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Migrant Children, Social Capital and Access to Services Post-Migration: Transitions, Negotiations and Complex Agencies

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For migrant children, moving to a new country is marked by excitement, anxiety and practical challenges in managing this significant transition. This paper draws upon the concepts of social capital and social networks to examine migrant children's access to services post-migration. Using data from a qualitative study with Eastern European families in Scotland, we identify a range of cumulative barriers that limit children's access to services and illustrate how their experiences are shaped by ethnicity, social class and place. The study shows that migrant children are often disadvantaged post-migration and develop their own mechanisms to mitigate the impact of migration on their lives. We argue that migrant children's own social networks are relevant and they need to be analysed through a more individualised approach. © 2014 John Wiley & Sons Ltd and National Children's Bureau

Keywords: Eastern European migrants, ethnicity, children's access to services, children's social networks, social inclusion.

Introduction

The last decade has seen an increasing number of families with children migrating from Eastern to Western Europe. Families often migrate to give children a 'better future' (Orellana, 2009) and children's diverse roles in family migration are well documented, from influencing the timing of family migration, to the choice of a destination country and decisions to stay or return (Ryan and Sales, 2013; White, 2011). However, there has been little research on migrant children's lives and their access to services post-migration. Family migration is a particularly difficult matter for children. Existing research has acknowledged the significant challenges they have to cope with, including disrupted relationships with friends (Haikkola, 2011; Reynolds, 2007), changed family structures after migration (Salazar Parreñas, 2005; White, 2011), hostility and segregation at school (Devine, 2009; Reynolds, 2008), as well as challenges to identity and sense of belonging (Ní Laoire and others, 2011). Migrant children's educational attainment is poorer than of 'indigenous' groups (OECD, 2012a,b) and differences in academic performance, as well as access to good quality services, are strongly associated with socioeconomic disadvantage and geographical segregation.

Research with adults shows that migrants make low use of health and leisure services (Spencer and others, 2007) due to factors such as the language barrier, lack of information and poor access (Arai, 2006). The few studies on migrant children's well-being have shown that changes to family structure and the adjustment process can lead to health issues, especially anxiety and depression (Robila, 2010), isolation (Suárez-Orozco and others, 2010) and reduced ability to engage in leisure activities or socialise with peers in the absence of peer networks (Harinen

and others, 2012). Provision of services which meet migrants' specific needs is shaped by policies on social integration, debates on immigration and the perceived fairness in services available to them (Spencer, 2011). In the United Kingdom, where this study took place, the immigration legislation adopts a restrictionist stance, with an emphasis on limiting non-EU migrants' access to services and social welfare. However, the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 conferred working EU migrants access to public services such as nursery/school places, primary health care, leisure and some free public transport and this has created some resentment among local populations (Cook and others, 2012).

In this paper, we examined the extent to which migrant children are marginalised due to the complex interactions that result at the juncture of age, ethnicity, social class and place and how their access to services is affected by their status as new arrivals. The study, therefore, aimed to provide a perspective on the lives of children recently migrated, by examining their engagement with three types of services that seemed most salient in children's lives, namely education, health and leisure. It focused on the barriers that children and their parents encountered in accessing services in the context of their everyday lives, and examined the role of children's agency within their inter- and intra-ethnic social networks post-migration.

Social capital, social networks and migrant children's opportunities

Social capital has been an increasingly influential concept in migration research. Several authors have used the theory to explain adult migrants' reliance on different types of networks before and after migration (Haikkola, 2011; Lopez-Rodriguez, 2010; Ryan, 2011; Ryan and others, 2008). As social capital may be viewed in essence as the resources individuals access through social interactions and relationships, the extent to which these connections help migrants access resources seems key to examining their lives. Two main traditions have been identified in how social capital is theorised: one focusing on group action and integration (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000), and the other dealing with social injustice and inequality (Bourdieu, 1986). Both Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000) see social capital as a resource 'within' the family, through intergenerational relationships, and 'outside' the family, through community-based social ties. However, not all social contacts have equal usefulness. Granovetter (1983) makes a distinction between 'strong ties', through family members and close friends, and 'weak ties', which can facilitate opportunities beyond those available in people's own social circle. Putnam (2000) has highlighted the key roles of 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital, with an increased value attributed to the bridging social capital, where associations transcend differences of ethnicity or socioeconomic status. The bonding social capital is generally seen as detrimental, if individuals develop exclusive ties around homogeneity within their own communities. Bourdieu (1986), however, sees social capital as a source of social inequality, as some groups are more privileged than others in their access to resources and valuable networks.

