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**Glocalised homestay hosts:  
The relationship of the “global” and the “local”  
in the context of internationalised education**

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A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Social Science

at  
Lincoln University  
by  
Martina Bruederle

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Lincoln University  
2010



Abstract of a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
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In the debate about the impacts of globalisation the question arises about the importance of locality and how the “global” and the “local” are related (Hannerz, 1996; Robertson, 1995; True, 2006). Robertson (1995) suggests the simultaneity and interdependence of these two spheres, describing their relationship as glocalisation. One way to further investigate this relationship is to explore how globalising processes impact on the local level of home and family life.

This research studied the New Zealand homestay home, an under-researched phenomenon (Richardson, 2003a; Ward, 2006) and a suitable setting where the “global” and the “local” intersect. In this study the “global” is represented in this study by international students who sought homestay accommodation while the home manifests the “local” spheres. Hosting an unknown “other” can be considered as one of the most direct impacts of globalisation.

Twenty-six semi-structured qualitative interviews with homestay hosts and homestay agents were conducted to explore how homestay hosts’ interpretation of home and family was affected by sharing their home with an international homestay student, to determine the place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry as perceived by hosts and to determine whether or not homestay hosting could be understood as a form of glocalisation. Three major themes emerged from the analysis of the interview data: homestay hosts’ experiences of family life, culture and working from home.

The results indicated that homestay hosting reinforced the notion of home as a site of family life, enhanced family relationships, and presented home as a site of cultural (re)production,

challenging and renegotiating homestay hosts' cultural identity. Globalising processes, in the form of hosting an international student, initiated the transformation of home into a business site which commodified home and family life by paying homestay hosts to provide international students with feelings of being at home and part of the family. This led to ethical dilemmas for homestay hosts having to make decisions that were placed around generating profit through hosting and making the student part of the family at the same time.

In regards to their place within the international education industry, homestay hosts represent one element contributing to its viability, not only in its economic sense but also by emphasising the social and cultural aspects of international education.

The extension of globalising processes, reaching to the very specific setting of "home" confirms Robertson's (1995) suggestion that globalising processes are not solely macro scale processes but also penetrate the micro scale and that the local has an impact on the global and vice versa. Homestay hosting can therefore be described as a form of glocalisation: while sharing local culture and family life with international students, homestay hosts experience the global "other". Although the discourse of those studied indicates that the emphasis of these encounters lie on localising the international students, locals also are shaped by the global influence.

**Keywords:** homestay, home, family, culture, international students, international education, commodification, globalisation, glocalisation, global, local

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

In an era of a 'global' world the importance of locality is contested. Some social scientists consider the process of globalisation as a large-scale phenomenon that leads to domination by global forces that reduce the meaning and diversity of locality (Robertson, 1995). It is argued that globalisation will lead to homogenisation of culture and local identities will lose their significance. Others disagree and suggest that globalisation is also a microsociological process that maintains local differences and culture (Appadurai, 1996; Nederveen Pieterse, 2009; True, 2006). Hence, locality matters even in times of globalisation (Hannerz, 1996; Massey, 1994). Robertson (1995) suggests that globalisation is always linked to some locality. He argues that the "global" and the "local" are interconnected. The "local" is the locality where people make new experiences in a day-to-day context. These local places cannot be viewed as independent entities. They are always part of the "global". He favours, therefore, the term glocalisation which highlights the idea of a simultaneity of the "global" and the "local". In the process of glocalisation individuals (re)create local identities and cultural practices in response to global cultural influences which lead to retention of local differences (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006). The different perspectives lead to the question about how the "global" and the "local" are related in the context of globalisation.

A suitable "local" sphere in which to study these relationships is the "home". Home can be described as a physical unit that is inhabited, but also as a feeling, a place of meaning and attachment (Mallett, 2004). Home is created through every day experiences, social interaction of individuals in a particular environment and memories that are attached to artefacts and places in and around homes (Blunt, 2005; Perkins & Thorns, 2003). Home-making is therefore a fluid, socio-spatial process. Further, home is a place that is crucial to the development of a person's identity and therefore a central locality in people's life. Both, home-making and identity creation are not static conditions that once built, never change. They are, rather, active processes that underlie continuous renegotiation depending on changing surrounding circumstances, environments and social relationships (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). In the context of increased globalising processes that affect individuals' lives, the question arises as to ways the "global" influences people's interpretation of home and thereby the importance of locality.

One suitable setting where the “global” intersects with the “local” is the New Zealand homestay home. Homestay represents an accommodation option for international students studying at a foreign educational institution. It offers an opportunity to live with a local family which provides full board and lodging as well as a familial environment in which the student has the opportunity to practise the local language and learn about local culture (Campbell, 2004; Richardson, 2003a). The demand for this type of accommodation is largely generated through the globalisation of education which represents one “global” force that may have an impact on the local home.

International education has become a growing global industry. In 2005, about 2.2 million students went abroad to study at a foreign educational institution and it is estimated that this number yearly increases by nine per cent (Hugonnier, 2007). Global demand for international education, and processes of restructuring on a national level in New Zealand, resulted in the creation of an international education industry which has grown rapidly over the recent decades (Tarling, 2004). The outcomes were a growing number of international students studying at all levels of New Zealand’s educational institutions. Campbell (2004) argue that given this growth, there has not been sufficient time for research to be carried out in international education in comparison to other industries such as the dairy or wine industry.

International students are a major source of revenue for the New Zealand economy. The estimated economic value added from international education was \$1.82bn in 2007 (Ministry of Education, 2008c). The quality of pastoral care mechanisms play an important role in supporting New Zealand’s education export industry (Ministry of Education, 2007b). Homestay is a popular accommodation arrangement for international students (Campbell, 2004). Ward and Masgorat (2002) discovered in their national survey of international students studying in New Zealand, that about 75 per cent of secondary students, 43 per cent of language students and 25 per cent of international tertiary students are accommodated in a homestay environment (Ward, 2006). Home-stay hosts contribute significantly to the pastoral care of these students. Their contribution to the success of this activity is therefore of relevance and interest (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003). It can be reasonably argued that the success of the education export industry is linked, to some degree, to the quality of the student’s homestay experience (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003).

“Although the homestay has long been considered a key factor in the study abroad experience, it is one of the least-examined components of foreign [language] study” (Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004, p. 254). While existing studies have focused on students’ language and cultural acquisition, home-abroad comparisons, changes in student values as a result of this experience

and exploration of the homesickness phenomenon (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002; Richardson, 2003b), there has been little research undertaken from the host or homestay families' perspective. The hosts' perspective of homestay hosting itself has mostly only considered the homestay hosts' accounts as part of trying to gain an understanding of the students' experience (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004) and not to explore their own place within international education. The few existing studies focus on the role of the homestay host or conflict resolution strategies (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Richardson, 2003a). Research into homestay hosting in the context of other social or global phenomena was not evident. Ward (2006) has pointed out a research gap by identifying that further research is needed related to the hosting of international students. She suggests that research into long term impacts should not only focus on students but also on host families (Ward, 2006). Richardson (2003b) comes to the same conclusion saying that "there is especially very little study into the home-stay hosts' perspectives and negligible research into the organisational structures and policies of home-stay programs (sic)" (Richardson, 2003b, p. 2).

The New Zealand International Education Agenda for 2007-2012 has suggested that international education can be divided into internationalisation "at home" and "abroad". It suggested that hosting international students can be one way of internationalisation "at home" (Ministry of Education, 2007b). According to the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2007), international education can foster intercultural understanding and can raise awareness of one's national identity. Further, it helps students gain a global perspective and provides institutions and people with the opportunity to exchange ideas, build relationships, improve quality of teaching and in the building of human capital (Ministry of Education, 2007b). If homestay hosting is considered to be one part of the international education industry, then it is important to know about the extent to which these presumed benefits appear and are confirmed by the hosts. One of my study's objective was therefore to explore the place of homestay hosts within the New Zealand international education industry and extend knowledge about the homestay hosts' perspective. Of interest is how hosts have come to be hosts to international students, what the perceived benefits are and how they interpret their role and how significant their role is for the success of the international education industry.

As homestay is an accommodation form where people literally "stay" in somebody else's "home", another aim was to explore what impact this occurrence has on the home and its occupants. The meaning people attach to home can change over time and in accordance with new circumstances (Perkins, Thorns, & Winstanley, 2008). It can especially be affected or

shaped by “intrusion” from outsiders (Chapman & Hockey, 1999). Therefore, this study sought to see how international students who will be part of a home over a certain period of time, affect hosts’ lives in particular households by exploring their interpretation of home.

By exploring how global influences work themselves out in a local home through homestay a third objective was to focus on gaining a better understanding of how global and local levels are related and what meaning they have for the people who live in a certain locality. The focus here was on understanding the meaning and significance of local changes due to the growth of interconnections between global and local forces.

## **1.1 Research aims and objectives**

The research aims were to explore how the presence of international homestay students influenced New Zealander’s homes and, in particular, how the hosts interpreted this influence. It further intended to identify the relevance and significance of homestay hosting for the New Zealand international education industry. This study sought to understand how the “global” and the “local” were connected in the context of globalisation, whether or not it can be considered as a form of glocalisation. The “global” was represented by the international New Zealand education industry which attracts international students to study at an educational institution in New Zealand. Their stay created a demand for homestay accommodation in New Zealand’s homes. The “local” in this context, is the small nucleus of home, a physical entity and a place of meaning and attachment.

This research was guided by the following objectives:

- To explore how homestay hosts’ interpretation of home and family is affected by sharing their home with an international homestay student
- To determine the place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry as perceived by hosts
- To determine whether or not homestay hosting can be understood as a form of glocalisation.

## **1.2 Thesis organisation**

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 2 presents the literature review which comprises three sections. The first section will give an overview of globalisation, the current debate about its impact, for example the relationship between the “global” and the “local”. The second and third sections will discuss examples of global and local forces. The second

section will discuss research into the meaning of home and home-making processes. The third section will introduce an industry that has been globalised: the international education industry and will focus in more detail on the homestay industry Chapter 3 contains background information about international education and the homestay hosting phenomenon in New Zealand. In Chapter 4, the applied research approach and procedure are described. Chapter 5 presents the results that are drawn from the semi-structured interviews that have been conducted for the fieldwork of this study. Chapter 6 is the discussion. It discusses the study's findings in regards to previous research into home, international education and glocalisation. Chapter 7 highlights the limitations of this research and make recommendations that are relevant for the homestay industry as well as for theory developed in the area and offer concluding remarks.



# **Chapter 2**

## **Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature review is divided into three sections. Section 2.2 discusses the concept of globalisation. It provides a brief overview of its definitions and dimensions and the potential impacts in the form of the homogenisation-heterogenisation-hybridity debate and the relationship of the global and the local. It concludes with the presentation of glocalisation theory. Section 2.3 discusses the local sphere of the home. It describes different research approaches into home, the process of home-making and different interpretations of home as well as home in the context of cohabitation, work and global influences. Section 2.4 discusses a particular globalisation process: international education. It comprises a review of the evolution of international education in general and, in particular, of the homestay hosting segment. This section concludes with a discussion of research into homestay students' and hosts' experiences of homestay hosting.

### **2.2 Globalisation**

Globalisation is a multidimensional phenomenon. It “refers to the multiple ways in which economies, cultures and societies are increasingly integrating” (True, 2006, p. 73). It is driven by corporations, governments, institutions, consumers and social movements. Globalisation is used to explain questions in different fields such as the study of capitalism, inequality, ecology, culture, gender identity and population development (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009).

There is a lot of controversy in the debate about globalisation (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). In the early stages of the globalisation debate, the centre of the discussion focused on what globalisation was, whether or not it “existed” (Papastephanou, 2005) and if it was manageable.

According to Giddens (1993), the globalisation debate is divided into two groups: radicals and sceptics. Radicals see globalisation as a recent inevitable process of change which the world must undergo and which will result in a dramatic shift of economic, social and political relations that are very different from times before (Giddens, 1993). It is not perceived to be in the capacity of anybody to counter its impacts. It has been therefore compared to a natural force like the weather: “a self-regulating, implacable force of nature about which we can do

nothing except look out of the window and hope for the best” (Andrews 1999 cited in Papastephanou, 2005, p. 535).

Sceptics consider globalisation as a “hype” or a myth. For them, the ongoing patterns of development are not different from the economic situation of the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Castles, Curtin, & Vowles, 2006; Giddens, 1993). According to Hirst and Thompson (1996) the world economy was more internationalised before 1914. Nederveen Pietersee (2009) criticises this view as this era was more territorial and imperialist. He further argues that Hirst and Thompson (1996) only focus on the economic aspect of globalisation and neglect other dimensions of it. Nederveen Pietersee (2009) clearly advocates for its existence. He suggests that globalisation is a long historical process that has been accelerated since the 1970s. Today the academic discussion is no longer centred around the existence of globalisation but rather about its consequences (Papastephanou, 2005).

In terms of its consequences, champions of globalisation view it as a chance to enhance people’s identity as well as sense of belonging and cultural distinctiveness through contact with foreigners in global networks. Locals obtain a better understanding about what is happening in other parts of the world and expand their horizons and will ultimately feel connected or as part of one common social global space (Giddens, 1993; True, 2006).

Critics emphasise opposite trends. For them, globalisation symbolises an uneven development: a homogenisation of culture, a loss of identity and tradition through westernisation. Furthermore, it is claimed to cause environmental degradation and social inequalities, especially with disadvantages for third world nations (Baragwanath, 2003; Bisley, 2007; Giddens, 1993), leading to a new form of imperialism (Perkins & Thorns, 2003).

### **2.2.1 Definition**

The term “to globalise” was first introduced by Reiser and Davies in 1944 to describe processes of universalisation (Reiser & Davies, 1944). Webster’s dictionary included the term “globalisation” for the first time in its dictionary in 1961 (OED Online, n. d.). In the 1980s, “globalisation” was used mainly in economic contexts to describe competitive advantages from worldwide business integration measures. Towards the end of the 1980s, the term was used in a broader sense such as the general international trend towards more economic liberalisation, growing world societies and the notion that in an age of technology and communication everything is happening simultaneously (Baragwanath, 2003).

Today, there are a multitude of attempts to define “globalisation”. It is associated with much vagueness, inconsistency and confusion about what the act of globalising exactly means (Scholte, 2000). There are questions as to whether globalisation represents a general trend or rather a specific project. Some see it as a process leading to increasing economic and political connectivity. Some equate globalisation with the awareness of the growing global interconnectedness. Others do not see it as a real process or project but only as a discourse (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). Definitions are formulated according to these differing positions.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), for example, clearly focuses on the economic process. Globalisation is understood as “the growing economic interdependence of countries worldwide through the increasing volume of cross-border transactions in goods and services and of international capital flows, and also through the more rapid and widespread diffusion of technology” (IMF 2000 cited in Baragwanath, 2003, p. 25).

Bisley’s definition, in contrast, emphasises the social outcomes of interactive global processes: “Globalisation is defined as the set of social consequences which derive from the increasing rate and speed of interactions of knowledge, people, goods and capital between states and societies” (Bisley, 2007, p. 6). Another definition by Held, focuses on how globalisation fosters the interdependence of different levels of scale. According to Held, the process of globalisation “denotes the stretching and deepening of social relations across space and time, whereby day-to-day activities are increasingly influenced by events occurring on the other side of the world; whilst practices and decisions of local groups can have significant global repercussions” (Held, 1997, p. 2). While the cited definitions’ comprehensiveness is arguable, all of them capture valid and important characteristics of globalisation, even though from a slightly different angle. For the purpose of this study, however, the latter definition by Held (1997) appears to be the most suitable as he highlights the relationship between the local and the global which will be discussed later.

### ***Dimensions of globalisation***

Due to its feature of connectivity, globalisation can be divided into several categories such as economic, political, environmental, social and cultural globalisation which are not mutually exclusive but rather interpenetrating (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009).

#### ***Economic***

Economic globalisation refers to economic integration of markets and exchange in trade, investment, labour, production and consumption across borders. Furthermore, it is characterised by the appearance of and an increase in power of transnational corporations with

implications for national economies, people and the environment (Waters, 1995).

Globalisation can also be seen in the internationalisation of consumer norms and products (Robertson, 1992).

Economic globalisation is linked to technological changes, especially in communication and transport. The amalgamation of computer and communication technology into information technology has led to a shift towards a knowledge-based economy and technology centred production, an economy and production where knowledge, expertise and technology have become more important than traditional economic resources such as manpower or natural resources (Dickens, 1992; McMillan, 1996). As a result the organisation of production, labour, location and marketing has become more flexible and informal (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009).

### ***Political***

In politics, globalisation has affected the traditional dominance of nation states in terms of their power distribution and sovereignty (Papastephanou, 2005). A shift has taken place from government to multilevel governance from local, regional, national and supranational level (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). This is evident in two directions: Upwards through the formation of international arrangements and affiliation to regional groupings such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), European Union (EU), World Trade Organisation (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the United Nations (UN); and, downwards through the devolution of authority to local governments and a trend towards regionalisation. Neo-liberal structural adjustments undertaken by many countries across the world in the 1980s and the 1990s are the response to pressure from those supra and sub-national mechanisms (Baragwanath, 2003; McClelland & St John, 2006). Neoliberalism is the theoretical paradigm that dictates the discourse of governance. It focuses on a free-trading open global economy, deregulated investment of capital and a self-limiting state (Fitzsimmons, 2000)

### ***Environmental***

Environmental globalisation refers to the existence of large-scale interconnected environmental problems such as global warming. The notion of globalisation grows from the understanding that humanity has to face the consequences of this common global problem (Baragwanath, 2003). In response to the political shifts and growing environmental concern there has also formed a strong protest movement associated with peace, the environment and free-trade (Perkins & Thorns, 2003).

### ***Social and cultural***

The social and cultural dimension of globalisation is reflected in almost all aspects of life.

“There appears to be hardly a sphere of social life which globalisation has left untouched – from food to freedoms, rights to royalty – globalisation has left its mark across the spectrum of cultural, economic and political life” (Bisley, 2007, pp. 1-2). The cultural dimension deals with the (re)construction of identities and self-conception, conditions and impacts of human encounter and exchange of world-views as well as diversity of creativity, and aesthetic experiences (Papastephanou, 2005).

Everyday life has been shaped through new communication and transportation technologies and increased human mobility which has advanced the opportunities for interaction with a large variety of people and exchange of ideas and meanings. Massey (1994) characterises this phenomenon of movement and communication across space as “time-space compression”.

People of very distant origin meet each other in every day life, sometimes outside the certainties of home and the local sphere, sometimes even without having to leave the comfortable of their home. They communicate without face-to-face presence through various communication channels over long distances by which they encounter new possibilities and worldviews (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1996). A transfusion of ideas takes place on a personal level (McClelland & St John, 2006), as well as an increase in awareness of problems affecting humanity as a whole such as for example poverty, AIDS and global warming which demand joint initiatives (Baragwanath, 2003). Massey (1994), however, notes that not everyone benefits from increased movement and communication. Some social groups simply receive the outcomes of it. The “Third World” or developing countries are, for example, only asymmetrically included in globalisation. Income and wealth are increasingly unequally distributed, concentrating on the developed areas of North America, Europe and East Asia. Differences between developed and developing countries are suggested to become smaller but the gap between developing and least developed countries to become wider (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009).

The interconnectedness and simultaneity of events and people’s awareness of them led societies to become closer together and shrink to the level of, metaphorically, a small village, the global village (McLuhan 1964 cited in Baragwanath, 2003, p. 27). Individuals and groups become increasingly interconnected across borders. Communities of shared interests and imagination are formed that are not limited to a particular spatial boundary like the nation state (Appadurai, 1996). Hannerz (1996) suggests that the assumption of a relationship of a population, a territory, a unit of political organisation and a culture that are all congruent and

exclusive to a single locality belongs to the past. Instead he identifies the evolution of "habitats of meaning", places that individuals and collectives can be associated with who share the same meaning and culture but that are not necessarily linked to a specific unit of governance or population or spatial location (Hannerz, 1996).

The way in which globalisation impacts on social and cultural relationships has led to the discussion of to what extent the world is becoming homogenised, heterogenised or hybridised.

### **2.2.2 Homogenisation, heterogenisation and hybridisation**

Many people have associated globalisation with homogenisation which is similar to Raiser and Davies (1944) initial use of the term describing it as a process of universalisation. The idea of homogenisation is central to theories of cultural imperialism, synchronisation and Americanisation in which social actors and their local cultures are dominated and absorbed by products and cultural practices of large multinational corporations, global media and powerful nations (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009; True, 2006). It is assumed to represent a threat to national identity as well as local and cultural diversity (True, 2006). Ideas and practices in the Western world are claimed to be disseminated to other parts of the world with the outcome that alternative local cultures are eliminated.

Others lament it as a takeover by giant cultural commodity merchants who make sure that Coca Cola can be sipped, Dallas watched and Barbie Dolls played with everywhere, in the Second World and the Third as well as in the First where they originated. (Hannerz, 1996, p. 24)

Massey (1994) suggests that even though there is an emergence of global products, they penetrate the local markets in different ways. So, homogenisation through distribution of Western products does not take place (Massey, 1994). Hannerz (1996), who also rejects the homogenisation hypothesis, admits that there is some loss of ideas, cultural knowledge and practice but that in the meantime there is also the opportunity for new culture to evolve. He highlights that the discussion whether or not there is an increase or decrease of culture in total is of minor importance. What is more prevailing, is the individual's opportunity to have access to more different cultures (Hannerz, 1996).

In contrast to the homogenisation paradigm, there are suggestions that cultural difference is immutable and therefore globalisation will not lead to global sameness. Heterogenisation or cultural differentialism are the related paradigms to explain this way of thinking. They suggest that the process of globalisation rather leads to regionalisation and interregional

rivalry. These are suggested to be evident in the formation of, for example, spatially separated gated communities (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009).

Nederveen Pieterse (2009) suggests a third concept to explain the relationship between globalisation and local and cultural diversity: hybridisation. Rowe and Schelling (1991, p. 231) define hybridisation as “the way in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices”. Nederveen Pieterse (2009) proposes that in the process of cultural mixing, new commonalities and differences are generated. He sees culture not as fixed but as fluid and therefore hybridisation as an open, ongoing process. Instead of homogenisation to one cultural identity, or maintaining heterogeneous fixed identities, new cultural identities are created that integrate previously held identities. This can take place across different locations. Cohabitation, for example, is expected to yield to new cross-cultural patterns that are different and representative of their locality. Westernisation might take place but at the same time there is also an Easternisation and other non-western influences. He describes the outcome as a “global mélange” (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). This way the tension between the “global” and the “local” is minimised. I will discuss this tension in detail in the following section.

### **2.2.3 The “global” and the “local”**

In the globalisation debate, the "global" and the "local" are often depicted dichotomously: the “local” as a “guardian for continuity” (Hannerz, 1996), the “global” as a means of change. The "local" is characterised as traditional and deep while the "global" is portrayed as modern and shallow. Featherstone (1996) and Hannerz (1996), both suggest that dichotomies like that are not very useful to explain the relationship between these two spheres as they rather imply a time-space separation than their interdependence. Featherstone (1996) sees the "global" and the "local" as two spheres that are interconnected.

The “local” used to be associated with a particular space that is characterised by long-term social relationships that had strong emotional content and were linked with a certain length of residency. It also resembled a unique, stable and integrated cultural identity (Featherstone, 1996). It was associated with heritage, nationalism and a distinction of “outsiders” versus “insiders” (Massey, 1994). Hannerz’ (1996) description of the "local" adds to this portrayal, particularly its resemblance to “everyday life”:

We might say that it tends to be very repetitive, redundant, an almost endless round of activities in enduring settings. Furthermore, everyday life is in large part practical. People participate actively, training their personal dexterities without necessarily reflecting much on the fact.

There develops a trained capacity for handling things in one way, and [...] perhaps a trained incapacity for doing anything else (Hannerz, 1996, p. 26).

Members of a locality were assumed to form distinctive communities with their own local culture that was constructed through every day, face-to-face encounters, where meanings and commitments to these meanings were worked out in detail and potential change was negotiated.

The experience of the local is usually a “real”, sensuous and bodily experience, in contrast to an “unreal experience” via the internet or television. Experiences are gained with all senses without any distraction of attention. They evoke “feelings of immediacy, immersion and surroundedness” (Hannerz, 1996, p. 27). Brah (1996, p. 192) suggests that the local “intrudes” upon the self through the senses, defining “what one smells, hears, touches feels, remembers”. It provides some form of stability and security. Due to the nature of these experiences, the “local” retains its importance and persists in the changing world.

The “local” can be considered as the intersection point of networks of social relationships (Massey, 1994):

A place is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location. And the singularity of any individual place is formed in part out of the specificity of the interactions which occur at that location (nowhere else does this precise mixture occur) and in part out of the fact that the meeting of those social relations at that locale will in turn produce new social relations (Massey, 1994, p. 168).

These shared local places, however, cannot be seen as isolated entities, they always also are part of the “global”. There are always influences from outside that shape the reality of the “local” (Hannerz, 1996). It is the presence of the outside world that actually shapes and helps to construct this new local place (Massey, 1994).

When the “global” and the “local” intersect, it provides the opportunity for locals to make new experiences, identify what is familiar and what is unfamiliar, what will be assimilated or rejected over time. The “local” is the place where these decisions are made. In this situation, the “global”, or what has been local somewhere else, has the possibility of making itself at home, so that what appears to be change at the moment, can become continuity later. This way the “global” and the “local” become increasingly fluid and simultaneous. There is always something global in the “local” and local in the “global” which leads to Robertson’s concept of “glocalisation” (Robertson, 1995)



#### 2.2.4 Glocalisation

The term "glocalisation" describes the interconnection of the "global" and the "local". "It is a concept to analyse the ways in which social actors construct meanings, identities and institutional forms within the sociological context of globalisation, conceived in multidimensional terms" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006, p. 171).

The concept is based on the Japanese notion of *dochakuka* (becoming autochthonous<sup>1</sup>), derived from *dochaku* (aboriginal living on one's own land) (Salazar, 2005). It refers to the agricultural principle of adapting farming techniques to local circumstances. In the 1980s, the term was adopted by Japanese business people to express tailoring global products to particular local conditions (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006). With its slogan "we are not multinational, we are multilocal", Coca Cola presented a version of a glocalised business approach (Wilson & Dissanayake, 1996, p. 2).

Robertson (1995) introduced this concept in response to the perception that globalisation describes mainly processes that take place on a macro-level, neglecting the local sphere. According to Robertson (1995), globalisation is always linked to some locality. The "local" contains as much of the "global" and the "global" is formed and permeated by locals. The "local" is not only limited to the space, the locality it represents, it is foremost a place inhabited by people. These people have a particular way of life and worldview. They also associate a certain meaning with the place they live in. In the process of glocalisation, identities, local traditions and cultural practices are negotiated and (re)invented according to local people's needs and beliefs in response to global cultural phenomena. Glocalisation does not mean a random generation of heterogeneous cultures. It also recognises that locality may possess particular structures and contents so that cultures in similar localities might have commonalities (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006).

The earliest glocalisation debates especially focused on contributing to the homogenisation-heterogenisation discussion. Research has demonstrated that the abandoning of local culture or "evening out" of cultural differences does not take place straight forwardly. In contrast, cultural differences are accepted and reinforced even in very peripheral cultural settings (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006). "Globalisation in part features the critical construction and reinvention of local cultures vis-à-vis other cultural entities" (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006, p. 172).

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<sup>1</sup> The term "autochthonous" refers to the idea of becoming native, indigenous or domestic.

Glocalisation has been applied in the context of political economy, urban geography and urban anthropology (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2006). Giulianotti & Robertson (2006) see glocalisation as also related to other concepts, such as indigenisation (Friedman, 1999, p. 391), creolisation (Hannerz, 1992, p. 264), vernacularisation (Appadurai, 1996) and hybridisation (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995)<sup>2</sup>. The latter term has been introduced in section 2.2.2.

## **2.3 Home – a local setting**

In the debate about homogenisation, heterogenisation or hybridisation of the world through globalising processes, the question has been raised how these global forces impact on the relationship of the "global" and the "local". The "local" place "home" could help to build an understanding of if and how local differences are sustained (Perkins & Thorns, 2003).

Home is a multifaceted phenomenon which can be viewed from different angles. Home can be a space, natural or built, a habitat that we occupy. Home can also be a feeling or an active state of being (Mallett, 2004). In the practice of home-making people construct a place and a sense of self (Perkins & Thorns, 2003). Home is therefore a socio-cultural and geographic idea about people's relationships with spaces, places, artefacts and people (Mallett, 2004).

### **2.3.1 Definition**

The term "home" is also an ambiguous term as it represents a category of phenomena that describes something concrete and abstract at the same time. It exists in popular usage as well as in the context of research. Its origin can be traced back over 2,000 years (Brink, 1995). The word "home" originates from the Germanic word "ham", "heem" or "heim" which derived from the Indo-European term "kei" (Brink, 1995). In Greek "kei" means "to lie", "brings to rest" or "camp". In Old Celtic languages it is associated with "something dear or beloved". Brink (1995) concludes that the term "home" now as in ancient times, can be interpreted as a dwelling-place that is linked with affection.

In popular usage, people use the term "home" to describe the product "house", or to refer to an active state of being – "feeling at home". It is used to describe certain mental states that show an affective element such as comfortableness, security, control, ownership or kinship.

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<sup>2</sup> Each of these concepts suggests how individuals engage with global cultural phenomena and how these phenomena are altered by individuals' local cultural needs and values. Although these concepts describe similar ideas, they should be understood as independent concepts.

Example of this usage can be found in everyday language sayings like for example “home is where the heart is”. It is also referred to larger entities or environments like a city, a landscape or a country (Rapoport, 1995).

In research literature, “home” is defined as “a socio-spatial system that represents the fusion of the physical unit or house and the social unit or household” (Mallett, 2004, p. 68). But according to Blunt and Dowling (2006, p. 2) “[it is] more than this, home is also an idea and an imaginary that is imbued with feelings...home is a spatial imaginary: a set of intersecting and variable ideas and feelings, which are related to context, and which construct places, extended across spaces and scales and connect places” (Blunt & Dowling, 2006, p. 2). So, on the one hand, it is a place of physical structure such as a house or flat; and on the other hand it is a place of meaning and attachment. Both components together form a complex socio-spatial relationship which “is shaped by everyday practices, lived experiences, social relations, memories and emotions” (Blunt, 2005, p. 506; Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Consequently, the meaning people ascribe to home constantly undergoes processes of creation, change and reinvention over time (Perkins et al., 2008) which can lead to positive or negative associations with this environment. Some people experience, for example, feelings of belonging, security, warmth and intimacy while others associate home with feelings of fear, alienation and inequalities (Bowlby, Gregory, & McKie, 1997).

### **2.3.2 Research approaches**

“Home” has been researched increasingly over the past three decades. It has been the subject of research in anthropology, sociology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture and philosophy, each discipline focussing on a different aspect. Interdisciplinary approaches are rare. Acknowledging other disciplines, this literature review will focus on human geographic perspective. Blunt and Dowling (Blunt & Dowling, 2006) suggest that there are four major frameworks that need to be considered for research on home. According to them, they are not strictly geographic but have the most relevance in this context.

