political context. TFT literature includes perspectives of immigrants, refugees, displaced people, members of an ethnic immigrant population dispersed across multiple regions, and third world-culture people, as well as women living in culturally disadvantaged situations and environments in which they appear invisible (Horne & Arora, 2013; Zerbe et, al, 2021). Transnational feminist theory focuses on the diverse experiences of women who lived on the outskirts or at the borders of nation-states. The transnational feminism theory emphasizes social activism and justice, intersectionality, collaboration, and interdisciplinary work (Castro et al., 2020).

Alexander and Mohanty (1997) argued that intersectionality and social justice are the complex interaction among social identities experienced by an individual. Transnational feminists use post-colonialist ideas to comprehend the power dynamics ingrained in the interaction of gender, economic, racial, class, and historical factors. Transnational feminism focuses on oppressive forces like economic exploitation, structural racism, extreme forms of capitalism, and gendered racism because of its history and global structure (Ozcan, 2018). Transnational feminist theory gives voice to many women from third-world countries such as Jamaica.

Feminist United

Children and family members left-behind might develop a feeling of abandonment due to migration. When a family member migrates to another country, the period of separation depends on the financial situation of the immigrant parent (Hundle et al., 2019). According to Hundle et al. (2019), the work of self-identified women of color feminists in the Global North and postcolonial academics, or "Third World feminists," in the North and South has inspired and developed transnational feminism as activism and research. With the rise of hetero-patriarchal and white nationalism worldwide, it is imperative that transnational feminists participate in

critical engagement by collaborating with those on the left and the right, therefore developing appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches.

TFT connects the predicament of many Jamaican women who left their children behind while working overseas to support their families. TFT and practice stress intersectionality, diversity, social action, justice, participation, and collaboration. Gender disparities and inequalities, such as diverse purposes and viewpoints for discussing gender problems and varied perspectives on conceiving agency, undermine the misconception that women all over the globe share the same beliefs, inequities, injustices, and rights. Transnational feminism is notable for emphasizing the intersections, overlaps, and divergences of identities. When power relations are examined from other perspectives, gender is woven into a complex web that includes sexism, racism, and heterosexism (Moallem, 1999; Mohanty, 2003). Grewal & Kaplan, 1(994) argues that a number of approaches can be taken to address the issue of gender inequality. One of these approaches examines the ways in which injustices are studied in transnational feminist theory. This includes the role colonialism and postcolonial feminism played and the effects that these concepts had on transnational women as a socioeconomic component that promotes power imbalances, including economic circumstances and global capitalism. According to scholars, examples of socioeconomic factors that foster power imbalances are some of the factors that contribute to power imbalances. Many Jamaican mothers who left their children behind for economic reasons are recognized by transnational feminist theory as it includes disenfranchised and marginalized women from the diaspora.

Tambe and Thayer (2021) suggest that the transnational feminist movement is still in its infancy compared to prior activity and must be expanded. The rise of the political right has pushed feminism off the global stage it occupied in the late 1990s. At the same time, they are

expanding the institutionalized entities that control the feminist movement as it seeks to evolve and become a more inclusive movement. Transnational feminism builds on the notion of intersectionality, highlighting historical factors and global structures such as colonialism, structural racism, gendered racism, economic exploitation, and other kinds of globalization that bolster northern world regions (Grabe & Else-Quest, 2012). Finally, transnational feminist theory creates a place for women like Jamaican women, who left their children behind in search of better opportunities. As a result, transnational feminists must continue to fight for marginalized women's rights to be included in the feminist discourse, therefore making room for those who do not have a seat at the table.

Application of Theories to the Study

The theories fit into the current research topic as they provide a framework for understanding the challenges adult left-behind children who were left in Jamaica face after being reunited with their parents in the U.S. The theories help explain why some mothers leave their children in their home countries to seek a better life overseas. It also sheds light on the challenges these women face in being recognized by the mainstream feminist movement due to the color of their skin and the geographical region they are from, which, in turn, dismiss the unique issues they face as a population. More specifically, these theories collectively address elements of each research question. For example, TFT is appropriate because it considers the diverse experiences of Jamaican women who live within, between, or at a country's boundaries. Data notes that most people who move transnationally are women, many of whom are mothers. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that while the feminist worldwide movement must become more inclusive, they will be able to address transnational women's issues, so together, they are able to fight the oppressive patriarchal system that affects all women. When the feminist

movement is united worldwide, it will be able to dismantle the patriarchal system that forces many Jamaican women to leave their home countries to seek employment and a better life outside of their home country.

Additionally, the theory considers the interactive forces for Jamaican women who are mothers and who have left their children behind to travel transnationally (Gabaccia, 2016; Hoang & Yeoh, 2012; Paul, 2015; Zerbe Enns et al., 2021). This theoretical framework helped in framing the purview and captures the transcultural immigrant experiences of Jamaican women who are transitory mothers, as captured in RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. Furthermore, it directly connects to the following key concepts in the research questions: "immigrate," “emigrate,” "parent," “mother” "child," "left-behind."

NELM speaks to the challenges parents face in making the decision to separate from their children. These four elements are also represented in RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. More specifically, these elements are connected directly to the following key concepts in each research question: "adult immigrants," childhood "impact," and adult "impact.” These theories are appropriate for this research because most Jamaican women who have left their home country and their children behind to travel internationally travel because of economic stability changes for their families.

Therefore, these theories address the tension that may exist and the potential losses that may exist as a result of this decision, so they are appropriate for this research. The qualitative research points to specific parts of the participants' selection that lend themselves to interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in the decision made in the methodology. The participants to be selected will be Jamaican adults who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S., and they will share their lived experiences. As a result, the

relationship between the two theories provides insight into why Jamaican parents, who are often women, are separated from their children.

Conclusion

The NELM and TFT examine the relevance of creating a place for all women in the feminist movement and are similar in that they explain what happens when a member of a particular population is marginalized and discriminated against. The NELM theorizes that migration occurs when poverty is experienced by families or households instead of individuals. With many Caribbean countries facing extreme poverty, many Jamaican women, in an attempt to provide for their families and increase income, make the decision to seek employment abroad, often leaving their children behind in their home country. Upon arrival in the host country, they are able to work and send remittances back to their families in Jamaica. TFT is a theoretical approach to a global women's activism movement in which women collaborate to study and prepare for women's rights and gender justice issues. Both theories disproportionately affect poor and marginalized women living in regions like Jamaica affected by poverty, who are often forgotten by mainstream white feminist groups and the world at large.

The NELM theorizes that families collectively decide which family member will go abroad to seek employment. The TFT posits that the feminist movement and many marginalized transnationals, which include Jamaicans, Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), and women worldwide, are often left to fight for their rights and are often not included in the sisterhood of their white counterparts in first-world countries. Therefore, perpetuating the patriarchal system of oppression similarly, but without the element of gender, the NELM theory is appropriate for this study because it addresses family decision-making processes, economics, remittances, and the impact of family functioning. functioning. According to the NELM theory,

the immigrant can send remittances to help family members in the home country. This remittance helps the economy of the developing country where their family member resides, which allows the families who have family members living abroad to work and invest more freely (Taylor, 1999).

Chapter Five: The Research Question

This study examined the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. To be more precise, the research investigated how adult children who were left-behind while their mother immigrated to the U.S. processed the occurrence and adjusted to being separated from their parents. The problem of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent(s)who came from Jamaica to the U.S. has received very little attention as it relates to the effect that it has had on children. The term "transnational" is an umbrella term that was coined to describe "the dramatic influx of people, things, images, and ideas across the borders of nation-states during the "globalization" era" (Conway, 2019).

The construction of research questions is pivotal before embarking on research. They seek to investigate and address present ambiguity in an area of concern and the imminent need for deliberate investigation, which is vital in constructing good research questions (Ratan et al., 2019). To better understand the lived experiences of adult immigrants from the Caribbean to the U.S. who were left by their parents and later reunited. The research questions set out below will be explored.

Research Questions

Overarching Research Question: What were the experiences of adults who stayed in Jamaica while their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (0 to 18 years old)?

Research Sub-Question #1: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time before their mother’s immigration?

Research Sub-Question #2: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time during and after their mother’s immigration?

Research Sub-Question #3: What do these individuals see as the lasting impacts of their mother's and their own immigration journeys?

Chapter Six: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to explore the lived experiences of adult immigrants from Jamaica to the U.S. who were left-behind when their mother immigrated to the U.S. The first section of this chapter discusses the reason for the study, which includes qualitative research utilizing the IPA phenomenological approach. The second part of this chapter discusses the study participants, data collection, and analysis of detailed procedures the researcher will use to measure and validate trustworthiness. Finally, this chapter discusses the ethical considerations for researching human subjects related to this study.

Research Design: Qualitative Method

This study uses a qualitative research design approach to investigate the childhood experiences of adult Jamaican immigrants who were left-behind when their mother immigrated to the U.S. and then later reunited in the U.S. A qualitative analysis was employed since it transforms the world by making it visible via the application of a set of interpretative frameworks.

The phenomenological approach was used in this study's qualitative approach. A thorough interview was conducted to collect data from participants and identify the categories of responses. These categories helped explain the lived experiences of this sample. A commitment to research entails studying things in their natural environments, as well as the understanding that individuals bring to them (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, qualitative research is a form of social investigation that seeks to give meaning to how individuals comprehend and make sense of their daily experiences in the world. This activity locates the observer and their position in the world by attempting to interpret the practices that make their reality visible (Jindal et al., 2015).

Research Method

Qualitative research is an interactive process that seeks to understand the scientific community through clear distinctions, thus gaining closer access to the phenomenon studied. (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Qualitative research starts with expectations involving interpretive/theoretical frameworks, helping to clarify the explanation of a research problem, social or human problem, and how individuals or groups give meaning to it. Qualitative research seeks to understand methodological approaches to inquire and conduct research in the natural settings of the people and places under study, which consists of data analysis, thus, building a holistic picture from which themes and patterns emerge (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Researchers use the qualitative approach to explore, investigate, and study social phenomena and provide meaning to the lived experience of people by providing a rich understanding of their social life. The fundamental values of qualitative research involve people's personal experiences and how they make sense of the process and obtain a deep understanding of the sample and its findings. Qualitative research was appropriate for this study since the central role was to explore, describe, or explain; therefore, qualitative research was best suited to investigate the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind when their mother migrated to the U.S. and then later reunited in the U.S. (Leavy, 2014).

In the most basic terms, quantitative research methods are concerned with collecting and analyzing structured data that can be represented numerically. Although quantitative research is generally used to explain phenomena, in most instances, quantitative research is often interested in collecting and analyzing data that is structured and numerically represented. However, it does not provide insight into the way participants think and feel or the behavior behind the behavior being observed. Quantitative research was not suitable for this study as the reason for this study

is to capture the experiences and gain an understanding of the childhood experiences of adult Jamaican immigrants who were left-behind when their mother migrated to the U.S. and then reunited in the U.S. (Goertzen, 2017).

Qualitative researchers observe individuals in their natural environments in an effort to comprehend or interpret things based on the meanings they attribute to them. Case studies, firsthand experiences, reflections, personal narratives, meetings, observational, historical, interactive, and visual texts are all empirical resources that may be used in qualitative research. The focus of these materials is on the recurrence and severity of adversity in people's lives, as well as the consequences of such experiences (Denzin et al., 2005).

As a result, a qualitative study is best suited for this study because its goal is to gain an understanding, shed light on the subject matter, and raise awareness about the challenges of adult left-behind children who have been separated from their parents. Using a qualitative approach provides for the discussion of adult left-behind children who have been separated from their parents. As a result, it provides individuals with a platform to communicate their perspectives on their lived experiences. This study aims to highlight the importance of understanding the impact culture can have on the experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S.

A major gap in the previous literature was the lack of representation of Jamaican families, particularly adults left-behind as children who were reunited in the U.S. The NELM and TFT guided this research. This design was a good fit since it engaged participants in a difficult topic while highlighting the challenges affecting many Jamaican immigrant families.

Phenomenology

A phenomenological approach was selected because it provided an avenue through which the participants could share their experiences in a diagrammatic and expressive format. According to Patton (2002), phenomenology is the process of seeing, explaining, feeling, judging, recalling, making sense of, and sharing one's lived experiences with others. According to Neubauer et al. (2019), phenomenology is a type of qualitative research that concentrates on studying the lived experiences of individuals in the world. Phenomenology is essentially the study of how a person perceives the world through their lens. By subjectively analyzing one's life experience, appreciation is developed, and education occurs as a result. A phenomenology research project seeks to collect a detailed description of how a group of individuals perceives a certain phenomenon. The objective of phenomenology is to provide an explanation for the significance of what and how individuals experience the world. Thus, a phenomenological method is appropriate for exploring and understanding the lived experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

The purpose of this study was to examine the lived experiences of adult Jamaican immigrants who were left-behind when their mother immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. through the use of a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to qualitative research. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a term that refers to a method for making sense of people's lived experiences that is employed in research. Hermeneutic phenomenology is defined as the theory of meaning and interpretation. As a result, a researcher employs empirical research methods to gather lived experiences and assess the meanings of shared data to arrive at a conclusion (Suddick et al., 2020).

Hermeneutic phenomenology can be used to investigate and explain the lived childhood experiences of adult Jamaican immigrants who were left-behind and later reunited with their parent(s). Hermeneutic phenomenology has one perspective that recommends that the researcher transcribe the interpretation in relation to the event, suggesting that an interpretation happens when the analysis of the text is used to find meaning. Using hermeneutic phenomenology, the researcher conducted a rigorous and consistent ethical dimension approach to obtain reliable and accurate information (Fuster, 2019). For instance, the scholar undertaking the study informed the participants about the ethical principles incorporated when collecting personal experience information for research. Ethical considerations affiliated with the hermeneutic phenomenology model include informed consent, confidentiality, justice, truth-telling, doing no harm, and autonomy. The participants were expected to and did respond positively, sharing their experiences in depth once they verified the researcher's credibility (Fuster, 2019; Varkey, 2021). The goal was to give meaning and understanding to the experiences by searching for themes, capturing data via interpretation, and focusing less on the essence that is relevant to describing the lived experience (Fuster, 2019; Varkey, 2021).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

The researcher uses interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) to analyze the transcripts to better understand the childhood experiences of adult Jamaican immigrants who were left-behind by their mother and later reunited in the U.S. from Jamaica. IPA is a flexible and interpretive approach that allows new and less experienced researchers to examine the participants' detailed experiences (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is a qualitative analytic method that seeks to provide detailed investigations of the participants' lived experiences and has its theoretical roots in the philosophical movements of phenomenology and hermeneutics. IPA uses

an idiographic method, which means that the data from each semi-structured interview must be carefully analyzed separately and then put together at the end of the analysis process. It is distinguished as a branch of qualitative research by its focus on similarities and contrasts in experiences, as well as its goal to study a thorough analysis of the actual experiences of a small number of participants. Therefore, IPA researchers are given access to the participant's experience and try to understand the participant's point of view; they co-construct the meaning of the participant's experience through interpretive activities, and multiple themes are shared (Alase, 2017; Pietkiewicz et al., 2014; Smith, 2011; Smith & Osborn, 2015).

Context of the Study

According to the Migration Policy Institute (Lorenzi & Batalova, 2022), close to 90 % of immigrants in the United States from the 13 Caribbean countries and 17 dependent territories come from one of four countries: Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Haiti. Jamaican immigrants are the third-largest group among Caribbean immigrants in the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), the highest concentration of Jamaicans in the US resides in Florida (26%) and New York (31%). Other lesser numbers reside in Virginia, North Carolina, Texas, and California. The metropolitan New York region has the largest concentration of Jamaicans (330,944). Therefore, in order to accurately represent the Jamaican population in the U.S., the researcher will make every effort to recruit adult Jamaicans from around the country. The researcher is a native of Jamaica residing in the state of New York, has deep roots in Jamaica, and, upon immigrating to the U.S., has made connections with the Jamaican diaspora in certain parts of the U.S. This gave the researcher credibility; the researcher was confident that participants would, and did, talk to her.