One of the criticisms of the 'theoretical fathers' of social capital is the fact that children are not valued as active agents in the formation of social capital (Holland and others, 2007), or for their ability to build their own networks. In this sense, Morrow (1999) proposes to move beyond the focus on 'measuring' children's capital (as Putnam would suggest) to a more nuanced examination of the practices that children engage in when generating capital. Holland (2009) also calls for a more considered approach to the role of factors such as gender, age, ethnicity and social class in examining children's networks. Although concepts of 'bonding' and 'bridging' based on dichotomies of similarity and difference remain relevant to the study of children's networks, authors (Holland and others, 2007; Weller, 2010) have shown the diverse ways in which children use social ties to access different types of resources. While 'strong ties' through family members and close friends are readily available

to children, children's access to 'weak ties' which can facilitate opportunities, such as distanced acquaintances and services, depend on the resources children have to access them and parents' control.

Central thus to exploring the relevance of social capital theory to research with children rest questions about children's agency and the multi-sited nature of their social ties. Their agency is clearly conditioned by their social position and locality of their lives. Anthias (2007) sees theories on social capital as 'naïve' in placing responsibility with the individual, assuming that capital is equal for all who possess it. The social context a group sits within, being more or less advantaged, affects how successful social capital can be for social mobility and access to resources. As children are depending on adults for protection and provision, research involving their social networks needs to evaluate how their opportunities to develop useful networks and exert their agency in accessing resources are restricted by their families' class position (James and James, 2004).

Despite its criticisms, social capital has potential as an analytical tool because it allows the examination of micro-social, individual behaviours and macro-social structural factors, by considering individuals' social ties across a range of sites and longitudinally. As this study sought to explore migrant children's access to services, we were particularly interested in children's positioning and agency in relation to organisational structures. Bassani (2007) raises the importance of studying the interactions between the various groups and institutions that children are members of (family, school, friendship groups, community), rather than examining them in isolation. In this sense, we aimed to explore the multi-layered interactions that children engage in through intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic networks and across various sites, placing children's agency at the centre and taking into account the significant changes that occur in their lives after migration.

Study outline and methods

Participants and data collection

The focus for this qualitative exploratory research was a study of Eastern European migrant children recently arrived in Scotland. The data collection took place in urban and rural areas with a high proportion of new migrants. Initially, we carried out 11 focus groups, involving 57 children. Of these, all were newly arrived (between a few months and up to 3 years) and the majority (n = 48) were Polish, the main migratory group at the time. The participants were of both genders (31 girls; 26 boys), between 7 and 16 years of age and from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The groups involved child-friendly activities, where children discussed first the experiences of an 'imaginary migrant family' arriving in their area, then their own experiences.

In the second stage, 23 in-depth family case studies were completed, including 29 children, some from the focus groups, but also some newly recruited, to ensure a more diverse spread of nationalities. In addition to 13 Polish children, these cases involved 5 Lithuanian, 4 Slovaks, 2 Bulgarian and 2 Romanian children, as well as 1 Hungarian, 1 Russian and 1 Czech family. In total, 15 girls and 14 boys were involved, between 8 and 16 years old. All were visited at home at least twice and invited to complete diaries of daily activities and take photographs of their lives, which were then used as prompts for discussion. In each family, one or both parents were also interviewed.

Data analysis

Focus groups and interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using a grid analysis approach and thematic coding and retrieving methods (Boyatzis, 1998). An overview

thematic grid was produced to map out the descriptive summaries of the issues emerging from the data. Relevant sections of the transcripts were assigned appropriate thematic codes and refined sub-categories emerged and were allocated to text in transcripts. An NVivo 7 package was used to facilitate the organising and classifying of data.

Ethical issues

Close attention to ethical considerations was of paramount concern. A short, jargon-free project outline was distributed to families, translated in their home languages. Researchers met with families first to discuss the project and participants could withdraw at any point. All identifying information from transcripts was removed and respondents' details were anonymised. This was particularly important, given the relatively tight migrant communities, and the uniqueness of the respondents' circumstances. Finally, we were familiar with agencies that could assist families and on several occasions we gave families information on services. For two nationality groups (Polish and Romanian), interviews were carried out by researchers in these languages, while for the other nationalities, interpreters were always offered, to ensure that participants could fully express their views.