Firstly, there are housing studies which focus more on the physical space of people’s residences and the economic, sociological and political aspects of the provision of housing. Home is seen as some form of structured and secure shelter in which people live and build their sense of self. This can be a house, a tent, an apartment or a park bench. Housing studies examine aspects of domestic architecture, design of dwellings and furnishings. It relates house design and social context, for example, how particular designs can cater for people with disabilities, gender relations or environmental sustainability. The implication of technologies is another area that is under study. Housing studies are also concerned with housing policies,

rules and regulations regarding the costs, location of building or forms of tenure. Another area of housing studies deals with economies of housing provision: (re)construction of old and new houses, matters of residential segregation and mobility and the structure of the industry and impact of large-scale economic processes such as of globalisation (Blunt, 2005; Blunt & Dowling, 2006). It is further concerned with experiences and meaning of home in different forms of housing, in context of household structures and gender relationships or issues of property rights, privacy and autonomy (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Housing studies sees home as a series of feelings and attachments that depend on cultural and historical context and change over time. Researchers in this field emphasise a strong linkage between the physical structure house and the idea of “home” as a place of meaning. This conflation has been criticized for being too narrow. Blunt and Dowling (2006) suggest that home is more related to feelings and attachment that become connected a place that may or may not be a sheltered unit. Also, a person can live in a house but not experience any feelings of “home”. In this perspective housing studies therefore provides only a limited angle to studies on “home” (Blunt & Dowling, 2006).

Secondly, home is interpreted from a Marxist perspective as a place of social reproduction. This framework was predominantly used in the 1970s and 1980s, though its utility as a single analytical framework has been claimed to be insufficient (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). It is a place where labour power is reproduced by ensuring that the working population is physically and emotionally able to continue to work. This means home was reduced to the place where workers were accommodated, fed and rested. Another focus of the Marxist approaches was on home ownership. Working class members who were able to purchase homes were financially more dependent on mortgage repayments and, therefore, would less likely engage in strikes. As a result, the working class come to identify themselves more with capitalist values which implies that home or its ownership is a symbol of an impediment to social change (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). It was therefore considered as a challenge to collective life (Saunders & Williams, 1988).

Thirdly, the humanist approach explores in which ways places and homes are meaningful and how people experience and relate to them. This approach has brought research on “home” more into the centre of geographical research. For humanists, home is an essential part of the development of an identity and therefore a central place in people’s lives. Humanists seek to discover how people create their home, a place separate from society that is sacred and full of meaning (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Criticism of this framework focuses on the romantic notions of home and the idea of home as a static rather than fluid concept that is negatively

affected by changes in the modern world (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Blunt and Dowling (2006) suggest that home-making, the process of creating this special place, is a fluid process that is part of society rather than separate from it. It can be interpreted as a way of connecting with other people and finding a place in the society (Blunt & Dowling, 2006).

Finally, feminist frameworks are another means to explore home in the context of work production, consumption, space and status. They see home as a fluid concept that is shaped by lived experiences. Gender is an important factor in these experiences and imaginaries of home. The reason for this is that home has something to do with intimate, familial relations and the domestic sphere. All these social relations are linked with gendered expectations and experiences (Blunt & Dowling, 2006) which is why feminists, sometimes, depict home as a site of gender inequalities and female oppression. According to them, home is a site where often alienation, violence and emotional disturbance take place. Women very often lack authority, economic control and space in their own homes and priority is given to the emotional and spatial needs of other family members.

Additionally, home can be a workplace, for women the site of unpaid domestic work. At home, women are put into the role of the home-maker and family nurturer isolated from society, politics and business, while their partners are involved in paid work in the public sphere (Mallett, 2004). More recent studies of the relationship of work and gender, however, have shown that men and women equally engage in paid work, in the public sphere or from home. Inequalities remain in terms of level of income and amount of unpaid domestic and care work undertaken by both parties (McKie, Cunningham-Burley, & McKendrick, 2005). The type of work and the space used for work within the home impact on family members' experience and meaning of home and family relationships (Mallett, 2004).

Central to all these research approaches is that in most cases they investigate home from a traditional white Western perspective where home is a place of heterosexual couples, married or cohabiting with children or other relatives within a physical unit like a house, a flat or a caravan (Bowlby et al., 1997; Mallett, 2004). Bowlby et al. (1997) emphasise that this perspective neglects other forms of living arrangements, for example homeless people, people living in bed and breakfast accommodations, people who are chronically ill or people with different sexual orientation or cultural affiliation (Bowlby et al., 1997). Although this research will also focus mainly on white Western heterosexual nuclear families, it needs to be acknowledged that there are diverse contexts in which the standard conceptualisation is rather irrelevant and that research into those contexts is of equal importance.

### **2.3.3 Home-making**

Home can be viewed as a material and imaginative space with feelings and emotions attached to the physical location and the objects that are displayed in it (Blunt, 2005; Perkins, Thorns, Winstanley, & Newton, 2002). According to Blunt and Dowling (2006), physical objects and creation of imaginaries are mutually interdependent. Material forms of a home are influenced by how home is imagined and imaginaries of home depend on the physical structure of a dwelling.

Home-making is the active social process that transforms a dwelling into a home through the performance of everyday life (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Perkins & Thorns, 2003). Through social interaction and emotional relationships, inhabitants assign meaning to the material objects and structures with which they surround themselves within their dwelling. It results in the creation of an affective space that is full of personal and social meaning (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Meaning of home is continuously constructed through narratives and memories about the interaction of family members, friends and pets in a particular space. These narratives and memories are linked to possessions and artefacts that the inhabitants display in their home. Through these symbolic artefacts that are interwoven with stories attached to them, home becomes a representation of a person's sense of self (Perkins & Thorns, 2003). King (2004) describes it as a mirror that reflects our personality. Due to its interactive nature the home-making process is continuously evolving, it is never finished and therefore the meaning of home is never static. If there are new relationships, change in routines or seasons or other outside influences, dwellers will engage in new home-making practices. Space might be reworked and the use and design of it renegotiated. Decisions are made about the disposal, substitution, or maintenance of artefacts and memories (Perkins & Thorns, 2003). This will ultimately also shape and influence the inhabitants' meaning of home.

### **2.3.4 Meanings of home**

The place called home can have various meanings for different individuals. Home can be considered as a refuge, a place of family security or identity.

#### ***Home as a refuge***

Many people describe their home as a refuge, a haven where they can retreat from the outside world. The inside world of the private home is associated with feelings of comfortableness, safety, security and intimacy. Opposed to this stands the outside public world. It is assumed to be imposing, threatening and dangerous. Public life is linked to engagement in work and

politics as well as non-kin relationships while home is about family life and intimate and caring relationships. Home offers the opportunity to retreat from public view and gives freedom and control over the space people live in (Blunt, 2005; Chapman & Hockey, 1999; Dupuis & Thorns, 1998). It is secluded from outsiders but can also be shared with others. It is a place for relaxation, regeneration and expression of a person's individuality away from the pressures of modern life (King, 2004). Chapman and Hockey (1999) see it as a realm where private dreams and fantasies and inadequacies can be lived. Privacy for family or community is created. King (2004) suggests that the kind of security that is gained from homes gives people a sense of wellbeing.

The private and the public are interdependent spheres, everything that is not private is public and vice versa. The home is the place where these two spheres intersect. The separation of these spheres was a consequence of historical and geographical change. Industrialisation and urbanisation impacted on family life and work. In this process of change, work and home were spatially separated, so that home became a private place, a retreat for the nuclear family (King, 2004; McKie et al., 2005). Today, with increasing technological advances, a rapprochement of work and home has taken place. Modern spatial organisation and house design reflect those changing demands with home offices for work, living room for socialising (with visitors) and bedrooms for personal activities. At home, individuals have now the opportunity to connect with the noise and vibrant community or to escape from the demands of the society (King, 2004).

Mallet (2004) criticises the idealised dichotomies about home as a haven. According to her, these distinctions like for example safe/unsafe, comfortable/uncomfortable, work/home, associate home always with positive aspects and the outside world with negative ones. Wardaugh (1999) and McKie (2005), both point out that home does not necessarily only create positive feelings and memories. Family relationships and friends inside the home can also be stressful and home can actually be a place of violence and abuse which lead to feelings of insecurity, isolation and fear.

### ***Home as a source of family security***

Home is very often associated with family life and both terms are used interchangeably. Home is described as one's birth place or place of origin. In the period after the Second World War, family was imagined as the heterosexual married couple that constructs the "home" and the "haven" (McKie et al., 2005). The husband was portrayed as the breadwinner and the wife as the homemaker. In the nurturing environment of the home children were raised and emotional relationships were maintained (Mallett, 2004). It was considered as the place of

close, private and intimate relationships that form an antipode to the world of work (Bowlby et al., 1997). The family is assumed to follow shared goals and orientations such as economic survival or emotional support of family members (McKie, 2005). These traditional ideals of family as a unit comprising two adults cohabiting in a heterosexual relationship with dependent children were assumed as the typical constellation of households among politicians and sociologists (Bourdieu, 1996; McKie et al., 2005). Today this ideal of the traditional nuclear family is constantly challenged. More often women engage more often in full time employment, and divorce and fertility patterns have changed. Bourdieu (1996) suggests that the nuclear family is therefore a minority. Instead of categorising family along clear legal or administrative boundaries, families are rather constructed through their day-to-day interactions with others and are (re)created over time. While in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, lone parenthood was mainly a result of death of one parent, today divorce or separation is the reason for lone parenthood. Friendships and non-familial relationships are increasingly relevant for many individuals who question the importance of family as the main site of support, care and intimacy. Children, for example, consider family friends with whom they have no kin-relationships but maybe intensive contact on a daily basis as part of their family (McKie et al., 2005).

In an era where household structures are becoming more and more diverse and nuclear families less relevant, it has been argued that it is not accurate to conflate home with family. Critics see these assumptions as only valid for the white middle class, heterosexual family (Mallett, 2004). Today, it is argued, family is associated with multiple and diverse spaces. For children of separated or stepparent families or grandparents as their carer, home could mean more than one place. Home expands in the same way as networks of families across communities and continents. So, relationships are maintained across geographical boundaries (McKie et al., 2005). While home might be an important place for many people, family could only be central to some people at some stage in their lives or even completely irrelevant (Mallett, 2004).

### ***Home as a place of personal identity***

The home is the place that ultimately shapes people's identity and sense of belonging. The dwelling, the interior design, the use of space reflects the occupant's sense of self. It is a space where the individual can express their personality and individuality. Unique experiences in a place that is full of meaning for the inhabitant provide the person with a sense of belonging (Mallett, 2004).



Home is a place of personal freedom and a site of security. Like an anchoring point, home is a place of stability and consistency where routines are developed and maintained.

Homeownership contributes to the feeling of residing in a secure place. So, characteristics of being secure, private and in a place of lived and imagined experiences and relationships enable the production of an identity (Blunt, 2005; Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Perkins et al., 2008).

The sense of home and the relationship to our sense of self is not necessarily restricted to the walls of a private dwelling, it is multifaceted and multi-scalar (Blunt & Dowling, 2006).

People do not necessarily ground their home identity in a dwelling; they sometimes also identify with a person or social group living in a particular place, or describe home as the homeland, a place of nostalgia and memory. Feelings of belonging and “feeling at home” can also expand to suburbs, wider communities, countries or the globe (Perkins et al., 2008).

Mallett (2004) notes that the feeling of being at home only means the experience of locality and immersion of a self in a locality but does not set certain boundaries. Home-making can therefore occur on multiple scales and be influenced locally and from afar (Perkins et al., 2008).

### **2.3.5 Cohabitation**

Home is a space that people would like to share only with a group of selected people and only under certain conditions. Although much that is shared is the same in every household, members of particular households still prefer not to share those things with strangers (King, 2004). The actual or imagined intrusion from outsiders influences people in their home-making process to define themselves and their understanding of an ideal home (Chapman & Hockey, 1999).

In an idealised view of home, people tend to imagine that within their own place, they do only liaise when and with whom they want to. In reality, however, many dwellings are shared by several people, often of different generations with differing views, interests, hopes and opinions (King, 2004). Differing views need to be negotiated to achieve resolutions for their shared lives. Conflicts, suppression of interests and compromises include the process of negotiating the space and the meaning of home (King, 2004).

### **2.3.6 Home as a work place**

Home and workplace were separated during the industrial revolution in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Kelley, Kelley, Evans, & Kelley, 2010). As a result, home became a place of gendered power relations. Women stayed at home as domestic workers, nurturers and

guardians of the private home concerns partly because of that a mother's absence from her children would harm their upbringing (Kelley et al., 2010). They became responsible for the day-to-day activity of running a home and creating a home-like environment, while men left the privacy of the home to work in a public place. In the 1970s, women started to move into full and part time work. Their priorities, however, remained with domestic work and childcare (Bulos & Chaker, 1995).

The return to home as a site for production and social reproduction (Blunt & Dowling, 2006) became possible with increasing technological advances, a service based economy and the attention to a more "family friendly" working arrangement (Wight & Raley, 2009). The opportunity to work from home was taken when it was desired to be more an integral part of home and family life (Bulos & Chaker, 1995). It was believed that aspects of home life such as emotional warmth or family life and closeness of familial relationships could be better maintained or even improved by working from home (Kelley et al., 2010).

In the beginning, employment from home was seen as exceptional or abnormal as it would lead to disruptions of "homefulness". Outsiders perceived home workers not as really working or only working until "real" work becomes available. Home had to be renegotiated to maintain a sense of home. This was done by creating a separate work area that was characterised by physical and social closure. This was, however, not always possible and communal living space had to double up for employment as well (Bulos & Chaker, 1995).

Today, there is an increasing diversity of working arrangements, with people engaging in working from home permanently, or only occasionally. Sometime works is even carried out in multiple locations (Kelley et al., 2010).

### **2.3.7 Home in a global context**

In the debate about globalisation and its impact on the relationship between global and local forces, as well as on an individual's identity and sense of place, home is a central element of study. Home is a local space that is a crucial element in the creation of a person's identity. It is continuously shaped and (re)constructed by a multitude of influencing factors, which can be local and global in nature. Thinking of globalisation as a process that generates diversity and change, home is affected by those changes (Perkins & Thorns, 2003).

Home is affected in different ways by globalisation. Increased international mobility enables people to move to other places and (re)construct home in different locations. Local factors like the type of urban development or the values attached to the landscape can shape people's sense of home. These factors can become influential during every new home-making practice,

either in the form of elements of past homes that require renegotiation or as new elements that characterise the present locale (Perkins et al., 2008).

Communication technologies and media such as the internet or television allow people to gain access to ideas and examples of different real estate, interior design or lifestyles from other parts of the world without having to leave the comfortable surroundings of their living room or home office (King, 2004; Perkins & Thorns, 2003). A study by Leonard, Perkins and Thorns (2004) (see also Perkins and Thorns, 2003) demonstrated how American and British lifestyle, home decorating and design magazines and television programmes featuring refurbishment and renovation ideas, influenced New Zealand home owners in their decoration and design choices for their New Zealand homes.

So, global forces influence home-making processes of individuals on a local level. These influences are then conveyed to the local sphere through the negotiation of experiences of the local home-makers (Perkins et al., 2008).

## **2.4 Education – a globalising industry**

Over the last two decades, education has undergone processes of internationalisation and commodification. This has transformed aspects of it from being a public national good to a globalising export commodity (Martens & Starke, 2008). Historically, education used to be considered as a public good based on the ideals of egalitarianism and social welfare.

Education was seen as an agent for creating literate and informed citizens (Martens & Starke, 2008). With the rising complexity and diversity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economies and societies (Suarez-Orozco & Sattin, 2007) and the trend towards the replacement of physical resources with knowledge (Minstrom & Wanna, 2006), informed citizenship was no longer a primary concern of education. Furthermore, higher education was no longer exclusive to small elites but became accessible to a large mass of people. Fulfilling economic purposes became more dominant than citizenship needs. The world Bank and the OECD proclaimed the necessity of having an education sector that would serve the needs of the economy (Martens & Starke, 2008).

Since the 1980s, the rise of neo-liberalism and economic pressure on the welfare state restricted governments in their provision of funding for public educational institutions. They were faced with the pressure of maximising outputs with decreasing financial inputs. This ultimately led to an integration of education under economic policy which meant a greater commercialisation of educational policies (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005). The government's role changed from education provider to policy regulator. Visa regulations, for example, were

simplified, financial incentives were created to encourage students to study abroad and university taxation rates were changed.

At the same time, the demand for international education increased. With the rise of a knowledge-based economy and limited financial resources, many educational institutions, particularly those in developing countries, were unable to meet the growing demand for education, especially at tertiary level. Countries that had the opportunity to offer a greater capacity, took active advantage of a growing international market for educational services by offering fee-based study programmes to international students (Martens & Starke, 2008). This was reinforced by the fact that in commerce, the English language has become the *lingua franca* around the world. New job opportunities in middle level management in non-English speaking countries require adequate English knowledge and an understanding of Western cultural practices (Bisley, 2007). Liberalisation of trade services also facilitated the transformation of education into an export industry that created economic growth through direct revenues in the form of high-level international tuition fees and living expenses, local employment and income in other sectors, such as, for example, the travel industry.

The OECD and GATS agreements divide the export education industry into the following four categories: cross-border supply of educational programmes, for example distance learning or online teaching; direct investment in the commercial presence of institutions overseas; establishment of an institutional presence involving domestic employees; and, consumption abroad (Lewis, 2005). Consumption abroad represents the increasing number of students who decide to study at a foreign institution for a semester or a whole degree programme. International education, however, is not limited to student mobility; the academic world has also become international in terms of consumption and provision. Many institutions now seek to go where their potential clients are, setting up branches and offering off-shore programmes in their home countries (Martens & Starke, 2008).

According to Martens & Starke (2008), there are two approaches that drive the internationalisation of education: the cultural-driven approach and the trade-driven approach. Cultural enrichment was the main driving force for internationalisation of education for a long time. International education was recognised as an opportunity for inculcating cultural, social and political values between members of the home and hosting country of the international student (Martens & Starke, 2008). The trade-driven approach was a more recent contributor to the internationalisation process. It focuses on attaining revenues through high level tuition fees for foreign students, well-targeted institutional marketing to attract high numbers of students as well as the delivery of off-shore educational services to students who remain in

their home countries. The trade-driven component reflects the desire to export educational services to generate economic benefits. Aspects such as provision of services, financing, standard setting and competition for research, students and consultancy underlie economic considerations (Martens & Starke, 2008) .

From the students' perspective, study abroad experiences used to be sought mainly for the purpose of acquiring "soft" and language skills: experiencing a different country and its culture, improving language ability and learning cultural diplomacy. Today, students do not primarily study at a foreign university to acquire cultural competencies but to gain high-level skill qualifications, or at least higher-ranked qualifications than they would have been able to acquire in their home country. Internationally recognised qualifications are perceived to increase job opportunities on the wider job market (Martens & Starke, 2008). This trend is reflected by members of the global middle class who desire a study abroad or overseas experience. It can be further multiplied by the increasing wealth of newly industrialised countries whose inhabitants desire to benefit from an overseas education (Lewis, 2005). It is estimated that within the next ten years, India's and China's middle classes will be larger than the population of the United States and that Asia's demand for tertiary education will exceed that from Europe (Martens & Starke, 2008). This is already visible in the large numbers of predominantly Asian students, originating from non-English speaking countries, moving to Western English-speaking countries for the purpose of gaining a tertiary qualification from a foreign institution. In summary, there is high interest among students to gain internationally recognised educational qualifications, improve their cultural sophistication and acquire English language skills through overseas educational experiences (Hugonnier, 2007; Lewis, 2005; Suarez-Orozco & Sattin, 2007).

In addition, student mobility has been further facilitated by a few other factors such as the establishment of exchange programmes with credit transfer opportunities, less expensive air fares, accessibility to comprehensive information about study programmes, institutions and living conditions in other countries and cheap communication options to stay in contact with family and friends during the abroad experience (Martens & Starke, 2008).

Critics see the internationalisation process of education from different perspectives. Stier (2004) identifies three concepts that can be associated with the internationalisation of education: idealism, instrumentalism and educationalism. Idealism refers in this context to the idea of creating a better world through international education. Internationalisation is assumed to have only positive impacts. It is thought that internationally educated citizens will show respect, tolerance, cultural understanding, democratic values and personal commitment to

help less fortunate people. Overall, international education is seen as a means for building a sense of solidarity, compassion for a global community as well as preventing ethnocentrism, racism and self-righteousness (Stier, 2004). This perspective incorporates the ideas of Martens & Starke's (2008) culture-driven approach but is emphatically centred on aspects of morality and justice. The idealist view, however, can be criticised for representing the rich world's world view and value system. Furthermore, it shows a paradox when promoting convergence of ideas and pluralism at the same time which could easily result in arrogance, victimisation and ethnocentrism.

Instrumentalism comprises aspects of the trade-driven approach identified by Martens & Starke (2008). It focuses on sustainable development by increasing transparency and transference between national educational systems. Ideas, know-how and cultural competencies are sought to be exchanged between interest groups. The main goals are to maximise profit and maintain economic growth. Attraction of international fee-paying students, provision of professional training and market research are some of the means to reach those goals (Stier, 2004). Martens & Starke (2008) argue that privatisation and internationalisation of educational services will increase competition on world markets and therefore lead to increased efficiency and improved educational outcomes for countries and individuals.

Matthews and Sidhu (2005), however, criticise not only the dependency of the education industry on the imposition of high-level international tuition fees but also the areas the remaining governmental funds are spent on. According to them, a lot of the financial resources are invested in recruitment and marketing activities and not spent on educational practice. They also see the risk of a further reduction in government funding when surplus revenues are gained through the international education sector. Generally, they consider the user-pays-principle as "inegalitarian and undemocratic" (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 57). For them it "undermines the commitment to free and universal public education" (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 57).

Stier (2004) also sees the risk of a long-term "brain drain" of academic staff and students in poor world countries. Martens & Starke (2008) also argued that privatisation of the education industry could lead to increasing inequalities between individuals and countries with privileged private owners of educational services securing the power of capital. There are further risks of homogenisation of cultures, increased global disparities and cultural imperialism (Stier, 2004).

The third rationale that Stier (2004) sees connected to the internationalisation process is educationalism which looks at education in a profound way. According to this rationale, education is not limited to goal-oriented acquisition of certain skills or knowledge but is more seen in a sense of life-long learning. The process of adapting to the foreign academic and cultural environment is perceived to enhance personal growth and self-actualisation (Stier, 2004). A problematic aspect of this concept is that it could lead to imposition of methods of teaching and research onto another country with the idea that one is better than others. There is also a concern about the individualisation of structural and global problems, for example, the idea that individuals could solve a global problem like, for example, curing poverty (Stier, 2004).

#### **2.4.1 The homestay sector**

One integral element of the international education industry is homestay accommodation. Homestay is an industry that is relatively new as it has grown in response to the increasing number of international students requiring accommodation (Richardson, 2003a). Homestay is a global phenomenon and one of the most popular types of accommodation for sojourn students (Campbell, 2004).

According to Richardson (Richardson, 2003a) the term “homestay” is still not included in many dictionaries and is therefore a term whose definition is still evolving. Homestay could be described as “a period during which a visitor in a foreign country lives with a local family” (Webster’s dictionary 2002 cited in Richardson, 2003.). Welsh (2001, cited in Campbell, 2004, p. 108) defines it more specifically as “an accommodation option which includes full board and lodging for students studying in a foreign country through which they may be exposed to the culture, language and social structures of that country”.

#### **2.4.2 Actors**

Within the homestay industry three major stakeholders can be identified: the homestay agent, the homestay host and the homestay student.

##### ***Agents***

The homestay agent functions as the coordinator of the homestay programme and organises the accommodation for international students of educational institutions by recruiting suitable host families and matching them with international students. The agent can be either a department or an agency that is attached to an educational institution or an independent organisation that serves several educational institutions (Campbell, 2004; Richardson, 2003a).

## ***Students***

Homestay students are usually full-fee paying international students. They contribute financially to the homestay family's living needs which can be considered as remuneration for the services offered by the host. Usually the fee is paid in conjunction with the student's tuition fees for an initial period of time before arrival of the student at the destination. If students select "homestay" as their accommodation option, it is compulsory for them to live with that family for the initial prearranged period of time which is normally one to three months, depending on the homestay provider's regulations. After this arranged period, international students can reconsider their accommodation situation and board can be negotiated and paid directly to the host family if they desire to stay (Campbell, 2004).

## ***Hosts***

The homestay hosts are "individuals or families who offer their own home to international students for part of or the duration of their stay" (Richardson, 2003b, p. 2). They provide accommodation, usually with meals within their private homes. Hosts are expected to integrate the guests into their family and care about the needs of the international students for the time they reside together (Lynch, 2000). According to Lynch (2000), most homestay hosts are recruited through word of mouth recommendation from an existing host prompting calls to a particular organisation. Furthermore, it tends to be the homestay mother who makes the decision about entering the homestay business, the rest of the family will then support her idea (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002).

### **2.4.3 Homestay from the student's perspective**

From the homestay students' perspectives there are three major benefits they could experience while living in a homestay arrangement: language learning, informal teaching and social integration (Ward, 2006). The homestay environment could provide a setting within which students can practise and broaden their language knowledge through day-to-day communication with the host family. Through interaction between host and students, students are ideally given the opportunity to learn about the host culture and share their own culture so that multicultural understanding and acceptance of differences are fostered (Richardson, 2003b).

Ideally, homestays also offer social support and learning opportunities for international students. Hosts can create lasting impressions concerning the host culture and in that way also foster students' integration into the larger community before they might move into other



forms of accommodation (Richardson, 2003b). All of these three aspects can ultimately help them to become, and function better as, global citizens (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002).

Additional beneficial outcomes of the homestay situation for the students concern legal and financial arrangements. As educational institutions have to ensure that the duty of care is fulfilled after school hours for international students less than eighteen years of age, homestays offer a setting to meet these needs as students are accommodated in a family environment (Richardson, 2003a). Financially, living in a homestay can save costs on accommodation (Richardson, 2003b).

According to studies by Campbell (2004) and Richardson (2003a) when they decide to reside in homestay accommodation most homestay students expect to experience all the above-named benefits. Most importantly, however, they expect to be given the opportunity to practise English and, secondly, to feel included in the family. Therefore, many homestay students picture the homestay as a “home away from home.” (Campbell, 2004); an environment in which they can experience security, warmth, friendship and support that only a family can offer (Campbell, 2004; Richardson, 2003a).

There are not only benefits reported with homestay arrangements. In many cases the ideal does not match reality and the expectations of hosts and students and providers can diverge. While Ward (2006) found that 62 per cent of the international students were extremely satisfied with their homestay situation, McFedries’ (2002) research into the life of Asian, fee-paying secondary students in Christchurch depicted a different situation. She discovered that homestays can be a source of significant distress. On average, students changed their host family once and emotional support was sought from friends, classmates and parents rather than homestay families. The most frequent reasons given for changing the family were people in the homestay family (27%), food (19%), loneliness (8%), money and other reasons (40%). Sixty-three per cent of the participating secondary students felt unhappy outside school (McFedries, 2002). The different findings of those two studies could be related to the introduction of the Code of Pastoral Care of International Students in 2002 which aimed at setting standards for the care of international students.

Campbell’s (2004) exploratory study of international students’ and host families’ experiences of the homestay situation in New Zealand found that interviewed students experienced problems with food, communication opportunities and integration into the host family (Campbell, 2004). Campbell (2004) explains these problems by way of the high expectations of international students, information overload, lack of familiarity with the host culture,

inadequate linguistic proficiency and lack of communication with the homestay family. Further dissatisfaction can occur when students perceive that the homestay arrangement is treated as a business activity by the homestay family (Campbell, 2004).

Kendall-Smith & Rich (2003) noted that in the literature problems are often described as a deficit in the international student although they just behave in ways consistent with those of their primary reference group in their home culture which causes mismatches between their own and their hosts' expectations. Problems and dissatisfactions appear especially high when hosts and homestay students originate from societies that are ranked at different ends of the individualism-collectivism dimension, as these two groups differ in terms of their responsibility as family members (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003).

#### **2.4.4 Homestay from the hosts' perspective**

While some studies have been undertaken into students' perspectives of the homestay arrangement, little research has been done into those of homestay hosts (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002; Richardson, 2003b; Ward, 2006).

Kendall-Smith and Rich's (2003) study of the experience of New Zealand homestay hosts and their conflict styles came to the conclusion that, in general, homestay hosts describe their hosting experience as very satisfying. The participants of this study reported three aspects that led to this positive judgement: cultural enrichment, intellectual stimulation and social contact. Cultural enrichment refers to the opportunity of experiencing the cultural differences, learning about the homestay student's culture and gaining more appreciation for their own culture. Conversations and discussions with the homestay students, on sometimes more serious topics like world affairs or religion, were seen as a positive intellectual stimulation. The presence of the homestay student, the feeling of being surrounded by young people and the opportunities to engage in activities with them was also appreciated (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003).

Lowe, Askling and Bates (1984) suggest that the relationship and interaction of host family and international students can foster a better understanding of foreign affairs and can prompt participation in the decision making of their nation's foreign policies. Furthermore, it can encourage the development of international networks of people who are concerned about world issues and problems (Lowe et al., 1984).

According to Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart's (2002) research into homestay families' perceived role as host families, families thought that the homestay experience was an integral part of the overall study abroad experience. The majority of the hosts reported that their task went

beyond the provision of board and food. They saw themselves holding multiple roles: as teachers, tutors and counsellors (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002).

Richardson (2003b) identified similar roles in her study of host families of English language students in Melbourne. Her respondents perceived themselves as being expected to fulfil the pseudo-parental role, the role as cross-cultural advisor and the role as servant. The role as a servant refers to the fact that some homestay students expected to be served by their hosts as they paid for their board. All three roles are perceived as being quite complex and intense (Richardson, 2003b).

Problems and dissatisfaction were generally perceived to be minor (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002). In Knight and Schmidt-Rinehart's (2002) study only three hosts out of 25 reported any problems. The absence of problems was explained by families having solved problems by themselves without contacting the educational institution for help. It has also become apparent that families who have had students for many years will consider things as normal that might have been a problem when they first started their hosting experience. In some homestay programmes, contact between host families was so close that sharing of experiences between them helped to solve their own problems in similar situations.

If there were any problems, they were associated with food, telephones, opposite-sex issues, messy rooms, siblings, different personality-types, showering, electricity, slamming doors or over scheduled social life or weekend touring (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002).

Kendall-Smith and Rich (2003) had identified similar issues which they categorised as money, food and attitudes. The only other factor that was seen as a problem was the lack of pastoral care and support from the agency or educational institution that was available to homestay hosts (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003).

Most studies' findings (Campbell, 2004; Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Richardson, 2003b; Ward, 2006) came to the conclusion that homestay hosts and providers are very often only poorly prepared for the services they are expected to offer. They could, therefore, be better supported if they have had access to orientation programmes and support networks. A host family should also be provided with information about legal responsibilities, rooming house legislation and the cultural background of the international student they are going to host (Campbell, 2004; Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Richardson, 2003b; Ward, 2006). Providers themselves often require more training regarding the ongoing quality of homestay programmes they provide. They need adequate selection criteria to match families and should

have a well-founded cross-cultural communication and conflict management training (Richardson, 2003a).

Unfortunately, “To date, it has not been demonstrated that there is any duty of care being shown towards these people [homestay hosts] who, in the end, are the ‘coal face’ personnel dealing with the problems that arise. We disregard the concerns at our peril. Without adequate support this part of the education export industry may flounder, leaving regrets of what may have been, bitterness and dissatisfaction in its wake” (Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003, p. 175).

## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

Globalisation is a multifaceted multiscalar phenomenon affecting different aspects of people’s lives through compression of time and space leading to growing interconnectedness of people and places on different levels of scale. The way in which the “global” and the “local” are connected and the impact of globalisation on culture and locality are highly contested.