Data and Subjects

Recruitment

Recruitment for this study occurred in two steps. The researcher advertised using social media platforms and flyers in spaces where potential respondents from transnational communities were identified, such as Jamaican markets and Jamaican restaurants. Additionally, the researcher distributed flyers through personal networks, such as a faith group that has a large Jamaican congregation with members in New York and other parts of the US. Snowball recruiting was also employed.

The first point of contact was made through participants responding to the researcher's outreach efforts. If the survey's inclusion criteria were met, the consent form was then sent to the prospective participant (Appendix A). Participants received a follow-up phone call one week after the initial contact to request and confirm their participation. The recruiting process was completed when the researcher obtained the maximum number of participants for the research study (determined to be 15 participants; 1 pilot participant and 14 interview participants).

The second step included screening included those who replied to the advertised flyer. The eligible criteria included present residency in the United States and national origin from Jamaica, an island in the Caribbean. Participants have to be older than 18 to participate. Adults who self-identified as "barrel children," "left-behind children," or "transnational" and who were raised apart from their mothers for a period of zero to 18 years as a result of their mothers' immigration to the U.S. The interview date, time, and manner of conducting the interview were determined after meeting the eligibility criteria. It was explained to each participant that their names would not be used for identification; instead, a number was used in lieu of their names.

Participants came from New York and other states within the U.S. where Jamaicans reside. Thus, the research was not geographically restricted.

The consent form was explained, and any participant concerns/questions were addressed. Participants who agreed to participate in the study were required to sign the consent form. The researcher used the Zoom Video Communication platform to interview the participants. According to Gray et al. (2020), Zoom enables researchers to conduct in-person interviews in a cost-effective and convenient manner. Each interview was recorded using the Zoom platform; participants could turn off their video, but the researcher's camera was left turned on. Most of the participants did not turn their cameras off. Zoom transcription, an online VoIP transcription service, transcribed the Zoom audio recordings. All interview recordings were maintained in a password-protected file on the researcher's laptop, and a backup file was kept on a password-protected Google drive linked with the researcher's institution. Participants received a $20 Amazon e-card in exchange for their participation in this research. The permission form contained information about the study's voluntary nature and the participant's right to withdraw at any time.

Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria included national origin from the Caribbean Island of Jamaica, located in the West Indies, and current residence in the U.S. Participants had to be over the age of 18. Adults who were separated from their mother as children for ages zero to 18 years due to their mother immigrating to the U.S. and who self-identified as "barrel children," "left-behind children," or "transnational" were eligible for participation.

Exclusion Criteria

Exclusion criteria included those who were under the age of eighteen, as well as those from the French, Spanish, or Dutch-speaking Caribbean, were barred from participating for IRB purposes. International students, those following parents on temporary work assignments, and those who migrated with their parents were also excluded. Participants who were left-behind but were not born in Jamaica, did not currently live in the U.S., or who did not identify as left-behind children were also excluded.

Sampling Method

Purposive and snowball sampling was used because they are focused and strategic in reaching out to hard-to-reach participants. Snowball is considered one of the most popular qualitative research sampling methods as it focuses on networking and referral as its central characteristics (Parker et, al, 2019). Snowball sampling is a chain-referral method where the initial recruits (seeds) who meet eligibility criteria and, upon agreeing to participate in the study, recruit other participants from their social network with distinctive characteristics, and those persons identify other individuals (Valerio et al., 2016). Snowball sampling is widely used in qualitative research in various sciences, including social sciences. This method was used and the researcher asked each interviewee to provide at least one name of a potential participant, so the sample size grew like a rolling snowball. Recruitment stopped when the desired number of participants was met. Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants' since it can reduce reluctance among participants and protect their identity (Kirchherr & Charles, 2018).

The strength of purposive sampling is in selecting examples that one can learn from while capturing the issue of most importance, thus gaining more knowledge about a research topic. Purposive sampling is a qualitative research approach for gathering and capturing data that is

both rich in information and uses limited resources. The objective of purposive sampling is to capture a representation of a population in order to generalize while shedding light on the subject that is being investigated. One of the goals of purposive sampling is to capture the diversity that exists within a population. With purposive sampling, the researcher is intentional about including "outliers," which are often conveniently discounted by quantitative approaches. Purposive sampling puts the researcher in the driver's seat rather than being dependent on selection bias and a characteristic of a pre-existing group. It enables "the exception to prove the rule" by highlighting commonly occurring procedures and interactions through contrasts. In other words, it helps bring deviant cases into the light (Barbour, 1999; Barbour, 2001; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Frankland & Bloor, 1999; Mays & Pope, 1995; Patton, 2015).

Sample Size

There is no straightforward answer to the question of how many should be included in a qualitative sample. Qualitative research experts argue that several factors, such as epistemological, methodological, and practical issues, should be taken into account (Baker & Edwards, 2012). According to Padgett (2017), the smaller the sample size, the more intense and detailed the data collection. The projected sample size enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Padgett, 2008) and to achieve code and theme saturation (Hennink et al., 2017).

Researchers in phenomenological qualitative studies seek to collect in-depth information about the lived experience of the individual; between five to 25 participants were sought to complete this study using the phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) argues for between five to 25 participants, while Baker & Edwards (2012) posits six to 20 participants. Although the literature implies that a sample size of five would be sufficient, it did

not seem to be a rich enough dataset for the researcher's intended study, while 25 appears excessive. It was anticipated that a sample of 15 participants would provide sufficient information for the researcher, particularly if the interviews are rich. Ultimately, 15 participants were recruited for the current study.

Measures

The interview questions were left open-ended so that respondents could describe their individual experiences. To ensure that all participants received the questions and probes consistently, the questions were written and pilot tested with one participant. which included probing and specific prompts. The semi-structured interview questions for this proposed study were informed by the researcher's existing scholarly literature review, the researcher's practice experience, NELM, and TFT.

To obtain optimal responses, the researcher prepared for follow-up questions or prompts. Thus, the researcher used probing questions to explain and guide the participants to reach the desired richness and depth. The interview protocol was field-tested with one participant, who was later eliminated from the sample pool. According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), the use of semi-structured interviews is the primary source of qualitative data research, enabling the researcher to collect open-ended data and delve deeper into participants' thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a particular subject. It can also delve into personal and occasionally sensitive issues (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Padgett, 2017). In addition, demographic information was collected in the first meeting, including age, location, level of education, marital status, age separated from parents, and age reunited. A copy of the final interview guide is provided in Appendix C.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing of the research questions was undertaken with one participant who met the inclusion/exclusion criteria. During the pilot testing, the participant became significantly upset over the use of the term “stayed behind” in Jamaica, noting that this term did not reflect their experience and that they did not have a choice about remaining in Jamaica. The participant was upset enough to suggest that she might need to go to therapy to address the experience of being left-behind, as the term "stayed behind" brought back painful memories. The researcher provided the participant with mental health information. The term "stayed behind" was removed from both the interview and research questions as per the pilot study.

Data Collection

The researcher interviewed each participant for approximately 90 minutes. Using a consistent format guaranteed that all relevant information was obtained, and that time was used appropriately. As mentioned previously, demographic information was collected in the first meeting, including age, location, level of education, marital status, age separated from parents, and age reunited.

Interviews

The researcher conducted phenomenological interviews through Zoom. Zoom is a video and conferencing technology that is also known as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) (Archibald et al., 2019). Zoom is a cloud-based, collaborative video-conferencing platform that provides online meetings, group chat capabilities, and secure session recording. Zoom, like comparable services such as Skype, allows real-time communication with geographically distant individuals through a computer, tablet, or mobile device (Zoom Video Communications Inc., 2016). Interviews were recorded and transcribed by Zoom.

Bracketing

At the beginning of the research project, the researcher identified and bracketed previous knowledge and biases about the phenomenon. Bracketing involves the researcher abstaining from judgment or deviating from the conventional, everyday way of perceiving things. In practice, bracketing is defined as a technique for separating the researcher's personal experiences from the subject being investigated. To practice "bracketing," a critical component of phenomenology, researchers must set aside personal ideas, research presuppositions, inherent knowledge, and preconceptions as distinct from what they observe during the research process (Chan et al., 2013; Creswell, 2007).

Data Analysis

The data analysis was undertaken as an inductively summative assessment to aid in the formation of ideas that are improved, tested, evolved, and emerged as significant from the text (Assarroudi et al., 2018). The researcher examined the data using a thematic analysis technique. A thematic analysis enables the identification, organization, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) included within data. Thus, in the simplest way possible, organize and explain your data collection in (rich) detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). Braun & Clarke (2006) and Nowell et al. (2017) et al. describe the following as a step-by-step approach to thematic analysis, including: a) familiarizing yourself with your data; b) generating initial codes; c) searching for themes; d) reviewing themes; e) defining and naming themes; and f) producing the report.

Identifying Themes

The following outlines the procedures used for coding the data and identifying themes from the data collected.

Familiarizing Self with Data

It is critical that the researcher spends additional time familiarizing themselves with the data, as well as comparing the transcripts to the original audio recordings for 'accuracy'. The researcher should be immersed in repeated reading of the data, as well as active data reading searching for meanings, patterns, and so on (Braun & Clarke, 2006), as well as active data reading searching for meanings, patterns, and so on (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Coding Process

Qualitative data analysis for this study involved the analysis and coding of transcribed interviews and open-ended focus-question data for general themes and subthemes. The Quirkos Cloud® (2022) software program was used for the coding process. The coding process required labeling and organizing qualitative data for the purposes of identifying themes and the relationships between them (Saldaña, 2021). According to Saldaña (2021) three to four different coding processes be applied for qualitative analysis, which was applied in this study. In this analysis, data were analyzed using a) first cycle coding (using research questions to identify/delineate the main themes), b) second cycle coding (to identify patterns/commonalities, and thus, subthemes), and c) third cycle coding (to identify any additional themes that did not fit within the main themes or subthemes in the first two cycles) (Saldaña, 2021). After the data was collected, the researcher highlighted, circled, and underlined quotes that were considered important for the purposes of elucidating the data for reporting.

First Level Coding

First level coding using the three research questions as a guide, was undertaken after the data were collected from the interviews in order to determine general themes. Inductive coding creates codes based on the data collected and the survey responses (Saldaña, 2021). Coding was

performed by breaking qualitative data into smaller samples, after which, a sample of the data was "read," and the researcher created codes to cover and reflect the obvious content of the data sample (Saldaña, 2021). The data from this study was found to contain important and relevant words and phrases from the transcribed interviews, reflective thoughts, and questions written by the researcher, which provided some initial insight into the main themes (Mason, 2002; Saldaña, 2021). Where applicable, field notes gathered by the researcher while listening to interviews were incorporated.

Second Level Coding

Once the first stage coding was completed, pattern and axial coding was completed for the second cycle coding stage. Pattern/axial coding allowed for a large amount of data to be divided into more meaningful categories/subthemes for ease of handling (Saldaña, 2021). In the current study and after the first stage of coding, the researcher examined the data to identify patterns (commonalities/similarities) in the data, from which similar items were grouped. together. Patterns deemed by the researcher to be important were used to derive categories, which later became "subthemes". If outliers were identified, the researcher created a new category labeled as "to be listed", after which the researcher reviewed that data to see if the information should be recoded to fit into one of the other categories. Some of these outlier data were placed in other categories, while any remaining outlier data that could not be grouped into an existing category were placed in a category labeled "other."

Third Level Coding

In the third stage of coding, pattern, and axial coding were repeated to identify the "codes" contained within each subtheme and ensure that codes were attributed to the correct

theme or subtheme. Some new codes were identified, and the researcher determined which existing themes or subthemes the codes needed to be placed under.

Producing the Report

The final step occurred after the researcher had thoroughly defined the themes and was ready to begin the final analysis and report writing. A thematic analysis was written such that it presented a clear, cohesive, logical, non-repetitive, and engaging description of the data inside and across themes. According to Thorne (2000), researchers must ensure that they describe how they assigned their results in a way that a critical reader can understand. As a result, the statements made regarding the data set become more trustworthy and credible. King (2004) argued for actual statements from participants to be included in the final report. Brief excerpts might assist in explaining certain interpretations and demonstrating the recurring themes.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

This section details the steps that the researcher took to establish trustworthiness and rigor in this research study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) were the first to incorporate rigor into their model of qualitative research's trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is a central concept in their framework for evaluating the rigor of a qualitative study. The term "trustworthiness" is used by researchers to refer to the quality, integrity, and factual accuracy of qualitative research findings (Cypress, 2017). In 2007, Creswell identified eight key rigor strategies and recommended that qualitative studies utilize at least two of them. They include prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer review or debriefing, negative case analysis, reflexivity (an attempt to explain researcher bias), member-checking, rich description, and external audits (research should be audited by an external researcher). This section will outline the steps that the researcher will take to establish trustworthiness and rigor in this research study.

Thick Description

Thick description is the researcher's task of explaining and analyzing social activity in its context. The setting might be a marriage, a family, a workplace, or a town, community, or culture. By comprehending and clearly describing the environment in which social activities occurred, thick description properly explains observed social behaviors and attributes purpose and intentionality to them. Thick description reflects people' ideas and emotions as well as their intricate interactions. Researchers, participants, and the report's readership benefit from thorough description and interpretation. Readers may be "placed" in the research context by the results (Ponterotto, 2006). Thick description isn't just a contextual analysis; it's an expression of how we see and comprehend (Freeman, 2014).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is frequently regarded as being one of the most important techniques for enhancing objectivity and minimizing potential bias in qualitative social work research Reflexivity refers to the researcher's knowledge of the effect they have on what they are investigating as well as how the research process influences them. According to Johnson and Waterfield (2004), the purpose of reflexivity is not to establish impartiality and objectivity; rather, the purpose of reflexivity is to make the researcher's participation in all parts of the interpretative research process obvious. Therefore, in order for researchers to engage in reflexive practice, they are required to not only be aware of the role that social interactions play in the construction of knowledge but also explicitly discuss and document the meanings they associate with those social interactions at each stage of their research (Gringeri et al., 2013). The term "reflexivity" refers to the process through which the researcher identifies and articulates the foundation for the trust placed in them (Probst & Berenson, 2014). Reflexivity is recommended

as among the many strategies used to strengthen rigor, thus reducing bias in social work research (Mackieson et al., 2019).

Role of the Researcher and Positionality

Creswell (2014) notes that researchers need to be mindful of any potential biases they may bring to the research, which may impact the researcher and their interpretation of the data. According to Creswell (2014), the researcher's perceptions, experiences, and biases have the potential to influence the interpretation of the results and general findings of the study. To combat any potential biases that may have influenced the design of the focused interview guide, a pilot test was conducted, and the focused interview guide was modified based upon the findings of the pilot test and the recommendations of the pilot test.