Findings

Children's intra-ethnic networks and service access

Ethnic-specific, bonding social networks have been shown to influence adult migrants and help them 'get by', especially in the initial stages, and facilitate family migration through support with information on services, jobs and emotional support (Portes, 1998). Children in our study also talked about the supportive role of friendship networks with children from the same country upon arrival and how these friendships helped with signposting of local services:

We had our 'gang' at school, I used to call it that. We had a special table in the corridor and we met there during breaks. We'd gather together, all Poles, and talk about what things are like here, where can you go to a safe park, go swimming for free, buy Polish food...And just talk about life in Scotland, about the rubbish weather (laughs). (Zofia, Polish, age 12)

Beyond the shared ethnicity and migrant status, which are often wrongly assumed to be unproblematic, issues of class became evident in children's service access. Bassani (2007) says that resources need to be mobilised to translate into capital. In our study, children's ability to access services was often conditioned by the families' socioeconomic status before and after migration, and their ability to identify opportunities available, with a clear contrast between more affluent and poorer children.

For many, poverty had been a feature of their lives before migration and their limited use of local services continued post-migration. Andreas, a boy from a Roma family, migrated from a poor rural area in Romania to an urban neighbourhood in Scotland. The area was among the poorest in the city and attracted many Roma migrants, who suffered from severe poverty, high rates of illiteracy and irregular employment. The facilities Andreas accessed were limited to the local school and church and he socialised mainly with Roma youth:

I don't go out much, my dad says I can't go on my own. I go swimming with the school. I like it...and football, too. And I like going to the cinema, but I've not been here [in Scotland], I don't know where it is. My dad sings in the church, so I go with him sometimes and meet with other Gypsy children there. And that's it, the rest of the time is just at home. (Andreas, Romanian Roma, age 10)

For some children, therefore, the availability of intra-ethnic ties locally lead to the development of limiting or negative social capital, as these excluded them from opportunities that

were otherwise available in the city. Portes (1998) talked about the narrow ties within one community which comes together after migration in 'ghettoes' of marginalisation, which limits people's ability to mobilise existing resources and transform them into useful capital.

While some children were deprived of access to local amenities, others had a very developed network of public and private services they accessed. Katia, a 11-year-old Polish girl, whose mother had been a teacher in Poland, but was not working in Scotland due to her developing English language skills, described her weekly extra-curricular activities:

On Monday, I go to swimming lessons. On Tuesday, I have the art class at the community centre. On Wednesday, it's English classes with my mum's friend, and on Thursday, I have extra Math. On Friday, it's a day off to prepare my stuff for Polish School, which I go to on Saturday.

Like Katia, other children used intra-ethnic networks within the diaspora community to identify local opportunities for activities. These ethnic ties had been of immense practical help, although many noted that they were brought together by their shared ethnicity and 'new migrant' status in the school rather than shared affinities, values and interests. As in the case of adult migrants (Ryan, 2011), ethnic-specific networks were determined by circumstance and fairly dynamic. One participant explained how moving to another school and losing ties with the Polish friends in her first school did not matter, as those 'were not my best friends, because I didn't know them that well' (Agnes, Polish, age 10), accepting thus the transitory nature of some friendships.

Intra-ethnic 'bonding' was not exclusively based on ethnicity. Class position was a key factor, and children were often directed by parents in their intra-ethnic networks. This involved aspects such as different educational attainment and aspirations, preference for certain cultural activities and leisure, confirming findings reported before in research with adults (Ryan, 2011) that being from the same country was not sufficient to make families stick together or use the same services:

I'm not ashamed of my Polish culture, but I'm ashamed how some Poles behave here, I hate their boorishness. Since we moved here, I have come across Poles who I would never meet in Poland \dots I don't like their attitude, asking questions about your social status, for example, what are your wages here? Where do you work? So I tend to keep my children away from these families and we don't go to the places these people go to. (Berta, Polish mother)

It was evident in the cases we examined that both family and community intra-ethnic bonding networks were key in determining children's opportunities. While children from better off families, who also displayed higher human capital, could access a wide range of resources through local statutory services and diaspora groups, children from poorer migrant families depended more heavily on schools for activities and information. Other studies have highlighted the class differences in terms of involvement in community activities of the well-connected and financially better off migrants (Li and others, 2003). In the case of migrant children, their class positioning, combined with reduced social networks with family and friends post-migration, represents an additional risk of marginalisation. For families with sufficient financial capital, more choice in terms of where they lived also meant better access to well-resourced facilities, while for poorer families, the influence of wider structural factors, mainly in terms of services available locally and quality of public spaces, was key to their opportunities for social participation.