One local sphere that is affected by globalising processes is the “home”. Home can be interpreted as a physical place but also as a place of meaning and attachment where (cultural) identities continuously are (re)created in the context of people’s experiences of everyday life. In an era of the global world, the experiences of these local places remain vital but are suggested to being shaped by global influences.

One global force that penetrates to the local level is international education. Education has been internationalised and commodified through globalising processes. An increasing number of students move across borders to seek education from foreign educational institutions. A large proportion of these students demand accommodation in a homestay environment. Homestay hosting is an accommodation option of living in the home of locals and experiencing their family life. There has been only little research into the impact of the international students’ presence on locals’ home and family life in New Zealand and in general. Hence, the research objectives addressed in this study should be timely contribution to the literature.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Context: Homestay in New Zealand**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Homestay accommodation is the second most popular accommodation option for international students in New Zealand and the most popular one for secondary students (Ministry of Education, 2008a). According to the New Zealand Guidelines to Support the Code of Practice, “Homestay means accommodation provided to an international student in the residence of a family or household where no more than four international students are accommodated” (Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 103). Accommodation of five or more students in one home is considered as a boarding establishment which has its own set of rules, also regulated by the Code of Practice. Although this definition seems vague and focussed on the number of students per homestay accommodation rather than other components of the arrangement, regulations, like the Code of Practice and the corresponding Guidelines, point out clear requirements of what is expected of the different stakeholders that are involved in provision of homestay accommodation to international students. These exact requirements will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. First, I will provide an overview of the history of the New Zealand international education industry, including the homestay sector, followed by a discussion of the Code of Pastoral Care of International Students, common management practice in New Zealand and characteristics of current homestay hosting arrangements in New Zealand.

#### **3.2 History**

The homestay sector in New Zealand can be considered as a segment of the international education industry, an industry with a relatively recent history. To understand its development, it is also necessary to look at the evolution of the whole international education industry at least in terms of international education “at home” which describes the situation when students move to the country of the supplier, in this case New Zealand, to receive education.

##### **3.2.1 Evolution of the international education industry in New Zealand**

When the first international students came to New Zealand in the 1950s to study under the Colombo Plan, New Zealand’s international education was not considered to be an “industry”.

Until the 1980s, the acceptance of international students was primarily seen as a form of international aid to developing countries and therefore not considered as a source of revenue (Smith & Rae, 2006; Tarling, 2004).

### ***The Colombo Plan***

The Colombo Plan was a Commonwealth initiative aimed at supporting the development of Asian countries by allowing a small number of their students to study in New Zealand without being charged fees. The largest single group of students were Malaysian Chinese who were unable to attend university in their own country. Students were trained in the fields of engineering, agriculture, science, commerce and health. They were expected to return to their home country after completion of their degrees. The small number of 468 students who arrived between 1950 and 1957 were welcomed with curiosity and sympathy. At that time, contact with people from these countries was seen as an opportunity for cultural enrichment of New Zealand, quite an isolated country till then. By 1967, over 2200 students had come to New Zealand under the Colombo Plan. Word of mouth from these students or New Zealanders abroad also stimulated some private overseas students (funded by themselves or their own government) to come to New Zealand to study. Their acceptance was seen as a case of semi-formal aid as they were only charged a low domestic fee (Tarling, 2004). Tarling (2004) suggests that these private students could be considered as the precursors of today's international students.

### ***Policy changes of the 1970s and 1980s***

Internationally, and in New Zealand, however, demographic and social trends indicated that the economic development aims of international educational exchange programmes were rarely met. Positive effects could only be found for the economies of the societies where graduates settled which was very often the country in which they had gained their education (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). The failure to meet these goals, coincided with several other factors. There was a demand for reducing the government's expenditure in the education sector. The number of private international students increased. The capacity for enrolments of domestic students for high demand courses at New Zealand universities reached its limits. This resulted in policy changes (Tarling, 2004).

Firstly, open entry at tertiary institutions was replaced by admission based upon academic merit. Second, the establishment of a quota system regulated temporarily the entry number of international students. Third, the establishment of cultural exchange programmes provided the opportunity for New Zealanders to make contact with other nationalities which

counterbalanced the large number of incoming students from Malaysia. At this stage, concerns were raised about controlling entry numbers in order to be able to save costs; the idea of making profit through education was not yet present. At the end of the 1970s, New Zealand's desire to cut expenditure, led to the introduction of international fees of \$1,500 per student for all private international students exempting Australians and South Pacific People. By that time also, the annual number of international students had reached 2,680 which is the equivalent of the total in previous years (Tarling, 2004).

With the beginning of the 1980s an ideological shift took place in New Zealand that fully manifested a decade later. New Zealand was marked by a period of major restructuring and deregulation with a focus on economic policies in the 1980s followed by changes in social policies throughout the 1990s (Le Heron et al., 1996; McClelland & St John, 2006).

These changes could be considered as New Zealand's reaction to global restructuring processes and local and national initiatives (Boston, Martin, Pallot, & Walsh, 1991; Kelsey, 1995; Le Heron & Pawson, 1996). Under the fourth Labour government between 1984 and 1990, New Zealand began to adopt a policy framework that was based on neo-liberal thinking and New Right politics which promoted the ideas of market liberalisation, corporatisation and privatisation. The New Zealand government opened the economy to participate more in global markets and networks (Le Heron & Pawson, 1996). State interventions were no longer of a supportive and directive character but more facilitative in nature and import tariffs were removed. In the finance sector, capital flow was more liberalised. Public sector enterprises (for example, Air New Zealand, the Forestry Service, Railway Department and the Post Office) were either converted into businesses like state owned enterprises or were privatised which forced them to be profitable (Dalziel, 2006; Le Heron & Pawson, 1996; Pawson et al., 1996).

Neo-liberal reforms were also starting to affect New Zealand's education system as the state was the primary "capitalist" of its educational institutions. Education was no longer considered as a public good but, rather, as a private good (Martens & Starke, 2008). After a long running series of policy debates about charging foreign students, it was recognised that university places could be sold to overseas students on a full-cost basis (Lewis, 2005; Tarling, 2004). In 1989, the Education Amendment Act cleared the way for a policy of charging foreign students the full cost of education services (Martens & Starke, 2008). Firstly, this recognition was focused primarily upon the basis of available capacity and cost recovery. It meant that admission priority was still given to New Zealand students and only surplus capacity was sold to overseas students without making any profit.

### ***International education reforms of the 1990s***

The problem of decreasing capacities for international students was finally solved by creating new capacity through charging full-cost fees to international students at primary, secondary and tertiary level to help meet capital and operating costs (Tarling, 2004). These changes were part of the education reforms of the 1990s which themselves need to be seen in context or as a reaction to what was happening in other areas. Increasing international competitiveness created pressure for labour market deregulation, while reduction of taxes restrained social expenditure on the national level (McClelland & St John, 2006). State institutions were encouraged to act more in an entrepreneurial manner, their autonomy was increased, government contributions were reduced and they were more exposed to market forces. During the 1990s, New Zealand's state social policies (health, housing, education and income support) underwent huge change. Under a National Government, the welfare state was reduced by the cutting of welfare benefits, gradually introducing user pays for health and education and housing reforms based on market rents (Dale & Robertson, 1997; McClelland & St John, 2006; Pawson et al., 1996). For educational institutions, it meant the introduction of a market ideology which became visible through the devolution of responsibilities upon them, competitive funding models and competition for students (Lewis, 2005; Tarling, 2004). From this time on, the education sector was recognised as an opportunity to increase New Zealand's foreign exchange. New Zealand's potential to be an English language educational system that was politically safe and stable and geographically close to potential markets was discovered (Tarling, 2004).

### ***Today's international education industry***

The policy changes of the late 1980s and 1990s resulted in the establishment of today's New Zealand international education industry which has become an important export sector of the country's economy. It has been estimated that in 2007 international education's total contribution to New Zealand's GDP was \$2.1bn which is about 1.2 per cent of the country's GDP (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008) .

International education providers have become part of a commercial industry that transforms students into clients and institutions entirely dependent on the income generated through them (Ward et al., 2001). Universities, for example, have been given the power to enrol full-fee paying students and limits on their admissions have been waived. Now, policy discourses have placed emphasis on extracting value at the regional and national level through "stair casing", which describes the process of moving international students through the educational system, preferably from primary school to university. The growing industry has required re-



orientation of existing curricula, development of marketing networks, new administrative practices, new buildings and a residential care infrastructure (Lewis, 2005). Marketing and quality control have become important tools to remain internationally competitive and cost effective (Lewis, 2005; Tarling, 2004). The earlier target markets of South East Asia were first expanded to Africa and Latin America followed by Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Europe and North America. China is one of the most recent target markets.

The policy changes resulted in a dramatic increase in overseas student arrivals. In 1994, only 3,199 tertiary students were enrolled as full-fee paying students. In only seven years the number had tripled to 12,649 in 2001 (Tarling, 2004) and further increased to 91,321 in 2007 (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). While the increase was temporarily broken by the East Asian Economic Crisis in 1997 (Lewis, 2005), Australia's enforced visa requirements and New Zealand's simplified access for Chinese students to New Zealand again boosted the international student numbers in New Zealand (Lewis, 2005).

Despite the diversified marketing approach, the primary market for New Zealand's international education remains Asia, with 92 per cent of all international school children, 83 per cent of public tertiary students and 80 per cent of English language students (Lewis, 2005). About 27.1 per cent of all international students are Chinese, which is the single largest group of international students, followed by South Koreans (19.6%) and Japanese (13.4%). At 27.6 per cent, students from non-Asian countries collectively account for only a few more than the number of those from China alone (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). In comparison with other countries, New Zealand has benefited by netting 1.5 per cent of the total global market demand (Lewis, 2005).

By sector, English Language School (ELS) students represent the largest group of international students, making up 36.7 per cent of all international students. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teaching is a central component of the international education product and a key aspect in the service chain. ELSs have focused on particular relationships with schools whereby preparatory courses are sold to students enrolling in schools or tertiary institutions (Lewis, 2005). The majority of the ELSs' students, however, are only enrolled part-time. Considering full time equivalent (FTE) students, universities account for the largest number of international students with 31 per cent (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). The increase in student numbers is reflected in the foreign exchange earnings made through international students.

By 1990, the international education sector obtained about \$66m from foreign exchange earnings (Tarling, 2004) and Education New Zealand<sup>3</sup> had reported that the education industry had generated an income of \$1.5bn in 2001 (Lewis, 2005) and \$2.3bn in 2003 (Smith & Rae, 2006). In 2007, the amount of direct foreign exchange earnings were estimated at \$2.2bn, which does not include the \$70m earnings from offshore provision. These \$2.2bn comprise, approximately, \$600m in tuition fees and \$1.6bn in other goods and services (living expenses). These income earnings do not include any expenditure that is created by visiting friends and relatives of students who may come to help the student to settle in their academic year or attend graduation ceremonies. Education New Zealand and the Ministry of Education (2008) suggest that about 11.0 visitor nights are generated per international student which would mean a total of 1.0m visitor nights in total. Given an average daily expenditure of \$129<sup>4</sup>, this would generate another \$130m foreign exchange earnings.

The generated employment that can be directly linked to foreign students' expenditure is estimated at about 12,800 full time equivalent (FTE) positions. The multiplier effect raises it to 32,400 which means that for every job created directly in the education industry another 3.29 FTE jobs are generated in other industries (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). The external links to the wider social and cultural economy can be seen in the development of specialist providers in accommodation, car dealerships, travel agencies, insurance companies and immigration consultancies. In Auckland City, ELSs have become the single biggest occupier of office space by sector with about 11 per cent of the total space (Lewis, 2005).

It is difficult to measure the complete contribution of international students to the domestic economy as they are not only paying tuition fees but also accommodation and living expenses and therefore contributing to different types of industries. The multiplier effect for foreign fee paying students is based on weighted contribution of each individual industry and is different for each educational institution. The basis for the multiplier analysis is the gross output which represents expenditure less leakage in the form of direct imports and tax. In 2005/2006 this figure for the gross output was \$1.7bn. An additional \$1.3bn was generated through upstreaming industries, such as energy that was provided to educational institutions. A further \$1.0bn was generated through induced turnover generated by the spending wages and salaries earned by people employed in export education and supplying industries (Infometrics Consulting, 2000). Considering the double counting leaves, the total contribution was not

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<sup>3</sup> Education New Zealand is a marketing initiative founded by the New Zealand government in the 1990s; it was formally named New Zealand International Education (NZIEL).

<sup>4</sup> According to Ministry of Tourism Key Tourism Statistics, August 2008

\$4.0bn but \$2.0bn. This way, a total contribution to GDP of \$2.1bn is created, not considering the earnings from offshore provision. This represents about 1.2 per cent of total GDP, an increase of 0.7 per cent since 1999 (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008).

In comparison, the horticulture and wood processing industries have contributed only 0.8 per cent each (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). Even the return generated from the wool and wine industries could not compete with international education (Smith & Rae, 2006). The earnings generated through international education make New Zealand's national economy more and more dependent on international education. This industry used to account for only 0.5 per cent of GDP in 1999 (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). Now, it is already in the top five export income earnings of service exports and fifteenth in the overall export earnings (Smith & Rae, 2006).

International education has become a crucial funding source for state educational institutions and subsidisation of domestic education. While Smith (1993) sees this as a positive development for New Zealand's education system, Shen (1997) points out that many educational institutions do not have a choice about selling education in the international market place. At school level, foreign-fee paying students contribute already more than ten per cent of their total revenue or 35 to 40 per cent of their government operating grants. At university level, the contribution is even higher. The University of Auckland receives 40 per cent of their total tuition fees from international students (Lewis, 2005). Like other export industries, New Zealand's international education industry is highly dependent on the international market and has especially high dependency on the Asian market (Martens & Starke, 2008). The competition with other education markets such as USA, Australia, Canada or the UK is very high and there are new competitive markets arising that offer the advantage of being, culturally, more Eastern, such as, for example, Hong Kong and Singapore. Fluctuation in the exchange rate affects tuition fee rates and international outbreaks like SARS easily affect the number of incoming students (Martens & Starke, 2008).

In order to be less vulnerable, the government saw it as essential for New Zealand to diversify its marketing activity and target also non-Asian markets. The recent focus has therefore been on the Middle East and Central and Eastern Europe (Smith & Rae, 2006). In addition, the New Zealand government has tried to facilitate the visa application process, grant work permits to international students and introduce a compulsory levy for education providers to produce additional funding for promotion and communication of the industry. Furthermore, it founded the marketing initiative Education New Zealand, released the International Education

Agenda 2007-2012 and established the Code of Pastoral Care of International Students (Martens & Starke, 2008).

### ***Branding “Education New Zealand”***

One outcome of the education reform is the marketing of New Zealand as a high quality education destination. From the 1990s onwards, New Zealand’s education marketing has been professionalised and institutionalised through the establishment of New Zealand International Education (NZIEL) which has later been renamed Education New Zealand (Martens & Starke, 2008). According to Martens & Starke (2008), New Zealand has been marketed as a clean, green, safe country with comparatively inexpensive high quality education. Being a “green” product, international education fits in well with New Zealand’s growing emphasis on positioning itself as a country with a knowledge-based economy (Smith & Rae, 2006). As education is an immaterial and highly reputational good, the Code of Practice can be used to define the product, to communicate information about it and to market its quality. This is important as the brand “New Zealand Education” is only one in the family of brand “New Zealand”. The government has chosen to promote different “New Zealand” products individually and collectively through people in-place imagery and geographical knowledge of New Zealand using for example images of the All Blacks, bungy jumping, sheep or pristine nature to promote New Zealand assets that are related to environmental aesthetics and social stability (Lewis, 2005). In 2000, Education New Zealand, Trade New Zealand and Tourism New Zealand formed the New Zealand International Education Marketing Network to develop and distribute a New-Zealand-wide brand and marketing of education services (Martens & Starke, 2008). So it is not only New Zealand’s education reputation that has been marketed (Lewis, 2005) but “participants are selling New Zealand; its educational history, qualities, organization and reputation, its colonial history and attachments, its physical, cultural and political environments, its cities and their cultural infrastructure and its families and their homes” (Lewis, 2005, p. 36). Therefore it is also necessary to protect the education sector to maintain a high reputation. The establishment of the Code of Practice reflects the state’s desire to take ownership of the brand New Zealand Education (Lewis, 2005). The International Education Agenda 2007-2012 also focuses on the enhancement of the product “New Zealand Education”.

### ***The international education agenda 2007-2012***

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has described New Zealand as “one of the leading exporters of tertiary education in the world” (OECD n. d. cited in Ministry of Education, 2007b, p. 2). Due to its success and potential, the New Zealand

government considers international education as an important contributor to its Economic Transformation Strategy towards a sustainable economy that is founded on innovation and quality (Ministry of Education, 2007b). The recent New Zealand Educational Agenda of 2007-2012 recognises the economic benefits of international students and highlights their potential to contribute to an increase in the flow of ideas, building relationships between people and institutions and sustaining the national identity in a globalised world.

Internationalisation of the New Zealand education industry is claimed to provide New Zealanders with knowledge, skills and experience that help them to become global citizens. Through interaction with students from different cultural backgrounds, they learn to show appreciation for other cultures and develop a sense of New Zealand's place in the world and of their own national identity (Ministry of Education, 2007b).

The New Zealand government's current strategy focuses on the enhancement of the reputation of New Zealand's education, ensuring high-quality education and supporting industry and providers to build and achieve sustainable growth in revenue form (Ministry of Education, 2007b). Although the International Education Agenda suggests more than pure economic benefits, it has been argued that the monetary benefits overshadow the recognition of all other contributions international students make to New Zealand and New Zealand's education that were valued highly during the early arrival stages of international students in the 1950s (Tarling, 2004). Sawir et al. (2009) are concerned about the reduction of international students to the status of economic revenue generators. "International students are not just economic units but complex people. No industry or educational enterprise will survive if it neglects the concerns of those it serves" (Sawir et al., 2009, p. 46).

One group of people that deals with the concerns of international students are their homestay hosts. According to Campbell (2004), a large number of students choose this type of accommodation. Due to the amount of time international students spend in a homestay family, the contribution of the homestay sector to the education industry is significant.

### **3.2.2 Evolution of homestay hosting**

The first homestay arrangements for international students in New Zealand were made in the 1960s when overseas students came to New Zealand studying under the Colombo Plan. Their placement with New Zealand families in the Wellington area and later also in Auckland and Christchurch was believed to give students an insight into the responsibilities of good citizenship. External Affairs therefore suggested that "only in the environment of family life [...] [can] our visitors truly appreciate the full meaning of community responsibilities" (Tarling, 2004, p. 20).

Today, most foreign language departments of schools and universities encourage their students to live with a homestay family during their experience studying abroad experience for similar reasons; to improve their linguistic skills and increase their opportunities to interact with members of the host culture (Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002). With the increasing number of international students seeking education at New Zealand's educational institutions, and correspondingly residing in homestay accommodation, a regulatory framework was needed to ensure high quality pastoral care for international students.

### **3.3 Regulations: The Code of Pastoral Care of International Students**

The increasing significance of the international education sector and educational institutions' reliance on income through international fees led to the regulatory interest in pastoral care issues (social, cultural and educational impact of international students in educational institutions), aspects of consumer protection and protection of the New Zealand education "product". The response was the introduction of a voluntary code of practice for education providers in 1996. Due to its voluntary nature, it lacked effective sanctions and therefore had only limited success. After ten years of a mostly self-regulating industry, the government developed a more prominent management interest in this globalising industry and passed the Education Standards Act in 2001 which was partly aimed at regulating international education. Its centrepiece became the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students which came into force on March 31, 2002 and was revised in December 2003. This Code was required to be signed by all education providers allowed to enrol international students (Lewis, 2005). The International Education Appeal Authority (IEAA), an independent public agency has been made responsible for the enforcement of the Code and deals with complaints made by students and agents. It has the authority to issue sanctions, if the Code has been breached (Sawir et al., 2009).

The Code addresses concerns of schools, academics, students, parents and advocates. It is divided into the following eight sections: 1. marketing, recruitment and enrolment of international students, 2. use of contracted agents, 3. contracts and government indemnity, student welfare, 4. students aged under 18, 5. grievance procedures, 6. applications, 7. monitoring and 8. administration (Lewis, 2005). It sets standards such as, for example "They [international students] must be placed in safe accommodation" (Sawir et al., 2009, p. 47). "The Code makes "the industry" visible, makes a market, controls brand New Zealand Education, regulates through consumer assurance, and imposes direct disciplinary controls on institutions" (Lewis, 2005, p. 5). From a student's perspective, it serves as a protective agent

for their security. Despite its goal to ensure international students' pastoral care, the Code is a tool that aims to control and mediate for the collective interests of the government and the industry, sets standards and provides benchmarking opportunities, certification and auditing. The imposition of this Code shows the policy interest for developing and securing an industry which is externally linked to the development of an internationally competitive state that can contribute to the stimulation of New Zealand's economy. Through this code, the government protects its own interest as a leading funder in the education sector by protecting the industry's reputation from risks of poor quality of educational or pastoral services and rogue enterprises (Lewis, 2005).

A study by Sawir et al. (2009), however, found gaps in the coverage of pastoral care mechanisms in the areas of financial matters, accommodation assistance and intercultural relations. Matters like visitors' familiarity with local customs, relations with New Zealanders, issues related to students' stress and students' recourse opportunity in the event of financial problems were not sufficiently covered in the Code. Furthermore, there are no specific recommendations for providers on how to implement the Code. Another point of concern was the poor information flow in regards to communicating details of the Code to international students. Most international students had no knowledge of their entitlements under the Code and no knowledge of the appeal authority. Sawir et al. (2009) highlighted the need for intensified information in order to make the Code a comprehensive tool that will protect both the industry and the students.

Regarding homestay accommodation, the Code for the Pastoral Care of International Students and the corresponding Guidelines to Support the Code exactly define exactly what is required for a homestay accommodation and how the signatories of the Code may go about meeting those requirements. The details of these requirements will be discussed in the following chapter 3.4 Management practice.

### **3.4 Management practice**

In New Zealand, homestay hosting is to a large extent regulated through the Code of Pastoral Care of International Students and its Guidelines. The signatories of the Code are bound to ensure that the requirements of the Code are met. They are, however, allowed to appoint accommodation or agents who will be in charge of managing the selection, placement and monitoring of international students in accommodation on their behalf. One option is the placement of international students in homestay accommodation. In the placement process, the signatory or the homestay agent has responsibilities with regards to the homestay host and

homestay student. If the placement of the international student is with a new homestay family, the Code signatory or homestay agent first has to assess the suitability of the homestay home and host for homestay hosting. They need to be able to meet the needs of international students. Homestay hosts for students under the age of eighteen are expected to:

- Provide care for the student (in a family-like environment) respecting individual cultural, spiritual and emotional needs;
- Accept and meet the physical and emotional needs of the student in their care, including provision of adequate shelter, warmth, nutrition, and support;
- Recognise the important modelling role they have for the student, and reflect this in their actions;
- Accept student individuality and difference;
- The number of the applicant's own children and resident family members/other residents in the home or residence of the applicant may impact on the suitability of the applicant, where students under the age of 18 will live in the accommodation. Caregivers should be able to give dedicated time to each student in addition to time spent with their own children;
- Be willing to help the student to learn English.

(Ministry of Education, 2007a, pp. 134-135)

In regards to the accommodation, homestay hosts have to provide a “clean, secure and warm” (Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 137) environment and meet the following minimum requirements:

- Private bedroom for the student (or suitable sharing arrangement with other student of the same sex where each student will have his/her own space and bedroom facilities. Signatories should specifically ask students if they mind sharing a room.);
- Wardrobe and chest of drawers and other appropriate bedroom furniture;
- Study desk and chair with adequate lighting;
- Standard bed with linen and blankets or duvet;
- Heating appliance;
- Clean and available laundry, bathroom and toilet facilities;



- Provisions for emergency situations (for example smoke alarms, first aid supplies);
- Access to telephone.

(Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. 137)

The assessment process involves application forms to be filled out by the potential homestay host, an interview that will assess whether or not a homestay host can provide a physically and emotionally safe environment, a visit of the home prior to a student placement and a reference check of two by the applicant nominated referees that can provide information about the host's suitability. Furthermore, a police vetting process will be conducted of all adults over eighteen living in the home (Ministry of Education, 2007a). Once it is ensured that the homestay hosts can meet international students' needs, their suitability will be approved and they are matched with students. Training and support sessions should be held prior to or soon after the arrival of a student to discuss roles, responsibilities and realities of homestay hosting (Ministry of Education, 2007a).

In regards to the international students, the Code signatory or accommodation agent has to inform international students about the available accommodation options and in the case of homestay accommodation, what a homestay is like and what it includes, for example three meals a day, a furnished room, a place within a family and the associated costs (Ministry of Education, 2007a).

Once the student has been placed, homestay agents are required to carefully monitor the living arrangements of the international student and the homestay family. They are expected to visit the homestays on a regular basis (at least twice a year in the case of a placement of a student who is under the age of eighteen) and interview the students to ensure the student's well-being and that occupants of the house have not changed. Code signatories or homestay agents are also required to be available to homestay hosts and students at all times in case of an emergency and at reasonable times to accept complaints. In case the homestay host or the student desires a change of placement, the Code signatory or homestay agent is responsible for arranging the transfer into a different accommodation. All steps of the placement and monitoring process are required to be documented (Ministry of Education, 2007a).

### **3.5 Characteristics of homestay hosting in New Zealand**

According to a national survey on international student experiences in New Zealand conducted in 2007, sampling 2,677 students from all educational sectors and nationalities, about 22 per cent of all students were accommodated in homestays. Other popular

accommodation options were rental accommodation (57%), hostels (9%), own home (5%) or relatives' home (5%). Regarding the different sectors, secondary students stayed more often in homestays (67%) than other students. In terms of nationality, students from Asian countries (except China) and Europeans were more often found in homestays than other nationalities. Christchurch had a higher proportion of students in homestays (30%) than the national average (Ministry of Education, 2008b). Homestay arrangements were usually managed by schools or educational institutions, followed by "own arrangements" and alternative means (via family members in New Zealand). New Zealand agents or home country agents were used only on rare occasions. In terms of living costs, 66 per cent paid between NZ \$101 and \$300 per week and 18 per cent between NZ \$301 and \$500. A small proportion of students paid less than NZ \$100 or more than \$501.

Sixty-six percent of all participants were "satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" with their accommodation; only 2% were "not at all satisfied". Homestay students were more satisfied with their living situation than students in other accommodation options. The aspects homestay students were most satisfied with were "safety and security", "management and arrangement by landlord or host", "cleanliness and quality of amenities". Least satisfaction was drawn from "access to internet", "value for money" and "quality of food provided" (Ministry of Education, 2008b).

About half of all international students were accommodated with no other international students; about a quarter lived with one other and about 20 per cent lived with two or more other international students. Satisfaction was higher when students were the only international student in the homestay (Ministry of Education, 2008b)

Interaction with homestay families was by and large limited to no more than ten hours a week (73%). About 13 per cent interacted even less than one hour per week. Students who spent more time with their homestay family (10 hours and more) were more satisfied than students who did not spend as much time (Ministry of Education, 2008b)

In terms of support, international students turn to their homestay hosts when they are sick or when they have informational needs, for example, answering questions about New Zealand. Emotional support tended to be sought from fellow international students or members of their home country (Ministry of Education, 2008b).

### **3.6 Chapter summary**

The New Zealand homestay sector is a segment in the international education industry which has evolved in association with the acceptance of the increasing number of international students at educational institutions. It is a popular accommodation form, especially for younger students. It is mainly regulated through the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students that was established to ensure high quality pastoral care to international students.

Potential hosts have to undergo a rigorous screening process before an international student is placed in their home. Hosts are not only expected to provide a room and board to students but also to cater for students' emotional needs.

According to a national survey in 2007, about 22 per cent of international students were living with a homestay family almost half of them were satisfied or extremely satisfied with this type of accommodation.

# **Chapter 4**

## **Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research approach I adopted in this study. It describes a qualitative research method using intensive, semi-structured interviews supplemented by secondary information sources.

### **4.2 Qualitative research approach**

A qualitative research approach was deemed most appropriate as it allowed an in-depth study of the homestay hosts' experiences in their every day lives. The practices of every day life are very complex and are difficult to study using experimental design and other quantitative research methods. The use of a qualitative approach is open towards its objects of study and is better able to meet the requirements of an exploratory social enquiry (Flick, 2006).

In social science, both quantitative and qualitative methods can be used to study a person's point-of-view. Quantitative research relies more on measuring elements of social phenomena, while qualitative research seeks to understand a question of social interaction and the construction of meaning (Babbie, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Sarantakos, 2005).

Quantitative research assumes a relatively fixed and measurable reality (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1990), but qualitative research methods assume that the social world is fluid and socially negotiated (Flick, 2006). Adopting this position, Minichiello et al. (1990) argue that social realities exist as meaningful interaction between individuals which depend significantly on the language used by individuals. In-depth interviewing therefore is a central method used to understand and gain access to individual's meanings and interpretations.

Since this research has no strict hypothesis, is largely exploratory in nature, and seeks to understand the homestay hosts' life worlds "at home", a quantitative method would not deliver adequate information to meet the research aims and objectives. In contrast, qualitative research produces a large amount of detailed information or so called "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973) about a phenomenon. It explores social interaction, meanings, thoughts and impressions which people attach to certain situations, subjects or places (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Further, it allows more context sensitivity as it takes place in a natural setting (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

In accordance with previous studies on homestay hosts' experiences (Campbell, 2004; Kendall-Smith & Rich, 2003; Knight & Schmidt-Rinehart, 2002; Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004) and research into the meaning of home, the adoption of a qualitative method appears to be most suitable. There was only some basic quantitative data collected to profile the interviewees.

### **4.3 In-depth interviews**

I decided to explore the homestay hosts' experiences by using the technique of in-depth interviewing, with interviews containing semi-structured and open-ended questions. Taylor and Bogdan (1984, p. 77) describe in-depth interviews as "face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants, directed towards understanding informants' perspectives on their lives, experiences or situations expressed in their own words." I did not have the chance to observe homestay hosts and homestay students in their day-to-day life directly, so the interview offered a good alternative way to gain a detailed and in-depth understanding of homestay hosting from the homestay hosts' point of view (Minichiello et al., 1990; Patton, 2002). As one of the aims of this study was to gain an understanding of the hosts' perspectives and role as opposed to the more often researched students' experience of this living arrangement, the in-depth interview with hosts appeared to be the most suitable method of research.

According to Minichiello et al. (1990) and Sarantakos (2005) interviews focus on gaining access to individuals' interpretations of themselves and their social reality as well as the meaning they ascribe to certain events and experiences in their lives. In this study, I was aiming to develop an understanding of how participants have organised their world, in this case their homes, and how living with a homestay student has affected or changed their life at home or the meaning of home. The interview process helped to make this knowledge public by giving each participant the opportunity of spontaneously answering open-ended questions (Flick, 2006). Open-ended questions allow participants to express their own perceptions and thoughts without having to respond with prescribed answers (Sarantakos, 2005). While it has been argued that a semi-structured interview could lead the interviewee to respond in a certain way (Creswell, 2003), Babbie (2007) suggests that the semi-structured nature of the interview schedule allows for a more flexible, iterative, and continuous interview, which allows for a more natural conversational-type of interview (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006). Rubin and Rubin (2005) support the latter argument by pointing out that each interview can be considered as a unique conversation in which the researcher gently guides the interviewees so that the researcher obtains detailed answers about the desired research topic by following

up on answers given by the interviewees. Probing then helped to reconstruct the interviewees' subjective reality (Flick, 2006), as well as the fact that they communicate it in the language that is natural to them (Minichiello et al., 1990).