My heritage is Jamaican, and I was born and raised in Jamaica until my teenage years. Although my mother did not emigrate to the United States, my grandmother played a role in raising me. Therefore, I am familiar with the customs and traditions of Jamaicans and the Jamaican culture. Growing up, I knew of families whose mothers relocated to the U.S., The United Kingdom, Canada, other Caribbean islands, and other countries for the purposes of employment and for the betterment of the family. In my teenage years, I relocated to Canada, where I gained employment and continued my education. In 2004, I earned my Bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Sciences, which was followed by a Master's degree in the same field, with a concentration in Human Development and Family Studies, in 2011. In 2015, I earned a Master's degree in Social Work, after which time I became involved with providing counseling and support to Jamaican workers in the hospitality industry. Through my work with the reunification of Jamaican families, I became interested in the different challenges and difficulties faced by these families. After several years of working in this area, Throughout my

work with Jamaican and Indigenous Canadian families, I came to understand the extent and magnitude of the trauma of separation suffered by Jamaican families and left-behind children. I also became aware of the lack of resources and services for these families, as well as a dearth of preparation amongst immigration workers with respect to how best to support these families and assist them with the challenges they were facing. In particular, one aspect that I became aware of as being particularly relevant for families that have been separated in this manner is that they need to focus on rebuilding the relationships between and among family members, and especially, between mother and child. Additionally, I became aware of the fact that while family finances were improved through the immigration of a parent to a different country for the purposes of employment, that this frequently left family members and children with mental health issues.

As I became more involved in working with these families, I discovered that not only was there a lack of information available to provide guidance as to how to work with these families, but there was, in fact, an almost complete absence of information and evidence supporting what was needed by these families and how to best provide them with quality care. As a result of this finding, I was prompted to enter PhD studies where I could focus my research on the experiences of left-behind children and the impact of maternal migration and separation on the family. While I may have a bias towards the belief that more work is necessary in this area, my research has been designed to capture the perceptions, memories, and experiences of left-behind children through the use of open-ended questions that allowed participants to offer their opinions and experiences in an uncensored manner. Although this research sought to capture the participants' memories and experiences in a wide range of areas, it is important to note that this research constitutes only preliminary work into the area of Jamaican left-behind children. More research

is necessary in order to ensure that social workers and other professionals working with this population provide the best evidence-based treatment modalities that support and care for these individuals.

Protection of Human Subjects

Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the WCG IRB. The IRB application contained the informed consent form for participant signature and the interview methods. Consent forms were prepared at an eighth-grade reading level and detailed the data collection, processing, and storage protocols, per IRB rules. Participants were asked to agree to be interviewed and record their responses using Zoom. They were asked to examine and submit written comments on a summary of their interview. A copy of the WCG IRB approval is contained in Appendix D.

Due to the nature of the interviews and the anticipated use of quotations in the report, participation was anonymous. However, confidentiality was maintained throughout the interview and publication process; number identifications were used instead of participant names. Prior to commencing the interview, participants were advised about the possibility of being triggered because of the research subject. They were advised that they could stop the interview at any given time. No participant expressed feelings or emotions that would cause harm. Further, this did not occur in the current research. A listing of mental health resources was provided to each participant in case they felt the need to access mental health services, see Appendix B. The consent form was required to be signed and read by all participants. Each participant received a new individual link and a password-protected invitation, meaning that attendees had to enter the private meeting room using the password. Each participant was assigned a number that protected them from being identified. This ensured that no one but the researcher and the participant could

join the Zoom session, and no one was able to barge in without the passcode. The host disabled screen sharing. The Zoom recording was stored on a password-protected computer. The information was kept on a password-protected laptop secured in the researcher's home and was backed up on an external hard drive not connected to the internet.

Study Limitations

The research has significant limitations. Researchers have an obligation to the academic community to present complete and honest limitations of a presented study (Ross et al. 2019). Although this study focused on individuals from a particular country who live in a variety of demographic regions in the U.S., using a single kind of data source, the study utilized a purposive sample of convenience, which relied on participants contacting the researcher after finding the study advertisement or through word-of-mouth. This study also only investigated maternal migration and although one participant had both parents migrate, this study is not generalizable to those individuals who have only experienced paternal migration. Consequently, the lack of a random sample means that this study may not necessarily be generalizable to a wider population of left-behind/barrel children from Jamaica. Thus, the findings are not generalizable to all "Barrel Children, "Left-behind Children", "Transnational children", or children of paternal migration. Secondly, although the interview questions were pilot tested, they were not subjected to a reliability and/or validity investigation. While the questions, on the face of them, appear to target areas of interest to the current study, they may not, in fact, capture the data that was desired. One specific issue identified is that the questions, while open-ended, ask participants to describe their experiences before and after their mother's migration in the same sentence. This resulted in a variety of answers that did not, in all cases, obtain "before" and "after" answers to each question topic.

One final limitation pertains to the answers solicited from the participants in response to the focused interview. It should be noted that the perceptions, memories, and memories of experiences reported by the participants in the current study cannot be taken as absolute truths. According to Galbin (2014), "the social constructionism perspective says that we never know what universal true or false is, what is good or bad, right or wrong; we know only stories about true, false, good, bad, right or wrong. Social constructionism abandons the idea as constructivist that the individual's mind represents a mirror of reality" (Galbin, 2014, p. 2). In other words, the memories relayed by the participants in the current study are the truth *as they perceive it to be*, not necessarily the *actual* or *absolute truth.*

This section discussed the methodology used in conjunction with the proposed study period; the next section discusses the results.

Chapter Seven: Results

This chapter consists of the results, interviews, and related research question themes from the perspectives of 15 participants. The participants shared their experiences as adult immigrants left-behind as children by mothers who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. The results in this section address the following research questions.

Overarching Research Question: What were the experiences of adults who stayed in Jamaica while their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (0 to 18 years old)?

Research Sub-Question #1: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time before their mother's immigration?

Research Sub-Question #2: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time during and after their mother's immigration?

Research Sub-Question #3: What do these individuals see as the lasting impacts of their mother's and their own immigration journeys?

Demographic Data

The categories included in the demographic information are: age at the time of the study, country of birth, age at which migration occurred, and reasons for immigrating from Jamaica to the United States. Fifteen focused interviews containing open-ended questions were used to explore the feelings and effects of maternal immigration from Jamaica to the U.S. Participants in this study self-identified as adults who had stayed in Jamaica after their mothers immigrated to the United States. The sample consisted of 14 participants (11 females, 3 males) ranging in age from 22 to 72 years of age. The average age was 45.6 years old, with a standard deviation of 2.74.

Participants' ages at the time their mothers immigrated ranged from 2 years of age to 17 years of age. The average age at the time of maternal immigration was approximately 8 years of age (M = 8.07; SD = 5.28). The length of time participants were separated from their mothers ranged from 3 years to 16 years, with the average length of separation being approximately 8.5 years (M = 8.54; SD = 4.54).

The reasons for maternal immigration to the U.S. are set out below. Virtually all of the participants (n = 14) reported that "finances" were the primary reason for their mother's migration, while the majority of participants (n = 10) also identified other reasons for their mother's migration, in addition to finances. For example, participants identified finances only (n = 4); finances + better life (n = 4); finances + better opportunities (n = 2); finances + job opportunities (n = 1); finances + educational opportunities (n = 1); finances + independence (n = 1); and finances + help family back home (n = 1).

Reasons for Participants' Immigration to the U.S.

The reasons for the participants' immigration to the U.S. are detailed below. All of the participants (n = 14) cited reunification with their mother as the reason for their immigration to the U.S. In addition to reunification, participants cited the following reasons for immigrating to the U.S.: reunification only (n = 9); reunification + educational opportunities (n = 1); reunification + career opportunities + educational opportunities (n = 3); and reunification + educational opportunities + sibling care (n = 1).

Qualitative Analysis Results

Coding Process

First, second, and third level coding, based on the three research questions, were undertaken by the researcher. Table 1 shows the deductive and inductive analysis of the transcribed data. The process set out by Saldaña (2021) was used to code the data.

For the first level coding, the researcher used the research questions as a guide, anticipating that the main themes would fall into the following codes: before mother's migration, after mother's migration, and impact of mother's migration. These were formally coded as follows: a) Participants have positive childhood memories & experiences before maternal migration to the U.S. (Research Subquestion#1); b) Participants have negative childhood memories & experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S. (Research Subquestion#2); and c) Impacts of maternal immigration (Research Subquestion #3). Using the first level codes based on the research questions as a guide, the second level coding was undertaken. The second level coding revealed subthemes for each of the three first level research question codes, yielding a total of 17 subthemes and second level codes: Theme #1 Research Subquestion#1: six subthemes; Theme #2 Research Subquestion #2: eight subthemes; and Theme #3 Research Subquestion#3: three subthemes. Within the second level coding, the subthemes that emerged were coded according to Saldaña (2021).

Table 1

Themes, Subthemes, and Codes Derived from the First, Second, and Third Level Coding Process

First level coding Main Themes	Second level coding Categories/subthemes	Third level coding
Theme #1 Participants have positive childhood memories & experiences before maternal migration to the U.S.	Family dynamics	Family separation, connection with mom, religion, mom's work hours, sibling, extended family, mother working as a professional in the U.S., mother's marital status (8)
	Childhood experiences & memories	Maternal discipline style, things we do together, early childhood memories, things my mother taught me (After mother left Jamaica, difficult memories, birthday memories, memories of mother, fond memories, parental partnership, memories of basic school (11)
	Living arrangements	After mother left Jamaica, before mother left Jamaica (2)
	Emotions	Abuse, feelings (2)
	Memories	After mother left Jamaica, difficult memories, birthday memories, memories of mother, fond memories, parental partnership, memories of basic school (7)
	Migration	Reason for migration, reason for mother's migration, preparing for departure (3)
Theme #2 Participants have negative childhood memories & experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S.	Communication	Communication/connecting with mom (22)
	Thoughts about U.S.	Opportunities, concerns about mother living in U.S., questions about mother leaving (3)
	Emotions	Living arrangements, mother/child bond, mental effects, visiting mother in the summer (4)
	Migration	Memories of mother preparing to leave (2)
	Memories	Age at time of mother's emigration, saying goodbye (2)

Academics	Academic performance/schooling (2)
Lifestyle change	Maternal visitation, siblings as mother, grandparent parenting, community support, early employment (5)
Finances/Gifts	Change in finances, things mother sent, maternal funding, role of creditors (4)

Table 1 (cont'd)

Themes, Subthemes, and Codes Derived from the First, Second, and Third Level Coding Process

First level coding Main Themes	Second level coding Categories/subthemes	Third level coding
Theme #3 Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant	Direct effects	Communication, academics, finances, celebrations, safety, gifts & gratitude (6)
	Individual effects	Social effects, symptoms of stress, emotions & coping with emotions, abandonment, challenges, difficulty forming bonds (6)
	Family & community effects	Kinship care, maternal visitation, living arrangements, family togetherness, length of maternal separation(s), parental separation, length of maternal visits, relationship breakdown (8)

Theme #1 Research Subquestion#1; six subthemes emerged and were coded as follows: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, memories, and migration. Theme #2 Research Subquestion#2; eight subthemes emerged and were coded as follows: communication/connecting with mom, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics/schooling, lifestyle change, and finances/gifts. Theme #3 Research Subquestion#3; three subthemes emerged and were coded as follows: direct effects, individual effects, and family/community effects. Due to the amount of data collected and transcribed from the researchers' interview process, there were a total of 91 third level codes identified by the researcher. The first level codes and themes, second level codes and subthemes, and third level codes are presented in detail in Table 1.

Themes and Subthemes

The following section details the findings of the focused interviews undertaken with the participants. Main themes are identified and presented, with subthemes presented along with each theme. Overarching Research Question: What were the experiences of adults who stayed in Jamaica while their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (zero to 18 years old)?

Research Sub-Question #1: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time before their mother's immigration?

The responses obtained from the participants in the current study was that their childhood experiences and feelings about their life in Jamaica, prior to their mother migrating to the U.S., were overwhelmingly positive. Although there were some participants who were too young to remember much about their life in Jamaica prior to their mother's migration, the vast majority of participants were able to recall their life experiences prior to their mother's departure. One theme

that emerged with respect to experiences prior to mother's migration to the U.S. was that the actual separation event, where the mother was leaving the family for the U.S., was that it was negative and traumatic for all participants. The six overriding subthemes identified by the researcher from the data were: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, memories, and migration. The themes and subthemes related to Research Question #1 are detailed below.

Theme #1

The first theme to emerge from the focused interviews was "Participants have positive childhood memories & experiences before maternal migration to the U.S." Contained within this theme were a total of six subthemes, which included the following: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, and memories. The overall finding was that the majority of (*n = 13*) participants had positive memories and experiences while in Jamaica before their mother migrated to the U.S. One participant (*n = 1*) relayed an experience of molestation prior to her mother migrating to the U.S., which she refused to talk about.

Subtheme #1: Family Dynamics

The first subtheme to emerge under this category was "family dynamics". Contained within this subtheme were a total of eight codes, which included the following: family separation, connection with mom, religion, mom's work hours, sibling, extended family, mother working as a professional in the U.S., mother's marital status.

The participants in this study tended to come from traditional Jamaican families and family situations. For example, Participant #3 said,

> It was a typical Jamaican household. We grew up with both parents in the household, and traditional Jamaican values. It was a typical Jamaican household. As the older sibling, I

> would be expected to follow the trend of my mother with helping with caregiving responsibilities when my parents, particularly my mother when she, wasn't around. It was a loving environment. My parents were very supportive. It was a good upbringing.

Participant #4 noted, "I remember my father, my mom, my brothers and sisters." "I had a very good childhood. I love my parents; my parents loved me." The majority had one parent living outside the home, although most participants noted that they had a close relationship with extended family or community members, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and neighbors. Most of the participants (*n* = 13) were in contact with their father and/or had a good relationship with the father and the father's side of the family. All of the participants also lived with their mother prior to her migration to the U.S. (*n* = 13), reporting that they had a good connection with their mother. One participant reported living with her mother at one point, but due to not having a good connection with her mother, she moved in with her grandparents. More than half (*n* = 8) of participants mentioned religion, the Bible, and/or attending religious schools as an important part of their upbringing. All of the participants (*n* = 14) talked about their mother having to work prior to migrating to the U.S., and just over half (*n* = 8) mentioned that their mother worked "long hours" or "worked hard." Additionally, all of the participants (*n* = 14) stated that their mother worked after migrating to the U.S. Similarly, all of the participants (*n* = 14) mentioned that they had at least one sibling and that they either cared for that sibling (s), assisted their sibling(s) in some way, and/or received help from their sibling(s).

Subtheme #2: Childhood Experiences

The second subtheme to emerge under this category was "childhood experiences". Contained within this subtheme were a total of four codes, which included the following: maternal discipline style, things we do together, early childhood memories, things my mother

taught me. Overall, the participants reported positive early childhood memories. Some of the participants commented that they were too young to recall much about their childhoods, while others described somewhat idyllic childhoods. For example, Participant #11 stated the following:

> We grew up thinking we were rich. Thinking we had money but looking back, we weren't poor like. I don't want to say dirt poor because being poor doesn't make you dirt. Financially we just didn't have it but all our …we always had everything we wanted to be comfortable. Even though we weren't the richest we had 2 pairs of shoes. We never felt like we were any lesser because we were always taken care of. For the most part we were taken care of. We had a good life.

Participant #5 stated,

> I had a wonderful childhood experience in Jamaica. Um, I lived with my, with the extended family, so to speak, um, before my mom left. We lived in the same, we lived next door to each other. My mom was in one house, my grandmother was in another. Um, so we were always kind of part of one family.

One participant talked about maternal discipline style, while others discussed the discipline style of their fathers, siblings, and/or extended family members, such as a grandparent, and so forth, with many participants commenting that the discipline style was "loving" but "strict" or "very strict" (n = 8). Almost half of the participants (n = 6) commented that they engaged in a lot of activities with their mothers before she migrated, including reading (especially the Bible), going to church, going to the market, playing, telling stories, and homework. Others mentioned engaging in activities with siblings, extended family members, and friends.