The social networks which facilitated families' access to services were not limited by borders, however. Many children alluded to the importance of maintaining links with friends and family in their homeland and these transnational intra-ethnic ties allowed them to maintain their ethnic identity, but also access services in their own language. Maintaining these

links was also strategic, as families' transnational use of services was often a way of overcoming perceived gaps in provision in Scotland:

We had to wait to see a specialist so long, so my mum decided to take a flight to Bulgaria and go and see the eye doctor who treated me first there, it was quicker and we trust her. (Andrea, Bulgarian, age 12)

However, families' ability to engage in transnational practices also depended on financial resources, as not all had access to the internet at home or could travel regularly. Andrea's mother, a well-established lawyer, used her financial gains after migration to ensure that the family benefited from services in both countries.

These observations point to much more diverse opportunities and barriers among migrant children than previously thought. In some situations, families suffer from resource deficiencies (i.e. they may have limited language skills to access information or confidence to interact with services), which can have a negative effect on children's opportunities. Lopez-Rodriguez (2010) talked about Polish mothers' class repositioning after migration and their insecurity in negotiating cultural and social capital for their children, because of their unfamiliarity with the new social structures. Migrant children also showed unfamiliarity with services and their intra-ethnic relationships, although supportive emotionally, did not always lead to better opportunities for service access, as other children from the same ethnic group did not always have the local knowledge themselves. This may mean that children's interethnic networks, represented by 'weak ties' with people such as non-migrant children, school teachers, librarians etc., may be more useful and more desirable to access services and we turn to examine these next.

Children's inter-ethnic networks and service access

Migrant children were engaged almost immediately after arrival in inter-ethnic networks through schools and friendships developed in their neighbourhoods. Thrown in 'at the deep end', most children had to learn English and join in activities with local children in a range of locations:

When I arrived here, I was the only Polish child in this school. It was really hard to make friends: everyone was asking words in Polish. Then my teacher asked a Scottish girl to look after me, so she become my best friend, and she helped me a lot and then we started doing things together after school, too. (Klaudia, Slovak, age 13)

If you hang out with Scottish children, you just find out what are the best places to go. We go to the swimming pool and the local park usually. (Marina, Polish, 13)

Putnam (2000) argues that individuals' participation in associational activities, such as clubs and sports activities, encourages people to interact together and contributes to social cohesion. In the case of children, participation in activities within the community is also an opportunity to engage in bridging or forging of weak ties, which may allow them better access to valuable resources. However, networks of access to resources may be built in ways that privilege some 'insiders' (i.e. the established communities) over the 'outsiders' (Ryan, 2011). In the context of UK's policies of restrictions of migrants' rights, some children were unsure if they would qualify for access to after-school clubs, free language or swimming classes, or other leisure facilities:

We go to the library and the church, but other than that, it's hard to find out what other things are available to us, Polish people. We used to go to the cinema in Poland, but it's quite expensive here and we don't understand anyway. (Georgina, Polish, age 14)

Georgina's parents worked in the whiskey industry as manual labourers and their shift work often meant that Georgina had to find things to entertain herself at home. Families' class position post-migration created other barriers to access, through the characteristics of the areas in which children lived and perceived neighbourhood risks:

Because of the area we live in, there are many teenagers who take drugs, drink and smoke in the local park, and sometimes shout things like, stupid, fucking Polish when you pass by, so there is no way I would let Bartek out to play or walk by himself to the library. (Agata, Polish mother)

We live quite far from everything, plus my mum says my English is not good enough yet, she says I might get attacked and things, so I tend to stay mostly at home. (Radicz, Lithuanian, age 13)