## **4.4 Participant recruitment and sample selection**

Participant recruitment and sample selection of homestay hosts and homestay agents were carried out between the months of October 2008 and February 2009.

### **4.4.1 Homestay hosts**

Potential participants were selected using a self-selection and snowball sampling method. As an "outside researcher" to the field of homestay hosting, I followed the suggestion of Lofland et al. (2006) to gain access to potential participants through pre-existing connections who could refer me to homestay hosts and agents. The majority of the potential interviewees I therefore recruited through pre-established contacts through friends from Lincoln University and contacts from participants who had been recruited during the fieldwork. Additionally, I approached two homestay agents in Christchurch to assist in identifying potential interviewees as the initial chain-referral process did not generate a sufficient number of potential participants.

Prospective interviewees were female and male, individuals and couples, aged 18 and older with a good comprehension of the English language, residing in Christchurch at the time of the interview. Their English language ability was ascertained during the initial telephone contact. They had to have participated in homestay hosting experiences for a minimum of six months. This time span was chosen to ensure that the presence of the homestay student had not been experienced as simply a short-term guest who might have had only a low impact on the homestay hosts' life. Weidemann and Blüml (2009) found this with short term programmes: homestay students were considered as guests rather than as family members. Another reason for the selection of this timeframe was that this way there were hosts included who had different levels of hosting experience, from relatively short to long backgrounds of hosting. Knight and Schmidt-Rinehart (2002) have highlighted that the inclusion of "old" and "new" homestay hosts is essential to counter desensitisation that may have occurred within homestay families that had hosting experiences over many years.

Furthermore, they had to have hosted a minimum of two international homestay students who had come to New Zealand to study at an educational institution (at secondary or tertiary level or at a private language school). Having hosted more than one student ensured that hosts did not relate their experience to a single incident. To avoid any potential arising conflicts

between homestay hosts and students that could originate from an interview about a current homestay hosting experience, I decided to interview only participants who were not involved in hosting an international homestay student at the time of the interview. I saw this as a necessary precautionary measure and was confirmed by Weideman and Blüml's (2009) study who suggested the same criteria.

Prospective participants were initially contacted by telephone (Appendix 1), introduced to the study and screened on the sample selection criteria. If the prospective participants met all selection criteria and showed an interest in participating, I emailed or posted them a research-information letter (Appendix 3) and consent form (Appendix 5), followed by a second telephone call (Appendix 1).

#### **4.4.2 Homestay agents**

The homestay agent selection process was conducted at the same time as the selection of homestay hosts. I selected agents using a convenience and snowball sampling technique. One homestay agent was approached directly; three other homestay agents were referred to me by homestay hosts or by another homestay agent. Potential participants were female and male, aged 18 and older with a good comprehension of the English language. They were all involved in the organisation and/or care of homestay arrangements for international students who come to study at a New Zealand educational institution.

Prospective participants were initially contacted by email (Appendix 2) and introduced to the study. If they were interested in being interviewed, I emailed them a research-information letter (Appendix 4) and consent form (Appendix 5).

#### **4.4.3 Sample**

I conducted 26 interviews. Twenty-four of the 26 approached homestay families and all four homestay agents consented to be interviewed, leading to a response rate of 94.8 per cent for homestay hosts and 100 per cent for homestay agents. Two homestay hosts refused to participate. One approached homestay host withdrew from the study after initial agreement to participate due to an unforeseen change in personal circumstances. Another participant refused to participate without any further explanation. I interviewed two of the homestay agents in both roles, as homestay hosts and homestay agents and therefore considered them twice, one time as host and one time as an agent. Considering the limited resources of this study, the sample size was considered large enough to attain theoretical saturation to determine emerging themes in the data.

For the homestay hosts, I interviewed 30 participants in 24 interviews. While in the majority of the cases the interview was conducted with only one homestay parent, six of the interviews contained both homestay parents. Eight participants were male and 22 were female. Their ages ranged from 29 to 74. A more detailed profile of the homestay hosts including their length of hosting experience, number of hosted students and overview of hosted nationalities will be discussed in the results chapter.

Although I aimed to obtain a cross-section of participants by sex, age, length of hosting experiences and hosted nationalities, there was a higher proportion of female and over 50 year old participants. As there are no official statistics about the overall demographic characteristics of homestay hosts, I cannot validate whether the age distribution is skewed towards older cohorts or if homestay hosts tend to be older in general. The snowball sampling technique has the weakness of not necessarily delivering an even distribution of cases across age, sex and other characteristics. In my findings about the reasons to take up homestay hosting, however, I suggest the tendency towards an age profile with a larger group of older hosts. Many of my participants started hosting because of the vacant rooms in their houses, a result of grown-up children who had left “the nest”. Others sought social contact and company for their every day lives after they had retired from their working life.

For homestay agents, I interviewed four participants. Two of them were homestay coordinators at local high schools, one was employed by a language school and the fourth interviewee was working for a homestay agent that catered for different institutions but with an emphasis on placements for one tertiary institution. They were all female and had been working in this role between three and a half and seven years. They all have had experiences as homestay hosts themselves which is why two of them were interviewed also in their role as hosts.

## **4.5 Data collection**

The interviews were undertaken between October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008 and February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at a place and time of the interviewee’s convenience. With the exception of two cases, I interviewed all homestay hosts at home and all agents in their offices. All participants consented to the recording of the interviews using a digital voice recorder. The interview length ranged from 20 to 94 minutes. The average length of interview was 51 minutes. The interviews were based on two interview guides: one for hosts, the other one for agents. Both contained semi-structured, open-ended questions, see Appendix 6 and Appendix 7.



The interview guide for the homestay hosts can be divided into five different sections. The first set of questions was quite general and aimed at gaining an understanding of the participants' previous homestay experiences. Questions were directed at explaining reasons for involvement in homestay hosting, number, age, length of stay, and nationalities of hosted students, any preparations before arrival of the students, hosts' responsibilities, day-to-day activities as well as nature and resolution of occurring problems. The second part of the interview guide focussed on the homestay arrangement process. Questions focused on the application process, the role of homestay agents and the existing support network from agents and educational institutions. The third set of questions asked about the hosts' meaning of home and how the presence of a homestay student had affected the hosts' life at home. The fourth set of questions aimed to determine the impacts of hosting a foreign homestay student on the hosts' identity, behaviour and local environment. Additionally, information was sought on the extent to which homestay hosting had helped hosts to establish lasting social relations with their former students. The final questions asked the hosts to evaluate their experiences, to identify characteristics of successful homestay hosts and any future hosting plans. The interview was closed by collecting information that would gain an overview of the characteristics of the participants that were retained in the "face sheet" of each interview. For this purpose, the following information was requested from the participants: gender, age, marital status, number and age of children, and profession.

Although the questions for this interview guide were grouped in different sections in a particular order, it was only used as a guide. Not all of the questions were asked in each interview and the course of the interview did not necessarily follow this prescribed plan. The applied interview style was more in the form of "responsive interviewing" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. vii). This means that the interviews evolved more around the interviewees' responses to initial questions and were then followed up with probing and questions that seemed appropriate in the context rather than relying on predetermined questions. I followed up appropriately so that the flow of the conversation was maintained.

Due to the nature of information that was sought from the homestay agents, the interviews with them were more structured, shorter and fewer in number than those with the homestay hosts. The interview guide for the agents consisted of questions for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the nature of the homestay arrangement, the recruitment process, the support and monitoring network as well as the agents' understanding of the homestay hosts' place within the international education industry.

## **4.6 Ethical considerations**

This research was conducted according to the Lincoln University ethical guidelines and approved by the Lincoln University Ethics Committee. All participant recruitment and snowball sampling was conducted in an ethical and respectful manner.

I informed the prospective participants about the aims of the study, explained the necessary involvement for participation in the research as well as their rights as participants. I also informed them of their rights to withdraw their consent to participate in the research or withdrawal of their consent to have any information used in any written reports up until March 31, 2009. I provided them with this information during the initial telephone contact as well as in the written research information letter (Appendices 3 and 4) which was posted to them together with the consent form (Appendix 5). During a second telephone call, interested prospective participants were given the opportunity to agree to participate. This three step recruitment process was chosen to ensure that prospective participants had sufficient time to consider involvement in the study and make an informed decision.

Once the participants agreed to participate, an interview time and location of their preference was arranged. Before the commencement of the interview, I asked the participants to give their written consent (Appendix 4). During the interview, participants were again informed that they had the right to decline to answer any questions. With the interviewee's consent, interviews were digitally voice recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The participants were given the right to review any transcripts and ask to exclude information from the transcript, if they desired.

Confidentiality were assured by using only pseudonyms in any written or oral presentations of this research. No individually identifying information for the participants, their homestay students, schools or agencies that they were referring to or representing during the interview are mentioned in this thesis. Any quotations from the interviews have been referenced using pseudonyms.

## **4.7 Data analysis**

As suggested for qualitative research (Gibbs, 2002; Minichiello et al., 1990), I had already started the data analysis during the data collection process. Upon completion of the first interviews and throughout the fieldwork, a preliminary screening of the interview data took place to reassess the suitability of the pre-established interview schedule and to identify

additional interview questions for consecutive interviews. Upon completion of the interview process, I carried out in-depth analysis of the interview data.

#### **4.7.1 Interview data**

The digitally voice-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim using Olympus DSS Player Pro Transcription Software with as much contextual accuracy as possible. I then imported text files of the transcribed interviews into QSR NVivo 8, a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software. The programme facilitated the organisation, analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

Using this software, I coded and catalogued emergent themes and concepts and analysed them for use in regards to the research aims and objectives. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, I first assigned the data with open-ended thematic codes (Flick, 2006) that I later transferred into more focused main themes (Lofland et al., 2006). The coding process can be described as a search for “repeatable regularities” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69) that I sought from immersion in the data, but the coding themes did not solely emerge from the data. The initial coding themes were based on ideas and concepts that I had already formed during the review of relevant literature (Lofland et al., 2006; Richards, 2005). If the data did not match the initial coding structure, I did, however, alter or expand the coding structure using new themes. I will explain the main themes supported with interview quotations in the following results chapters of this thesis.

#### **4.7.2 Other data**

This research was not only based on qualitative interviews. The interview data were supplemented with the analysis of other information sources such as academic literature about globalisation, the meaning of home and international education, legislative documents (for example the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International students), government reports and statistics (for example those released by the Ministry of Education) that were related to the research topic, and information material that was provided to me by the homestay agents (for example homestay hosting guides and handbooks).

### **4.8 Chapter summary**

The qualitative research approach gave me the opportunity to explore homestay hosts’ everyday lives with homestay students. Twenty-two homestay hosts and four homestay agents allowed me to view their perspectives on homestay hosting by participating in semi-structured in-depth interviews. By responding to my open-ended questions and homestay hosts’ and

agents' own spontaneous narratives, I gained insight into how hosts interacted with their homestay students and what it meant for them to be a homestay host and to share their home and lives with international students. The consecutive interview transcription and coding process enabled me to conduct an in-depth analysis of the data. As a result, I identified main themes that will be presented in the following Results chapter.

# Chapter 5

## Results

### 5.1 Introduction

This study aimed at exploring homestay hosting experiences from the hosts' perspective. This chapter presents the results of this research. The chapter is organised into four sections: first, it will present a profile of the participants and the characteristics of their experiences. The succeeding three sections will discuss the three main themes that emerged from the analysis of the interview data that were collected following the procedures as outlined in previous Chapter Four. The first themes describe homestay hosts' experiences of family life (Section 5.3). The second theme deals with homestay hosts' experiences of culture (Section 5.4) and the last theme shows homestay hosts' experiences of working from home (Section 5.5). Quotations from homestay hosts and agents were used to illustrate the study's findings.

### 5.2 Profile of homestay hosts and their experiences

The results were derived from 24 interviews with homestay hosts. In six cases, I interviewed couples and in the other instances I only spoke to one homestay parent. In the following sections I will discuss the participants' demographic characteristics, their reasons for becoming a homestay host, the length of their hosting experience and the number of students they hosted during their time as homestay hosts. I will further outline the students' age, nationality, type of educational institution they were enrolled with and length of stay.

#### 5.2.1 Participants' demographic characteristics

Of the 30 interviewees, 22 participants were female and eight male. The youngest interviewee was 29 and the oldest was 74. Most participants were between the age of 50 and 60. There were six participants in their 40s, ten participants in their 50s and six interviewees in their 60s. Only five interviewees were younger than 40 and three were between 70 and 75.

At the time of the interview, 25 of the interviewees were married, three widowed and two divorced. All participants had children, although only eight of them had children who were still living with them, of whom half were teenagers.

Due to their age, eleven of the 24 hosts had already retired, four of them were housewives, three were working as homestay coordinators, three were self-employed and others were in

professions such as teacher, lawyer, administrator, builder, ambulance officer, secretary or retail assistant.

### **5.2.2 Reasons for hosting**

Many hosts told me a similar story about how they first got introduced to homestay hosting. More than half of the interviewed homestay hosts, especially those who commenced hosting some time ago, had initially been approached by a third party. For some, it was a language school or a homestay agent directly who was seeking more homestay parents. In other cases, it was a family member, a friend or a neighbour who had been hosting homestay students and had suggested it. So, there were external factors that introduced and familiarised hosts with the concept of homestay hosting and offered them the opportunity to become homestay parents:

When I started, it was at that time when you were often approached to host. And, my husband has done some buildings for the people that run the school and then they said to him: “Have you guys ever thought about hosting a student?” And, we hadn’t because we had too many children. But however, we ended up hosting and that is how we have started and we have never stopped. [Grace].

There was a variety of different reasons that made interviewees become homestay hosts. About a quarter of homestay hosts were young families when they started hosting international students. They told me that the idea of generating income through hosting a student had drawn their attention to homestay hosting. This income source sounded especially appealing to them because they found that homestay hosting offered a good opportunity to supplement their income. For many families it meant that one parent – in these cases always the mother – was able to stay at home to look after her children:

But for me or for our family, it was another way of another income that was coming to the household. So, that was really the main reason for doing it because I was home with three young children [Yvonne].

Apart from being able to work from home, young families or sometimes young couples also thought that the “extra money” that was earned from hosting could be used to pay off the mortgage. Over time the mortgage was paid off, so money was invested into refurbishment of the home or to save money for travelling.

About a quarter of hosts were seeking company either for themselves or for their family members. Parents of teenage children wanted a companion for their youngest child who was still living at home after other siblings had already left home. Retirees became hosts to experience more variety in their everyday life. Two retired homestay mothers told me, for

example, that they wanted company for their sick husbands who were tied to their homes due to their illness.

Another quarter of interviewees pointed out that they were curious about meeting “the other”. They desired to engage in a cultural experience. Hosts themselves or their children were curious about living with someone from a different cultural background:

And my eldest daughter, she’d met international students through her school when she was at school. And, she really enjoyed meeting them and getting to know them. And, I thought it would be quite good for my girls to meet someone from a different culture. So, I rang around different places and I finally got in touch with one school [Susan].

About 10 per cent of participants entered homestay hosting at later stages in their lives; as “empty nesters”, their grown-up children had left home and vacated their rooms. Hosts indicated that they wanted to make use of these spare rooms. “Our oldest daughter had just left home – I had a spare room” [Jessica]. By hosting a student, they were able to fill the physical space but also to satisfy their emotional needs. Hosting a student meant that they were able to look after a young person again and support the student in their personal development, after their own children no longer needed support on a day-to-day basis.

On one occasion a family started homestay hosting because they had hosted a child from the exchange family where their own children had spent time abroad. Subsequently, they continued to host. A few hosts could not name a specific reason, they just stated a “general interest” in homestay hosting. Many hosts ended up hosting someone for a combination of the previously described reasons:

So, I think...oh hosting...I can’t remember now but just through someone else who had hosted, explained it and I think it sounded like a good idea. My children were...I have got two children and my oldest daughter was away flatting but my son was still living at home. So, we had a spare bedroom and I thought it could be good company for him. It would be nice for him as well. [...] I thought we would try it out and see how it would go, you know [Laura].

Over the course of their lives, reasons for hosting changed over time. At first they might have engaged in hosting because it suited their situation as a young family, later on their children left home but they enjoyed the company of the international students or maintained a curiosity of the other culture. This became apparent for those hosts who hosted over a considerable amount of time.

### 5.2.3 Length of hosting experience

The length of hosting experience varied. It ranged from one year to twenty-four years. Nine homestay hosts had only a reasonably short period of hosting experience. At the time of the interview they had been hosts for up to four years. Seven participants had already gained five to nine years of hosting experience. The remaining eight hosts could look back on an extensive hosting experience of more than ten years with four of them, having hosted for twenty or more years. All of the hosts who had participated in homestay hosting for more than ten years were still currently involved in hosting international students. Apart from two of them, who were unsure how long they would continue to host, they all planned to continue to do it. “I think so, for the rest of my life... So, I really, really enjoy it” [Betty]. The ones who considered giving up homestay hosting after such a long period of time were going to expect to attain a change in their life stage by planning to retire which seemed to also include retirement from homestay hosting:

Yes, I will still continue to host. We’ve got the room in the house to do it and we are able to do it at the moment. My husband retires in three years time. So, maybe, we might stop then. I don’t, we might but some people say...you need the money even more [Jessica].

Among the 16 participants with up to nine years of hosting experience, there were only nine who were still accepting homestay students, three of them had just started hosting during the last two years. The other seven had already given up hosting more than five years ago. There were different reasons for no longer being involved in homestay hosting. Some host parents felt that they had entered a different life stage, mostly when their own children had either got older so that the stay-at-home-parent could take up full-time employment again, or when children had grown up and left home. Another important reason was a change in the living situation. Hosts, for example, had moved to a smaller home and did not feel that they had enough space to accommodate homestay students any longer. Sometimes these two aspects would fall together when interviewees told me that they had relocated after their children had left home.

No, I just wouldn’t. I don’t think I could go through...we are in a different space now for a start. You know we have moved on from having kids around and running around after them [Jane].

Interestingly, the ones who had given up due to reduction of their available space were less rigid about the possibility of returning to hosting at a later stage.

Probably not here. It is too small. We have got four kids now and this is a four bedroom [house]. It is only a two bedroom house converted into four bedrooms. It is too small. If we got an offer,...we wouldn’t host any paying guests. [...] No, I don’t think this house is suitable. But maybe in another house, yes. I think we would do it again, if we had a bigger house [Toni].



#### **5.2.4 Number of hosted students**

The total number of students who homestay hosts had welcomed to their homes over the course of the years ranged from two to 110. The large range is due to the length of involvement in homestay hosting but also to the number of students who were hosted at a time and the length of students' stays.

All interviewees told me that when they first started to host, they only hosted one student. Over time about ten of them decided that they preferred to host two students at a time. On rare occasions and mostly over short periods of time, a quarter of the hosts had up to five students staying with them. These were occasions when the students were either relatively young, about eleven-years-old, or in periods when students had to be placed in a new homestay accommodation and the homestay families functioned as a transitional home. The number of available bedrooms is, of course, a requirement for being able to host more than one student. However, hosts have different preferences for the number of students they host at a time. The advantages of having two students at a time, for example, were described to me as being financially more beneficial and less stressful as students would give each other company so that hosts did not feel obliged to entertain their students as much as they would if the student was by him or herself.

And we had a couple of times where we did short-term things, where we have had two, instead of just one. And, that was much, much better. I really, really enjoyed that. They kind of feed off each other a little bit. And they encourage each other as well as one might be able to understand better than another. And, you knew, they kind of had company. You didn't feel like you had to entertain them [Alice].

Disadvantages were seen when hosts encountered problems of jealousy and personality clashes between students. Also, different preferences for food made meal preparation more difficult.

I prefer to have one. I found that if I host two...in one particular case when the second girl arrived and of course, I sort of fussed over her a bit and she was terribly kind of sick and the girl who had been there originally came to me in tears and said to me, "Why don't you like me anymore?" So, there can be some jealousy [Betty].

#### **5.2.5 Age of hosted students**

The youngest students who the participants had hosted were aged eleven years and the oldest students were families with children and middle-aged professors or middle-aged language students. In most cases, students were between the ages of 16 and 25. To some of the homestay hosts it mattered if the students were adults or minors. All of the hosts who had hosted very young children found these experiences quite stressful and less desirable. Some of the hosts enjoyed sixteen to seventeen year-old high school students the most while others

preferred adult students. Teenagers were preferred by those host parents who still had their own children at a similar age or younger, so that the homestay student was just another child at home. They did not mind the parenting role and found that the student was easier to integrate into the family. By contrast, some hosts thought that more mature and independent students were easier to host as they did not need as much looking after as the younger students. The level of responsibility was felt to be lower in these cases.

#### **5.2.6 Hosted nationalities**

In terms of nationalities hosted, interviewees had welcomed a total of twenty-four nationalities. The majority of homestay students came from Asian countries followed by Europeans and other countries in the rest of the world. The large number of Asian students results from the close proximity of Asia to New Zealand. Within Asia, students came mainly from Japan, Korea and China. There were also families who hosted students from Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and India. From Europe, the majority of students were Germans, Swiss and Italians. A few hosts had homestay students from England, Scotland, Denmark, France and Spain. Apart from Asians and Europeans, there were only two other major groups which were international students from Brazil and Saudi Arabia. There was only one occasion each time that someone was hosted from Uruguay, the USA and Tahiti. Homestay families who had started hosting in the 1980s reported that their first students were in almost all cases Japanese. Over the course of the years, nationalities had become more diverse. The most recent groups of homestay students were Saudi Arabians. With one exception, hosts had hosted more than one nationality. Alex was the only one who reported that his family only ever hosted Japanese students. The particular English language school they had signed up with catered for Japanese students only. Most hosts did not state preferences for hosting any particular nationalities when I asked them directly. In their stories later on, they often revealed their preferences. Many enjoyed hosting Europeans because the language barrier was lower and their culture was considered more alike than that of Asian students. There were a few who did not want to host students from Saudi Arabia because of their different eating habits due to their religious beliefs and other cultural differences.

...we had a Saudi Arabian and found it really hard. I haven't said but I won't have another one...Oh, just the food thing. Yeah, just the hours that they keep...they are just up all night. They'll sleep and don't go to school. Yes, so...it is just too stressful. Huge cultural...The problem is that they are just so restricted from where they come from that they do whatever they like when they come here. They have huge problems in school [Jessica].

Some found Japanese people easier to get along with as they were considered to be very polite, quiet and well-mannered. Many hosts tended to generalise about different nationalities and set out their preferences, if any, according to their previous hosting experiences.

#### **5.2.7 Type of educational institution that was attended by students**

The host families had hosted students who were either studying at a local public high school, at a language school, a polytechnic or at a university. Most homestay hosts had had students from different institutions and did not seem to have any preference with regard to the student's institution. Only three interviewees insisted on hosting students from a particular school as the school had a reputation for having well-behaved students and a good support system for homestay hosts.

#### **5.2.8 Students' length of stay**

The length that students would stay with a homestay family also influenced the extensiveness of homestay experiences. Students stayed with their host families from one week to four years. In almost all cases, my interviewees reported that they first had students only for short-term stays, which could be considered anytime up to three months and then later also accepted long-term homestay students. Most hosts seemed to feel more comfortable when they first got into hosting knowing that they would host a student only for a limited time but later on they got used to having a homestay student in their home and did not mind hosting for longer periods. Once they got used to homestay, most of them did not really worry how long a student would stay. Georgia gave the following answer to my question as to whether or not she had any preferred length of stay: "I had one student who came to stay for six months and stayed nearly two years". Some of the hosts even preferred the longer staying students as frequently changing students was perceived to be potentially more disruptive for their family life and some got tired of going through the initial stage of orientating the student and dealing with the language barrier. "...and with the young family it was quite disruptive because I was forever going to the airport picking up the students" [Yvonne].

When hosting short term students, homestay agents expected hosts to do more sightseeing with their students or hosts just felt obliged to show them around more which was, in either instance, more time consuming and less desired. Only a few preferred to host short-term because it was more flexible and offered more chances of recovery from hosting. "You know, it's just having an extra person around is a stress and it was quite nice with the short-term people" [Harry].

The length of stay also depended on the age of the student and the student's purpose of study in New Zealand. According to the Code of Pastoral Care for International Students, international students under the age of 18 are legally obliged to be living with their parents, a designated caregiver, in a boarding establishment or with a homestay family. So, younger students are more likely to remain with a homestay family over the course of their stay than adult students who may choose to stay with a homestay family upon arrival but later prefer to live more independently. Under-age students who came to New Zealand for a study abroad experience usually stayed with their host family for the whole time of their stay in New Zealand if there were no problems, usually between three and twelve months. Most adult students who came to New Zealand for studying English were short-term students. They stayed with a homestay family for the course of their stay in New Zealand. Adult students who intended to study in New Zealand for longer periods of time (for example, for a whole degree) often chose initially to stay with a homestay family and then to live independently, although some then remained with their homestay family.

In the following section(s) I will discuss how family life in a homestay home took place and what changed due to the fact that the family extended by one (or more) new member(s).

### **5.3 Homestay hosts' experiences of family life**

For homestay hosts home life meant family life. They used the terms "home" and "family" synonymously. When I asked Elisabeth, what "home" meant for her, she answered: "Family life. Doing things as a family" and she automatically added: "Treating them [the homestay student] as family." By hosting a student, homestay hosts opened their homes to a person who was initially an outsider. Inviting him or her into their homes subsequently meant inviting them into the life of their families. Any other treatment of the student was considered "kind of odd" [Alice]. "Once he comes through that door, they are now part of my family" [Gordon]. Hosts took "...down the shell that protects [...] [their] homes" [Peter] and accepted this new person as a family member. Peter told me that it meant that they would share with the student "the way you eat, the way you dress, the way you speak to each other in private." In my interviews participants had difficulties answering my question on aspects in their daily life that had changed after they began to host an international student. Most of them reported that not much had changed and life was still the same as before: "No, not really, no nothing I could really think of" [Angela]. But when they told me particular stories of their everyday life with a homestay student, I was able to identify a number of aspects that changed due to the presence of the international student: establishment of house rules, changes in the use of

space, differences in the type and way of consuming family meals and spending leisure time and the challenge of being a surrogate parent to an international student.

### **5.3.1 Establishing house rules**

The majority of homestay families established a small set of house rules which they asked the students to follow. A few hosts did not like the term “rules” [Angela]. They rather referred to them as “guidelines” [Helen] for their joined home life. Most hosts claimed that they did not really have any or many rules, because they probably did not want to appear as too authoritarian. In the end, however, they were always able to name certain aspects in their home they wanted the student to handle in a particular way, even if it was just very basic as Angela’s expectations: “I just expect them to respect the place and respect us”. Yvonne was an exception. She avoided setting any kinds of rules. As she was mainly hosting Japanese students who “quite liked rules” [Yvonne], she wanted them to learn to use their own initiative and not always just do what they were told to do. She thought using one’s own initiative was part of the New Zealand culture which students should experience and learn about. So this was the only “rule” she set.

Rules were mostly set as a result of previous experiences with homestay students. They addressed cleanliness and tidiness around communal spaces and the student’s bedroom. If, for example, they cooked a meal in the kitchen, they were expected to clean after themselves. They further referred to aspects of the family’s and student’s safety such as, for example, locking doors and windows when leaving home or informing homestay parents where they went out at night. Georgia expected to meet students’ friends when they brought them home for the first time. Angela clearly said that they were allowed to invite friends but not to have any overnight guests. Most homestay parents would not accept smoking and drinking. Rose stressed that she would not like her Saudi Arabian students consuming alcohol at home as she knew it was prohibited in their culture. Helen and Gerald generally did not allow any drinking or smoking at home. All homestay parents expected students to let them know whether or not they would be at home for dinner. This way they could avoid wasting food. As most international students were not familiar with the hot water system in New Zealand, most hosts had formulated some rules regarding hot water use, especially frequency, and duration of showers. The general rule was that the student could only have one shower per day. Permitted length of showering time differed from seven to ten minutes a time.

Rules were communicated either verbally or in a written form. The written rules were presented as a comprehensive list of rules or as little notes around the house. House rules were established because hosts wanted to inform the homestay student how the family operated

within their home and how they expected the student to act. Before the student's arrival, families probably already had an agreed set of rules and norms established for their family life to which all family members implicitly adhered, but which were unknown to the homestay student. The family seemed to want to ensure that these standards would be maintained. Interestingly, these written rules and notes were specifically created for the homestay student. Most hosts claimed that these rules would apply to all family members but the student was the only one in the family who would receive them outlined in a written format almost like a binding contract. In one case, hosts actually made the student sign the rules to ensure that he or she would comply with them. The reason for presenting the rules in a written format was explained in terms of communication difficulties: "And, you know, as a teacher, I know if you write things down, they often can pick it up off the paper. It is easier than us saying it with our funny accent" [Andrew]. Hosts found students' reading skills were usually better than listening skills and subsequently chose this communication channel. For some it was also the convenience of not having to explain or remind the student repeatedly, especially after having hosted over longer periods of time.

By creating house rules, rules and norms of the family became more formalised and "put on record". By putting notes around the house, day-to-day communication was extended to written communication. The house rules helped homestay hosts to communicate the way their family operated and the way their space was used. The actual experience of sharing their home space was perceived differently among hosts.

### **5.3.2 Sharing space**

Hosting a homestay student included for many hosts the act of giving some of "their" space to "somebody else". This was especially apparent for the bedroom the student was provided with. All homestay families saw it as a necessity to give the students space and respected it as their personal space. It was considered as part of making the student feel welcome.

The children [of the homestay family] must know that their [the homestay student's] room is their personal space and...they should never walk in. [...] They need their total privacy. It is theirs. It is no longer yours, especially with children [Robert].

The use of the communal space, especially the lounge, was seen differently among the hosts. The majority did not seem to have any problems with sharing this room with homestay students. They told me how the student was allowed to watch television, use the computer or the telephone. Some said that students would sit at the dining table to do their homework or join the family for board games or to watch television. When having guests, the student was

invited to be part of the occasion or, if that was not desired, guests were taken to another room.

And, if I ever had people coming to visit me, I would let them know that someone was coming and they'd always asked me, the question "Shall I stay in my room?" And I am going, "No, if I am having a guest who wants to discuss something personal and private, I would take them into my room. I don't expect you, to have to stay holed up in your room. "If you come here, you are sharing the house"  
[Georgia].

Although students were offered and allowed to use the lounge, many hosts reported how students would spend most of their at-home-time in their rooms. John and Maria even reported the extreme case of one of their students who was so quiet and reclusive that the family was sometimes not sure if the student was at home or not. Asian homestay students were especially found to spend most of their time in their bedrooms, if it was a male student, sitting in front of his computer. Some hosts seemed to be unhappy or disappointed about this behaviour. They acknowledged that teenagers needed their own time and space but found some homestay students' reclusiveness unusual. Many hosts interpreted the reclusiveness of the students as a lack of interest by the student to engage in family life which took place in the communal living areas. They felt that their "invitation" to be a family member was rejected by the student.

I have had it very hard with the Japanese girl because she would spend so much time in her room. It was hard not to feel like I was doing something wrong. Or what could I do to bring her out? From what I have heard from other people, it tends to be quite common for students...for international students to spend quite a bit of time in their rooms. You know, they are often on lap tops, in touch with their family and friends. And they are teenagers. And they want to be in their own space. But, I would also say that is very Japanese, their culture, where they are quite withdrawn and don't communicate a lot. So, I stopped beating myself up and thinking that I have done something wrong [Susan].