Subtheme #3: Living Arrangements

The third subtheme to emerge under this category was “living arrangements”. Contained within this subtheme were a total of two codes, which included the following: before mother left Jamaica and after mother left Jamaica. For example, one participant noted that before their mother’s migration, living arrangements were as follows:

> We always had a house. The house we had then, growing up, it wasn’t always the same house because we lived in rented homes, but it was always a house. The last house we lived in before we migrated was our home. It was a three-bedroom house, one bathroom, living room, kitchen. We had built another room onto it as well and a verandah.

Overall comments indicated that participants had a good life, which implies satisfactory living arrangements, with one participant noting, “I wouldn’t change anything.” Living arrangements after the participants’ mothers immigrated to the U.S. are addressed under Theme #2.

Subtheme #4: Emotions

The fourth subtheme to emerge under this category was “emotions”. Contained within this subtheme were a total of two codes, which included the following: abuse and feelings. For the most part, participants chose to focus on their feelings and emotions after their mother migrated to the U.S., although some provided some insight into some emotions and experiences they had prior to their mother leaving. Several of the participants indicated that their mother, parents, or caregivers were often too busy to worry about feelings and emotions or the emotional response to experiences. For example, Participant #12 stated the following:

> When I think of parents of yesteryear with less resources, less knowledge, what have you, trying to make decisions for their families and totally lacking in any understanding of emotions beyond, if I hit you, you cry or if you fall down and hurt yourself, you cry. But

> the business of a person crying because they are sad, nobody had time for that because it was all about making the bread, chasing the dollar to make the bread. If you didn't chase the dollar nobody lived. Then you didn't have a roof over your head. You didn't have clothing on your back etc.

Still others mentioned that their mother was always available to them and that times were happy prior to her migration from Jamaica. One participant described emotions tied to an unpleasant experience she had before her mother migrated from Jamaica, which included an episode of molestation, that left her in need of therapy, while others tended to focus on how their emotions had changed as a result of the migration of their mother. For example, one participant said "I think the person that I am right now maybe I'm more reserved in my expressions of my emotions." "Initially, we had an ok relationship when she was in Jamaica." Further details are provided under Theme #2.

Subtheme #5: Memories

The fifth subtheme to emerge under this category was "memories". Contained within this subtheme were a total of seven codes, which included the following: after mother left Jamaica, difficult memories, birthday memories, memories of mother, fond memories, parental partnership, and memories of basic school. For many of the participants, their memories prior to their mother migrating to the U.S. are positive. The memories described by the participants were generally descriptions of family times and fond memories that included their mother in Jamaica before their mother migrated. For example, one participant noted the following: ", I remember basic school, her coming to my fashion show in basic school. She would, I remember specifically her packing my lunch in the morning to go to basic school." Another participant recalled the following memory, "We talked the same. The only difference I think a lot is when we were in the

islands. Even when they worked, they seemed to be more available; when we came here, they seemed to just work all the time." Another participant stated "We used to have family night every Sunday. Dinner, sit down, eat, talk." Several of the participants described the traumatic experience of watching their mother leave as she migrated to the U.S., which is addressed in subtheme #6 below. Again, for the most part, participants tended to focus on how memories changed after their mother left Jamaica.

Subtheme #6: Migration

The sixth subtheme to emerge under this category was "migration." Contained within this subtheme were a total of three codes, which included the following: reason for migration, reason for mother's migration, and preparing for departure. The overall experiences of the participants as it relates to migration was that it was a traumatic experience. Whether it was saying goodbye at the airport or whether it was realizing, after the fact, that their mother had left them behind, most participants described their mother's leaving as a negative experience and a defining moment in their lives. For example, one participant stated the following:

> As a child, you don't have the cognition, the logic to reason out what leaving really means. At the end of the day you're just left-behind. Yet at an emotional level, especially since it happened too early, before I could reason, then I was abandoned. If I could change anything, it's not the poverty, it's the leaving behind. You can be together in poverty.

Another participant described the following experience with migration,

> If they hadn't left and I had been raised with them my whole life I do think that mentally and emotionally I'd be a lot more stable. I wouldn't spend so much time trying to ensure that I don't make the same mistakes as them. That in itself is draining, trying to be

> different and do things differently especially now that I have children. I just think that them leaving and me going through the struggles that I did because they weren't there has me in a fight or flight mindset. It's always…I don't feel stable. I never feel stable.

Another participant echoed these sentiments, "I think that my parental departure had the major impact on my childhood."

Summary Research Question #1

The results of the current study found that the childhood experiences and feelings of participants prior to their mother migrating to the U.S. were overwhelmingly positive, with the exception of the separation event, which was overwhelmingly negative and traumatic for all of the participants. One major theme emerged from the thematic analysis, which was "Participants have positive childhood memories and experiences before maternal migration to the U.S." A total of six subthemes were identified: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, memories, and migration. With specific regard to family dynamics, participants cited connection with mom, sibling, extended family, religion, mother's marital status, mom's work hours, family separation, and mother working as a professional in the U.S. In specific regard to childhood experiences, participants cited things we do together, early childhood memories, things my mother taught me, and maternal discipline style as the things they remember the most. In regard to living arrangements, major themes that came out were living arrangements before mother left and living arrangements after mother left. With specific regard to emotions, participants cited feelings and abuse as factors tied to this subtheme. The factor of "abuse" was only cited by one participant, but this factor was chosen by Quirkos® as an evident underlying theme. In regard to memories, participants cited fond memories, memories of mother, memories of basic school, birthday memories, parental partnership, and memories of the

time after their mother left Jamaica. With regard to migration, participants cited the reason for mother's migration, the reason for migration, and preparing for mother's departure as the factors relevant to this subtheme.

Research Sub-Question #2: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time during and after their mother's immigration?

The primary theme that was identified was "Participants have negative childhood memories and experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S." The thematic analysis revealed that the childhood experiences and feelings of participants after their mothers immigrated to the U.S. were overwhelmingly negative. Subthemes that were identified were: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics, lifestyle change, and finances/gifts. Details about the experiences of participants are presented below.

Theme #2

The second theme to emerge from the focused interviews was "Participants have negative memories & childhood experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S." Contained within this theme were a total of eight subthemes, which included the following: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academic performance, lifestyle change, and finances.

Subtheme #1: Communication

The first subtheme to emerge under this category was "communication." Contained within this subtheme were 22 codes, such as telephone, neighbor's telephone, business telephone, payphone, WhatsApp, etc. In this subtheme, most participants addressed communication in literal terms, describing how they interacted with their mother after she had immigrated to the U.S. For example, some indicated that they connected with their mother by

telephone, mail, WhatsApp, pay telephone, and using a neighbor's phone. The general overall experience of participants was that they did not have many opportunities to communicate with their mother after she left, which several participants described as either "detrimental" or they associated it with emotions of sadness or a lack of recognition of their mother.

Some participants described communication on a more emotional level, noting that after their mother left, communication was difficult: "It was hard to communicate; hard to express how I feel. At first I would break down before I communicated". Another participant noted the following:

> But I wouldn't leave, I would not leave the door open for, us not communicating. I would communicate with my child each day, each week. If I can't do it each day, I would find a way to talk to them each week, something. But I think the biggest part of the relationship I had with my mother after she left was the lack of communication. We did not really talk much. So, when we finally got to spend time together, I remember the first time it was so awkward because she picked me up from the airport, and she was very distant. And I'm like, this is not my mother. It was strange. I was, it's like I was meeting this lady for the first time, even though I hadn't seen her in about eight or eleven years or so {sic}. After she left, when I saw her for the first time, it was a very awkward, um, encounter. And then, when I saw her, it was nighttime when she picked me up. So, we, you know, I went in, took a shower, went to bed, and when I saw her the next day, it was like, very strange. It's like, this is my mother. I went to hug her, but she didn't hug back. I think the communication thing is what I would, um, I would change.

Another participant noted “We didn’t really talk much. Maybe 2 times a month.” “We didn’t have a phone in the house, so we used a pay phone that was in the neighborhood. Most people made collect calls on Sunday.”

Subtheme #2: Thoughts About the U.S.

The second subtheme to emerge under this category was “thoughts about the U.S.” Contained within this subtheme were a total of three codes, which included the following: opportunities, concerns about mother living in the U.S., and questions about mother leaving. Most of the participants spoke about the opportunities that were afforded them as a result of their mother migrating to the U.S. However, there is a prevailing theme that while there were more opportunities in the U.S., they came with a cost that may not have been justified (ie. parental separation, trauma of separation and leaving, not knowing if one will see one’s parent again, not understanding why one’s mother was leaving, not truly understanding that mother was leaving or what that meant, etc.). For example, one participant clearly elucidated the opportunities and benefits of their mother’s migration, although the value of the increased opportunity was questioned, “I know the opportunities I have had in my adult life. I don't think I would've had if I stayed in Jamaica. Granted, I'm sure I would've gotten a good job, but I wouldn't be where I am today.” Another participant described initial excitement at their mother migrating to the U.S., followed by the realization of her absence:

> I didn’t really know what to expect. I was 14. I was still really young. On one hand, you are excited about your family member going to America. All the opportunities you see on television, and what does that mean for me? Am I going to be able to go and visit sometimes? Will I move there? Of course, there is also the flip side too of your parent is not going to be there anymore. I don’t think that part hit me until afterwards. I think at

> first, just the whole glory and glitter that's around the whole idea of relocating to America that really overshadowed the fact that my parents weren't really going to be there – or be there like they were before. Or that they weren't coming home tomorrow per se

Most of the participants were left with a feeling of loss, with some of the participants associating the physical loss of a loved one as a result of the gained "opportunities in the U.S." A participant described how the migration to the U.S. resulted in their sister's mental illness, and, ultimately, her death,

> More opportunities were afforded me here, and so I have been able to do well academically here as well. None of it was easy. It took work and determination and, of course lots of money and debt. I think now, I'm sad because I lost my sister that followed me. That will remain with me for the rest of my life because she was a big part of the family back then. Even though the migration happened, my mother left us, we had our ups and downs, but we were all together. When we came together back with our mom, we were together again. Now she's missing so, I think it's sad. I mean, I'm happy that we are here. There are opportunities that are afforded us, but I saw my sister get ill. I saw her get lost in the shuffle. I don't think this life was for her.

Finally, another participant articulated the following:

> I wish that I wasn't left-behind to go through some of the things that I went through. There were some harrowing experiences that I still haven't spoken about to this day. Don't feel like you can tell your parents because either they'll be dismissive, or they won't understand. And when they do understand, they won't show you that they understand. There is no emotion there. I don't know if it's because they don't want to

> remember that part of their life or because they don't want to believe that the people, they trusted to take care of their child was not the people that they thought they were.

Subtheme #3: Emotions

The third subtheme to emerge under this category was "emotions." Contained within this subtheme were a total of four codes, which included the following: living arrangements, mother/child bond, mental effects, and visiting mother in the summer. Overall, the mental and emotional effects of the participants' mothers' migration to the U.S. were recalled as negative or highly negative. Virtually all of the participants (n = 14) indicated that there were strong emotions around their mother migrating to the U.S., most of whom cited the actual moment of departure as being extremely traumatic. Similarly, almost all of the participants (n = 12) cited a significant disruption to the mother-child bond and their relationship with their mother, many of whom also commented that their relationship with their mother was not fully repaired upon reuniting in the U.S. One participant (n =1) noted that the relationship with her mother remained so damaged from the point of separation onwards, that her mother felt compelled to apologize to her on her deathbed. For example, another participant stated the following,

> She apologized to me for not doing better. And, um, I think she knew all along that there were issues, there were gaps in our relationship, but only when she was, um, close to death that she apologized and say, Hey, I could have done better, but it is what it is. So it, wait, wasn't really a true apology either. It was like something to make her feel better, you know, clear her, clear the air before she died.

Almost all of the participants (n = 12) indicated some level of anger directed at their mother for leaving, some of whom indicated that they later understood the reason for their mother's migration. For example, one participant stated that she was "angry", "always so angry

at her", and "I remember I was sad. It was a lot more sad." None of the participants indicated that the anger ever went away or subsided. At least five participants (n = 5) reported crying at the time of the mother's departure and then in the time period during which they remained separated.

Most of the participants also indicated having memories of sadness, longing for their mother, anxiety, or other emotions, with qualifiers such as "traumatized", "sad", "draining", "confusing", "tough", "having to survive", and so forth. Some participants (n = 2) recalled initially feeling excitement at their mother's expected departure, which was quickly tempered with statements regarding the distress they felt upon learning what that departure meant and how long it was going to last. For example, another stated the following,

> We were excited because we think my mom is going to go to America, and she is going to get her paperwork by next year. Probably in a couple months, and then boom, we would be there. You know …fast. It was going to be amazing.

Other participants described a sense of confusion or being puzzled about their mother leaving. For example, one participant,

> Confusion. There was no explanation as to what was going to happen. What the end goal was. You were just left, and you sort of just got on with life as best as, and after a while, you didn't think about it anymore. It was your reality that where you were is where you were, and you didn't try to think of what was going to happen. Is somebody coming back for me? You just got on with it.

None of the participants (n = 0) indicated being "happy" that their mother departed from Jamaica, nor coming to be happy as a result of their mother being away, although one participant (n =1) indicated having the belief that their mother's immigration to the U.S. was a positive

factor in their life. Notably, one participant indicated that the damage from the separation was so significant that they later required professional help to deal with the trauma. Specifically, they noted the following,

> I needed therapy. They didn't understand that. I didn't understand that so it never really happened. Some bad things happened in Jamaica, and I needed therapy. So mentally, in Jamaica, I survived. Coming out of Jamaica, I survived but in a different way because now I started to build a new narrative, so I created a shell person to cover the wounded person.

Still, another participant detailed the following:

> Mentally for me, I don't know if I ever really processed some of those emotions at that age. You just know that your mom is not there, and she's overseas. Initially, we had an ok relationship when she was in Jamaica, but after she migrated, we definitely lost that bond that we had. The respect and the love is still there, but that bond that you get from being together with somebody day in and day out it was definitely severed and hard to rebuild because we started to get older. I don't think we had that emotional attachment like we had before.

Some participants described longing for their mother and continually hoping that she would come home. For example, one participant stated,

> It was tough. You're constantly looking to see this person walk through the gate. You're looking every day. Your smaller siblings asking when mom is coming. Walking on the street, you would see somebody shaped like her or look like her. You try to run through the crowd to find out that it's not the person you know.

Subtheme #4: Migration

The fourth subtheme to emerge under this category was "migration." Contained within this subtheme was one code, which was: memories of mother preparing to leave. In general, the participants did not comment about their mother's migration from a literal perspective, choosing rather to speak about the migration as it related to other factors, including emotions, communication, living arrangements, thoughts about the U.S., specific memories, academics, lifestyle change, and finances, which are addressed under the separate themes that they fell under. However, a total of five participants (n = 5) participants gave specific feelings or memories relating to the "migration event" (defined as the point at which their mother departed).

For all of the participants (n = 14), the "migration event" occurred at the point at which their mother left from the airport in Jamaica, which contained a "waving gallery" for children and their families to indicate their final goodbyes to one another. Overall, those participants described the moment of separation or the "migration event" as being an event where they wished they weren't left-behind, that their mother wouldn't immigrate, that their mother would have waited to immigrate, or that they could have gone together. For example, one participant stated,

> When she was leaving, she just said she was going on a trip. A trip meaning what? We didn't understand the trip or how long the trip would last. We know that other family members would come in from England or America during the Christmas season, so you expect to see her at that time. It never happened.

Another participant noted the following: "I wish that I wasn't left-behind to go through some of the things that I went through."