These experiences highlight the significance of time and place when analysing migrant children's opportunities to create social capital for themselves and their families (Weller, 2010). Although local neighbourhoods are often seen as spaces of networking possibilities, issues of ethnic discrimination and perceived risks were clear barriers to migrant children's opportunities to develop friendships with local children and participation in local activities. Engagement with cultural and leisure activities can create opportunities for newly arrived children to 'bridge' networks and participate in interactive processes of capital generation, highlighting the significance of making services accessible. In addition to the nature of the places migrants lived in, children's engagement with services was hindered by other barriers, such as their limited knowledge of services and perceived negative attitudes of staff:

For me, a good service has information so I understand what's on offer and what I can do there. If I don't understand what they do, I don't go. (Piotr, Polish, age 13)

I'd go if people wouldn't treat me like a foreigner, like at the swimming pool. I think sometimes the staff think we shouldn't be entitled to free swimming and they talk down on us. (Kasia, Polish, age 12)

The value of inter-ethnic networks in facilitating access to opportunities was evident. Children talked about accessing services together with their Scottish and other ethnic minority friends who knew the area better; others were asking teachers and other adults to signpost local resources.

My Biology teacher always tells me about things we can do. She told me they had English classes for adults at the college and I told my mum and she went there for a few weeks. (Gintare, Lithuanian, age 16)

Adina (Romanian, age 8) explained how she found out about a dancing class through one of her Scottish friends, Kate, and persuaded her mother to take her to class too; in time, the two girls started visiting each other at home and the families became close friends and were now doing other activities together.

These examples, although illustrative rather than representative, show that although migrant children may have limited social capital during their initial settlement and limited control over family decisions on the area they live in, they are engaged in actively mobilising resources through their inter-ethnic networks. We discuss the role of children's agency in capital mobilisation next.

The role of children's agency in creating social capital within families

While until recently, research on children has positioned them as dependent on adults' social capital and resources, the evidence presented here showed that children played a crucial role

in mediating their families' engagement with statutory services. Many felt this was their 'duty' because they had better English skills and more exposure to local contacts through schools and inter-ethnic friendships. The need to understand aspects of how services are delivered in the new country and the 'rules of engagement', such as expectations of parents and service norms, meant that children often had to act as 'mediators' and convey to their parents what were the expectations and what parents should do to comply. They had an active role in many ways, through reading leaflets and official letters, filling in forms, and interpreting for their parents. Daniel, age 10, was acting as an interpreter on a regular basis:

My husband sometimes starts talking in English and Daniel finishes his sentences. Daniel translates for my husband, finds things on the internet, as he doesn't always understand and Daniel even found out if we could register with the dentist. (Jolanta, Daniel's mother)

On occasions, children helped parents challenge provision, by complaining about their experiences and asking parents to act on their behalf. Weronika explained how her mother challenged the school when they placed her in a segregated language unit:

I used to go to the bilingual unit and I hated it, plus we didn't learn much, 'cause we would just sit together, all the Polish children, and speak Polish. So my mum went and spoke to the head teacher and the next day I was back to the normal school. (Weronika, Polish, age 9)

Other similar actions included asking for children to be placed at a higher level in certain subjects or for support with language skills or demanding specialist care for medical conditions. Ensuring that children received the appropriate level of support depended often on parents' confidence to challenge provision and many said they felt inadequately equipped to do this, as they did not understand the system well enough (see also Lopez-Rodriguez, 2010).

These findings clearly indicate that cultural differences in service provision, with services mainly suited for the native population, may place migrants at disadvantage and put a heavier burden on children, who rely on information from their friends and their limited experience of services to assist with parents' decisions and actions. The roles they have to take on to facilitate their families' engagement with local services required complex skills and confidence and involve activities usually reserved for adults. This 'role reversal' (Orellana, 2009) is not unproblematic, as it challenges established responsibilities in the family, but children's agency appears to be key to their families' successful engagement with services.

Summary of issues

This research has shown how the positioning of migrant children and their families as new to a culture and often at the periphery of society poses significant barriers in terms of their ability to engage effectively with services. These barriers can be summarised as follows:

- Families' lower class position post-migration and limited financial resources;
- Lack of accessible information on services available and entitlements;
- Language barriers and uncertainty on rules of engagement;
- Cultural barriers and issues of trust in services;
- Lack of available networks of support to access provision;
- Area characteristics and perceived safety risks.