Over the course of their hosting experience many started to respond to the student's behaviour either with indifference or understanding for the students' need for privacy. They acknowledged cultural differences in the use of space and the need to retreat and recover from the contact with the foreign environment. The homestay coordinator, Grace, who had been homestay hosting herself for many years explained how challenging the day-to-day living environment can be for homestay students and how hosts have to understand this. She pointed out how stressful the confrontation with the English language can be whenever students leave their rooms:

I don't think many realise how important the bedroom is. It becomes their sanctuary. As soon as they come out of their bedroom door, they are back to full immersion of English, even if it is me saying, "Do you want to have a cup of coffee?" It's immersion in English but in their bedroom, they are away from that. That is why they close their door. In our culture, we don't tend to do that but in their's they do and homestays have to understand that. That is why they do that, so they don't have to think for five minutes. They don't have to think. They only have to come out to the kitchen and get a glass of water and somebody is talking to them again. I think it is a haven for them [Grace].

In contrast to the hosts who preferred students who participated in their home life, there were some hosts who clearly appreciated the fact that students preferred to stay in their rooms for most of their time at home.

Otherwise, during the day, no, they don't come in and turn your TV on and sit in front of you and take up your space. They don't do that. They are very good [Laura].

Alice described having a homestay student as "space invasion" [Alice] and Sarah said to me during the periods she was hosting that her home did not feel as if it was hers. Philip told me that sometimes he felt that when his student would have lots of foreign friends visiting, they would take up the family's space. These hosts clearly found the presence of the homestay students more disturbing. After having shared "their" space with homestay students for longer periods of time other hosts admitted that they enjoyed having their space back to themselves again, once the student had left. Georgia said: "I value the space when it is my space". One homestay parent told me that when their home is their own space again, it was easier to relax because they did not have to consider another person.

Most difficulties and problems that arose from sharing the home space were, therefore, identified around the limitation of privacy. It was considered as "a big one" [Sarah]. "[...] [Some homestay hosts] said, 'If I want to have a shower and want to walk around naked, I can't. And they sort of change what they are doing'" [Monica]. Yvonne agreed by saying:

But some people, you know, some people couldn't do it. It is people who like their privacy. You don't have the same privacy when you have people like that. Yes, it is quite hard.

She did not, herself, have problems because she felt that they had enough space at home for everyone. Additionally, she had young children which had affected the way she dealt with privacy anyway. She did not, therefore, feel invaded by the students staying with her, especially with the ones who fitted in well into her family. She had no problems with them going anywhere they wanted to within her home.



Homestay hosts who coped better with the lack of privacy had the feeling that they were living in a spacious home. “Having the space” [Maureen] or a “big house” [Betty, Andrew] seemed to be an essential criterion for many homestay hosts. Jane, Elisabeth and Toni explained to me that the smaller space that their current living situation has to offer would make hosting impossible or unacceptable. Angela also thought that she “got that space” [Angela] to accommodate a homestay student, otherwise she would feel “a bit crowded” [Angela]. Some of the participants talked about the importance of having the “right set up” [Andrew] within the house. Andrew pointed out how great it was that the students were accommodated “down at the other end of the hall” [Andrew], while in my interviews with Betty and Grace, there was a clear perceived advantage in having a two-storey-home with bedrooms, bathrooms and lounges on both levels which offered all household members the chance to retreat easily. Jessica and her family who had been hosting for more than twenty years, even considered the homestay hosting situation in their relocation plans. When they decided to move into their current home, they opted for a house that offered a bedroom with an ensuite on the ground floor while other bed and bathrooms were located on the first floor. They thought this house set up would be ideal for a homestay hosting situation. The bedroom on the ground floor was transformed into the student’s room, while the rooms on the first floor were used for the family. She only identified one “problem” [Jessica] the house had: “It doesn’t have a separate lounge. I think it would be perfect, if it did” [Jessica]. A spatial separation of the bedrooms of hosts and students seemed to have been a desired solution by most of the hosts to maintain more privacy.

Overall, it seems to be crucial for homestay hosting that hosts did not feel disturbed in their privacy or use of space by the presence of the international student. If they did feel a confinement in their privacy they balanced it against other outcomes of hosting such as the generation of income:

And, the other thing is when you, when you are, when you are annoyed with the person, well, a) you know that they are paying to be here, so you are benefiting with the money, you bite your tongue and b) there is just, they are in a foreign land, how would I feel, if I was in some house in Japan? You need to be quite considered both ways [Harry].

I don’t think there is any way that I would do a year for nothing. It is just too much space invasion for no reward [Alice].

If this negotiation was unsuccessful, hosts decided to withdraw from hosting. Homestay coordinator Monica confirmed this by pointing out that hosts with privacy issues would discontinue to host over the long term.

### 5.3.3 Meals

Meals were always an issue that homestay hosts raised when they talked to me about their life with a homestay student. Part of the homestay arrangement was that homestay hosts provided homestay students everyday with a breakfast and a dinner and, depending on the arrangement, also with a lunch. Because students were paying for these meals, homestay hosts felt that they had to make an extra effort and prepare a “proper meal”:

When I had students [...] I had to start thinking: “Now what am I going to cook for dinner today?” But when you are cooking for a family, you have to cook a meal anyway. You don’t have to but I did. But, now there is only three of us, we just cook whatever we want. If you have got someone in your house, you feel: “Oh, I better make an effort.” You make an extra effort [Yvonne].

Ease of catering depended on the type of cultural background of the student. Breakfast was seen as the easiest meal time as, most times, homestay students were asked to help themselves to breakfast as household members were getting up and leaving at different times in the morning. Initially, hosts would introduce them to New Zealand-style breakfasts and would show students where they could find everything in their kitchen, so that they could later prepare their own breakfast. Hosts reported that this usually worked out well for them and for the student.

Lunch was usually a meal that the students would have while being at school or university. If it was part of the homestay arrangement, homestay families had to provide the student with this as well. In these cases, homestay parents would usually provide students with a “cut lunch” which meant sandwiches accompanied by yogurt, fruit and other small snacks. This was considered as a quite common type of New Zealand lunch. Many international students from Asia, however, did not like this type of bread based meal and often showed a dislike for them. Many homestay hosts were unhappy about that and subsequently had to become creative to replace them. Homestay agents tried to give them suggestions on how to alter their lunches. Monica suggested giving students some left-over dinner from the day before, to incorporate rice in the lunch, for example, by making rice balls or to give them money to let them organise their own lunches.

Dinner was considered the meal where homestay hosts felt that they had to make the biggest departure from their usual routine because it required the commitment of providing a “proper meal” [Monica, Jessica, Grace] every day. “You have got be thinking all the time. You got to be thinking: ‘Oh what am I going to do for tea?’”[Monica]. Many hosts thought it was not acceptable to just serve “egg on toast” [Grace], a casual meal that several homestay hosts

found quite appropriate to serve for their family but not to their “paying guests” [Andrew]. Consequently, they spent more time on grocery shopping and preparing meals than they usually would do. “I have to go out and buy...I need vegetables every night” [Monica].

There was a notable difference in the homestay hosts’ understandings of an appropriate meal in regards to the type of food that was served. There was one group who said that they would provide them with exactly the same type of food they used to cook for themselves. “I just prepare normal food that we would eat because I don’t cook that other...I don’t have to really” [Angela]. This meant homestay hosts would only cook one meal for the whole family and expected the student to adapt to New Zealand food which some students struggled with. The positive side of it was that they would treat the student the same as every one else in their home. They would not deprive or prefer the student over any other family member.

No, I didn’t change anything. They just ate the same meals. I just treat them like my own son. When I have...I would not go out buying something really nice for me and then not give it to them. Oh, if I had a friend here, I would buy enough for us all. I would just buy something what we all have. Food is exactly the same. [Rose]

The other extreme were hosts who tried to accommodate to all student’s likes and dislikes. Hosts felt that they had to adjust their cooking in order to please the student. They wanted the student to have exactly what they desired which involved cooking a lot of ethnic food to meet the student’s needs which was sometimes hard to cope with. Homestay coordinator Monica told me: “I had one homestay who said to me, ‘I had stir-fries for two months and I can’t cope. All my stir-fry tastes the same.’”. Another group of homestay hosts was willing to compromise and tried to consider students’ preferences and prepared more diverse food. They would for instance cook rice more often when they hosted an Asian student or more pasta when they hosted a European student. Homestay agents suggested a compromise of serving one night New Zealand food and one night an ethnic meal.

Some nationalities were found to be more difficult to cater for because they would not like to eat left-overs or the “meat-and-three-vegetable-thing” [Monica] that New Zealanders would usually serve for dinner. If there was a problem with students not being able to adjust to the homestay family’s cooking style, homestay coordinators suggested that students could cook for themselves and the family would provide them with the ingredients or money to buy them. Most hosts found this a good solution as it made the student happier and them less stressed. Angela described it as a “quite casual and easy” [Angela] solution.

Taking students out for dinner was a controversial point. The reason for that was that homestay parents were then expected to pay for their student's meal. Some homestay families just refused to take out their students for a meal because they found they were not paid enough money to be able to do that without earning less money. Other homestay hosts, who did not worry about making any profit, were happy to take their students out. There were even a few hosts who thought that their reimbursement was quite "generous" [Phil], so that they should invite the students to "do some extra things" [Phil] with them.

Homestay families sometimes underwent quite an adjustment process with the type of meals they were preparing and the time they spent on organising them. "It was a bit of trouble to make meals that would suit everybody" [Monica]. Having to worry constantly about providing their homestay student with home-cooked meals and investing lots of time in the preparation process was probably one of the aspects that they liked least about homestay hosting. Grace described it as the "downside" [Grace] of hosting. There were only a few hosts who thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of changing their diet and preparing ethnic food.

Well, I am a cook and I cooked at the University in Brisbane and so I was used to trying different things. So, I quite liked trying different foods. And, my husband got to liking rice and different things which we hadn't been having much. I was for what they were used to have [in their home countries]. And, as we got more of it, he started to like the different sorts of meals, too [Elisabeth].

Helen had tried to reduce the pressure of having to cook every night by introducing "F.O. S. – fridge or starve" [Helen] once a week. This was directed towards all household members. Everyone was responsible for their own dinner for this particular night. Susan also thought of introducing one cook-free night when accepting the next student. This way she would give herself a break. Others just bought a take-away meal every now and then.

The positive side of organising these "proper family meals" was that all family members would more often sit together at the dinner table. Andrew and Tess discovered that their dining habits changed when they hosted Spanish homestay students. Their dining time would suddenly change from fifteen minutes in front of the TV to over an hour sitting together and chatting to each other. Phil explained how much impact having international students had on his family dinners. They made his family join in more often for a meal together which Phil described as a real benefit for them. It was time sitting at the dinner table and talking to each other which helped them to relate to each other and to improve their communication with each other.

In some ways it is really good in having a student because, it makes you get together as a family because normally with us, we sort of with meals...our boys are never sort of home or somewhere. We both are always doing things, you know. So, you end up having microwaved dinners, you know what I mean? Lisa would make dinner for everybody and would have all the plates there. Come dinner time, it might only be me. Because everybody else comes until about ten o'clock at night or the next day and all the plates are just sitting around, microwave your dinner. But when you have got a student, you will say to everybody, "right, we are all sitting down together and we are all gonna have a meal." And you tend to do that for a little while. Mind you, it didn't happen all the time but that tends you to be a bit more focused. "Turn the bloody TV off and come on everybody to have a meal." Otherwise, you get a little bit too relaxed about it. But now, of course, we have sort of gone back to our routine again [Phil].

Susan described a similar change. She said: "We are more conscious of sitting at the table for dinner" [Susan]. They would not just have a meal while watching TV, but having a conversation at the dinner table. They would use this time to talk to each other without any interruptions which let it become valuable family time. It also helped the student to feel included in their family. All homestay families enjoyed this aspect about their meals. In that regard, the homestay student's presence had a positive influence on the homestay family and their relationships to each other.

#### **5.3.4 Leisure time**

Collective family leisure was another part of family life that was affected by having a new family member. Homestay hosts tried to include their student in their family and their leisure time. They included students in anything from at-home-barbeques with friends over Christmas holidays, family outings to local parks, weekend trips to longer holidays around the South Island of New Zealand. Some hosts, like Jessica or Peter, told me that it was natural for them to take the student along when they had planned to go somewhere with their family.

Helen said the same:

We have taken them on holiday. We have taken them to local events in the city. Even at home, we might do board games or ... We do a lot of things as we have a large family, with our family, so if we are going to have a barbeque with family, we always take them along with us. [...] Like, you know, it depends on the child, we have taken kids on holidays, like we have taken them over to the West Coast and taken them to Shanty Town. We have taken them up to Kaiteriteri and we'll do scenic things as well, like day trips or weekend trips, so that they can see something of New Zealand scenery and even do some of New Zealand holiday activities [Helen].

So homestay hosts spent their leisure time travelling to local tourist attractions and doing sight-seeing, things they normally would not have done but which they chose to do because they wanted their student to see something of their environment. Some leisure time had to be used to cater for the student, assisting organising the student's leisure time, finding them opportunities to meet people and arrange transportation for them. Georgia would always try to find out what kind of activities the students would like to do and she would try to realise that for the student. One student was particularly interested in art, so she would take the student on trips to different art galleries; for another student she found a baseball team and another she took to see the snow as the student had never experienced winter with snow:

And, I get them to talk about them [their families at home] and try to include them in picnics and barbeques, just things to make them feel a little bit more at home, or things that they might want to do. I mean a lot of them said, we really want to go swimming at the public swimming pools and I went to take them down to Pioneer and the wave pool and they just think it is just wonderful. Oh, one student, I took him up to the snow. He came from China, he had never seen snow [Georgia].

Jessica always tried to encourage her students to participate in the extra-curricular programme of the language school or other activities that were offered in the area of their home. She thought it was her responsibility to remind the student about those options. Harry emphasised that, initially, it was important to spend more time with them but once their students had made their own friends they usually would organise their own free time without any problems.

Generally, hosts were happy to drop students off and pick them up but Robert, Georgia and Toni felt that they ended up doing a lot of running around for them. So, depending on age, time and location of their leisure activities, if it was safe, Robert and Hannah encouraged students to become independent by taking the bus. For Yvonne, it did not make a big difference whether or not she had another child in her car when she was already taking her own children to their after-school activities. Helen said the same about one of her students. She considered it part of the parenting role to organise the homestay student's transport.

Hosts also felt responsible for supporting the student on special occasions. Hosts provided their students with a dish when they were asked to "bring a plate to school" [Helen], "threw them birthday parties" [Yvonne] or "organised ball gowns for high school proms" [Jane]. They did tutoring if the student needed help with their homework. According to Georgia, "some of them just actually needed help with studying [...] [and] being focused". They looked after them when they were sick. They took them to consult a doctor or provided them with medicine. They also helped them to solve almost any problem they encountered. Ruth, for

instance, had telephoned a student's bank to sort out his problem with his bank card. Toni planned and organised trips for her students who struggled to do that on their own and Elisabeth taught her homestay students how to drive on New Zealand roads.

The amount of available free-time was reduced due to the demand of the student. Family leisure time was more directed towards catering for the needs and interest of the new family member.

Being a homestay parent did not only require them to involve the student in family activities and help them if needed, but also meant that hosts had to act as a parent in terms of setting rules and boundaries.

### **5.3.5 Acting as a surrogate parent**

Homestay hosts took over the role of a surrogate parent when they accepted a homestay student into their home. Depending on the age of the student, hosts saw themselves more or less acting out as a parent towards the student. "It is almost like being mum and dad all over again" [Gordon]. Generally, the younger the student was, the more parent-like the hosts felt. But even with adult students, many hosts felt responsible for them and cared for them as if the students were their own children.

You do have a certain responsibility, definitely. I think, the older they are..., it doesn't make too much differences, it is not quite as much responsibility. But there are still those other things you have to worry about [Laura].

In my interviews with homestay hosts, I learned that they felt responsible for almost all aspects of the students' lives, especially for those students who stayed long term. Hosts showed that they were carrying the responsibilities of parents of setting boundaries.

#### ***Setting boundaries***

As homestay parents, hosts felt responsible for the student's safety and wellbeing, they felt it was one of their tasks to set boundaries.

But I treated them like my daughter...If they did something, I didn't like them to do, I would tell them off. And, if they didn't like it, it was just too bad [Yvonne].

Hosts were the ones who first got to know of situations that required parental guidance or disciplinary measures and so they had no other choice than dealing with it and establishing some rules. Diana explained that this was clearly the situation when she was no longer a friend but a parent.

Homestay parents encountered different situations during their hosting period when they were not only required to lay out rules but also had to take action to enforce them. Boundaries were especially necessary for international students who were younger than 18 years of age but sometimes older students also needed guidance. Rules were set in regards to common issues such as curfew, telephone and internet usage, or regular attendance at school. Curfew was a problem that most hosts had encountered.

In many cases homestay parents laid out curfew rules which some of the students had difficulties with. Elaine explained to me how they had problems making their Brazilian student Rodrigo understand their rules as his “real” parents allowed him to stay out until a considerably later time in comparison to typical New Zealand teenage students.

So, I guess, it is not always easy and because you are parenting another person’s child which isn’t easy because they have their different rules. We found out that Brazilians start their parties at twelve o’clock at night and they go until early hours in the morning. And, so Rodrigo found it really hard that he had to be home by twelve o’clock because that would be when all his parties would be starting. He had quite a group of Brazilian friends here. So, that was initially really difficult. And, he didn’t understand that. And because...that what the agency...they had sent a letter to all the homestay parents saying that they had to be home by twelve. This is what they were doing. And, it is also... you feel responsible where they are. You know if it is like five or six in the morning or whatever and they are coming home... But that was hard...but I wouldn’t let my 16 year-old be out until that time at night. That was quite hard in that way [Elaine].

Although adult students were not given a curfew, they were expected to always communicate to their homestay parents where they would be going and when they would be coming home, especially if they were planning to return home late or to stay away from home.

Most of the time, homestay parents were quite willing to handle problems. If rules were not followed, homestay parents would typically have a serious conversation with the students and from their perspective, tried to make them understand the situation and to learn from their mistakes. Depending on the circumstances, those conversations sometimes were more like interrogations:

“Look, are you going out at night after you have gone to bed?” And, he didn’t want to answer it and I told him, “Because I think you might be and tell me the truth, because I do want to know because I am responsible for you” [Angela].

Sometimes it aimed at teaching the student a lesson:



“What did you learn from that?” “Don’t take too much...don’t drink too much” Because that was quite often the problem. [...] And you go, “Look, I do feel sorry for you that you have thrown up five times during the last three hours but have you learned the lesson? Don’t drink so much!” [Georgia].

### ***Dealing with difficult students***

In some cases, hosts were confronted with more serious issues that required parental actions such as addiction to computers and computer games [Laura, Monica], experiments with drugs [Helen] and alcohol [Georgia], theft of personal property [Laura] or gambling [Georgia].

These cases were considered more “difficult” so that hosts requested the help of the homestay agents to solve the problems and in severe cases it was even necessary to involve the police.

For most hosts, the final disciplinary measure was to ask the student to leave their home. Most hosts, however, tried to find solutions to prevent this and were ready to give students a second or third chance and keep them in their home. Laura told me how even in a relatively serious situation, they kept the student and tried to teach him to make the right decisions for his life.

And then we had this boy from Malaysia, who was absolutely lovely, he had a real sneaky side and he ended up chatting to a girl at the bus stop, an Asian girl, her homestay was a friend of mine[...]. And then the mother rings me and says, “well, my girl’s wallet is missing, your boy has just been here, bla, bla, bla”. And, he had evidently stolen it. Then I found my golf clubs are missing and...my good ones, not the old ones and he had taken them to cash converter for money. So, he ended up going to court and going to jail. And they rang me and said, “shall he stay here over night, we could keep him over night or you could pick him up?” I said, “no keep him overnight” because I wanted him to learn a lesson. And he did and then when I picked him up from Rolleston prison the next day, I had a good talk to him. He was terrified. And, we had a big family conference. His sister was here, going to university as well. He has had problems in the past but they never told me. I was actually annoyed with the school for not letting me know that he had a history with that because I could have looked out for it. But I think, they just thought that I just say “no, I don’t want him” and they wanted to give him another chance. But anyway, the end result was that he stayed the full year, I kept him here. He did his year. And then when he went...I took him back to the airport to go home. I said... talked to him about: “There are two ways to go. There is a bad or a good way.” Anyway, he rang me back, three years later which was just recently and he says: “Remember me?”...”Oh, yes, I remember you”. And he says: “Oh, I just want to thank you now for everything you did because now I am a lawyer!” Could you believe? He had gone the right road, he has just done really well and he is just so happy. And, he just wanted me to know, which I thought was wonderful. But you can get through to some of them, you know. He was a nice boy and his past was sad. He had a terrible...his family life wasn’t good. His parents were never home. They were living...like the father worked till ten o’clock at night, the mother till seven and

that sort of thing. And, his way of getting attention was...you know, he didn't need to steal for money but it was really that. Anyway, I was so glad that he has come alright, thank goodness. That was a nice end of the story [Laura].

Homestay hosts found the parenting task of setting boundaries sometimes quite challenging. Homestay parents sometimes faced those challenges because the student they were hosting had been raised in a different cultural environment by parents who quite often had different beliefs and values from them. They, therefore, set quite different rules. Elaine discovered this, for example, when dealing with Rodrigo's lack of understanding for his curfew. Laura, as well as Peter and his wife Jane, had similar problems with students who apparently never had been set clear boundaries:

She was an only child, she was from a broken family. Her mum was very..., she wasn't a stay-at-home mum. She was working.[...]. So, [Sonia] basically had no rules. She just did what she wanted. She made her own life and her own decisions and her mum had her life and made her own decisions as a mother would do, of course. And, her dad who she visited, also didn't put any guidelines on her. And, so when she came into our family, she had trouble knowing where the rule...working under a set of rules and because she didn't have a family with brothers and sisters, she had no real concept of how a family would work in that way. As far as she was concerned she could walk into Sophie's bedroom and take out her clothes and wear them without Sophie being asked or Sophie even being present and that caused a few ruptures [Peter].

In addition to the differences in parenting styles and cultural background, Monica explained to me that they had got the impression that many of the homestay students were sent to New Zealand by their parents because they were having problems with their children. Sometimes the children did not really want to be studying abroad. No one communicated any previous problems when the students arrived. The homestay family only faced them later on and had to subsequently deal with them. Yvonne found this with one of her Japanese students who was, according to Yvonne's descriptions "a quite unusual girl" [Yvonne] who hardly showed any emotion let alone appreciation, for Yvonne's attempts to get her involved in family life and after-school activities. Yvonne explained this behaviour in the following way:

I think it was a personality thing. I think now she really didn't want to be here and I think her mother sent her away because I think her mother had enough of her [Yvonne].

Harry as well as Helen experienced students who, according to their perception, did not really want to participate in their family's life. Harry gained the impression that one of his students had been "dumped in New Zealand" [Harry] by his parents already at an early age. After

having moved through different homestay families, he would not be interested in being part of the family. He would spend most of his time in his room and would rarely get involved in family activities. As much as host parents desired to and aimed at integrating the homestay student into their family, the success also depended on the willingness of the students and the circumstances that brought them to New Zealand. Despite this disappointment, hosts accepted the situation and continued to host them.

It was surprising how well most homestay hosts coped with even very difficult situations. Experienced hosts said to me that most incidents never really made them regret that they were hosting or would not have made them stop hosting. Laura explained to me that dealing with problems as, for example, the student who had committed theft was not the same as coping with the same sort of problem involving her own children. She would not get as emotionally involved with them as she would have with her own children. Some hosts, however, preferred to have a break after having to deal with students who pushed the boundaries a lot. Some of them also admitted that negative incidents at an earlier stage in their hosting career could have easily deterred them from continuing but after having hosted for a while they accepted that they would “get the odd one” [Gorden, Rick] that would cause problems.

As often as they had gotten an “odd” student, hosts also lived with students who got along very well, who were “just fitting in beautifully” [Toni]. So their homestay parents were more than willing to go the extra mile for them.

### ***Going the extra mile***

Depending on their nature, experience and their self-understanding as a parent, some homestay parents looked after their students exceptionally well. This is what homestay coordinator Diane described as going “the complete extra mile” [Diane]. She said that she used to have a homestay family who was hosting a Japanese student who was playing basketball at a venue on the opposite side of the town. The homestay mother drove her three times a week to this sporting activity which Diane thought was beyond what was expected from a homestay host.

A few hosts were aware of the extraordinary care and commitment they showed towards their homestay students. Rose admitted to me that she was “fussing” [Rose] over her students. Her last student was not very good with speaking and failed his language course, so she borrowed some story books “from a neighbour’s girl down the road” [Rose] and made him read to her every night to help him improve his speaking skills. When students were getting up late in the morning, she would put a piece of fruit in their pockets so that they would not leave home

without breakfast. When they were ill, Rose was “dragging” [Rose] them to the doctor. When they stayed out until late she got really worried and stayed up until they had come home. She even cared about them after they left. She always tried to make sure that they would have had enough cash in their pockets in case they would get lost somewhere during their return trip to their home country. Rose described her actions in the following way: “Some might say I fuss over them too much but that is what I did with my kids and I just treat them like one of mine. I just don’t know how to treat them in any other way.” So, her “fussing” [Rose] showed how seriously she took her responsibilities and how much she got involved in her role as homestay parent. She naturally slipped into the parental role as if the students were her own children.

Ruth had acted similarly when she and Gordon could not take their students to a family member’s birthday party. Ruth tried to make up for it and made sure that she could bring home some of the birthday cake for both of her homestay students. On another occasion she found out about a student’s particular eating habits which she incorporated in her cooking without hesitation. She admitted that a lot of people probably would not cater for special food preferences, but she did.

Betty took particular care over her students’ meals. She said it was very important to her that students would have healthy meals and would receive food they were used to eating at home. She would, for example, prepare Korean sushi lunches for her Korean students. She was also a homestay parent who worried when her students would come home late. “I never go to sleep until they do come home” [Betty]. Rose reacted very similarly: “When they come home late in the evening ‘Are you alright? Did you have a good night?’ ‘Yes, mum.’ ‘Alright see you in the morning.’ ‘Yes’ and then they just go in their room” [Rose].

Hosts did do a lot to make the student feel comfortable; they seemed genuinely to care for them. They showed affection and compassion for the student as they would for their own children. Toni had a situation when she agreed to pick up her students after their shopping trip and they would not contact her until quite late at night. Toni’s reaction was quite similar to a mother worrying because she would not know where her children were.

I got to the stage in the end, “Right, I am going to drop you at Hornby Mall, you catch a bus, you do whatever you like and you do ring me and text me when you want to be picked up.” Instead of running around everywhere, they had to become independent. There was one time where it backfired and that was the one that we had when we had Miuki.... She was just a friend. She went out with the paying guest and they went shopping....And it was about seven o’clock at night and we hadn’t heard from them. I got really worried because at seven o’clock at night, we haven’t heard. And, I was absolutely terrified and

thinking what happened to these guys? When they realised what happened, they rung and we picked them up, they said: “We are really sorry, we are so sorry.” They got to the supermarket and they were wanting to buy New Zealand type food and they just lost themselves in the supermarket. And they spent two hours in the supermarket. And I said to them: “Don’t you ever do that again, we were worried.” So, they are like your own family; you do worry about them [Toni].

Phil did not worry as much about his students going out late at night but he admitted that he would worry if his students had a car. He is always worried about his own kids driving and he would feel exactly the same with his homestay student. Laura told me how she was asked by one of her student’s mothers to keep an eye on her son who was suffering from depression. Laura promised to “look out for that and help” [Laura].

In some situations, homestay parents like Rose and Helen reported to me how the student required some affection and encouragement. Rose would give her adult student a “wee hug and pat on his back” [Rose] when she heard how well he was progressing through his English classes. She was proud of him. Helen noticed that especially younger homestay students would need special attention and time, what she called “mothering” or “fathering” [Helen]. She described how her student Jack would come to sit on her lap when he felt homesick. Sometimes students would just need company. She thought it was her role to respond to the student’s needs.

The way Rick told me about the memory of one of their students sounded just like someone recalling a memory of his own children. He sounded very proud of being called “dad” [Rick] by this foreign girl.

I do vividly recall one girl, Akiko. She was one of the big round face girls and all that smiling. And if she had some news, she had a way to rush down the hall: “Daddo! Daddo!” She used to call me “Daddo”. “Ey, tell me something...” She was just a bright kid, just one of my vivid memories of her. She ended up marrying a Japanese guy and came back out here and lived here, several years later and got a little boy. I remember her rushing down the hallway yelling “Daddo” [Rick].

For most hosts, treating the student as a family member was not an obligation that had to be fulfilled but hosts also wanted to include them in their family life. Alice said “to have somebody being in your house but not being in your family is kind of odd”. Hosts told me that they would otherwise feel like being a hotel or boarding home which they disliked. Toni mentioned to me that the latter situation would be more stressful and less relaxed than considering the student as a family member. Elaine also remarked that when a student was living with them, it would be unrealistic to entertain them all the time. She said it could

“become quite a strain” [Elaine]. Additionally, Toni felt that they “got more out of the ones that just came here and wanted to be interacting with a Kiwi family as opposed to being here on a holiday or being here studying” [Toni]. The outcomes for her were, “follow-on emails and follow-on cameras and follow-on photos and follow-on cards” [Toni]. Two of her former homestay students had stayed in contact and revisited the family as friends which Toni described as very rewarding. Ruth explained the rewarding behaviour of the student as an outcome of her investment into the student. She thought, if she treated them well, they would behave well:

And, I find, if you treat your students well, they will do the same back to you. It is actually like having your own family. Same thing. You treat your kids well and they will give the same back to you [Ruth].

Hosts were willing to take over a parental role because the student’s situation reminded them about themselves and their own children. They all imagined how they would like their children to be treated in a similar situation.

Well, it’s our home. We like to think of it as an extended family in a way. You know, as I had three children of my own, if one of mine was overseas, you know, I would like somebody to make them welcome, just home to them, didn’t just see it as somebody that was there to help out financially and understand that they are young who are a long way from home. That’s what they are. They are just young kids. They are alone. And they are coping with things like a foreign language. I don’t think it would be easy at all [Angela].

Most of them showed a lot of compassion and understanding for the student who had very often come from a distant country with a completely different culture and language.

## **5.4 Homestay hosts’ experiences of culture**

Homestay hosts experienced culture in two ways. First they shared their own culture by acting as a cross-cultural adviser to the student and, second, by learning about the culture of their homestay student.

### **5.4.1 Cross-cultural advising**

In most cases homestay hosts were welcoming students who had never been to New Zealand before, sometimes students who had never been to English speaking countries or abroad at all. As most of the students came from a different cultural background from their hosts such as, for example, China or Saudi Arabia, and had only limited English language skills, homestay hosts were put in the position of being cross-cultural advisors. They had to orient the student,

familiarise them with New Zealand customs and culture as well as help them to communicate in English.

### ***Orienting international students***

Upon the student's arrival, homestay hosts gave the student a brief orientation around their houses, their school and the local area. At home, the use of the bathroom, kitchen, household appliances and heating systems were aspects that required some instruction by hosts. John told me that if students had never been to a Western country before he would show them how the toilet and the shower worked because he knew that in some of the Asian countries, people shower themselves in the middle of a tiled bathroom floor. After Monica had introduced the student to the limited availability of hot water and the delay time until the hot water arrived, her student got really panicky and jumped immediately under the shower.

Eric was knocking on the door saying to him "Get out of the shower because the water is freezing, it can't be hot." So, then he jumped out of it. He didn't understand. We turned the shower on and told him what happened. We have all different things happening. (Monica)

Ruth had to put a note on the shower door saying "please no shoes in the shower" [Ruth] after she found out why the shower floor was always so dirty. Her Chinese student was wearing shoes in the shower.