Subtheme #5: Memories

The fifth subtheme to emerge under this category was "memories." Contained within this subtheme were a total of two codes, which included the following: age at time of mother's immigration and saying goodbye. In general, all of the participants (n = 14) had memories about the period of time after their mother left them behind in Jamaica. However, the majority of the memories have been classified under specific themes detailed before or after this category.

The memories highlighted under this section are those memories to reflect the theme of "memories," and as can be observed, they tend to contain reflections of the participants with relating to specific moments that they remembered in their childhood, in which they either longed for their mother's presence or which called to mind their mother's absence. For example, one participant recalled a specific memory that caused them to wish that their mother was present:

> There were definitely some sad days when you looked around and hearing everybody else saying "mom" or "dad" or "papa." You didn't have that. It was auntie something or uncle something but no mom or dad for you. So you would try to integrate yourself with somebody else's family so you feel like you had a mom or dad.

Another memory recalled by a different participant highlighted the physical changes in their mother between visits, which addresses the real changes that occur as a result of aging. For example, another participant noted, "When you see your parents or meet them for the first time again, it's a new person. Face changes, voice change, more gray hair." Another participant mentioned that it was difficult mentally, stating:

> Mentally, we longed for her. It was a different kind of ballgame after mom left. I felt that we felt more dependent on everybody. And knowing that my mom wasn't there, so we were a little bit, especially around holiday times and stuff, we felt a little sad.

Another participant noted that their mother's departure made it feel like they had to grow up fast, noting, "I would say that you had to grow up fast. It was a lot."

Subtheme #6: Academics

The sixth subtheme to emerge under this category was "academic performance." Contained within this subtheme was one code: academic performance.

Overall, all of the participants (n = 14) in the current study commented that their mother's migration to the U.S. had an impact on their academic performance. Notably, most participants reported that their mothers left Jamaica in order to improve opportunities for their families, but this did not reflect the reality with respect to academics. All of the participants (n = 14) reported that in spite of their mother migrating to the U.S., their mother provided for them financially so that they had everything they needed to attend school in Jamaica. With regard to academic performance, the majority of participants (n = 10) commented on academic performance: four (n = 4) did the same after mother left, worse (n = 4) after mother left, and better (n = 2) after mother left Jamaica. Four participants (n = 4) declined to say. Consistent with these reports, only three participants (n = 3) reported having greater opportunities after relocating to the U.S. and reuniting with their mother. In general, participants reported "struggling" with academics after their mother left Jamaica, regardless of whether their performance stayed the same, declined, or improved. Most of the participants reported difficulties with academic performance due to the loss of assistance with homework provided by their mothers. For example, one participant noted the following: "Things that I should have been doing at that age, my academics, just socializing

and being a young person, was put on hold." Another participant stated, "I'm not sure if there is a direct correlation, but now I find it hard to finish academic tasks that I have started."

Subtheme #7: Lifestyle Change

The seventh subtheme to emerge under this category was "lifestyle change." Contained within this subtheme were a total of five codes, which included the following: maternal visitation, siblings as mother, grandparent parenting, community support, and early employment. Overall, participants reported feeling a sense of having to grow up very quickly and a sense of loss after I coded this because this is what came up in the analysis. It confirmed the overarching theme. their mother migrated to the U.S. To varying degrees, most of the participants reported having to take on some responsibilities that their mother would have performed had she not immigrated. For some, this involved looking after smaller siblings, while others reported feeling the need to gain employment and start working earlier than planned. With specific regard to lifestyle change, one participant stated the following:

> It was tough. You're constantly looking to see this person walk through the gate. You're looking every day. Your smaller siblings asking when mom is coming. Walking on the street, you would see somebody shaped like her or look like her. You try to run through the crowd to find out that it's not the person you know.

All of the participants (n = 14) in the current study also had some form of caregiving provided by others after their mother migrated to the U.S. For some participants, this took the form of living with their fathers and/or grandparents, while for others, this meant living with other extended family members, including aunts and uncles. Overall, most of the participants also commented on the fact that it was other family members who took on roles and motherly duties (i.e., helping with schoolwork, attending special events, etc.) after their mother

immigrated to the U.S. In general, most participants reported that the person providing the caregiving in place of their mothers was there for school and other activities, although participants still expressed feeling the loss of their mother being there. For example, one participant stated, “In school, and I was doing poetry, reading and winning, I really didn't have anybody there to say, okay, wow, this is my daughter, and she's doing, I didn't really have that.” Many of the participants also reported that they received some level of community support and care from neighbors after their mother immigrated. Still, others recalled feeling a sense of loss, responsibility, and pressure to grow up, with one participant stating,

> It left a gap in our development. I think it put a very heavy load on my shoulders as a young person. It made me grow up so much faster than I would have. Things that I should have been doing at that age, my academics, just socializing and being a young person, was put on hold. I think my growth, social, emotional, mental growth was not stunted but inflated extremely to this adult person. Which I wasn’t emotionally and mentally. To take on this parentification role of doing and being for my siblings. What I had, I was in no position to do. It impacted me in that sense of never getting the opportunity to grow up in the stages of growth that was normal. Being forced to do so by circumstances. I had no opportunity to question or say I couldn’t. Even though my mom was far away, I felt an obligation to do it. I could have said, “I’m not doing it. I’m out of here.”. I could have done that, but there was a deep sense of responsibility and obligation that I felt. My mom wasn’t here, it was my job to do it. I also felt like I needed to do it and do it to the best of my ability.

The majority of participants (n = 10) reported receiving visits from their mothers after she immigrated to the U.S., while four participants (n = 4) reported that they did not have maternal

visitation after their mother immigrated to the U.S., primarily due to financial reasons. One of the participants (*n* = 1) reported having to start work at an earlier age to help provide for the family and due to the fact that he was not doing well in school.

Subtheme #8: Finances/Gifts

The eighth subtheme to emerge under this category was "finances". Contained within this subtheme were a total of four codes, which included the following: change in finances, things mother sent, maternal funding, and role of creditors.

All of the participants (*n* = 14) spoke about the "barrels" or "big boxes" that they received from their mothers after she immigrated. Barrels are 55-gallon drums that individuals fill with items they want to ship to their loved ones in their native country. All of the participants spoke about the excitement of receiving a barrel from their mother, which would contain clothes, shoes, toys, food, school supplies, and miscellaneous items, which many participants described as showing that their mother cared for them and was concerned for their economic welfare and mental well-being. For example, one participant stated,

> From time to time, when she was able to put some money together, she would send us monetary gifts. If she knew of anybody who was coming back to Jamaica to visit, she would send down items of clothing. Sometimes she would try to pack food and send a barrel. Initially, that wouldn't happen frequently, but as she was able to start working and put funds together, then she would, maybe once a year, send down a barrel. Maybe two times a year, somebody was coming down, she would send down a shoe or a dress for us,

while another participant noted the following

> When the barrels or something came, someone would go down to the wharf or to where the ships came in, the docks. You had to go through lots and lots of people a lot of

> excitement. She had to send money ahead of time to clear the barrels. She would send food stuff, and clothing. Sometimes it would be two barrels. That would probably be only once or twice a year. We would get stuff to share with other people in the neighborhood, or that she would specifically send a list in the barrel to say who would get what.

Most of the participants also reported that their mother sent money (remittances) back to Jamaica after immigrating to the U.S. However, several participants noted that they were more likely to receive barrels than money and that from time to time, mail was disrupted, so that they did not receive the financial support they were expecting. With regard to money (remittances) being sent to Jamaica by their mothers, several participants described experiencing financial hardships as a result of either receiving no money or disruptions due to unforeseen circumstances, such as mail strikes, which means the remittances, barrels, or parcels would not be sent by their mothers. Some participants noted that they wished their mother would come home instead of receiving goods from her. For example, one participant said,

> At that time financially, it wasn't working out. The little that she sent it was just enough or sometimes barely enough." "You would get that Christmas {barrel}. You would get gifts. Someone would bring a package and say this is from your mom. But you were still looking at the gate if your mom would come.

Participants also spoke about the need to find ways to help out financially after their mother immigrated to the U.S. Two of the participants (n = 2) described having to seek out employment in order to help out the family, while others described having to approach their fathers for financial support in lieu of their mother's immigration. For example, Participant #6 said,

> You start work early. You started work as a teenager getting paid just to help out with the other siblings. Based off of single parent household you actually pick up a responsibility as you reach teenage years. 13-14 you start working, bringing in an income just to eat food, just to survive.

In further regard to monetary remittances from their mothers, one participant (n = 1) commented on the role of creditors in assisting them with obtaining the basic necessities back in Jamaica. For example, Participant #5 said,

> If the mail was on strike, we got no money. There were times that the mail was on strike. Wow. And sometimes it went for a few weeks. So if the money had just come before that, we are okay. But if it was at the time that it would have come, then we were in trouble

and also,

> Um, because we had rent to pay, uh, food to, to eat. You know, one of the things that helped us is again, the extended family. My mother had one brother, especially, that checked on us very frequently. And so sometimes he would bring a box of food, um, and then he would pay some of the bills, like rent. He would pay that if it was at a time that that was due, and the money didn't come. The other thing that I think helped a lot was they had the supermarkets. You had these books, and in the book, they would write what you bought on credit. And for a while, we would go and, um, he {creditor} would, he would put whatever we took and had no money to pay for. And then when my mother came, she would clear all the bills, or my father didn't come as much as my mother did after they left.

Summary Research Question #2

The second theme identified from the thematic analysis, “Participants have negative childhood memories & experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S.” Contained within this theme were eight (8) subthemes, including: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics, lifestyle change, and finances/gifts. In regard to communication, participants discussed modes of communication with their mother, with most citing the difficulties they had with communicating with her and the limited times they were able to connect. In regard to the subtheme of thoughts about the U.S., participants cited concerns about mother living in the U.S., questions about mother leaving, and opportunities. With respect to emotions, participants cited factors such as mother/child bond, mental effects, emotions about living arrangements, and visiting mother in the summertime. In regard to immigration, participants cited memories about their mother preparing to leave for the U.S., which continued to plague them from the time which she left until they were reunited. With specific regard to memories, participants cited their age at the time of their mother’s immigration and saying goodbye. Academic performance was a major area of concern, with the vast majority of participants commenting on their academic performance after their mother immigrated to the U.S. In regard to lifestyle change, participants cited factors such as maternal visitation, grandparent parenting, siblings as mother, community support, and early employment. Finally, with respect to the final subtheme of finances/gifts, the participants cited the change in finances, things that their mother sent to them, maternal funding, and the role of creditors after their mother immigrated to the U.S.

Research Sub-Question #3: What do these individuals see as the lasting impacts of their mother's and their own immigration journeys?

The third major theme that emerged from the focused interviews was "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant." Within this theme, three (3) subthemes emerged, including: direct effects, individual effects, and family and community effects.

Theme #3

The third theme to emerge was "Perceived impacts of maternal migration to the U.S. are significant." Contained within this theme were a total of three subthemes, which included the following: direct effects, individual effects, and family and community effects.

Subtheme #1: Direct Effects

The first subtheme to emerge under this category was "direct effects". Contained within this subtheme were a total of six codes, which included the following: communication, academics, finances, celebrations, safety, and gifts/gratitude. Direct effects encompassed larger facets of the participant's life, such as academics and finances. These are the names assigned to these subthemes.

With respect to the direct effects experienced by the participants as a result of their mother's immigration to the U.S., the vast majority of participants cited communication as the factor that was most affected. Communication was cited as a factor due to the fact that many of the participants did not have cell phones or phones within their home in Jamaica, which limited the frequency and duration of contact that they could have with their mother. In further regard to communication, many of the participants noted that the disruptions to communication were a large factor in the disruption of the mother-child bond. For example, one participant stated the following:

> Initially, we had an ok relationship when she was in Jamaica, but after she migrated we definitely lost that bond that we had. The respect and the love is still there but that bond that you get from being together with somebody day in and day out it was definitely severed and hard to rebuild because we started to get older. I don't think we had that emotional attachment like we had before. Sometimes when I look at other peers or daughters and mothers how there is that connection. I don't think we really have that and that's probably because we spent such a long time away from each other.

The second area that was most affected by the mothers' migration to the U.S. was finances. All of the participants (n = 14) in the current study commented on finances before and after their mother immigrated, although the impact on finances was felt after the mother immigrated. With specific regard to finances and matters relating to finances, and as noted in the preceding section, all of the participants received either barrels, boxes, or parcels from their mother containing everyday essentials and special treats. Some of the participants also received remittances from their mothers, but most of the participants also indicated that they did not know how the finances were addressed overall. Some of the participants indicated that they were too young to know the details, while others stated that it was not a subject for discussion with a child in their home after their mother immigrated. For example, another participant stated the following:

> Then…I would say now I am conservative with funds. I try to make sure that my kids have everything that they have, that they need. I try to make sure they don't go without. Versus, when my parents left, I was given the bare minimum. I'm not sure if that was because of finances or because who was looking after me didn't do a good job. So,

> finance-wise I do my best to make sure we are never struggling, well my kids are never struggling.

All of the participants (n = 14) commented on the impact of their mother's immigration on their academic status in some way, noting that there had either been a negative (n = 4) or positive impact (n = 2), with some indicating that there was no impact at all (n = 5). Three of the participants ((n = 3) declined to say how their academic performance was affected, although two participants (n = 2) reported that their academic opportunities in the U.S. were improved after they migrated. Some of the participants indicated that their mother's immigration spurred them to strive for more academically. For example, another participant stated the following:

> I still did ok in school. Thank God I was still able to – even though at times we didn't have money - go to school every day. Sometimes I would bring lunch, I was able to finish and graduate and started working at the bank. I think academically things were ok. There weren't any major disruptions there." "I think that maybe it contributed to my motivation to keep striving to achieve some of these goals. The drive to go after those things that I'd like to achieve.

Some of the participants cited a direct impact on their safety and security after their mother migrated to the U.S. For example, one participant stated,

> It left me feeling with no sense of security. Always being on edge. You overanalyze things. You just never felt secure. You felt that you could be moved at any time, or they could show up at any time and you were expected to just be ok with it." Another participant cited the vulnerability imposed by their mother's absence, noting "The separation left me open to the abuse of others. So, no protection.

All of the participants (*n* = 14) commented on the value and importance of gifts they received from their mother after her immigration to the U.S. or their gratitude for what their mother did for them and/or the experiences that accompanied their mother's immigration. In spite of the hardships and losses that many of the participants described as a result of their mother's immigration, many spoke of the gratitude that they felt. For example, Participant #8 said,

> Eventual migration has its pros. There are certain opportunities that are afforded us as immigrants and we are not knocking it because it is what it is. There are certain things that are readily available on this side of capitalism. In a third world country there are certain things that come with the environment; the quiet, the peace, the ignorance. A lot of things that come on this side of migration which is affordability, educational opportunities, work opportunities and different things. Some of the blessings…all of the blessings that all of the opportunities that came for my children and for myself, I appreciate that, and I am grateful for that. Losses…I wish I didn't have to deal with those. Loss of relationship and loss of people.

Subtheme #2: Individual Effects

The second subtheme to emerge under this category was "individual effects". Contained within this subtheme were a total of six codes, which included the following: social effects, symptoms of stress, emotions & coping with emotions, abandonment, challenges, and difficulty forming bonds. Individual affects were quite personal and tended to deal with the participants emotional reactions.