Morrow (1999) advocates that children's networks need to be understood within the wider context of constraints imposed by their everyday lives at home, school and within the community and a range of socioeconomic factors. This paper has provided further evidence that provision should ensure that it does not disadvantage the most vulnerable migrants. Migrant families need opportunities to develop bonding and bridging social capital through a range

of sites, and in this context, services need to be more accessible and informed by families' specific needs. By applying a social capital framework, we have shown that the intersection between age, ethnicity, class and migrant status may place children at risk of disadvantage. In the absence of strong ties after migration and of diminished family-based financial and cultural capital, migrant children will find it more difficult to mobilise resources available locally and turn them into useful capital. While intra-ethnic ties are significant for new migrants and mainly supportive emotionally and in terms of cultural identity, access to information on resources such as activities and services seems to be mainly facilitated by inter-ethnic ties, which were often mediated by schools as sites of socialisation.

The findings of this study raise a series of significant issues with implications for the delivery of services and public policy. Services designed for non-migrant, predominantly monolingual and monocultural groups may pose significant barriers to migrant children's engagement. As services play a crucial part in migrant children's inclusion, through the opportunities they create for them to engage with diverse social networks, policy on public services needs to consider the ways in which these can support meaningful opportunities for children's agency and development of social capital. These findings call for a more balanced discussion on how services can take into account the many barriers migrant children are faced with and improve access. Institutional contacts, through schools and other services engaged with families, have a significant role in facilitating children's and parents' access to other resources, which is not only desirable, but also necessary for migrant children's integration.

Discussion

Migrant children are clearly disadvantaged through their status as recent arrivals in a community and may struggle to build effective networks immediately after arrival. The social capital building in the case of new migrants clearly depends on the capital their families bring with them when migrating, which can in itself be a basis for social inequality. Parents with strong social ties, higher level of education and language competence, confidence and financial capital are in a more advantaged position when it comes to ensuring that services are meeting their children's needs. Family class status emerged as a key determining factor in terms of determining the nature of the area in which children lived after migration and the extent to which parents were able to help and encourage children to seek different kinds of activities and social ties. Low income after migration and narrow networks of support often limited the use of services important to children's integration and civic participation. Access to resources is by no means equal, and class, ethnicity, gender and social capital are bound up with the segregated opportunities that are available to different families, depending on the characteristics of the local area (Ball, 2003) and their families' resources.

Evidence from this study suggests that migrant children's opportunities to access resources post-migration are not straightforward. Whilst there is scope for a debate on the role of the state in providing services for migrants, the issue for migrant children in particular is that they have limited access to networks which would enhance their social capital. Their access to cross-ethnic community links which may facilitate their integration in their host communities is generally limited to schools and thus they may experience social exclusion. In addition, children's opportunities for bridging networks were significantly conditioned by their families' social class positioning before migration, their (often) lower class positioning post-migration and their lower human capital due to the unfamiliarity with the new social structures. In the absence of close friendships or any strong ties with relatives, children's moves were restricted by parents' concerns for safety and this in itself constituted a barrier.

In this context, it seems that policies focused on bridging inter-ethnic relationships to ensure social cohesion may distract from the fundamental inequalities existent within migrant groups, and between migrants and non-migrants. What emerged from our research were very complex networks and barriers in access to resources. The fact that families differ in their resourcefulness when it comes to identifying appropriate services, challenging provision which is not meeting their needs or finding alternatives, also means variable opportunities for developing social capital. Children confirmed that their networks were in many instances much more limited than those they had before migration and they wanted more opportunities for social mobility. Their opportunities for developing social capital were often dependant on schools (see also Morrow, 1999) as the main sites for interactions with other ethnicities and relationships with peers and staff were often key for access to local services. However, children accessed resources in multiple sites (school, community, transnationally), and used multiple networks of support (family, peers, other migrants, service providers) to identify opportunities relevant to their needs. We have also highlighted the active role that children adopted in facilitating parents' understanding of the new culture and access to services through the knowledge they acquire. Their agency in negotiating opportunities available and acting as cultural mediators is highly significant. This shows the dynamic and fluid nature of young people's social capital formation (Weller, 2010) and agency and calls for a more individualised analysis of children's affiliations, which need to be seen as ever changing in time and across various social spaces.

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