It was important to make sure students would be given simple instructions and explanations on how certain home appliances worked and certain things were handled in the household. Georgia said: "You know, because people do things differently, you have got to spell all those sort of things out." She gave a simple example how one of her friends forgot to tell her homestay student that the washing machine emptied into the sink. The student was using a bucket in the laundry tub to wash something by hand. The machine went on and the laundry room got flooded. These incidents happened because international students were used to different mechanisms in their living environment in their home countries.

Orientation in the local area and transportation were other issues that hosts had to familiarise their students with. On their first day of school, hosts took the student to school and showed them how to get there. Often, they explained the bus system, familiarised them with the bus stops and organised a ticket for them. Additionally, many hosts would take the student on a tour around the city and show them maps, so they would get an idea of where everything was located. Adult students who were interested in travelling were given tips for their trips as well. Andrew told me how he advised two Spanish homestay students on interesting places to see in New Zealand.

Safety in New Zealand was another topic that was covered by homestay hosts. Rose also told me that she wanted to make sure that “they got everything for their cell phones so that they can contact their parents”[Rose]. Georgia would make the student an identity card with all her contact details, their home and email address as well as emergency contact numbers in case they got lost or they had an emergency. For Jessica, it was important to talk about safety when students would go out on their own and especially about going out at night time. Hosts tried to explain to students which places were safe to go and which places they should avoid, especially at night time. Georgia stressed this point as well:

We have a bus exchange, good system, I think. But for a young woman of her... at half past ten at night, it is not appropriate to be in the bus exchange and especially when you are on your own and when you are not European... just Asian. “A lot of people will just throw a can at you and will say very nasty things!” But trying to get that across... You know, I would say: “I will come and pick you up.” “Oh, no, no. It is alright”. I would say: “I need to know that you are safe. And, I wouldn’t go out to the bus exchange at 10:30 at night. I would take the taxi.” Of, course that costs money. “If you are going to stay here, I want to know that you are safe. I don’t want to ring your mum up and say you had your face smashed in with a bottle” [Georgia].

Students were given these orientations to make sure that they were safe and to facilitate their daily life while they were staying in New Zealand. After the initial orientation students still needed help to manage their life as New Zealand culture would sometimes be unexpectedly different from their own culture.

### ***Teaching customs and culture***

While students were staying in New Zealand, the homestay family taught the students New Zealand culture and “Kiwi” lifestyle. By living with a New Zealand family, they got an insight into how New Zealand society functioned and how New Zealanders interacted with each other. “They have definitely experienced some Kiwi culture in my house”, was a comment that Alice made. She said they had experienced New Zealand food and seen how New Zealand children grew up.

New Zealand food was quite a challenge for some international students. For Asian students, it started by learning how to use a knife and fork. Many students were also not used to preparing their own meals. According to Yvonne, “a lot of the younger Japanese students, they come here with no idea of even how to make toast or do anything in the kitchen or boil water...Most of them only...didn’t even know how to boil rice. Because they have different things in the kitchen” [Yvonne]. She had two explanations for that. First, students were used to getting things done by their parents. “...they are just so used to having things done for



them” [Yvonne]. Second, they did not know anything about Western style food and cooking. Yvonne’s expectation of them preparing their own breakfast and lunch, was a big change. For her, as well as for other participants, it was quite normal that their teenage children would help themselves to these kinds of meals. On weekends, there was very often no formal lunch and students were expected to help themselves. Homestay coordinator Grace, however, reported that Asian students struggled with this type of behaviour.

But some of the Asian students, different culture, their parents don’t let them do anything. They don’t teach them anything... how to make a sandwich or they have never learned to do anything. That is hard because they’ll wait and they’ll come in here and say, “Oh I have waited until two o’clock and no one made me lunch.” And the hosts will say, “Why didn’t they help themselves?” So, two different ways of thinking. So, I say to them, “You have got to make it clear if they are polite about it, you have got to make it clear that they can help themselves and what they can help themselves, too” [Grace].

So, students, especially Asians, had to adjust to another way of thinking and hosts had to teach them that it was appropriate to help themselves when they were hungry.

The second aspect was in regards to the different type of food that was consumed and prepared in New Zealand. This required more adjustment for Asian and Saudi Arabian students than for European students. “With the lunches we give is not really what they like. The Swiss like them but not the Asians” [Jessica]. Hosts responded differently to the likes and dislikes of the students. Grace repeated a comment she heard quite often from homestay parents: “Why can’t they eat what I make? They are here in New Zealand!” Robert made a similar point: “You are in New Zealand, you are going to eat what we eat. If you don’t like it, you either don’t have it...” Hosts considered food as part of the New Zealand culture and wanted them to try it and accommodate to it. Some were disappointed when students would not adjust to the different eating habits. All homestay coordinators noticed that Chinese, students, especially, struggled with New Zealand food. The best suggestion they had for homestay parents was to cook rice every day as surplus to the normal meal or to provide them with dinner left-overs for lunch instead of sandwiches and yoghurt. Some hosts were happy to buy and prepare the food the students liked or let the students cook for themselves.

Generally they are happy but I always asked them, if there is something specific, they would like in their lunch. One Japanese girl said that she had missed sushi. So, I would buy some sushi occasionally. Just once a week and put some sushi in for her [Helen].

Saudi Arabian students were also found to be quite difficult eaters as they preferred to eat meat over everything else; they hardly ever touched vegetables or left-overs. Rose tried to teach them “what [New Zealanders] do here” [Rose]. She would tell them that New

Zealanders would not serve a multitude of small dishes for a meal like Saudi Arabians were used to, but instead everything was served on one plate. She also told them that, from her understanding, a healthy meal would include vegetables.

Homestay parents wanted the students to experience the “Kiwi” lifestyle and teach them about their country. They took them, for example, to a friend’s barbeque or organised one on their own. They told me how they would have a casual get-together in the back yard with a drink and some food from the barbecue. That was a situation when hosts thought that international students could learn how New Zealanders socialise. Rick was convinced that the Japanese girls his wife and he had hosted, had never experienced anything like that because they grew up in a different environment. Andrew thought that his Japanese and Korean students had really enjoyed this way of socialising with friends.

Sometimes, it was not so much about familiarising the student with New Zealand culture but just with Western customs. There was an occasion when Rose’s Saudi Arabian student had witnessed a memorial service in the cathedral in the city. He had taken pictures of the event. Because she knew that in her student’s culture, people were not buried in a coffin she explained to him what he had observed earlier on. She closed her conversation with “so, [...] you have learned something today. We all go in a box” [Rose].

Ultimately, all students learned about New Zealand culture by being exposed to it while they were living in a New Zealand family. Helen, however, said it was important that the homestay family would realise that as hosts they had the responsibility to encourage students to immerse themselves in New Zealand culture. Otherwise the study abroad experiences were incomplete.

[...] if you are a host family, if you don’t help a child to embrace the culture that they have come to, then, even if it is only for a short period, they are only marking. They are retaining everything of their own culture which is fine but they need to experience something of your own culture [Helen].

As much as, however, homestay parents, wanted their students to learn about their culture, Gordon also made the point that international students should not give up their own culture for the relatively short time they were staying in New Zealand. He said “They are [primarily] here to learn English and [also] the way we live” [Gordon].

### ***Communicating in English***

English language was a vital element in the cultural learning process of international students. Homestay families were expected to help international students to improve their English

language skills outside the class room. Students could practise their conversational English with the family. At the dinner table, for example, they would simply learn by talking about the meal: “What is this called?”, “Pass the salt”, “Do you want to clear up?” [Grace].

Hosts coped differently with the challenge of communicating with international students. European students were generally found to have better English language skills than other nationalities and therefore were easier to talk to. Asian students were usually associated with rather poor speaking skills. Some of them were able to read and write well but had a hard time speaking English. Yvonne and Alice noticed that a lot of international students, especially Japanese students, had quite good written English skills when they first arrived in New Zealand but really struggled to speak and listen. According to Yvonne, “it takes them a good four to five months to sort of start realising what you want them to do” [Yvonne]. Rick and Gordon made similar discoveries with their Asian students:

They just had their little bit of English they learned in high school and... absolute nonsense. They taught them a lot of grammar and things apparently but they could barely say “hello” and “goodbye.” But we coped...but they were here to learn English, so it was good for them in this environment [Rick].

In this regard, there were two broad groups of hosts. One thought that communication was hardly ever a problem. Those hosts also showed a lot of understanding for the student’s situation, having to deal with a foreign language all the time that even made them feel isolated at times:

And it is very hard, very lonely for them. They get very lonely because it is so hard. You just can’t chat to someone. Everything they say to you is very...Well, they have got to think about everything – what they say, what you say and they have got to translate it and translate it back again. It is difficult and tiring [Monica].

Angela told me how she liked it when students tried to practise their English and told her something in English. Homestay parents like her managed to communicate with the student or did not mind if there were any problems talking to them. Helen had the attitude that there was always a way to understand each other: “And even if you had language barriers. You can always point to the washing machine and say ‘Me or you?’ as ways of communication” [Helen].

The other group of hosts clearly appreciated students with better language skills. “It was a lot more difficult, if their English wasn’t as good” [Toni]. They found it quite tiring, time consuming and frustrating when the student would not understand them. Slow communication

did not fit into their busy and hectic lifestyle. These hosts found it also more difficult to relate to a student whose English was very poor. They said it was harder for themselves as well as their children. Elaine and Andrew found situations frustrating when students seemed to have understood but later they realised they had not. Yvonne also gave a good example about those frustrating moments:

That's the hardest thing about having a different culture like Japanese or Chinese because you can explain things and speak. And, they can say "Yes, I can understand." But they didn't understand. And then, they'll ask you a question, especially the Chinese, the last girl, she'd asked you a question and then you'd explain it and you write it down. And, then they still go and do the opposite to what... That is just their way of speaking... understanding the language [Yvonne].

Hosts had developed different strategies to deal with the language barrier. The majority of them found it easier to write a lot of things down during the initial hosting phase, so that the student could read over it several times and refer back to it, if necessary. Rose said that she started to put little notes in the students' rooms to remind them of something, so she would not have to repeat herself over and over again. She found it quite a successful strategy for communicating what she wanted them to know. Monica explained to me that she had developed three different communication strategies:

But you do a lot of actions. I do lots of jumping up and down because they can't understand. Usually, I try three different approaches, if they don't understand, I'll start acting it out to them. Or I get them to spell the word to me. Because quite often the way they are pronouncing it, I can't pick up how they spell it. But you do need time with them. That is an important thing [Monica].

Hosts with children, found that their children were good "icebreakers" [Toni, Helen]. Even though the student had poor English, they were always able to communicate with their homestay siblings without hesitation. Toni noticed, for example, that her students enjoyed watching English speaking DVD's with subtitles together with her kids. Helen noticed the same about playing video games.

Georgia's strategy appeared student-oriented. She had developed a way of helping them learn how to write and vocalise words. She would stick labels like "kitchen", "door", "fridge" or "sofa" in her house and then other words that were similar to them like for example the words "sofa, sitting, lounge suite" [Georgia] would be stuck on the sofa.

Sometimes it was also necessary for hosts to explain how certain terms and words are used in the English language. Rose tried to make her Saudi Arabian student understand that the term

“black” [Rose] was thought of as derogatory in regards to describing a person’s skin colour: “Don’t be so rude! We don’t say, ‘he is black or she is black. She is dark or he is dark’” [Rose].

Helping them to fit into an English speaking society also meant that homestay hosts encouraged and helped Asian students to find an English name. Gordon suggested that it would make the communication process easier. “If you try to use a Korean name, which can be very awkward to pronounce correctly, rather embarrasses you by the time, you use his correct name. It is far better to have an English name” [Gordon]. From Elisabeth’s point of view, it was less about pronouncing a foreign name, which she got used to fairly quickly, but more about making the student feel comfortable. She was hosting a Chinese girl whose Chinese name had a derogatory meaning in English, so the girl needed help to replace it. Interestingly, the homestay mother never got used to calling her by her new name. She continued to call her by her real Chinese name.

Ultimately, Yvonne hoped that by learning more English, students would be able to become more independent and mature which made life in a homestay home a lot easier, for both hosts and students.

#### **5.4.2 Cultural enrichment**

In return for teaching students about their own culture, homestay hosts learned about the homestay students’ countries and cultures. They had the opportunity to broaden their horizons and make lasting connections with people of other nationalities.

##### ***Broadening horizons***

Sharing their home with an international student provided homestay hosts with the opportunity to broaden their horizons. They developed perceptions of different countries, their people and cultural practices. Homestay coordinator Grace confirmed this finding to me by explaining that a lot of interaction between homestay parents and students would take place around exchanging information about each other’s countries and cultures.

In terms of what homestay hosts thought they had learned about their homestay students’ cultures and countries, they reported that they learned about the geography of the countries, different places, people’s living conditions, students’ habits and cultural characteristics.

Most comments that homestay hosts made were about Asian students and their cultures. According to Betty and Yvonne observations, Asians considered education as very important. They drew this conclusion from stories they heard from their homestay students about how

the students were experiencing constant pressure to succeed in school and had to spend most of their time during the day at school or studying at home. As a result, Asian parents would not expect their children to do any household chores or to prepare their own meals. Usually, mothers would get up very early in the morning to prepare their children's lunches. Alex assumed that due to the high pressure at school, students spend a lot of time sleeping during their free time, especially when going on bus and car rides. He found that most of his Japanese homestay students used to spend most of their time inside in their rooms while at home and hardly any time outdoors. Alex described them therefore as "city kids" [Alex] who do not have much appreciation for nature. He described an episode to me in which he noticed that students would rather have spent their time sleeping than appreciating the scenery:

And, they seem to sleep a lot in buses. As soon as they get on buses or trains or cars they fell to sleep because that is what they did. They spent all their lives studying, you know and having a chance to sleep was great. I remember, we drove all the way down to Queenstown and one of the lakes and she slept. And she woke up and we would be on the side of the lake, she woke up: "Where are we?" "Lake Tekapo". So, she got out of the car took photos, back into the car, back to sleep and we would drive to the next place. "Where are we? What time is it?" Take photos, back in the car and slept... Of all that scenery, they didn't see a thing. They are quite different. You know, their mindset is quite different in comparison to our kids [Alex].

Japanese students were generally encountered as very polite and family oriented people. The girls were perceived to be a little "immature" [Rick, Yvonne] for their age but hosts interpreted their upbringing as quite sheltered. Helen learned that her Japanese student grew up in a three generation household which she linked to her student's demonstrated respect for parents and the elderly. Harry mentioned that he got to know that Japanese teenagers did not have much personal freedom or chances to make choices for their own life. Jessica, who had hosted international students over a long period of time, observed a cultural-change among Japanese students who came throughout the years. She found that in the earlier years Japanese students were very submissive, polite and never said what they meant. Even their walking style was traditional "shuffle, shuffle" [Jessica]. Nowadays, she perceived the Japanese students as more westernised. They would say what they mean and would dress in more Western clothes and listen to Western music.

Rose, as a further example, believed that she learned a lot about Saudi Arabia which she was willing to share with me. She picked up from her students' stories that Saudi Arabians had large families with lots of children. They would very often live in high rise apartment buildings and would have a Malaysian live-in maid who would be responsible for cleaning and childcare. Males were the only ones who were allowed to leave home whenever they wanted to. Women would wear burqas and gloves and would only get a chance to leave the

house when husbands would take them somewhere. In general, Rose concluded that she perceived them as living a very different life from New Zealanders: “No, they are interesting because they have a totally different life from what we are used to. You know, it was quite exhausting to think about that” [Rose].

The Europeans “have their own little things but generally, they are much alike in their attitudes and their way of thinking” [Jessica]. So, although homestay hosts also hosted quite a lot of European students, the only aspects they thought that were worth mentioning to me as something they had learned, was that young Swiss men have to attend military service for two years, Italian cities could be quite dirty and that most Germans like to eat bread and cheese. Hosts made also only a few remarks about Brazilians. They portrayed them as living a busy lifestyle, staying up until late at night and being very social people.

What hosts have described to me as what they have learned about other cultures need to be seen only as their interpretations, not necessarily as true characteristics of these cultural groups. Their interpretations, however, show that the encounters with their homestay students affected their understanding of cultures.

The learning experience took place by gaining impressions from conversations with students, looking at students’ photographs researching information together on the internet and by observing the student on a day to day basis. Hannah described to me the process of learning about the other culture as involving two stages. At the beginning there would be an initial shock about a different habit or cultural practice. This was then followed by understanding and acknowledging the other culture. In this process homestay hosts seemed to make a lot of comparisons between the “other” culture and “their” culture or between different cultures. Interestingly, homestay hosts told me more about the differences and especially about those cultures that seemed particularly to differ from New Zealand culture than those that were perceived to be quite similar.

One group of hosts emphasised the differences they noticed in dealing with different nationalities. Depending on their cultural background people were perceived to have different needs and desires. John, for instance, found that Japanese were more open than Chinese. Yvonne described Japanese girls as quite immature while Swiss students were very mature for their age. Germans were found to be easier to cook for than Asian students as they liked food commonly found in New Zealand such as “bread and cheese” [Yvonne]. Comparing these noticed differences, homestay hosts’ judgements and interpretations were made in reference to their own culture.

Despite all the discovered differences, there were also quite a few hosts who noted similarities. They came to the conclusion that young people from all over the world are quite similar: "...but they were all pretty easygoing, you know, like our kids are pretty messy...Angelo was so untidy" [Phil]. Angela found that all would respond to kindness and respect and Grace said that they all would be nervous, scared, tired, lonely and homesick during their stay in New Zealand.

Learning opportunities were not limited to absorbing information about the other culture but also in acquiring new skills. Two hosts picked up a few words of each language such as those for "hello" [Angela, Phil] or "be quiet" [Phil]. Alex even started to learn Japanese as a result of having hosted Japanese students over a period of eight years. Homestay parents learned about students' different eating habits which led Elisabeth, Betty and Georgia to learn, from their students, how to cook Asian dishes.

The close contact with a person from another country was a new experience for almost all hosts. They told me that they had no knowledge about most of the countries their homestay students came from:

No, for Saudi Arabia. I did not know anything about it. Didn't know anything about the boy until he arrived. He said he is from Saudi Arabia. And I said: "Where?" "Saudi Arabia" "Oh, ok." [Rose].

Helen said that she had previously been fairly ignorant of most of the nationalities she had hosted. She had hosted for example students from China, Germany, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Thailand. She admitted that she had only a little understanding about people's lives in these countries. Looking back after twenty years of hosting experience, Betty realised that, even though she tried to prepare herself for homestay hosting, she actually did not know anything about the Chinese culture before her first homestay student, a young man from China, arrived. She also suggested: "I am sure most New Zealanders have no idea the way Asian people live" [Betty]. Phil and Angela explained their lack of information about other countries with New Zealand's insular location, being a "long way away" [Angela] from everywhere.

Angela had noticed how isolated New Zealand was in terms of its location and opportunities for contact with people from other cultures. Growing up in Christchurch in the 1950s and 1960s, she remembered when she entered school, there were no international students. She had never really met any "foreigners" [Angela] until she started travelling later on in her life. She said:



They were so foreign. I didn't know any Japanese. I didn't meet any. I don't know, if I had ever seen one. I wouldn't have had a clue, until we have been meeting all these young people, really [Angela].

So, hosting had made most of the homestay hosts go from the state of being ignorant to more open and understanding about certain nationalities. For Phil, talking to his homestay students and looking at their photographs from home had educated him about their students' country and culture. Elisabeth also confirmed this by pointing out the benefit of mutual learning opportunities about customs and culture.

Living with a person from another nationality had made homestay parents also be more interested in the home countries of their students. In more than half of my interviews homestay hosts would always comment on their experience of a different culture with "It's very interesting" [Robert] or "It is interesting to see their idea of life" [Harry]. Susan said that prior to the arrival of her homestay students from Brazil and Japan, she had no interest in these countries. That changed after she met her homestay students. The "otherness" of a completely different culture fascinated Angela. She thought "it would be interesting to meet someone from a completely different culture" [Angela]. She was really hoping to host someone from the Middle East after she had had so many Asian students staying with her. Also, Rose was quite interested about finding out about her students' religion. She encouraged her students to take photos while they were at the mosque.

I said to them: "Take some photos and show me." And they got their little cameras and showed me what goes on at the mosque. I think I am not meant to know [Rose].

Although still having some reservations, Alice said that she would now be more open to travel to Asia than she would have been before. The reason for this was the desire to see and understand the environment in which her students had grown up. Susan also agreed that since now she knew someone in Brazil, she was more inclined to go abroad, not only herself but also her daughters. Since they had met someone from a particular culture, homestay hosts became more aware of these countries and their people. Rose, who previously had no idea about Saudi Arabia, now follows the news about Saudi Arabia and the Middle East with interest. "There is so much going on over there. If you look at the news... I love to look at it and where it is..." [Rose]. Contact with international students actually helped to reverse preconceived ideas. Alex revised one of his assumptions he used to make. He thought Japanese were all very rich people but then he learned that some parents were struggling to pay for their child's tuition. Harry, for example, admitted later that his German student had a great sense of humour and was not what he would have considered as a "boring German"

[Harry]. Georgia said that homestay hosting had broadened her perspective a little bit more and Helen thought it helped her build and broaden a global horizon.

I think one of the things that you gain for yourself that your whole horizon is broadened and your understanding of people has grown [Helen].

Jessica and Harry mentioned that homestay hosting had taught them to be more tolerant of other nationalities. For Angela, homestay hosting was about exchanging information and developing an understanding of people. Grace also thought that hosting offered the chance to exchange different ideas and thoughts with people from other cultures.

An interesting feature of homestay hosts' responses was the way they told me about their experiences of the other culture. The hosts' accounts were very "impressionistic": very particular, often colourful and sometimes judgmental. Hosts' comments ranged from very broad to quite detailed information and stories. Particular stories were often more detailed and colourful while general comments tended to be more judgmental. I noticed that hosts tended to generalise a lot. In most cases, they did not tell me about single experiences with their students or give me specific examples. They just stated that they learned "so much" [Laura] or learned about "Italy" [Laura], "China" [Elisabeth] or "Brazil" [Elaine]. "I mean you learn about their country" [Phil]. If their generalisations became more particular they also became more judgmental, by creating stereotypes. They stereotyped a lot about "Asians" and Saudi Arabian students with the former one already being a huge generalisation in itself. Only sometimes were Asian students specifically identified as "Japanese", "Korean", "Chinese" or any other Asian culture. Typical generalisations were for example:

Asians eat a lot. Huge quantities. Even the girls [Monica].

Asian students, tend to be a little bit more recluse but I think that is a cultural thing [Alice].

Japanese are city kids [Alex].

All of them [Saudi Arabian fathers] seem to be police men or in the law business [Rose].

But there were also a few generalisations about other nationalities, for example:

Germans are all boring and obsessed with cleanliness [Harry].

Because they are bright. They all going to be doctors, architects...all these Italian guys [Phil].

A few times the generalisation was so broad that homestay parents would not even refer to a particular nationality. They would just talk about them as "they" – "they don't like sandwiches" [Monica].

On some occasions hosts actually realised that they were stereotyping in their stories and noticed that they were false. Yvonne noticed immediately after she said “...comparing Chinese to Japanese, I would prefer Japanese mainly because they are cleaner” [Yvonne]. She noticed that her comment was “very unfair” [Yvonne] because “you can’t put a label on any nationality” [Yvonne]. These stereotypes seem to contradict the interviewees’ own statements of having become more tolerant towards other nationalities. The nature of the interview situation might have led them to give more an impression of their homestay experience which made them generalise about positive and negative experiences.

### ***Making international connections***

During the homestay students’ stay, homestay hosts and students formed lasting connections. Many of them sought a first contact before the arrival of the student and stayed connected after homestay students had returned to their home countries. The frequency and intensity of the contact between homestay families and students differed. Some told me that they still had contact with students they had hosted more than twenty years ago while others said that usually the contact ended after a few years, especially once students got married and entered a new life stage. There were only a few homestay parents who had lost contact with all of their students. The intensity ranged from occasional contacts and catch-up via email, to closer friendships with mutual visits.

The contact was maintained via various communication tools. The most common was email followed by cards, letters and personal visits. A few also mentioned students who would call in or even send parcels for Christmas. Angela said that she would reply to any card she would receive but she admitted that she sometimes did not know what she could tell the students that could be of interest to them.

Oh, yes, I do reply to them. Just tell them... there is not much that I can tell them. About the cats... They are always interested in the cats. You know, what students we have got here now. That’s all. [Angela].

Georgia emphasised that she would not initiate any contact after the student had left but would happily reply to all their emails. Phil, however, said that he tried to stay in touch with his homestay students but at the time of our interview he still had not heard anything from his Italian homestay student Angelo since he had left but Phil did not take it badly. He said: “He is just a kid. I know how my kids are like.” [Phil]. Yvonne said the same about her students. She stated that people are so busy that it is hard to keep in touch. She also found that some of her students also lost their language skills after having not used them for a while.

Betty, Georgia and Helen told me that they had already visited their homestay students back in their home countries. Helen used the chance to meet up with their student in Germany during her and her husband's trip to Europe. Georgia and Betty specifically went on a trip to visit their homestay students in Vietnam and Japan. Betty described this experience as "Amazing. It was so interesting to see how they lived and how differently it was for them to come and live with us" [Betty]. Some homestay students returned to New Zealand for a visit or ended up staying in New Zealand for good. Toni told me that two of her students came back as guests in the following years. A few of those who became permanent New Zealand residents kept in contact with their homestay parents and visited them on an ongoing basis. Helen, for example, said that they had spent New Year's Eve with their Singaporean homestay student Jack who had migrated together with his whole family to New Zealand. Helen also spoke of this contact as an international friendship that was "very special to [her]" [Helen].

Whenever homestay parents told me about their ongoing connections to their homestay students, they spoke with pride. They seemed to take the continuing contact as a sign that they had been good hosts and subsequently found the contact very rewarding. "They obviously have been happy while they were here" [Helen]. Another aspect that encouraged them to maintain contact was the idea that they were hoping to visit the student at some stage in their home country. Andrew told me that he heard from other homestay hosts who knew so many homestay students by now that they were able to do a trip around the world and visit students in every continent. This idea sounded very appealing to Andrew. Laura told me that she had an atlas where she marked where all her students lived to keep track of them and that she had this big plan to visit her students one day:

And, I want to go and visit, go holidaying, I will visit the two German and the two Italian boys and [...] there is another girl that wants me to go and see her. That is in Bangkok. I thought that would be lovely [Laura].

Some of the hosts took genuine interest in their students and followed up on their lives in their home countries. "I just posted a letter to the Saudi Arabian boy. He rang me, my first boy. He rang me to say: 'I found a wife.'" [Anna]. Yvonne told me this long story about her Japanese student Mizuki who married a German man, who she met while she was in New Zealand. She knew that Mizuki was living in Germany now and had two children. Yvonne was very eager to show me the pictures and the card she was sent. She was looking forward to their visit in the future.

A few homestay parents admitted that they did not stay in touch. They explained that they did not create a lasting bond because students did not stay with them for a long time or did not really fit into the family. Alice told me that she regretted not being in touch with most of her students. “I don’t know what has ever happened to any of them [except one]. It is a bit of a shame” [Alice]. Jessica said that she still replies to incoming emails but she lost track of who was who. She regretted that she never started a book to keep track of them. On the other hand, she said she felt it would be too much to keep in touch with all of them. Alice explained her lack of contact with the following argument: “Can you imagine having fifteen children, you kind of having keep track of? That would be impossible” [Alice].

#### **5.4.3 Impact on homestay hosts’ identity**

Learning about their homestay students’ cultures, encouraged New Zealand hosts to reflect on their own living circumstances. Being in such close contact had raised homestay families’ awareness of their own country. Looking at New Zealand and New Zealanders through their students’ eyes had made Elaine and Laura no longer take their environment for granted. “You sort of look at things differently, thinking ‘this is what a person that has never been here, will be seeing?’” [Laura]. Free space, small population and beautiful nature were aspects that were recognised as something valuable and special. Angela found that she was leading a very privileged life in New Zealand and Jessica also spoke of being “very fortunate” [Jessica]. When comparing their students’ living situations with their own, hosts started to appreciate aspects of their own society such as a good education system and health care, sound laws or freedom of speech.

Observing their students experiencing New Zealand culture had helped interviewees to become more aware of their own culture. Hannah told me how she once did a course of study where she was asked “what is our culture?” and she first thought “Oh, we haven’t got a culture because we are such a young country” [Hannah]. Having lived with her students, made her realise that there were some typical New Zealand traits. She described to me that she noticed how “casual” [Hannah] New Zealanders are with their meals by not always sitting at the table or just having finger food. She also said that New Zealanders very often just say “help yourself” [Hannah] which had been very unusual for her Japanese students. Helen made a similar comment about New Zealand culture. She described New Zealanders as being “more relaxed in [their] culture” [Helen] than other nations. To her, New Zealand was a country with a less rigid culture because of its considerably shorter history and the shorter time for its formation than older nations had such as, for example, with Japan. She came to the conclusion that other people would like that about her country and that she liked it as well.

A few homestay hosts also found contact with young international students very stimulating. It challenged their way of thinking. Grace realised that she might hold beliefs that are only held in her own culture and that other people might have never had any thoughts like that. Angela told me that if she was not hosting, she probably would only mix with people of her own age group and similar background which could easily cause her to live a complacent life.

Generally, all homestay hosts spoke positively about their New Zealand identity. Helen used the phrase “I love being a New Zealander” [Helen] and Angela thought “it is a nice country” [Angela]. Alex came to the conclusion that he preferred to live in New Zealand over anywhere else. Interviewed homestay hosts told me that they felt they became “ambassadors” [Grace] for New Zealand when they hosted an international homestay student.

It has definitely affected in that sense that you realise that you are a little ambassador in your own home for New Zealand and how you portray your own country and the way how you speak about it and the way you show them your city, the pride that comes up with it which you don't realise, you have, until you show people from other countries. So, what you take for granted becomes all of a sudden..." "Oh this is my city". And I think, it is really good actually. [Grace]

Most homestay hosts experienced a growing pride when they could show their country to the students. A lot of the interviewees even admitted that they became more patriotic and conscientious of the fact that they wanted to promote New Zealand. By showing them “Kiwi” culture, Alice felt she gave them a piece of New Zealand and Sarah thought it was “cool that they like to take stuff home” [Sarah]. Laura said that it made her feel proud when the parents of her Brazilian student commented upon their arrival in Christchurch “I want to live here and it is not so crowded!” [Laura].

Acting as an ambassador for their own country, however, meant that homestay hosts felt responsible for ensuring that the students would enjoy their stays. They wanted them to gain the impression that it was a good and safe place. Grace mentioned how easily a negative experience with a homestay family could lead students to generalise and form a negative attitude about all New Zealand homestays. She paid a lot of attention to the ways she portrayed her own country to the students.

## **5.5 Homestay hosts' experience of working from home**

Homestay hosts' experience of generating income through working as a homestay host was a topic that emerged in the interview process. During the first interviews I did not specifically ask any questions about the financial aspect of homestay hosting as I did not believe it to be

of major relevance in the context of homestay hosting. After ten conducted interviews, I realised that interviewees would allude to the financial benefits of homestay, “We haven’t touched on the money side of things but the money thing was a huge impact on us...” [Alice].

As it appeared to be of importance for the homestay hosts, I decided to alter my interview guide by asking more directly about the financial side of homestay hosting and how they interpreted their role as homestay host in this context.

### **5.5.1 Working from home**

Homestay hosting was described to me as “a job” [Yvonne, Jessica; Hannah] and others had seen it as “providing a paid service for them [homestay students]” [Andrew, Ruth].