In regard to individual effects, the overwhelming impact that participants identified relating to their mother's immigration to the U.S. had to do with emotions, emotional impacts,

and emotional challenges. All of the participants (n = 14) described their mother's immigration as "sad," "traumatic," "disappointing," "confusing," or other similar terms. The range of emotions expressed by participants was frequently conflicted, with participants expressing excitement or anticipation at their mother's immigration, combined with intense sadness, anger, loss of stability, confusion, trauma, loneliness, and so forth. Many described needing years of therapy and/or counseling to cope with the trauma or to help them re-establish the mother-child bond. Several participants noted that they were never able to re-establish the mother-child bond although they had respect for their mother. A large proportion of participants indicated that they had difficulty forming bonds with others or trusting others as a result of the separation they felt as a child. For example, one participant noted the following:

> I think if my mother had not migrated then all those aspects that we discussed. Maybe we would have had a closer bond" and "Initially we had an ok relationship when she was in Jamaica, but after she migrated, we definitely lost that bond that we had. The respect and the love is still there but that bond that you get from being together with somebody day in and day out it was definitely severed and hard to rebuild because we started to get older. I don't think we had that emotional attachment like we had before. Sometimes when I look at other peers or daughters and mothers how there is that connection. I don't think we really have that and that's probably because we spent such a long time away from each other" and "I think the person that I am right now maybe I'm more reserved in my expressions of my emotions. I think I have a built up somewhat of a wall. I feel like I have a harder time connecting and bonding with people." Participant #4 stated "I don't know. I had been a loner and I had enjoyed being by myself. We had friends who we

> played with. I don't think I was emotional. I can't look back and say anything other than I missed my mom.

Another participant said,

> I would say back then, when you look at it back then, there was a sense of abandonment. I just think that them leaving and me going through the struggles that I did because they weren't there has me in a fight or flight mindset. I would say now I still sort of struggle to be myself around people because I don't know if my true self is going to be accepted." "I don't feel stable. I never feel stable. It left me feeling with no sense of security. Always being on edge. You overanalyze things. You just never felt secure. You felt that you could be moved at any time, or they could show up at any time and you were expected {to} just be ok with it.

Several participants expressed feelings of abandonment or the sense that they were "left-behind," which has continued to impact the relationships and social ties that they make as an adult. For example, another participant said the following:

> I was plunged into whatever and you just had to live. Survive. You are talking 2–4-year-old making that transition. I think now I can see now how the whole thing has impacted my life. My relationships, especially as it related to my attachments. It's almost as if I expect to be abandoned. It seems to me that on some unconscious level I choose who will abandon me. As a child, you don't have the cognition, the logic to reason out what leaving really means. At the end of the day, you're just left-behind.

Participant #8 described the symptoms of stress they felt due to their mother's absence: "There was loneliness, there was more stress. So, there are pros and cons with that. There was more money but there were other things happening." Another participant noted,

> My relationships, especially as it related to my attachments. It's almost as if I expect to be abandoned. As a child, you don't have the cognition, or the logic to reason out what leaving really means. At the end of the day, you're just left-behind.

Subtheme #3: Family and Community Effects

The third subtheme to emerge under this category was "family and community effects." Contained within this subtheme were a total of eight codes, which included the following: kinship care, maternal visitation, living arrangements, family togetherness, and length of maternal separation(s), parental separation, length of maternal visits, and relationship breakdown.

All of the participants (n = 14) had some experience with kinship care after their mother immigrated to the U.S. In some cases, participants went to live with their father, others with grandparents (or grandparents moved in with them), aunts and uncles, and other family members. In one case (n = 1), the participant ended up living with neighbors. While some of the experiences were positive, other participants reported having negative experiences, where they had to give up their room because of the new living arrangement. For example, one participant noted,

> I had my bed at first but then I left my room and me and my uncle shared a room. Me and my uncle had a bunk bed, he sleep on the bottom, I sleep on the top. After a while the bed was getting loose, and I didn't want it to fall on my uncle so I started sleeping in the couch. So, for a long time I was bouncing in the couch, but it was ok for me." Another participant said "I had to share a room with {?}. When I went to my mom, I had to share a room with my mom and my brother, so it didn't change much for a while.

Others noted that they had to contribute to sibling care and other responsibilities after their mother left, leaving them with less time to engage in their normal activities. For example, one participant said,

> I didn't go to as many social gatherings or hang out like some of my peers because I had that added responsibility." Another participant said "I don't have friends here. Most of my friends are back home so socially I would say I don't have a social life here. I work, I come home.

The next largest impact under this theme was related to family togetherness, parental separation, and relationship breakdown. All of the participants (n = 14) reported disruptions to family togetherness and relationships with both family members at the time of their mother's migration, but also after reunification. One of the themes that was unexpected to some degree was the participants' mention of parental separation, after the mother immigrated to the U.S. and the father was left in Jamaica. Although two participants (n = 2) fathers also immigrated to the U.S., the majority of participants (n = 13) commented on the impact of having their parents in two different countries, whether they lived in Jamaica themselves or immigrated to the U.S. The final impact identified by all of the participants (n = 14) is the maternal separation, issues with maternal visitation (either not being enough or not at all), the length of maternal visits (not long enough), and relationship breakdown. For example, one participant noted "That time between when a person has to migrate and leave their children it's so detrimental who they leave their children with."

Summary Research Question #3

With regard to research question #3, the primary theme that emerged was "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant". All of the participants cited significant impacts

as a result of their mother having immigrated to the U.S. Three subthemes emerged from the thematic analysis, including direct effects, individual effects, and family/community effects. With regard to direct effects, participants focused on communication with mother, academics, changes in finances, changes in celebrations, changes in feelings of safety, and gifts/gratitude. In regard to individual effects, participants cited social effects, feelings of abandonment, challenges they faced, difficulties forming bonds and relationships, symptoms of stress, and emotions/coping with emotions. Finally, in regard to family/community effects, participants cited kinship care, maternal visitation, living arrangements, family togetherness, length of maternal separation, parental separation, length of maternal visits, and relationship breakdown (with mother).

Conclusion

The researcher's analysis of the data, the results of the thematic analysis, and the study's important findings revealed three main themes. These themes and their associated subthemes focused around the finding that participants' had predominantly positive childhood memories and experiences before maternal migration to the U.S., while their childhood memories and experiences after maternal migration to the U.S. were predominantly negative. Overall, there were substantial direct, individual, and family/community support impacts on participants as a result of maternal migration to the U.S. The implications of the themes and associated subthemes are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Eight: Discussion

The findings of the current study provide a better understanding of the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a mother who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. This study provides helping professionals, such as social workers, with a better understanding of the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind in Jamaica by a mother who immigrated to the U.S. Data was collected by way of focused interviews with fourteen (n = 14) participants who met the inclusion/exclusion criteria, consented to participate in the study, and who were left-behind in Jamaica by a mother who immigrated to the U.S. during their childhood. Data were analyzed by thematic analysis, which identified three major themes: a) "Participants have positive childhood memories & experiences before maternal migration to the U.S."; b) "Participants have negative childhood memories & experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S."; and c) "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant". A total of seventeen (17) subthemes emerged: a) Theme #1 six (6) subthemes; b) Theme #2 eight (8) subthemes; and c) Theme #3 three (3) subthemes. The themes and subthemes generally aligned with the three research questions and are therefore discussed on the basis of each research question in the following discourse.

Theoretical Framework

New Employment Labor Migration (NELM) Theory

The guiding theory used for this study was the NELM, which posits that people migrate to foreign countries for the purposes of improving their opportunities and to better life for the family remaining in the home country. This theory also posits that the mechanism by which the migrating individual improves the financial status of those in the home country is primarily through the form of remittances. In the current study, virtually all of the participants reported that

their mother had migrated to the U.S. for the financial opportunities offered in the U.S., in addition to other opportunities (educational, employment, and so forth), which would serve for the betterment of the family remaining in Jamaica. All of the participants also reported receiving remittances in some form and/or frequency from their mother after she had migrated to the U.S. Additionally, all of the participants also reported receiving goods in the form of barrels, parcels, boxes, and by conveyances through relatives and friends traveling between the U.S. and Jamaica. The frequency with which the goods were sent to the home country varied, but all of the participants reported that the financial remittances and the goods received had improved their circumstances in some form or other. Therefore, the NELM theory reflected the realities of maternal migration from Jamaica to the U.S. for the participants in the present study.

Transnational Feminist Theory

In the present study, the data that was collected did not provide enough detail to determine the employment or educational opportunities that women who migrated to the U.S. achieved once they arrived. With regard to this theory, it can be said that the women who migrated to the U.S. were from a developing nation and that they did so for the betterment of the family, suggesting that migrating parents are not always the males in the family. However, there remains room for further research and examination of whether the women who migrate for the benefit of their families have had better, worse, or similar opportunities offered to them in the new country. Additionally, more research needs to be done within the feminist movement to include transnational women's issues.

Research Questions

The overarching research question for the study was: What were the experiences of children who stayed in Jamaica while their parent (s) immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years (zero to 18 years old)?

Research Sub-Question #1: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time before their mother's immigration?

The first theme identified from the focused interviews was "Participants have positive childhood memories and experiences before maternal migration to the U.S. In regard to Research Question #1, the childhood experiences and feelings of the participants in the current study was found to be seminal literature, as there were no other studies identified that specifically looked at barrel children's perceptions of their lives before a parent or both parents migrated to the U.S. There was, in particular, no studies which reported on the perceptions of barrel children's lives before their mother migrated to the U.S. Therefore, the findings of the current study will be addressed as stand-alone research, since the literature that exists addresses only the experiences of barrel children after the migration of their parents.

In general, the results of the current study found that the childhood experiences and feelings of participants prior to their mother migrating to the U.S. were overwhelmingly positive. The exception to these positive experiences was the actual separation event, which was overwhelmingly negative and traumatic for all of the participants. The major theme that emerged from the thematic analysis with respect to this research question was "Participants have positive childhood memories and experiences before maternal migration to the U.S." A total of six subthemes were identified: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, memories, and migration. With specific regard to family dynamics, participants cited

connection with mom, sibling, extended family, religion, mother's marital status, mom's work hours, family separation, and mother working as a professional in the U.S. In regard to childhood experiences, participants cited the following: maternal discipline style, things we do together, early childhood memories, and things my mother taught me. In regard to living arrangements, participants cited the following features: before and after mother migrated from Jamaica. With respect to emotions, participants cited abuse and feelings as relevant components. Participants further cited the following components with regard to memories: after mother left Jamaica, difficult memories, birthday memories, memories of mother, fond memories, parental partnership, and memories of basic school. The last and final area noted by the participants with regard to experiences prior to their mother's migration to the U.S. was migration, which included reason for migration, reason for mother's migration, and preparing for departure.

With regard to family dynamics, living arrangements, childhood experiences, emotions, and memories, the participants in this study tended to come from traditional Jamaican families and family situations, consistent with the literature, which can be described as residing with the mother living in the home and the father living elsewhere (Green et al., 2019). Nevertheless, participants in this study reported having good relationships with both parents, despite the parents living in separate quarters. Participants also reported having close relationships with extended family and community members, including grandparents, aunts and uncles, and neighbors. These close relationships are in keeping with the researcher's experiences of Jamaican families.

Prior to their mother's migration to the U.S., all of the participants in the current study lived with their mother, with the majority (n = 13) reporting that they had a good connection with their mother. One participant reported living with her mother at one point, but due to not having

a good connection with her mother, she had moved in with her grandparents. Although all of the participants spoke about their mother needing to work, and in some cases, participants indicated that their mother worked long hours (n = 8) prior to the migration to the U.S., this did not appear to be a factor in how they felt about their mother or with regard to the mother-child bond. Either way, all of the participants in the current study reported having good relationships with their mother and/or caregiver. In spite of the good relationships reported with their mother prior to her migration to the U.S., virtually all of the participants experienced a significantly disrupted mother-child relationship following the mother's migration to the U.S. The impact was significant enough that five (n = 5) of the participants reported the need for extensive therapy and/or counseling in order to rebuild the relationship with their mother, although none of the participants reported that the relationship was actually restored, in spite of years of professional help.

One notable area uncovered by the current research was memories of participants sharing religion and/or religious experiences with their mother prior to her migration to the U.S. More than half of the participants (n = 8) mentioned religion, having religion, the Bible, and/or attending religious schools as an important part of their upbringing and their relationship with their mother. Notably, several of the participants in the current study correlated the absence of their mother with a change in their religious practices, whatever that experience looked like. To a large degree, this was related to the amount of time that they spent with their mother and/or their understanding of religion. Although none of the participants reported a complete loss of their religion, the majority of participants experienced a change in religious behaviors significant enough to result in voluntary reports about that loss, even though no specific questions were asked about this facet of their life. If the religious experience of barrel children is significantly

disrupted by the migration of a mother or parent, questions are raised about whether the child loses some or all of their ability to cope and/or hope for reunion with their mother and restitution of their religious practices. Therefore, the loss of the connection to their mother through religion as a result of the mother's migration to the U.S. may have some bearing on the resiliency of the child and/or family as a result of the loss of this religious connection.

The final area that participants spoke about were positive experiences and memories about working together as a family to maintain the family. All of the participants mentioned that they had at least one sibling and that they either cared for that sibling(s), assisted their sibling(s) in some way, and/or received help from their siblings. Based on the findings of the current study, sibling relationships among Jamaican families of mothers who migrated to the U.S. were found to be a particularly important family dynamic prior to the mother migrating. Older participants in the current study reported greater sibling caregiving responsibilities and an increased surrogate parental role. Many of the participants described the positive aspects of the sibling relationship prior to the mother migrating, which continued after the mother's migration to the U.S. Overall, based on the findings of the current study, it can be concluded that sibling relationships played an important role in the childhood experiences and feelings of Jamaican barrel children.

Summary Research Question #1

Overall, the current study found that the first theme was that the childhood experiences and feelings of participants prior to their mother migrating to the U.S. were overwhelmingly positive, with the exception of the actual separation event, which was described as overwhelmingly negative for all participants. A total of six subthemes were identified with associated codes: a) family dynamics, which included connection with mom, siblings, extended family, religion, mother's marital status, mom's work hours, family separation, and mother

working as a professional in the U.S.; b) childhood experiences, which included maternal discipline style, things we do together, early childhood memories, and things my mother taught me; c) living arrangements, which included before and after mother migrated from Jamaica: d) emotions, which included abuse and feelings; e) memories, which included after mother left Jamaica, difficult memories, birthday memories, memories of mother, fond memories, parental partnership, and memories of basic school; and f) migration, which included reason for migration, reason for mother's migration, and preparing for departure.

Research Sub-Question #2: Looking back from adulthood, how do these individuals describe the time during and after their mother's immigration?

The second major theme identified from the focused interviews was "Participants have negative childhood memories & experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S." Contained within this theme were eight (8) subthemes, including: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics, lifestyle change, and finances/gifts. In regard to communication, participants discussed modes of communication with their mother, with most citing the difficulties they had with communicating with her and the limited times they were able to connect. In general, the overarching theme was that participants' experiences and feelings after their mother's migration to the U.S. were overwhelmingly negative.

With regard to the participants in the current study, the positive benefits achieved by the maternal migration were cited as financial benefits and/or educational/occupational opportunities and/or maternal independence. The participants in this study portrayed the significant financial support system provided after their mother migrated to the U.S., as it was critical in improving the living situation, for some, in their developmental years. Although some participants had some positive things to say about their mother's migration to the U.S., these sentiments were expressed

against a backdrop of substantively negative experiences. Participants cited long-term emotional and mental impacts of maternal migration, which included years of therapy, disrupted relationships and/or disrupted mother-child bonds, loss of love but not respect for their mother, and deathbed apologies for the migration which were characterized as inadequate. These sentiments and others like them suggest that the mental health and emotional cost of maternal migration, regardless of the reason and whether there are significant positive benefits, come at a high cost to those left-behind and suggest that the cost might be too high.