The job involved similar tasks to running a hotel. It required hosts to prepare breakfast and cook a meal for dinner, changing the linen in the student’s bedroom and cleaning it on a weekly basis. Hosts were also required to wash and iron their student’s laundry. Additionally, hosts were expected to provide the student with a warm, welcoming atmosphere and the opportunity to converse in English. If homestay students were under the age of 18, they also had the responsibility for their safety, so hosts had to organise transport for their students and make sure that they were safe in whatever activity they engaged.

The reason for engaging in this type of work was because it was expected to be relatively easy, flexible work that would fit with hosts’ lifestyle. For many homestay hosts it was a second job that they could take up while keeping their full-time employment outside the home. They had the flexibility to take breaks between hosting students, if they wanted or needed more time to themselves. Sarah said the advantage of this kind of job was that “You don’t really have to change much. That’s the whole point. They just fit in, slip into normal Kiwi life“ [Sarah].

Many homestay mothers explained to me that taking up homestay hosting, had released the pressure from finding a part-time job. For them working from home was considered as an advantage because it meant that they could have more financial freedom while still having the opportunity of staying at home with their own children. They also saved time by not having to travel to their workplaces.

But it was also a job. That is how I treated it. It was a job, really. To be honest, it wasn’t really...if I didn’t have to do it, I probably wouldn’t do it...just for the sake of doing it, if I had nothing to do. [...] I did it then because it was when my children were younger, it was...I was still working part time. And I felt, I worked part time and then... have a student would just supplement our income. That is the

main reason. That was the only reason. Now, I work full time and it's...I could still have a student, no biggie but when your children are younger... It was just better. I just preferred to work part time and to have a student. That was good. It worked well. [Yvonne].

In regards to the expectation that homestay hosting was an easy job, homestay hosts later revised this belief. Hannah, for instance, told me that she initially thought it was an “easy way of making some extra cash” [Hannah] but now, after having hosted for a while, she evaluated the invested time in comparison to the gained income and she revised her statement by saying, “I think you earn every penny you get” [Hannah]. She explained that she described the responsibility as quite high and that she felt she had to be available “24/7” [Hannah]. However, most of the hosts had continued hosting for many years. It appeared that they had negotiated the disadvantages (for example, having less privacy with the benefit of gaining some income):

And, the other thing is when you, when you are, when you are annoyed with the person, well, a) you know that they are paying to be here, so you are benefiting with the money, you bite your tongue [...] [Harry].

If you are really in it for the money...you would...you would have lay out the pros and cons...you have to like it and you have to want to do it anyway because you know, not to have someone in your home all the time... You know if you go to work, you can come home and you leave work behind. I mean, if you have someone in your home, that's impacting on your home and you have them there all the time. You'd...if you did it just for the money...it wouldn't really work out...you would have to like it. Because it is hard work whatsoever [Elaine].

Alice said that she did not mind “the little negative things” [Alice] as she thought she would find them in any job. One of the advantages that let hosts engage in this trade-off was the idea that this job would imply some form of income.

### **5.5.2 Generating income**

Among the 24 interviews that I conducted with homestay hosts, with the exception of one couple, all received payments for hosting a student in their home. Only one couple had hosted students through a non-profit cultural exchange organisation that would not financially reimburse the costs of hosting a student.

In my interview with Hannah and Robert, Hannah spoke about “earning” [Hannah] their income rather than just considering the payment as a reimbursement for their expenses. According to one of the homestay coordinators, homestay hosting had to be financially beneficial. “Absolutely. It is absolutely beneficial. There is no way that your entire board



money is going to go into the student.” [Grace]. Of the NZ \$180 weekly board, Jessica explained to me: “You are able to make 50 per cent profit” [Jessica]. The tax-free income was another benefit many hosts knew about. Some of the hosts also agreed that hosting two or more students at the same time would increase the opportunity of making some profit.

The money that was earned was used for paying the mortgage, upgrading the home, investing in family stuff [Alice] travelling or saving. Grace, one of the homestay coordinators, said that she actually encourages hosts to (re)invest in their house, “their little business” [Grace], to make it look nice and presentable.

Most of the interviewed hosts expected to generate some form of income from their involvement in homestay hosting. The potential financial benefit was one of the motives for many hosts for initially starting homestay hosting. “And, I was always looking at ways that I could sort of bring in a little bit of extra money. So, she [her daughter-in-law] said, “why don’t you try it?” [Angela]. Alice mentioned that, unlike her parents, she would not host through a non-profit cultural exchange organisation as they do not provide any financial reimbursement for homestay hosting an international student:

I don’t think there is any way that I would do a year for nothing. It is just too much space invasion for no reward [Alice].

Although most hosts considered homestay hosting as an income source, the amount of money generated was not expected to be very high. It was described as a “financial benefit”, “a by-product”, “a little interest”, “an income supplement” or as “a second or third income”.

Although it was only considered as “extra money” for some homestay families with young children or retirees it was considered a quite valuable income supplement which allowed them more financial freedom:

We have been on a very tight budget, all our life. And, really the only way we have been able to get extra things, is to have a student for a short time. And, then we were able to save and buy a bed for the children. So, there has been a definite reason for doing it in that sense. [Harry].

Potential problems were identified around the future income opportunity due to increasing costs. Hannah reported to me that it used to be more lucrative but with the increasing costs for food, power and petrol, hosting is not as financially beneficial as it used to be. Because of the increasing costs for heating, Jessica told me, some people, including herself, had considered not to host during the winter time anymore. Others had altered their behaviour in other ways to counteract the increasing costs:

“We got a bit harder. The first few, we sort of felt, we have got to run around here and run around there. Take them everywhere and make them feel they are on a holiday. But after those ones...we said, we can’t afford what the agency paid us, was not going to cover our petrol, was not going to cover, this, this and this. I got to the stage in the end, “right, I am going to drop you at Hornby Mall, you catch a bus, you do whatever you like and you do ring me and text me when you want to be picked up.” Instead of running around everywhere, they had to become independent.” [Toni].

“We don’t really take them out for meals because it is really expensive. I really think...The school says, if you take them out for meals, we have to pay. I actually think it is a bit much asked of them because if you take them...most places are expensive to pay for them as well. So, we actually don’t take them very much out for meals but I always give them home cooked meals” [Jessica].

While some homestay hosts still believed hosting was a means of generating income, others had experienced income opportunities to be very low and subsequently gave up on the expectation of income generation. Others never engaged in it for the purpose of making any income. They explained to me that the expenses were too high and so they saw no possibility of saving any money. The homestay family’s lifestyle and their own expectations of what they should provide for students, influenced their decision whether or not they would spend the entire board money on the student. Because homestay students were paying for their stay, some hosts thought they would have to provide a “proper meal” every night which would be more expensive than what they usually would have and therefore their grocery bill would rise. Monica’s answer is a good example of these problems:

You see, I don’t... I get my students whatever they want. Therefore, I am not making money. I think if you have two students, you probably make some but in the winter with the heaters running and especially if you have a male student who is a big eater... The other way I think, you don’t make money is...because you can’t come home one night and have toast and an egg. I have to go out and buy...I need vegetables every night. And, I am forced to spend a bit more. My grocery bill goes up to about two hundred dollars. So, that is for two students. I don’t really think...People think they are going to make money... [Monica].

Overall, for almost all hosts, it was acceptable to consider homestay hosting as an income source, although, most of them also agreed that hosting should not primarily be about the money and generating income should not be seen as the first priority. Many of the interviewees said to me “I don’t know, people probably wouldn’t say, they would do it for the money, but I think some probably do” [Elaine]. Comments like that are very interesting, as it suggests that it is almost unethical to have money as the only motive for hosting and would

mean those people would be “bad” hosts. It seems to be as if the act of “providing a home” should or could not be commodified and reduced purely to a financial transaction. Reluctantly, all homestay coordinators told me they would not accept hosts who were just interested in gaining a financial benefit.

“The other thing I would say, I don’t encourage homestays, if they are doing it for the money” [Monica]. So, from the homestay agent’s point of view, the expectation or requirement of “providing a home for the student” demanded a form of commitment that hosts who were only financially motivated were believed unable to provide. It seems that both the agents and hosts perceived a purely financial motivation in terms of only providing a minimum of the components of a home (food, heating, driving) because anything in addition could decrease the desired profit. “I think some people do it for money and they...they just don’t give them good meals and they don’t consider them” [Laura]. None of the interviewees clearly identified themselves as one of these hosts although a couple of hosts answered the question what they enjoyed most about hosting with “the money” [Harry, Alice].

## **5.6 Chapter summary**

Homestay hosts’ experiences revolved around family, culture and income in the context of their home. As homestay hosting takes place in a family home and students are expected to become part of this home, family life is affected by their presence. Many aspects in the families’ lives changed due to the fact that they had a new member with different needs. It affected family relationships, family members’ sense of privacy and personal freedom. Some of the different needs originated in the different cultural background that the homestay student grew up in. It raised awareness of cultures of the “other” and also their own culture which affected the homestay host’s identity. Homestay hosting was not interpreted purely as a cultural exchange opportunity. It also provided homestay hosts a means of generating an additional tax-free income which let homestay hosts engage in work from home. These three aspects of homestay hosting did not always complement one another but rather caused some tensions. These will be discussed in the following Discussion chapter.

# Chapter 6

## Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

This study aimed to explore the relationship between global and local forces in the context of international education and New Zealand homestay homes. The discussion is therefore divided into three parts. Firstly, I will examine the local sphere and discuss how the engagement in homestay hosting affected homestay hosts' interpretation of home and family (Section 6.2). Secondly, I will consider the significance of homestay hosting for the global sphere, particularly the significance of homestay hosting for the New Zealand international education industry (Section 6.3). Finally, I will discuss the relationship between the "global" and the "local" and show how, in the intersection of those spheres, homestay hosts became glocalised (Section 6.4).

### 6.2 Home

Home is a key component in the homestay hosting experience. It is the place where homestay hosts and homestay students interact in their everyday lives. As the making and meaning of home and family is an underlying and continuous process (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Mallett, 2004; McKie et al., 2005; Perkins & Thorns, 2003), I wanted to see how this process is affected by the engagement of families in the homestay hosting experience. Furthermore, I wanted to find out how the incorporation of new household members influenced "home" and "family" in its symbolic sense. Three major themes emerged from the analysis of my interview data: home as a site of family life, home as a site of cultural (re)production and home as a small business enterprise. I will discuss these three themes in the following sections.

#### 6.2.1 Home as a site of family life

Homestay hosting reinforces the idea that home is a site of family and family life. "Home" was associated with family and almost synonymously used by all participants of this study to describe their meaning of home. In previous studies, this association has been predominantly found among white, middle class, heterosexual families (Allan & Crow, 1989; Valentine, 2001), characteristics that are also valid for this study sample. Being aware of Bowlby, Gregory and MacKie's (1997) suggestion that the equation of "home" and "family" is not

valid and relevant for all people, it is very appropriate to speak about it in this context. The reason for this is that homestay hosting impacted on the family's composition as well as the interaction and relationships of family members in their home environment.

Regarding the homestay home's composition, it became an example of the transformation of the monoethnic, monocultural, nuclear family home into a multiethnic, multicultural "patchwork" family home. The majority of homestay families that I was able to interview fitted the criteria of the nuclear monocultural, monoethnic family when they began homestay hosting. Only about one quarter of the participating families did not match one of these criteria. One family had a mixed ethnic background. The other five families were non-nuclear and consisted of parents who were divorced and remarried with children from previous relationships or foster care. Homestay hosting changed this constellation. Hosts were temporarily extending their family by including a person who originated from a different ethnic and cultural background and who had no kin-relationship with the homestay family.

In contemporary societies a multitude of ways of living have emerged incorporating different types of family constellations that share one household. The traditional idealised nuclear family home has been extended by a variety of living concepts. There are step-families, non-resident families, single-parent families, childless families, same-sex couples and people who live alone but still have family ties outside their own personal home (McKie et al., 2005). There are multicultural families with family members of different cultural affiliations or ethnic origins. Homes are sometimes shared by several generations such as the case where elderly parents come to live with their children or grandchildren; or where families live with adult children who are "dependents". As the social category of family has become very flexible, so has the family home. Allan (2005) describes the tendency to "families of choice" that are developed around non-kin relationships instead of those that are existing due to "blood" or "marriage" connections. The homestay home adds another example of an alternative way of living.

The decision to add someone to the family, and by that, alter the family form was lead by two aspects. Firstly, homestay hosts were expected to make the international student "feel at home". This idea is described in the concept of homestay hosting as it is marketed by the international education industry. For many families, this concept translates into making the student part of their family as they think of "home" as "family life". Secondly, to many hosts, the idea of sharing their home with an outsider was not appealing. Allan (2005) described "family" as a social construct similarly to community where distinctions between in-group and out-group, "us" versus "them", were dominating. Hosts therefore had to decide between

inclusion and exclusion of the homestay student. King (2004) suggests that living with an outsider leads to a significant amount of stress which interferes with the common interpretation of home as a place of relaxation and comfort (Mallett, 2004). Homestay hosts also described those feelings when they talked about their meaning of home. Therefore, many hosts told me that they would feel uncomfortable, if the homestay student did not belong to their family. As a result, these homestay families added to the growing trend of the diverse meaning of the social category “family” and simultaneously to the loss of significance of the nuclear family. It also demonstrated that “family” is not a “fixed” entity but rather a fluid unit of choice (Allan, 2005; McKie et al., 2005; Seymour, 2007).

Fluidity also characterised the way in which homestay family life was created. Morgan’s (1999) concept of “family practices” explaining the socio-spatial context of family living, highlights the idea of “doing family” – seeing family life as an active and fluid process that is (re)created through interaction of its members taking place in the privacy of the home or in public settings. In the context of homemaking, King (2004) suggests that the formation of new relationships always involves the establishment or renegotiation of routines, home making practices and family relationships. This also became evident for the participating homestay families. Although, in almost all of the interviews, participants were not able to consciously identify any changes in their daily life. Integration of the student into their family actually meant an adaptation to the student’s needs and, by that, a renegotiation of almost every aspect of their home and family life.

Initially, hosts aimed at familiarising the student with their routines and rules, but as the student became part of their family, the student also shaped the family’s routine. The student was an extra person who had to be considered in the course of the family’s everyday practices in and outside of home. Hosts had to cater for the student’s transportation needs or the requirement of preparing meals on a daily basis. Their disposable leisure time was reduced due to the need to be available for the student and it changed in terms of the way hosts spent it. Some of their leisure time was devoted to pursuing activities with the student, in which hosts normally would not have engaged by themselves. The way the family communicated was also altered. Family rules that were once only verbal agreements became written rules to make them more transparent for the student. Opportunities to engage in conversations with the student and other family members were sought more consciously as this was perceived to facilitate the integration process of the new family member. Family members responded differently to these changing circumstances.

One outcome of the changing patterns of family interactions was the increased time commitment. As a result, some hosts felt more confined in their personal freedom. This was especially evident for hosts with full-time employment and children at home. Changes to the management of a busy household were perceived as more challenging as free-time for the individual became scarce. Coping strategies were employed by some hosts to counterbalance these negative impacts. For example, one interviewee introduced the F.O.S. (Fridge-Or-Starve) strategy once a week, a creative alternative to relieve the pressure of the daily cooking duty that was considered as one of the most unpleasant commitments of homestay hosting.

Another outcome was the increased communication among family members during meal times which was perceived as very positive and enhancing the family relationships as a whole. Interviewees found the company and contact with the homestay students stimulating. Valentine (2001, p. 493) pointed out that shared meals are about social relationships and family: “unifying ‘family’ and producing a ‘family identity’”. In this way, homestay hosting contributed to the strength of family bonds and social contacts and provided new opportunities for family members to engage more with each other. In the political discourse about family, it has been argued that family life does not take place as much as it used to (Gatrell, 2005), which has been interpreted by Gatrell (2005) rather as rhetoric than a reality. Seymour (2007) came to similar conclusions in her study about family practices in locations that are both home and business. According to her, family forms and functions may change over time but “the commitment to ‘doing family’ remains” (Seymour, 2007, p. 1111). For the interviewed homestay hosts, structure and routines of the family changed but the commitment to “do family” was maintained. In some cases, engagement in family practices was even intensified which was considered a positive effect. Although family practices changed with the development of the homestay home, “family home” in its symbolic idealised meaning – parents nurturing their children, family members caring for each other and families spending time together – has not lost its relevance.

The development of the homestay experience was evident in the social and physical presentation of the house. Successful homestay hosting experiences were passed on in colourful stories that were displayed inside the home in the form of photographs and meaningful artefacts. Photographs depicting moments of time spent with the student were aligned with photographs of other family members. Artefacts gifted by the students became part of home decoration. Rose (2003) suggests that family photographs create feelings of homeliness that stretches to other places or the past, representing connections to family members and friends that go beyond the home. Lynch (2007) found in his study of host

relationships in small commercial homes (small home based accommodation with host interaction) that artefacts given as gifts were displayed by hosts to show their likeability, mirroring memories they were proud of. So, the photographs displayed in the participants' homes symbolised the close meaningful relationships homestay families developed during their homestay student's stay. The homestay families wanted to proudly show to others and also remind themselves of these good times. After the departure of the student, these objects, and their attached memories, became part of the family's history. Corresponding to Rose's (2003) findings, home in this context can be seen as a place of family memories and nostalgia as well as visual culture. Similarly, this study also found that culture was an important component of life in a homestay family home.

### **6.2.2 Home as a site of cultural (re)production**

Weidemann and Blüml (2009) suggest that family is crucial in the socialisation and "enculturation" of its members. Within a family, a person learns from his or her parents certain values, norms, and rules that are relevant for family life and family interaction. In this way, a particular family culture is created that is part of a more general cultural context. When outsiders enter this family, previous relationships change within the family because outsiders and family members presumably do not share the same concepts as they were socialised in a different environment. This environment could be characterised, for example, by different cultural or societal norms. Therefore, both parties have to adjust to each other. The outsider has to integrate into the family and the family has to stabilise its family system (Weidemann & Blüml, 2009). Furthermore, McKie et al. (2005) argue that family shapes identities through the experiences family members make interacting with each other.

In the context of homestay hosting, I would like to argue that home becomes a place of the cultural (re)production because it is first of all the site where family life takes place and second it is the place where someone from a different cultural background encounters a family and becomes part of it. Due to their different cultural backgrounds, the homestay families' existing cultural identity is challenged and renegotiated.

Through interaction, homestay hosts and students learned about practices and rituals of the other culture and performed the ones of their own. These practices evolved around the everyday family life, in and outside home, for example, through the way the family communicated with each other, socialised with friends and family members, or spent its leisure time. Sharing their culture with the international student raised the homestay hosts' awareness of and appreciation for their own culture. Introducing the student to local language, specific cultural characteristics of the people and the environment, helped homestay hosts to



reconnect to their own cultural background. For some, it meant an emergence of patriotism and pride in their country. Others were enlightened because they realised that they actually had their own unique local and national culture. These notions highlight Robertson's (1995) idea that despite the presence of global influences, locality and particular local cultures still matter, even in times of globalisation.

Homestay hosts' cultural identity was also influenced by the impact that the student's culture had on their home. Hosts broadened their horizons by listening to the student's stories in their day-to-day communication, looking at photographs the student shared or by observing their student's behaviour in their home. Most homestay hosts described this process as very enriching and rewarding. They learned about the existence of other cultural norms and practices and were able to compare them with their own. In this process they sometimes came to the conclusion that in some regards international students were not any different from their own children or themselves. At other times, the outcome was the realisation of differences between cultures. These differences were mostly accepted or at least tolerated and sometimes even appreciated. Only on a few occasions did homestay hosts struggle to cope with certain hosting situations, identified cultural differences as the reason for their problems.

While the hosting experiences were described by many hosts as helping them overcome preconceived ideas about particular nationalities, there were still many occasions during my interviews when hosts generalised and categorised students according to their nationalities. Most stereotypes were generated about "Asian" students. Kendall-Smith and Rich (2003) explain the perception of and dealing with cultural differences in homestay situations with Hofstede's (2001) individualism-collectivism spectrum. According to Hofstede (2001) collectivists consider themselves as interdependent within their group while individualists see themselves as independent and only responsible for themselves and their immediate family. The greater the distance between those two groups, the bigger the perceived cultural difference might be (Hofstede, 2001). Asian cultures, for example, are more collectivist whereas the New Zealand culture is much more individualistic. This may explain why there was a tendency to stereotype especially Asian students who were perceived to be quite different from the homestay hosts in the way they acted. It must be noted that this generalisation might be due to the nature of the interview situation in which homestay hosts may have tried to describe typical situations and characteristics of hosting international students instead of one particular experience.

The potential of these homestay experiences lies in the cross-cultural encounter of homestay families and students on an everyday basis. As an outcome of homestay hosting, hosts stated

that they became more knowledgeable, tolerant, open-minded and interested in other countries and their people. Many homestay hosts had formed lasting connections and international friendships with their homestay students that were maintained after the student left the homestay home. These relationships are an example of Held's (1997) definition of globalisation as a process that increases interconnection between people across space. As already indicated, homestay hosts displayed inside their homes some of the cultural artefacts that they had received from their students as gifts. Miller (2001, p. 1) suggested that "it is the material culture within our home that appears as both our appropriation of the larger world and often as the representation of that world within our private domain". In this way, the artefacts became a symbol for the connections that homestay hosts had made with people from other parts of the world.

The cultural learning experience was very successful for some children of homestay families. According to their parents, teachers had reported that the children would relate well to other international students at school, outside their own homestay home. This outcome contributes to internationalisation "at home", one of the goals of New Zealand's international education agenda 2007-2012 (Ministry of Education, 2007b). In the context of this agenda, this is a very good outcome, as there is only a relatively small number of New Zealand students who seek study-abroad experiences (Ministry of Education, 2007b). Considering New Zealand's relatively insular geographic location, growing up in a homestay home could therefore provide a direct way of engaging with people of other cultures and hence shape a young person's cultural identity. By growing up and living in a homestay home, homestay family members also became part of the product "family" that was created by transforming the home into a business.

### **6.2.3 Home as a small business enterprise**

The process of homestay hosting is an example of the consolidation of home and workplace, a process that has become more common in the recent decades (Kelley et al., 2010; Wight & Raley, 2009). It transformed the home into a small business enterprise and its inhabitants into small business operators. As homestay hosting is a paid service, where the payment is more than just a reimbursement of incurring costs, homestay hosts have the opportunity to generate income through hosting. This income opportunity was generally acknowledged by homestay agents and was an influencing factor in the decision of many hosts to engage in homestay hosting. For the majority, it was considered as a second or third income. The amount of the potential profit appeared to be contestable. Nevertheless, many homestay hosts did not begin

to host for purely non-commercial reasons. They considered hosting as a potential source of income and work from home.

Homestay hosting was seen as an attractive opportunity to work from home, especially for families with young children. It offered the opportunity to combine their need for provision of childcare and demand for income generation. These young families had a strong desire to have a stay-at-home parent who could nurture their children, rather than opting for a “normal” job outside their home and organised childcare for their children. Research by Gregson and Lowe (1994) found that most middle-class parents prefer to employ a nanny rather than a childminder as the care would be located within the parental home and not somewhere else. So there is a tendency for the desire to raise children within the own home with the help of a nanny or by themselves.

In this study, all stay-at-home parents who chose hosting as a second income were women. This is not surprising. In many studies home has been described as a gendered workspace with women taking over the traditional role of home making, doing housework and nurturing the children (Allan & Crow, 1989; Lynch, 2005; McKie et al., 2005). According to Kelley et al. (2010) the public’s understanding of mothers engaging in work from home is that they are still able to look after their children. This is considered more favourable than any other employment arrangement for women as it is assumed to provide more opportunity for childrearing. In this study, women were found to be predominantly involved in the business as they were the nurturer of their own children and of the homestay student. Even in those families where both parents were employed full-time, the homestay mother was the person most often responsible for all homestay matters. This became evident through the high number of female participants who made themselves available for the interview. I aimed at interviewing at least one homestay parent per family, preferably both parents. When I arranged the interview, most homestay mothers, however, did not think it was necessary to ask their partners to join us for the interview. In only two cases I did speak to the homestay father alone and this occurred only because their respective wives were out of town at the point of the interview. In those two interviews, host fathers mentioned a few times that their wives were the ones that mainly took care of the hosting business and subsequently would have been the better interview partners. This reinforced the impression that homestay hosting was a gendered occupation.

In terms of its impact on the home, engaging in homestay activity transformed the home into a hotel-like entity. The homestay business required spatial reorganisation and changes in the use of space as the business was not restricted to one part of the house. Rooms that were

previously used for a particular purpose were transformed into homestay student space. In addition to these changes in the spatial organisation of the home, every day activities like preparing meals, cleaning the house and washing the laundry became part of the job as a homestay host. Hosts thought of their role as of providing paid services to their homestay students which had to match a certain standard. From the hosts' point of view, a dinner had to be "a proper meal" and there would have to be a variety of food available to the homestay student. Furthermore, the home was thought of to be in a reasonably clean and tidy state. Some parts of the income were therefore reinvested in the business to keep the home presentable. Lynch (2007) interprets changes like paying more attention to the appearance and cleanliness of the home as an outcome of commercial hosting and suggests that it results in putting on a performance since "home" is not lived in the usual way. Homestay hosts did not make the impression of performing their role as homestay hosts but some of them noted the difference of having another person in their home by describing it as "not being their home anymore" [Sarah].

This type of work from home meant that the private realm of the family was opened to an outsider. Some homestay hosts had difficulties with this change because they perceived this as an intrusion into their private life, loss of space to retreat and ultimately a confinement in their personal freedom. In contrast to the restriction of personal freedom caused by less available free-time, privacy issues were crucial factors in the hosts' decisions to discontinue hosting. If they were unable to find ways to overcome these problems, they withdrew from hosting. Aspects that seemed to decrease privacy problems were hosts' perceived availability of sufficient space and the "right set-up" [Andrew] of the home. The latter refers to the idea of having more than one lounge and bathroom and having bedrooms at opposite ends of the house. Homestay hosts also identified "being relaxed and open-minded" as important personality traits to be a successful homestay host.

Homestay hosting differs in other ways from other forms of home-based businesses. In many home businesses, the family might be involved in the business but is not part of the business transaction itself. Homestay, in contrast, does not only take place in a home, "home" in its symbolic sense becomes a component of the provided service. In addition to the physical accommodation, homestay hosts were also required to provide a warm, homely atmosphere. The Guidelines to support the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students (Ministry of Education, 2007a) outline their role as to respect the students' emotional needs and to cater for them in their care. As students were paying for this service of "feeling at home", "home" was no longer just a feeling. It became a commodity.

Because the symbolic aspect of “home” was part of the homestay arrangement, no one wanted to admit that hosting purely for financial benefits is ethical. Both agents and hosts spoke about the income opportunities only as one benefit among others. Some hosts, however, clearly looked at other income opportunities such as boarding but decided in favour of homestay hosting as it appeared more lucrative. In these cases, their decision was primarily driven by the potential income. This was also evident in the hosts’ concern over decreasing income generated from hosting due to higher costs of living. Some had made some strategic decisions for it to remain a viable income source; otherwise they considered giving up hosting. Strategies were all developed to minimise costs: hosting only in summer to avoid high electricity costs, asking the student to take public transportation to save petrol costs, not taking the student out for dinner to reduce costs for food. These strategies could potentially affect the quality of the student’s homestay experience and the homestay industry.

This leads to the questions of whether or not someone with the primary concern of generating income can still be a good host? This depends on the understanding of what makes a homestay host a “good host”. This is associated with hosts who host purely for “altruistic” reasons who do not just provide an accommodation with board and room but also a warm and welcoming home. In opposition to this is the “bad host” who is purely interested in profit and who is presumed to provide only basic needs of board and room. Lynch (2005) suggested, that, in the hospitality industry, there are lifestyle entrepreneurs whose strategy is not oriented towards growth or profit maximisation but towards maintaining a chosen lifestyle. Homestay operators might, therefore, be interested in generating income but not in maximising it at all costs. Lynch (2005) also pointed out that the act of hosting itself could have an impact on entrepreneurial behaviour and could influence the degree to which entrepreneurial goals are pursued. This might be the reason why some homestay hosts continued hosting even after they noticed that their income opportunities were low. They might have started value other outcomes of hosting higher than their original desire for creating income. The intangible good of providing a “home” can also be part of the lifestyle entrepreneur’s business ethic and being a “good entrepreneur” would subsequently become one of their interests. Homestay hosting for money does not therefore have, to be “unethical” or necessarily lead to an unsatisfying hosting experience for the student.

Although homestay hosts reported different positive outcomes from homestay hosting, many were not aware of them when they first started. The potential additional income was an important incentive at the outset and might therefore influence the number of potential new homestay hosts. In this regard it is important to note that my interviews with homestay agents

confirmed that non-profit organisations who do not offer any financial reimbursement for their host families have difficulties recruiting new homestay families. The idea of homestay hosting as an income source remains, therefore, important for the viability of the industry. In research and policy terms, there is, therefore, a need to understand the tensions that exist between homestay as a business and as an extension of family life.

#### **6.2.4 Tensions between different interpretations of home**

There were several tensions that arose inside the homestay home due to its multiple meanings as a place of family life, cultural reproduction and small business enterprise that needed to be negotiated by the homestay hosts. In everyday life, homestay hosts were involved in trade-offs between their role as family members and “entrepreneurs”. Business decisions affected the family and vice versa. As a homestay operator, homestay hosts aimed to minimise costs or not to create any additional costs from hosting an international student. In regards to their family, however, these principles did not necessarily apply. Tensions occurred when families desired to engage in activities that would result in additional costs when including the student. Not incorporating the student would mean a separation of the homestay student from the rest of the family which would mean they would not fulfil their duty of providing a family home. Otherwise, not engaging in the desired activity led to potential dissatisfaction within the family. So, homestay hosts were required to prioritise and negotiate a solution that would satisfy both demands. Examples of these tradeoffs were situations when the family wanted to have dinner at a restaurant. In their role as homestay hosts, they were required to provide a meal for their students. From an entrepreneurial perspective, paying the student’s restaurant meal would result in higher costs than just providing a meal at home. Leaving the student behind, meant excluding him or her from the family. Another option was not to go out for dinner while hosting a homestay student.

One way to explain this dilemma is to compare principles of budgeting that are applied in hotels or family homes. While hotels follow cost efficiency criteria and market reasoning, within a home, principles of fairness and distributive justice are predominantly applied (Douglas, 1991). Douglas (1991) explains these different strategies with both entities being on the opposite ends of the market-non-market spectrum. Home is a very complex unit with multiple purposes and undefined goals. Decisions are not made following rational economic justifications. Action is, instead, based on the idea of community and solidarity (Douglas, 1991). Eating together, is, according to Kemmer, Anderson and Marshall (2002), central to living together and socialisation among members of a family. So, a decision against a joint meal, at home or at the restaurant, could have a disintegrating impact. Participants solved

these situations in different ways. If the dependency or desire for generating income was high, hosts decided against paying the student a meal. If homestay hosts wanted to treat the homestay student as an equal family member, they were more likely to favour solutions where they would have joint family meals. This way some homestay families ended up not going out for dinner as often as they used to.