Lu et al. (2020) notes the migratory experiences of left-behind children are typically associated with poorer mental health and increased risk of suicidal ideation, which can be exacerbated by poor levels of communication between children and parent(s). However, Lu et al. (2020) argued that "healthy communication between children and parents fully mediates the adverse effects caused by maternal migration experiences on mental health among left-behind children" (p. 110) and that in particular, communication with the mother partially mediates the risk of suicidal ideation. The findings of the current study support the contention of Lu et al. (2020) with respect to the mental health of left-behind children.

Communication is a critical part of a child's growth process and it emerged as a critical subtheme in the current study. Some participants wished that the parents communicated more because they lacked that assurance from their parents, more connection and reaching out to the then child was noted as something that would have been much more helpful in reducing the feelings of missing many experiences. In regard to the first subtheme of communication, participants cited difficulties with connecting with their mother and maintaining communication with her after maternal migration to the U.S., which was mentioned 22 times throughout the focused interviews. For all of the participants (n = 14) in the current study, there were significant

issues around connecting with mom, which primarily focused on the fact that none of the participants had access to a telephone within the home in which they resided. In general, participants had to rely on using telephones in other peoples' homes, places of business, or public pay phones, or alternatively, messages related to or from their mother through others. One of the participants stated that they were able to use a texting application (WhatsApp) in order to text their mother from time to time, although this was through another's phone. Others noted that communication was by way of written letters. In all cases, communication was cited as a significant factor in the disrupted mother-child relationship and the mother's migration to the U.S.

With specific regards to the subtheme of thoughts about the U.S., participants reported thinking about various aspects of the U.S. ten times throughout the focused interviews. Thoughts about the U.S. included participants wondering what the U.S. was like, what it had to offer their mother, what it had to offer in terms of opportunities, concerns about their mother living in the U.S. and questions about her safety and her departure, and how they would fit in after reunification or during summertime visits to the U.S. For example, one participant linked their perceptions about the U.S. with the fact that their mother was leaving on an airplane, noting "I think we kind of reflected, for me it was this thing about the airplane. So, she's going to America, is America in the sky?" As can be observed, many of the thoughts that participants had about the U.S. were likely linked to their developmental age at the time of their mother's migration or the time that they had the thoughts.

In regard to emotions and lifestyle change, participants generally cited the negative impact of maternal migration on emotions (27 times) and mental health (17 times), for an average of approximately three mentions per participant. Again, the overwhelming experiences

and feelings with respect to emotions and mental health were negative. A significant number of respondents portrayed issues with their emotional issues as a result of a lack of parental support alongside effective communication. Participants reported a range of emotions from “sad,” “confused,” “angry,” “lost,” “lonely,” “puzzled,” and so forth, with regard to their mother’s migration to the U.S. In regard to mental health issues, some participants reported the need for therapy to address mother-child bond issues. A significant portion of the participants felt sad about being left-behind, some of the participants even confessed wishing that their parents would have traveled with them on the same day they left the country; being left-behind was not a good feeling even though they were left under the care of someone. Manyeruke et al. (2021) reported significant disruptions in the parent-child bond as a direct result of parental migration. Living in a world of wishes reportedly resulted in participants suffering detrimental mental and emotional consequences as children and as adults, as they felt they always lacked something other children had. The changing family situation and having to adapt to new situations and environments made various participants “grow up faster” to be able to look after siblings. Therefore, the findings of the current study are consistent with the empirical literature respecting the mental health and emotional effects of parental migration and the impact on the mother-child bond.

In specific regard to migration, participants in the current study cited the experience of maternal migration, from a hindsight perspective (cited ten times). The theme of migration that emerged after maternal migration is different from the migration identified before the maternal migration. In that regard, the pre-migration experience and feelings was confined to recollections about the traumatic separation event (i.e., the exact point in time at which the mother migrated and separated from the family). In the context of after the migration event, participants’ recollections were specifically tied to their experiences and feelings *after* the point that their

mother left. Some of the participants shared their experience that after the migration happened, they wished that it had not happened at all or that it could have happened in a different way. In addition to the foregoing, participants reported that the maternal migration resulted in them having to adjust and adapt to the new lifestyle change because some of the roles needed to be performed by parents had to be taken by some of the children. The older siblings would have to take some of the parental roles because of the absence of parents in attending to younger sibling's homework and addressing some of the things they required. The findings of the present study are in keeping with this literature, particularly with respect to participants' tendency to look back on the migration event and the time of separation and wonder if things could have been different, handled differently, or have different outcomes. This was certainly true in the current study, with several participants noting that the effect of the maternal migration was different for them as opposed to their siblings.

In regard to the memories experienced by the participants after their parent(s) migrated, what can be observed is that there were intense feelings of loss and longing for things to return to the way they were prior to the maternal migration. Henshaw (2019) examined unrecognized trauma and concluded that "survivors of complex and unrecognized trauma are vulnerable to experience repetitive trauma in adulthood" (p. 7), which requires that they integrate various repetitive trauma events into their evolving experiences. Furthermore, Henshaw (2019) also concluded that "forming one's identity with vague understanding about *why* one feels and acts a particular way {can be} perceived as isolating and confusing, and {can lead} to feelings of instability" (p. 139).

Manyeruke et al. (2021) noted that the age and developmental stage at which the separation occurs is directly associated with their ability to cope with the separation.

Furthermore, Manyeruke et al. (2021) found that even individuals with a secure attachment style can develop an insecure, anxious, or avoidant attachment style that may persist throughout the individual's life and impact upon their ability to initiate and/or maintain relationships. The fact that many of the participants in the current study have such clear recollections of the separation from their mother that they felt during the time of separation suggests that some, if not all of the participants, may have experienced some impact on their attachment style and their ability to maintain relationships. Many of the participants in the present study reported difficulties or disruptions in the mother-child bond/relationship and/or with regard to forming relationships with others. Overall, the memories reported by the participants in the current study with regard to their experiences and feelings after maternal migration were generally negative, reflecting changes in their relationship with their mother and with other individuals. For many of the participants, it was interesting to note that while they did not think their mother's migration and the resultant separation had any lasting impact on their lives, the memories they recalled clearly show that there were/are lasting effects relating to the maternal migration and separation from their mother.

The next theme to emerge from the data was with regard to academics. Most of the participants in the current study freely discussed the impact of maternal migration on their academic performance. Five of the participants in the present study noted no change in their academic performance, while the remaining nine participants either declined to say (n = 3), described reductions (n = 4), or improvements (n = 2) in their academic performance. The migration of parents can positively impact the academic well-being of left-behind children through improved finances to support education sent by the migrant parent(s), but this does not necessarily mean the children will attain great academic performance. Nevertheless, comments

from participants reflected not only the fact that they experienced the effects of maternal migration on their academic program, but also, they felt the loss of validation and empowerment they gained from their mother's daily feedback and support. Consequently, it is argued that childhood educators should learn trauma-informed strategies to help students with migrant parents deal with childhood trauma so that they can be successful in their academic pursuits.

The last and final theme identified from the data after the maternal migration was with respect to finances and/or gifts. All of the participants in the current study reported that the primary purpose for the maternal migration was to improve the financial situation of the family, though the effects of the financial benefits were not necessarily felt immediately. Ultimately, while all of the participants reported that the family's financial situation improved as a result of the maternal migration, many of the participants reported feeling financial deprivation in the time immediately and/or shortly after their mother's migration. Some of the participants reported having to rely on creditors (shopkeepers) in order to obtain the things, they needed, including food, school supplies, and other things they needed (cited three times by participants). A few of the participants reported memories of waiting for remittances and cheques to come from their mother, which sometimes did not materialize. All of the participants recalled the gifts that were sent home by their mother in the form of barrels, parcels, conveyances through other relatives/neighbors, and so forth. Overall, in the current study, a mix of positive or negative financial benefits were recalled by the participants in the time immediately and/or shortly after their mother's migration. However, the overall impact that was ultimately experienced by the participants with respect to the family's financial situation was that there was a significant, positive change in financial status as a result of the maternal migration.

Summary Research Question #2

The predominant theme for research question #2 was that participants have overwhelmingly negative childhood memories and experiences after maternal immigration to the U.S. Contained within this theme were eight (8) subthemes, including: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics, lifestyle change, and finances/gifts. Although there were some positive benefits cited by the participants in the current study with regard to the experiences and feelings they had after the maternal migration, the overwhelming experience was negative, as indicated by the responses provided by the participants. Positive benefits cited by some participants, but not others, included improved financial and/or academic status/performance after the maternal migration. However, participants cited significant negative impacts after maternal migration with regard to communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotional and mental health, academics, lifestyle change, and financial status.

Research Sub-Question #3: What do these individuals see as the lasting impacts of their mother's and their own immigration journeys?

With regard to research question #3, the primary theme that emerged was "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant." All of the participants cited significant impacts as a result of their mother having immigrated to the U.S. Three subthemes emerged from the data analysis, including direct effects, individual effects, and family/community effects.

Theme #3

The thematic analysis indicated that there were significant impacts on the lives of barrel children as a result of their mothers' immigration to the U.S. The results further demonstrated that the impacts were lasting and substantial in terms of the mental health and emotional impacts participants experienced as a result of their mother's migration and the separation from her.

Subtheme #1 Direct Effects of Mother's Migration to the U.S.

In regard to direct effects, participants focused on communication with their mother, the impacts of their mothers' migration on their academic performance, changes in their finances (during the time of separation and after reunification), changes in family celebrations, changes in feelings of safety (during separation, when they reunited with mother in the U.S., and with respect to relationships with others), and gifts/gratitude.

The next area of impact identified from the data was the effect of maternal migration on academic performance, which was mentioned 22 times by the participants. In the current study, the impact on academic performance took two general formats: academic performance in kindergarten to grade twelve and academic opportunities after the participants' immigration to the U.S. Five of the participants in the present study noted no change in their academic performance, while the remaining nine participants described reductions in (n = 4), improvements in (n = 2), or declined to say how the migration affected their academic performance.

In the current study, all of the participants (n = 14) reported that the reason for their mother's migration to the U.S. was for the purpose of bettering the family's finances, and all of the participants also confirmed that the family's finances were indeed better as a result of their mother's migration to the U.S. The change in financial situation took two forms in the current study: during the time of separation and after reunification. Virtually all of the participants in the current study described an improvement in the financial situation once they were reunited with their mother in the U.S.

A final area of concern and direct impact cited by the participants in the current study and detected in the data was the issue of safety (cited nine times). The risk of increased safety issues

and the potential for abuse has been cited in the literature with regard to children of parents who have migrated (Pottinger, 2005). Left-behind children are also at greater risk of experiencing more severe medical, emotional, physical, security, educational, and social neglect than children experiencing those types of neglect but who are not left-behind by migrant parent(s) (Wen et al., 2021).

Pottinger (2005) notes that children of migratory parent(s) experience significant periods of grief and traumatic events, beginning with the separation from their mother and/or parents and then again at a later date when they are separated from the caregivers who looked after them during the period of parental separation. According to SAMHSA (2022), childhood traumatic stress can last well beyond childhood and has been associated with learning problems, decreased academic performance, school suspensions and expulsions, increased use of health services (including mental health services), increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and long term health problems (i.e. diabetes and heart disease).

Subtheme #2 Individual Effects of Mother's Migration to the U.S.

In regard to individual effects, participants cited emotions, coping with emotions, and emotional effects, challenges they faced, difficulties forming bonds and relationships, social effects, symptoms of stress, and feelings of abandonment. As can be observed, the individual effects on the participants were widespread and encompassed all aspects of their lives. Some of these items have been captured or partially captured in the preceding section on direct effects. All of the participants (n = 14) cited significant impacts on their emotions, emotional status and well-being, and their ability to cope with emotions as a result of their mother's migration, citing this effect at least 64 times in the interviews, for an average citation of almost five times per participant. Difficulties forming bonds and establishing/maintaining relationships was also cited

by participants 15 times in the focused interviews, while feelings of abandonment were cited six times, and symptoms of stress were cited seven times. All of the participants also cited a variety of significant challenges they faced as a result of their mother's migration to the U.S., which included a constellation of issues, from living and lifestyle adjustments, caregiver changes, difficulties with academics (performance, being put into a different grade upon reunification, etc.), financial challenges, issues around acculturation upon reunification (adapt to culture, weather, safety issues, etc.), having to go gain employment earlier than expected, social issues (including long-term relationships) and having to participate in sibling care to a greater degree during the period of separation and after reunification.

Participants **i**n the current study who were left-behind while their mother (or in one case, where both parents migrated) migrated to the U.S. related feelings of frustration, abandonment, and anger relating to the migration. The migration of parents resulted in emotional and psychological problems in the children left-behind. Even if the participants described loving caregivers, they still reported feeling gaps in the caregiving situation they were left in, and they noted the loss of the physical presence of their mother and the activities they enjoyed with her.

Chakombera and Mubika (2018) reported that the absence of parents due to migration has negative implications on the physical and psychological well-being of children and adolescents left-behind in Africa According to Chakombera and Mubika (2018), some of the outcomes of separation of the child from their parents(s) include suicide and suicidal ideation, personality disorders, depression, aggression, anxiety of being left alone, being affectionless, delinquent behaviors, and so forth.

Bloch (2017) stated that the concept of "other mothering" or "child shifting", which is the practice of grandmothers or other family members raising children on behalf of the birth mother,

is a concept that has emerged over hundreds of years in countries such as Jamaica. Bloch (2017) further contends that there is a personal cost to "mothering from a distance", which does not necessarily mean that the child is "abandoned", but in the current study, some of the participants described feelings of abandonment, regardless of their mothers' involvement from a distance. According to Bloch (2017), the concept of transnational mothering is a fluid concept, and that mothering from a distance varies over time, in the form of remittances, communication, visitations, and so forth.

In the current study, participants were careful not to malign their caregivers, which tended to be mostly family. As previously mentioned, the NCTSN (n.d.) has suggested that the level of trauma and/or grief children of migrant parents experience, combined with the extent of the losses they experience (which in this case, also included loss of religious activities/connections), may be so significant and severe that they go on to experience prolonged post-traumatic stress symptoms that impact every aspect of their lives, regardless of the quality of the caregiving relationship. The participants in the current study cited issues around social relationships and their ability to form close bonds and lasting relationships with others as a result of their mother having left them. Some of the participants reported feeling that they could not "trust" others not to leave them or abandon them. Others reported wanting to stay by themselves as that was where their comfort level was. Still others reported not being able to maintain relationships with others, preferring to maintain instead the relationships that they had in their home country.

Subtheme #3 Family and Community Effects of Mother's Migration to the U.S.

Finally, in regard to family/community effects, participants cited kinship care, living arrangements, relationship breakdown, parental separation, family togetherness, maternal

visitation, family togetherness, length of maternal separation, and length of maternal visits. For all of the participants in the current study, there was a change in both caregiving and living arrangements, with caregiving and kinship care cited 45 times by participants (approximately three times per participant) and change in living arrangements cited approximately twice per participant. As noted earlier, most of the participants went to live with extended family or extended family moved into the home after the maternal migration, resulting in the first change in living arrangements. For many of the participants, they underwent further changes in living arrangements in Jamaica before finally being reunited with their mothers in the U.S., at which time there was another change in living arrangements. Among the changes in their living situation were financial challenges and changes in housing conditions (some better, some worse in Jamaica; improved conditions in adulthood alongside changes in lifestyle in the U.S.). The remittances are vital in enhancing children's educational prospects, such as the availability of educational resources. Most of the participants in the current study reported enjoying a benefit from the rise in their mother's income after her migration, although some participants described not receiving or having knowledge of the remittances sent by their mother. Some participants reported "not wanting for anything" as a result of their mother's migration, while others reported that the increased income and remittances were channeled into their education in Jamaica or when they reunited with their mother in the U.S.

The remaining impacts identified by thematic analysis as they pertain to the family and community effects are all interrelated. The remaining impacts cited by the participants in the current study include parental separation (cited 13 times), family togetherness (cited ten times), maternal visitation (cited six times), length of maternal separation (cited three times), and the length of maternal visits (cited three times). For most of the participants in the present study,

time spent in family gatherings and family togetherness with their mother present, changed significantly after their mother migrated to the U.S. Several of the participants described not celebrating important events any longer, while others described it not feeling the same without their mother present.

Summary Research Question #3

In regard to research question #3, the primary theme that emerged was "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant". All of the participants cited significant impacts as a result of their mother having immigrated to the U.S., although the extent of impact identified by each participant varied depending, to some degree, upon who the interim caregiver was after their mother's migration to the U.S. The area of greatest impact was that of individual effects, which tended to focus on the emotional/psychosocial, unhealthy coping mechanisms, and mother-child relationship breakdown. Direct effects described by participants included difficulties and disruptions in communication with their mother, predominantly negative impacts on their academic performance and progress, changes in finances, disruptions in celebrations, and feelings of insecurity and a lack of safety. Finally, in regard to family/community effects, all of the participants noted changes in caregiving and living arrangements as a result of their mother migrating and then as a result of reunification in the U.S. Factors such as family togetherness, maternal visitation, length of maternal separation, parental separation, and length of maternal visits were cited as impacts of maternal migration.

Implications of the Study

This study was critical in providing information regarding social work and understanding the situations or backgrounds in which migrants come from and the situations they have to deal with to cope with their environments. The study evaluated adult Jamaican children of maternal

migrants, thus offering critical insight into comprehending the child and the child as an adult. It was also critical for offering insight into the type of care left-behind/barrel children receive after their mother's migration and the triangle of care. This study provides critical information for social workers regarding migrants and the specific experiences of Jamaican left-behind/barrel children who migrated to the U.S. following maternal migration. The research provides critical information that can be utilized in policy formation in the U.S. to address issues involving the migrant Jamaican population in the country.

Social Work Practice

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice (NASW Code of Ethics, 2021). Social work has a long history of fighting for the rights of immigrant populations. In doing so, they seek to advance the psychosocial health of this vulnerable population. Social workers are encouraged to address the complex issues immigrants face by utilizing several modalities, which encompass training on all levels, including micro, mezzo, and macro analysis and practice (Chang-Muy, 2008; Furman et al., 2012; Lum, 1996). Therefore, if social workers had a better understanding of the challenges faced by Jamaican adult left-behind children and their families on a day-to-day basis, they would be more equipped to provide competent, evidence-based practice when they interact with members of this community.

The findings from the current study provide direction for social workers engaged in immigration activities that involve Jamaican immigrants. These findings also provide direction

for anyone in the social or healthcare network who are working with Jamaican immigrants, with respect to being more aware of the population and their needs (i.e. mental health needs, maternal bonding, and restoration of the mother-child relationship, reunification needs). Specifically, this research provides insight into the emotional impact of maternal migration on adults whose mother migrated to the U.S. during their developmental years.

Social Work Policy

Social workers, educators, and other mental health professionals are unfamiliar with the Jamaican family structure and child-rearing practices. Many times, Jamaican migrants may work firsthand with members of the human services profession, and thus, it is imperative that they are aware of the unique issues that affect members of this community. The findings of this dissertation are intended to shed light on the childhood experiences of adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent who immigrated from Jamaica to the U.S. and the difficulties they face.

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 has strict guidelines as to how one can become a permanent resident in the U.S. Prior to 1965, families could not immigrate to the U.S. together. Therefore, anyone born before and up to 1965 in Jamaica may have been subject to parental and/or maternal migration, and thus, may have experienced the issues that participants in the current study described. It is imperative that greater emphasis be placed on the effect that immigration policies have in determining the outcomes for children and their families. It is important that the stories of these participants be told, so that the information gathered from the participants can be used to support the development of social work policies that support adult immigrants who were left-behind by a parent(s). Furthermore, social policy should inform and

embed training and support to all professionals who work with or have access to the population examined in the current study.

Social workers should work with policy developers to modify and update the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 to include clauses that require social workers and other healthcare professionals to take into consideration the needs of left-behind children and the impacts of parental/maternal migration on the family and left-behind children. Specifically, this policy should be adapted to include a focus on family reunification needs, mental health issues and needs relating to parental migration, counseling and support, and re-establishment of parent-child bonds and relationships.

Social Work Education

Educational policies that lead to curriculum development for social workers could address the needs of immigrant families and those who work with them. These educational programs could encourage further exploration of the impact of historical trauma on economic viability, particularly for immigrant families, and intensify the development of theories that consider Jamaican immigrant culture, economics, gender, generational trauma, historical trauma, etc. As additional information is learned about this population, the focus should shift to determining how to communicate this information to students who are studying social work.

Social work education is the route that should be taken to achieve the objective of becoming culturally competent about this population and how to deliver evidence-based strategies and interventions to this population. Once this information is known, social work students can learn about new information through social work education and continuing education courses. Social work education continues to be culturally sensitive and relevant. Being culturally sensitive reduces the risk of harm to individuals and populations (Fernández-Borrero et

al., 2016). Therefore, the overall benefit could be used to create evidence-based educational programs and continuing education courses that would be more inclusive and trauma-informed, and which could be used to inform academia at all levels.

This research provides important information for those involved in social work education with respect to immigrants, and in particular, with regard to Jamaican immigrants. Social workers need to know about evidence-based practice and research that provides insight into the needs of Jamaican immigrants. Specifically, social workers need to know about the physical, mental, social, psychosocial, academic, and financial impacts of maternal migration on Jamaican immigrants so that they may better provide service and support to this group.

In particular, social work education needs to include more information about the impact of immigration on mental health and psychosocial issues related to immigrants. For example, social workers need to be taught that it is a common practice for Caribbean children and parents to be separated for some period of time and then reunited at a later date as a result of parental migration to the U.S. and other countries. This is a practice that is supported by the culture but might be viewed negatively by social workers and educators in the U.S. who work with this population. While commonplace, this research illustrates the long-standing emotional and mental health challenges that are experienced by left-behind children as a result of this "common" practice. There is a dearth of literature, and as such, social work educators need to be trained to identify and support individuals and families who have been exposed to this type of trauma. In addition, social work education needs to include information about the lack of programming to support this population and how to partner with agencies that support these families. Furthermore, social work education programs need to include internship opportunities for

students with this specific population so that up-and-coming social workers can engage in evidence-based practicums.

Proposed Future Research

Based on the current study, a number of research areas are recommended. The first area in which research is proposed is to evaluate programs that purport to address challenges experienced by migrant children who were left-behind, to determine what works, what doesn't work, and what is needed. The second area that requires research is examination of the impact of developmental stages on the long-term emotional and mental health of left-behind, Jamaican barrel children. The third area that bears consideration for future research is in regard to the benefits achieved by migrant parent(s) as it relates to the negative aspects and costs associated with parent-child separation and disruption of the mother-child bond. While the migrant parent may achieve improved financial status and improved opportunities for the family, this may come at an emotional and mental health cost that is too high for the children to realistically overcome. Research that also examines the relationships between gender, age at separation, length of separation, and paternal versus maternal migration among Jamaican parents and their children should also be undertaken. Increasing the amount of research that looks at immigrant family separation, especially in light of the increasing diversity within the U.S., would aid those working with this increasing population. Finally, research that examines immigrant policies and practices relating to families who have experienced parental migration needs to be undertaken. Without the necessary research, it is unlikely that evidence-based practice and effective policies can be developed that address the needs of migrant families and left-behind/barrel children from Jamaica and other countries in a competent and compassionate manner (Oates, 2015). Social workers, educators, and policymakers armed with knowledge of the experiences and impact of

barrel children should use research to inform their practice, making them better equipped to work with children whose parents have immigrated and left their children behind.

Conclusions

This study examined the adult left-behind/barrel children of Jamaican maternal migrants. Specifically, this study evaluated the experiences and feelings of Jamaican children before and after maternal migration to the U.S., as well as the impacts of maternal migration on Jamaican children. Three main themes were delineated based on the research questions: a) Participants have positive experiences and feelings before maternal migration to the U.S.; b) Participants have negative experiences and feelings after maternal migration to the U.S.; and c) Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant. A total of 17 subthemes were identified. Six subthemes were identified within the first major theme of "Participants have positive experiences and feelings before maternal migration to the U.S.", including: family dynamics, childhood experiences, living arrangements, emotions, memories, and migration. Eight subthemes were identified within the second major theme of "Participants have negative experiences and feelings after maternal migration to the U.S.", including: communication, thoughts about the U.S., emotions, migration, memories, academics, lifestyle change and finances/gifts. A total of three subthemes were identified within the third major theme of "Impacts of maternal immigration to the U.S. are significant", including direct effects, individual effects, and family and community support effects.

Overall, the participants expressed overwhelmingly positive experiences and feelings prior to maternal migration to the U.S., with the exception of the actual separation event at the point when their mother left Jamaica for the U.S., which was characterized as traumatic for some or sad/confusing/puzzling/exciting for others. Overall, the participants expressed

overwhelmingly negative experiences and feelings after their mother's migration to the U.S., although there were some positive experiences relating to financial status or academic performance for a few participants. In regard to the third theme, participants cited overwhelmingly significant impacts as a result of maternal immigration to the U.S. While there was some overlap between direct and individual effects, the participants generally cited negative impacts, although all of the participants ultimately felt that their family's financial status was improved and there were increased educational and/or employment opportunities as a result of their mother's immigration. An overriding theme of severe disruption in the mother-child relationship was observed/reported, with participants generally reporting difficulties recovering any of the prior relationship or needing therapy to remediate the relationship, or deathbed apologies from their mothers about the migration and separation.

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Appendix A

Consent Form for Participation

Informed Consent/Introduction

Thank you for considering participation in this survey.
I, the researcher, is interested in learning about "the Lived Experience of Jamaica Barrell Children: A Qualitative Study."

You do not need to have experience reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to participate in this study.

This study is being conducted by Annette Clarke Jones, a Ph.D. student at Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University.

We invite any adult (aged 18 years old or older) to participate in this study.
Participation will involve answering a series of open-ended question questions related to the lived experience of Jamaican adults whose parents stayed behind in Jamaica while their parents immigrated to the U.S. You will be asked to participate in an internet survey asking demographics questions. You will also be asked to respond to some basic, non-identifying information. The survey should take approximately 90 minutes to complete. Minimal risk is associated with participation in this study. The open-ended interview questions should take about 90 minutes.

Responses to this survey are anonymous. Aggregated results of this study will be published with no identification of individual respondents. Participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time and for any reason. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study, there will be no penalty. Although there is no direct benefit to you, by completing the survey, you will be providing valuable insight that could improve how information is conveyed.

If you have questions about the research study or your rights as a participant, please contact: Annette Clarke Jones at 9143382044 or annette.clarke-jones@yu.edu. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Yeshiva University.
Completion of the survey will be considered your consent to participate. Thank you for your participation!

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have

decided to participate, having read the information provided above.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Thank you for your participation!

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B

Mental Health Resources for Participants

Below are several resources to support your mental health needs:

Emergency Hotline Information Department of Health Crisis Hotline 1-800-527-7474

Life Net Hotline Network 1-800- LifeNet (543-3638)

NYC Well 1-800-692-9355 or text “Well” to 65173

New York Project Hope 1844-863-9314

SAMHSA’s National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Crisis Text Line, text HOME to 741741

Veterans Crisis Line (800) 273-8255, PRESS 1, Text 838255 to chat online

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 800-273-8255

Immigration Advocates Network, (718) 826-2942

Panic Disorder hotline, 1-800-64-panic (72642)

Appendix C

Interview Guide for Lived Experiences of Jamaican Barrel Children: A Qualitative Study

Interview Questions

Intake Form (Demographic Considerations)

- Name:
- Country of Origin:
- Current Age: (18 to 21) (22-30) (31-41) (42 - 52) (53-63) (64 -72)
- Which parent(s) immigrated from?
- How old were you when you migrated to the United States?
- Reason for immigrating from Jamaica?

Research Questions

What are the reflective childhood experiences, reflective childhood perspectives, and perceived adulthood impacts surrounding adults who stayed in Jamaica while their parent(s) immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years?

RQ1. What are the reflective childhood experiences and feelings of adults who stayed in Jamaica before their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years?

1. Tell me about your childhood experiences in Jamaica before your parent(s) migrated to the US?
2. Are there any memories of experiences that you remember before your mother immigrated to the US?
3. Are there any memories of experiences that were difficult before your mother immigrated to the US?
4. When you reflect back on your time in Jamaica, what experiences come to mind?

RQ2. What are the reflective childhood experiences and feelings of adults who stayed in Jamaica after their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years?

1. What do you recall about your experiences while they were preparing to leave for the US?
2. What were your experiences after your parent(s) left for the US?

Prompts

Socially

Living arrangement

Communication,

Visits,

Gifts, barrels

Financially

Mentally

Emotionally

Academically

RQ3. What are the perceived impacts for adults who stayed in Jamaica while their mother immigrated to the U.S. during their developmental years?

1. How did your parent's migration impact you then as compared to now?

Prompts

Socially

Living arrangement

Communication,

Financially

Mentally

Emotionally

Academically

2. If they had not migrated to the US, do you think you would be different now as an adult? If so, how?
3. How would you describe the relationship with the caregiver (i.e. Loving, strict, abusive)?
4. How did parental departure impact you in childhood overall?
5. As you reflect upon your childhood experiences and if you could have created the perfect scenario as a child with all of the circumstances that you had, what would you have changed related to your parent (s) immigration to the US?
6. What would you have kept the same?
7. How many years were you separated from your parent(s)
8. Is there anything additional that you would like to add?

Appendix D

WCG IRB Approval

1019 39th Ave SE / Suite 120
Puyallup, WA 98374
855-818-2748
www.wcgirb.com

February 13, 2023

Annette Clarke Jones, MS, MSW
Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University
2495 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, New York 10033

Dear Ms. Clarke Jones:

SUBJECT: IRB EXEMPTION—REGULATORY OPINION
Investigator: Annette Clarke Jones, MS, MSW
Sponsor Protocol No.: 44956610
Protocol Title: The Lived Experiences of Jamaican Barrel Children: A Qualitative Study

This is in response to your request for an exempt status determination for the above-referenced protocol. WCG IRB's IRB Affairs Department reviewed the study under the Common Rule and applicable guidance.

We believe the study is exempt under 45 CFR § 46.104(d)(2), because the research only includes interactions involving educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observations of public behavior; and there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data.

This exemption determination can apply to multiple sites, but it does not apply to any institution that has an institutional policy of requiring an entity other than WCG IRB (such as an internal IRB) to make exemption determinations. WCG IRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions. You are responsible for ensuring that each site to which this exemption applies can and will accept WCG IRB's exemption decision.

WCG IRB's determination of an Exemption only applies to US regulations; it does not apply to regulations or determinations for research conducted outside of the US. Please discuss with the local IRB authorities in the country where this activity is taking place to determine if local IRB review is required.

Please note that any future changes to the project may affect its exempt status, and you may want to contact WCG IRB about the effect these changes may have on the exemption status before implementing them. WCG IRB does not impose an expiration date on its IRB exemption determinations.

If you have any questions, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Bridget D. Brave, JD, at 360-252-2466, or e-mail regulatoryaffairs@wirb.com.

BDB:dj
D2-Exemption-Clarke Jones (02-13-2023)
cc: Edward Berliner, Yeshiva University
WCG IRB Accounting
WCG IRB Work Order #1-1632444-1