Another tension arose from the consolidation of workplace and home as it affected the family life at home. Many hosts described their role as homestay host as a “24/7 job”, sharing their home with the student and having to be available most of the time. So, working at home interfered with home and family life and resulted in loss of privacy and space to retreat. These tensions between home and workplace have also been reported by Wight and Raley (2009) and contrasting with Golden’s (2001) suggestion of working at home as an opportunity for a better work and family life balance. In the context of small commercial home enterprises, Lynch (2005) describes the interaction between hosts and guests and sharing of space as a process of transformation from “private” to “public”. Homestay hosts tried to avoid this transformation. They preferred to keep their home a private place by taking down the “protective shell” [Peter] that surrounded the family home and letting the student into the privacy of the family life. So, a way of decreasing or avoiding distress that occurred due to negative impacts of running a commercial home that operated on a daily basis, was making the student a family member. It allowed hosts to see their home not as a work place but reinforced the idea of home as a place where the family comes together and has the opportunity to relax, feel comfortable and be private.

A lot of tensions arose around the home when the expected integration of the student was perceived to be difficult or unsuccessful because it affected the everyday family life. Parenting was described as challenging when family rules and norms were not accepted or ignored by the student. Allan (2005) suggested that contribution to family solidarity is an important factor for the construction of family “as enduring and ‘inalienable’” (Allan, 2005, p. 231). Homestay hosts therefore expected the homestay student to adjust to their living situation and show solidarity with the family. The underlying expectation that the student had to adjust to the family and not vice versa was also observed by Weideman & Blüml (2009). In regards to the evaluation of the overall experience, they noticed that hosts assumed that the integration process was unidirectional in nature. Homestay hosts were often disappointed, when there were communication difficulties or the feeling that homestay students were not interested in taking part in family life and preferred to be by themselves. They interpreted the behaviour as a lack of willingness to integrate. Otten (2003) suggested that these observations

are often a misinterpretation arising from the fact of hosts not having spent time abroad. They are unable to interpret student's behaviour as a reaction to psychological stress or cultural shock but instead see it as a sign of lacking interest in their family and, subsequently, rate the experience as less enjoyable (Otten, 2003).

Whether or not the true reason for the integration problems originated in cross-cultural differences, personality clashes, misinterpretation of student's behaviour or wrong expectation of the homestay family or student, hosts had to cope with the situation. Most continued hosting, even difficult students, because they were concerned that a discontinuity could reflect on their reputation as "good" homestay hosts. They handled the unsuccessful homestay relationships by treating it from an entrepreneurial point of view, as a business transaction in order to reduce the distress of having failed at establishing a family-type relationship in their home.

By opening their homes to international students, homestay hosts were directly involved in a globalisation process. It penetrated across public boundaries into the private realm of home and influenced people's life and meaning of home and family. It enforced the idea of home as a place of family life but at the same time commodified "home" and "family" as both concepts were sold as components of the homestay service. So, home also became a site of business operation which was added to homestay hosts' previous understandings of home. Globalisation, in this context, can be interpreted as a vehicle inducing processes of commodification and by that adding other meanings to current interpretations of home and family. For the individuals, these changing meanings resulted in conflicts between income generation and integration of the student into their family.

Globalisation also emphasises the idea of home as a place of cultural (re)production and by that a (re)negotiation of homestay hosts' cultural identity. It adds to the understanding and exchange of different cultural perspectives through everyday encounters of homestay hosts and students but not to a homogenisation of any of the involved cultures. These intensive and direct experiences rather portray globalisation as a means to overcome perceptions of "otherness" towards members of other cultures. This would be an important aspect as globalisation is said to be an initiator of mobility, migration and encounter of people who originate from very diverse cultural backgrounds (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). Mediated through international education, globalisation could be interpreted as a facilitator of cross-cultural understanding.



### **6.3 Homestay hosts' place in the New Zealand international education industry**

The homestay hosting of international students is a phenomenon that has grown in response to the global demand for accommodation of international students, a result of the worldwide growing international education industry (Martens & Starke, 2008). Homestay hosts can therefore be considered as one element in the international education industry. Their existence is directly related to the demand from international students desiring to stay in such an accommodation. The policy framework of the New Zealand education industry is another driving cause for the establishment of homestay hosting. Pastoral care regulations in New Zealand only allow international students under the age of 18 to be accommodated in homestay families, boarding homes or in the home of their legal guardian (Ministry of Education, 2007a). Homestay hosting seemed to fulfil the market demand for the need for a safe, “family friendly” accommodation option for (young) international students. It has become the preferred accommodation option for international students under the age of 18 (Ministry of Education, 2008a).

The demand for homestay hosts is controlled or mediated through the international education market and the education industry's marketing strategies. Homestay hosts had reported in the interviews how in recent years, the demand for homestay hosts had decreased and how it was more difficult to host new students. This corresponds to the slower growth rate in the total number of international students in New Zealand since its peak in 2003 (Education New Zealand & Ministry of Education, 2008). The market also directed the changing patterns of hosted nationalities. Global circumstances, such as changing exchange rates or national policy changes such as visa regulations affected the composition of New Zealand's international education market. With New Zealand's close proximity to Asia, Asia remains the primary market for international education. This situation is reflected in the large proportion of hosted Asian nationalities in this study's sample. While in the 1980s participants mainly hosted Japanese and European students, in the late 1990s, they began to host a lot of Chinese students. After changes in their visa policies, New Zealand simplified Chinese students' access to New Zealand (Lewis, 2005) which was evident also in their demand for homestay accommodation. The most recent group of homestay students originates from Saudi Arabia. Marketing initiatives of Education New Zealand focused on this new target market as part of one of Education New Zealand's diversification strategies (Smith & Rae, 2006). As a result, a few participants in this study had hosted Saudi Arabians in the most recent years which were perceived difficult to cater for due to their different cultural needs.

The role of homestay hosts is quite significant for the international student's study abroad experience. According to Otten (2000) it is vital for international students to develop positive relationships with the host culture. If international students are unable to form close social relationships after a certain period of time, their readiness for learning and academic performance will be negatively affected. Research into international encounters between local and international students (Otten, 2003; Ward, 2006) has demonstrated that only little or no contact takes place between these two groups and students tend to remain with the peers of the same nationality. Other opportunities for students to get in contact with the host culture outside the educational institution gain, therefore, more significance. Therefore, I would argue that homestay hosts have an important role as key representatives of the local culture giving the opportunity of close social relationships and the everyday experience of local culture within the environment of their homes. According to the homestay coordinators, homestay hosts are quite important for the homestay student's experience as they spend a considerable amount of their time in the homestay home. They suggested that an unsatisfactory homestay situation could negatively affect the students' learning progress and ultimately push students away and make them leave for another country. If students were happy and content with their living arrangement, they were more likely to extend their stay or return to New Zealand at a later stage. This idea is quite relevant in regards to Lewis's (2005) observation that the New Zealand education industry is aiming at staircasing, increasing revenue by moving international students through the education system from primary school through to university. Satisfied students will more likely stay in the country if they have had good experiences in and outside their educational institution including their time spent in the homestay.

While the majority of homestay students seemed to enjoy their studies abroad, some participants experienced students who were, according to their observation, not studying in New Zealand voluntarily. Some hosts presumed that these students were sent to study abroad by parents who did not want to deal with their problematic children. In these cases, the students' motivation was negatively influencing the homestay situation. One of the homestay hosts used the term "dumped in New Zealand" [Harry] to describe the situation of a student who had been sent to study overseas by his parents and who was perceived to be unhappy with this situation. Several homestay parents made similar observations. These observations led to the suggestion that New Zealand is being used as a "global boarding school" hoping schooling in another country could help solve family problems in the home country. Hardhill (2004) described the phenomenon of transnational education of children, as "parachuting" children into different countries where they would settle without their parents for the purpose

of their education. Following Hardhill's (2004) terminology, I suggest that homestay hosts could be considered as the new "landing ground" for the "parachutists". Hosts are often the initial contacts when international students first arrive in New Zealand. Many participants mentioned that their homestay students had never been abroad, let alone to English speaking countries. Homestay agents described the homestay home as the "students' base" [Grace] while living in this foreign environment. In providing homestay students temporarily with a home and acting as a surrogate parent for them, homestay hosts reported problems they encountered with these "difficult students". They were confronted with all kinds of problems: low performance in school, having problems integrating into family life, being addicted to computer games or gambling, sometimes even criminal offences. Reports of the interviewees about having to deal with these types of problems supports Kendall-Smith & Rich (2003, p. 175) comment that homestay hosts are "in the end, the 'coal face' personnel dealing with the problems that arise". Preparation and support of homestay hosts remains therefore vital so that they are able to contribute to the success of the international education industry. An indirect way of support would be a review of admission criteria to study at a New Zealand educational institution. They should focus more on the students' personal circumstances and motivation for his or her application to study in New Zealand. This would be of interest to the New Zealand education industry, as it aims to attract high performing students to develop a high reputation as a provider of international education (Ministry of Education, 2007b).

Globalising processes have commodified international education by making educational institutions dependent on charging tuition fees to their students (Tarling, 2004). It has become an industry that is trade-driven and profit-oriented (Martens & Starke, 2008). By recruiting homestay hosts for the provision of accommodation to international students, the commodification is extended to the homes and families of those who became engaged in homestay hosting. Homestay hosts were paid for providing the student with a home. So, home and subsequently family life became a product. Branded and sold as a component of the international education industry, the "homestay home" became a safe, family-oriented accommodation option for young international students, leaving homestay parents with the dilemma of fulfilling the expectation of being a family for the student and maintaining their income source.

In return, the process of homestay hosting adds social and cultural components to the economically driven international education industry. It provides the opportunity for cultural exchange and building of social relationships. Culture used to be the driving force behind international education (Martens & Starke, 2008) but in the process of globalisation,

education had been instrumentalised for the purpose of achieving economic growth (Stier, 2004) so that other goals became secondary. Homestay hosting might not have reversed this trend but it does demonstrate the existence of other facets of a globalising process.

Globalising processes have created, regulated and shaped the homestay hosting phenomenon. Homestay hosting contributes to the international education industry's viability, not only in its economic sense but also by emphasising the social and cultural elements of international education. The extension of globalising processes, reaching to the very specific setting of "home" confirms Robertson's (1995) suggestion that globalising processes are not solely macro scale processes but also penetrating the micro scale and that the "local" also has an impact on the "global".

## **6.4 Glocalised homestay hosts**

One of the objectives of this study was to determine whether or not homestay hosting could be understood as a form of glocalisation. Robertson's (1995) concept of glocalisation characterises the relationship between the "global" and the "local" as simultaneous and interconnected. The local setting that I chose to analyse this objective was the New Zealand home and the global process that impacted on it was the international education industry. These two spheres intersected in those homes that became homestay homes.

According to Salazar (2005) glocalisation is about tailoring localised products to a changing global audience (Salazar, 2005). In the case of homestay hosting, the localised product was the presentation of culture and New Zealand family life which was shared with international students who came from various parts of the world with different backgrounds.

The homestay home was located in a particular local place and shaped by its local inhabitants who led their everyday life. They had a certain way of communicating with each other, practising local habits and establishing routines that were mostly influenced by interaction with their surrounding environment. By hosting an international student they received the opportunity to teach and share these local cultural practices with international students. The homestay hosts functioned as the key actors in "localising" the student. Hosts described themselves as "ambassadors" of New Zealand, using a relatively globally interactive metaphor for being a connection to a particular location, a region, a country and its inhabitants. They familiarised students with local language, customs and environment, assisted them in their day to day life and provided them with temporary homes. In this process of familiarising internationals with local culture, homestay hosts became more aware of their own local culture and identity.

At the same time of this strengthening of local identity, exposure to the international student internationalised the home. They learned about everyday life in other localities around the world by interacting with their homestay student. As research on house and home has demonstrated news and advertising media can function as a significant global impact on the local level (Perkins & Thorns, 2003), but the homestay situation provides an even more immediate global influence. While in the case of magazines or television, the “global” is mediated, but the nature of the homestay experience means that it is direct, real and interactive. Its influence was therefore highly relevant for inhabitants’ home life and continuously present, with the only exemption being the times between departure of “old” and arrival of “new” student.

Homestay hosts were not aware of the “global” that would intrude on them when they got involved in homestay hosting, sometimes not even being aware of the nation the student was from prior to their visit and were still not able to clearly identify these impacts when I interviewed them. From their understanding, homestay students were living with them to experience “local” ways of living and therefore had to adapt to the homestay families’ lifestyle. Over the course of the hosting period, homestay hosts adopted more or less consciously to the needs of their students and, by doing that, to the “global” demands. So, homestay hosting initiated a discourse that privileged the “local”, but ultimately, altered it. Some scholars argue that with the growing interconnectedness around the world, the local becomes less important, while others argue the opposite. For the respondents of this study, the “local” maintained its relevance. While they seemed to have established global connections, their local reference point did not lose its meaning. Their perspectives were, instead, extended by the “global” and reinforced by their local everyday. Homestay hosts engaged with the “global” still being very much embedded in their local life inside and outside of home.

## **6.5 Chapter summary**

Homestay hosting contributed to the reinforcement of the interpretation of home as a site for family life and home as a site of cultural reproduction. Through homestay hosting the social category “family” was extended in its meaning by including an international student in the family. It altered family and home life in many ways, improving familial relationships but also reducing personal freedom. Hosting someone from another culture impacted on the host’s own cultural identity. Learning about other ways of living and sharing their own culture made them more aware of their own cultural identity. Additionally, home became also a site of business operation as hosting was interpreted as an income source. These different interpretations caused tensions for homestay hosts as provision of “home” and “family”

became of part of the homestay business. The desire for generating income had to be negotiated with demands of the family and the international student. Integration of the international student into the family was highly desired and rated as important for the overall satisfaction with the homestay experience. Sometimes integration remained unsuccessful, because hosts were unable to overcome privacy issues, personality clashes, cultural differences or difficult students.

Homestay hosts can be considered as a vital element in the international education industry. They fulfil the industry demand of providing accommodation and close relationships to an international student. Becoming part of the international education industry, “home” and “family” were commodified and international education was extended by social and cultural processes. Homestay hosting demonstrated how a globalising process reached to the very local level of home and family. In the process of localising the student, homestay hosts experienced global influences which impacted on their local life and identity. This simultaneity of the “global” and the “local” can be interpreted as a form of glocalisation.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

The previous chapters discussed the results of this study in relation to the three research objectives. This chapter concludes this thesis by addressing the three following aspects: acknowledging the limitations of this research; recommendation strategies for researchers in the field of globalisation, home and international education. The recommendations are derived from the discussion and are presented in a series of bullet points. The chapter will be closed with some final remarks.

#### **7.2 Research limitations**

This study had four main limitations. The first limitation was time. Since this research was undertaken for a Master's thesis, there was only a limited time frame of approximately three months to conduct the fieldwork. As a consequence, I needed to select a sample that was easily accessible; therefore I restricted my sampling to potential participants who were residing within the boundaries of the city of Christchurch, New Zealand.

The second limitation is the generalisability of the research findings which is related to the qualitative research approach that I chose. The data that I have collected for this study are a representation of the experiences of the homestay hosts that have participated in my research and the way they have described them to me. I was only able to draw conclusions from their accounts and make generalisations about this group of participants. They are not representative of all homestay hosts or even the ones residing in Christchurch. The desired outcome was not to conclude about the non-existing average homestay host but to show individuals' interpretations of themselves and their social reality which were related to real experiences. I have aimed at identifying some representative types of experiences of this particular group of participants, but there is a possibility that some aspects that were relevant for the research participants and other homestay hosts are not captured. Additionally, I would like to point out the contextual nature of experiences which is linked to limited generalisability. Experiences of homestay hosts living in different environments, for example rural areas, larger cities, other countries or just different types of homes interacting with homestay students of other nationalities or backgrounds than those that have been reported about in my study could lead to different results.

The third limitation is connected to the sampling procedure. The self-selection of the sampling procedure might have skewed the sample towards those homestay hosts who enjoyed homestay hosting, had had mainly positive homestay experiences and who were more extroverted and interested in volunteering to participate. There is the potential that homestay hosts who had rather negative experiences or disliked homestay hosting would have shared different experiences and impressions of living with a homestay student than the ones that participated in my study. Furthermore, the results of this study might represent a gendered perspective as most participants who agreed to participate were female. The type of “work” that is involved by operating a homestay business is very often interpreted as women’s responsibility. The large proportion of female participants could, therefore, actually be representative for homestay hosting; at least the responses from all my participants alluded to this assumption.

The fourth limitation is related to the method. By using semi-structured intensive interviews as the only method to gain an insight into homestay hosting, I was only able to analyse and interpret the interviewee’s responses. I could not confirm whether or not hosts had altered their responses in order to portray themselves or homestay hosting in a way they thought that was most favourable for them. This is particularly important as hosting purely for financial motives were perceived to be unethical by many hosts. Participant observation could counterbalance this effect by gaining an additional perspective to the subjective answers of participants. Due to ethical considerations, participant observation was not possible as interviews could only take place during periods when hosts were not hosting a student. This implied another research limitation as the responses were only historic accounts of the experiences. At the time of the interview, some hosts had to refer back to experiences that dated up to 25 years back. Subsequently, experiences were not part of their recent memories and made it difficult to give detailed answers. This memory loss may have impacted on the accuracy and richness of the data.

### **7.3 Recommendations for further research**

The homestay hosting phenomenon has not been investigated to any significant extent despite its clear relevance. Therefore, this area offers a considerable number of research opportunities of homestay hosting phenomenon itself. It also provides an interesting example for the study of social scientific debates about home-making and globalisation, international education and cross-cultural research. Researchers might consider the following recommendations which arose from the current study:



- Many participants in my study had been hosting for a course of several years. By having conducted only one interview with each participant at one particular time in the homestay hosting “career” of the homestay host, it was difficult to assess long-term impacts of hosting. A longitudinal study could offer the chance of determining how hosting over longer periods of time shapes participants’ meaning of home and cultural identity and dynamics of globalisation as it develops;
- This study offered only an insight into the homestay hosts’ perspective in response to the lack of existing research into hosts’ experiences. Being aware of the potential ethical problems that might arise by interviewing both parties of the homestay arrangement at the same time, a direct comparison of homestay hosts’ and students’ experiences would be interesting and could focus on their experiences of home, family life and the other cultures;
- The decision to engage in homestay hosting is largely made by the adults in the family. Some children have been said to benefit from hosting by being more open towards international classmates at school; others were observed to show signs of jealousy. Therefore, it would be interesting to research how children of the homestay family experience their new homestay siblings or, in retrospect how growing up with international homestay students has shaped people’s understanding of home, family and culture;
- Income generation remains an important component of homestay hosting and the amount of profit that can be made was highly contested among participants, It was beyond the scope of this study to determine the actual financial costs and gains of homestay hosting but it would help to show the potential as a source of income;
- It appears that homestay hosting provides homestay hosts with the opportunity of gaining cross-cultural competence due to the nature of the day-to-day encounter with international students. A study aiming at assessing homestay hosts’ cross-cultural competence prior to and after a period of hosting would be help to determine the extend of the cross-cultural learning experience;
- Some hosts reported about their observation that some students were involuntarily sent overseas by their parents who did not want to deal with their problematic children. It would be interesting to further investigate this observation by conducting a study into parents’ motives for sending their children abroad, pre-departure family situations and re-entry encounter of international students and their families;

- As homestay hosts had difficulties to identify changes in their home life caused by the presence of the student, an interview structured around “a tour” of the home and the room of the homestay student could facilitate interviewee’s responses in regards to interaction with homestay students at home, use of space, spatial reorganisation and changes of habits that might have occurred around the home after becoming a homestay host;
- From this study it appears that homestay hosting is a gendered occupation, it would be interesting to investigate this notion further and compare female and male perspectives of homestay hosting.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This thesis aimed at exploring how the “global” and the “local” are related in the context of a “globalising” world (Hannerz, 1996; Robertson, 1995; True, 2006) exemplified in the international education industry. I focused on how increasing globalising processes affect individuals’ lives and how the “global” influences people’s interpretation of home and family. My research studied the New Zealand homestay home, a suitable setting where the “global” and the “local” intersect, with “home” being one of the most “local” spheres in which to study the previous described relationships. The “global” was represented by international students who sought homestay accommodation. Hosting an unknown “other” was probably one of the most direct impacts of globalisation and Christchurch, New Zealand, represented a relatively isolated geographic location to study effects of globalisation. Twenty-six semi-structured qualitative interviews with homestay hosts and homestay agents were conducted to explore how homestay hosting affected homestay hosts’ interpretation of home and family, the place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry and whether or not homestay hosting could be understood as a form of glocalisation.

This study provides insight into homestay hosting from the homestay hosts’ perspective which, according to Richardson (2003a) and Ward (2006), has been an under-researched phenomenon. It has provided additional knowledge about the process of home-making and meaning of home in the context of globalisation. Homestay hosting reinforced the notion of home as a site of family life by adding the “homestay family” to the social category of “family” and by altering family life and routines in ways that led to enhanced close family relationships. It further presented home as a site of cultural (re)production challenging and renegotiating homestay hosts’ cultural identity through interaction with members of other cultures. Globalising processes, in the form of hosting an international student, initiated the

transformation of home into a business site which commodified “home” and “family” by paying homestay hosts to provide international students with feelings of being “at home” and part of the family. This led to ethical dilemmas for homestay hosts having to make decisions that are placed around generating profit through hosting and making the student part of the family at the same time.

It became evident that globalising processes, mediated through international education branded, regulated and shaped the homestay hosting phenomenon. Homestay hosts became part of the international education industry and contributed to its viability, not only in its economic sense but also by emphasising the social and cultural elements of international education. In their role as homestay host they became important representatives of New Zealand culture and functioned as surrogate parents to international students. Therefore, they became an important part in the student’s study abroad experience. Being exposed to the cultural “other”, the phenomenon of homestay hosting further contributed to internationalisation “at home”, one of the goals of the New Zealand international education agenda 2007-2012 (Ministry of Education, 2007b). They have, however, also been instrumentalised for meeting the demand for a safe and family-oriented accommodation, especially for young international students, leading to a number of ethical dilemmas of satisfying their role as family as well as meeting their own needs for an additional income.

The extension of globalising processes, reaching to the very specific setting of “home”, confirmed Robertson’s (1995) suggestion that globalising processes are not solely macro scale processes but that they also penetrate the micro scale and that the “local” has an impact on the “global” and vice versa. Homestay hosting can therefore be described as a form of glocalisation. While sharing local culture and family life with international students, hosts experienced the global “other”. Although the explicit and assumed emphasis in these encounters lay on letting the students learn about the “local” ways of living, locals were actually being shaped by their global influence.

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# Appendices

## A.1 Telephone contact and recruitment script (homestay hosts)

### Telephone contact and recruitment script (homestay hosts)

Hello, my name is Martina Bruederle. I am a Master's student in the Environment, Society, and Design Division at Lincoln University, undertaking a research project as part of my Master's degree. This project is called "The place and role of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry". This project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee I am interested in homestay hosting and particular in the homestay hosts' perspective. I would like to explore how the presence of international homestay students affects New Zealanders' homes and how their hosts see this influence.

Your telephone number was given to me by your friend/ another homestay host [name of the friend/host].

Your participation in this research will involve a 45 minute face- to face interview asking questions about your homestay hosting experience, how you see yourself as host and what impacts it has on your home. The interview will be recorded only with your permission. At the end of the interview, demographic characteristics will be collected for further data research.

Are you interested in participating?

[IF NO] That is ok. I understand. Thank you for listening to my request and thank you for your time. Good-bye.

[IF YES] [Ask Homestay host filters]

Have you hosted international homestay students for more than 6 months?

[IF NO] I am sorry but I will not be able ask you to participate in my study then.

Unfortunately, you do not meet the criteria for my research. My study requires that I talk to hosts who have already had hosting experiences over a longer period of time. I really appreciate the time you have given me and your willingness to participate. Thank you. Good-bye.

[IF YES] [Proceed]



Have you hosted two or more international homestay students in your home?

[IF NO] I am sorry but I will not be able ask you to participate in my study then.

Unfortunately, you do not meet the criteria for my research. My study requires that I talk to hosts who have already hosted more than one student. I really appreciate the time you haven given me and your willingness to participate. Thank you. Good-bye.

[IF YES] [Proceed]

Is an international homestay student currently living with you in your homestay?

[IF YES] I am sorry but I will not be able ask you to participate in my study then.

Unfortunately, you do not meet the criteria for my research. To avoid any potential conflicts with homestay students, my study allows me only to talk to hosts who do not currently host a student. I really appreciate the time you have given me and your willingness to participate. Thank you. Good-bye.

[IF NO] Thank you for interest in participation. Participation in the research is voluntary and you may decline to answer questions during the interview or withdraw up until December 31, 2008. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have already provided will be destroyed. Do you understand your rights as a participant? Are you still prepared to participate in this research project?

[IF NO] Thank you for your time. Good-bye.

[IF YES] I would like to send you a research information sheet which will provide you with more detailed information about my study, your rights as participant and the contact details of my supervisors and me. For this, purpose could you please tell me your postal or email address.

[IF THEY REFUSE TO GIVE CONTACT DETAILS] I am sorry but I will not be able to ask you to participate in my study then. It is a requirement for my research that I provide you with a research information sheet before you make your decision about participation in my study. Thank you and Good-bye.

[TAKE PARTICIPANTS CONTACT DETAILS AND DETERMINE THEIR PREFERRED WAY OF MAILING] Thank you for your time and interest in participating in my research. I will contact you by telephone in a few days to find out if you are still interested in participating in my research, once you have had a chance to read over the research information sheet. I will then ask you to arrange an interview appointment.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in case you have any questions, you can reach me via email at xxxx@lincoln.ac.nz, or via telephone at xxxxx.

Good-bye.

**Telephone script for follow up call after research information sheet has been sent**

Hello, my name is Martina Bruederle. I am a Master's student in the Environment, Society, and Design Division at Lincoln University, undertaking a research project is called "The place and role of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry". I contacted you a few days ago, if you were interested to participate in my research and I send you a research information sheet. Have received it?

[IF NO] [Try to find out why, send a new one and call another time]

[IF YES] Are you still interested in participating in my research?

[IF NO] Thank you for your time. Good-bye.

[IF YES] [Arrange interview time and location at the interviewee's choice.]

Thank you for time and your willingness to participate in my research.

Please do not hesitate to contact my supervisors or me in case you have any questions, you will find our contact details on the research information sheet that I sent you.

Good-bye.

## **A.2 Email Template to Contact Prospective Participants (Homestay agents)**

### **Email Template to Contact Prospective Participants (Homestay agents)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a Master's student at Lincoln University in Canterbury, New Zealand. I am conducting a research on homestay hosting of international students in New Zealand and I am contacting you for some help with the research for my thesis. This research is part of my Master's degree and I would be very grateful if you could volunteer your time to participate in this research.

This research project is entitled "The place and role of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry". The aim of the research is to explore how the presence of international homestay students influences experiences of their homes and how their hosts perceive this influence. Furthermore, focus will be given on homestay hosts hosting experiences and their contribution to the New Zealand international education industry. It is hoped that this study will help to gain a better understanding of the homestay hosts perspective of homestay hosting and reveal benefits of this experience and its significance for the international education industry.

For this research I am asking a number of homestay agents in Christchurch if they would agree to being involved in this project. Your participation in this research will involve a 45 minute interview with me, at a location and time that is convenient for you. I would like to ask you about your involvement in the arrangement of homestay accommodation for international students, the recruitment process of new host families as well as about offered support services and quality assurance in New Zealand. The interview will be tape recorded only with your permission. You may choose not to answer certain questions if you do not wish to answer them. You may also withdraw from the project at any time up until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. Any written presentation of the data will contain only pseudonyms, and all identifying characteristics will be removed. To ensure confidentiality, all data including any notes, tape recordings and transcripts from the interviews will be kept under lock and key and password protection, and will be only accessible to me and my supervisors. My supervisors are Dr Kevin Moore and Prof. Harvey Perkins Lincoln University.

If you have any question about my research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisors. Our contact details are:

Researcher: Martina Bruederle (xxx@lincoln.ac.nz, ph: xxx)

Supervisor: Dr Kevin Moore (xxx@lincoln.ac.nz, ph: xxx, ext: xxx)

Associate Supervisor: Professor Harvey Perkins (xxx@lincoln.ac.nz, ph: xxx, ext: xxx)

Otherwise, I will give you a call in a week to follow up this invitation.

Regards,

Martina Bruederle

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.

### A.3 Research information sheet homestay hosts

#### Research Information Sheet

Lincoln University

ID Number:
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#### Environment, Society and Design Division

Dear homestay host,

You are invited to participate in a research entitled: **The role and place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry.**

This project is part of my Master of Social Science thesis at Lincoln University. The aim of this project is to explore how international homestay students influence New Zealanders' experiences of their homes and in particular how homestay hosts interpret this influence.

You have been contacted as a prospective participant in this study because you have been a homestay host who has hosted two or more homestay students over a period of six months and who is currently not hosting a homestay student in your home. I received your contact information from a friend or homestay agent who said you host or used to host homestay students. The results of the project will help determine the benefits of homestay hosting, and help researchers understand what impact homestay hosting has on people's life and home.

Your participation in this project will involve a 45-minute interview asking questions about your homestay hosting experience, how you see yourself as a host and what impacts it has on your home. The interview will be recorded only with your permission. At the end of the interview, demographic characteristics will be collected for further data research.

You will be asked to sign a consent form to acknowledge your voluntary participation in the study. You may decline to answer any question, and you may withdraw your data up until March 31st, 2009. You also have the right to review the audiotapes or transcripts of the interviews, and ask for any information to be excluded. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have provided will be destroyed.

To ensure confidentiality, no one besides my supervisors and me will have access to your consent forms and data, and all consent forms and data will be kept separately under lock and key and password protection.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. Any written presentation of the data will contain only pseudonyms, and all identifying characteristics will be removed.

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.

My supervisors and I will be pleased to discuss any questions you have about participation in the project.

The project is being carried out by:

Researcher:

Martina Bruederle

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz,

ph: xxx

Supervisor:

Dr Kevin Moore

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz,

ph: xxx , ext: xxx

Associate Supervisor:

Professor Harvey Perkins

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz

ph: xxx, ext: xxx

## A.4 Research information sheet homestay agent

### Research Information sheet

Lincoln University

Environment, Society and Design Division

ID Number:
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Dear homestay agent,

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “**The role and place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry**”.

This project is part of my Master of Social Science thesis at Lincoln University. The aim of this project is to explore how international homestay students influence New Zealanders’ experiences of their homes and in particular how homestay hosts interpret this influence.

You have been contacted as a prospective participant in this study because you have been a homestay agent or coordinator who is involved in arranging homestay accommodation for international students in Christchurch. The results of the project will help determine the benefits of homestay hosting, and help researchers understand what impact homestay hosting has on people’s life and home as well as what significance homestay hosting has for the New Zealand international education industry.

Your participation in this project will involve a 45-minute interview asking questions about your experience and involvement in homestay arrangements, the homestay recruitment and placement process as well as questions about support services and quality assurance procedures. The interview will be recorded only with your permission.

You will be asked to sign a consent form to acknowledge your voluntary participation in the study. You may decline to answer any question, and you may withdraw your data up until March 31, 2009. You also have the right to review the audiotapes or transcripts of the interviews, and ask for any information to be excluded. If you do withdraw at any stage, any information you have provided will be destroyed.

To ensure confidentiality, no one besides my supervisors and me will have access to your consent forms and data, and all consent forms and data will be kept separately under lock and key and password protection.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation. Any written presentation of the data will contain only pseudonyms, and all identifying characteristics will be removed.

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.

My supervisors and I will be pleased to discuss any questions you have about participation in the project.

The project is being carried out by:

Researcher:

Martina Bruederle

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz,

ph: xxx

Supervisor:

Dr Kevin Moore

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz,

ph: xxx, ext: xxx

Associate Supervisor:

Professor Harvey Perkins

xxx@lincoln.ac.nz

ph: xxx, ext: xxx



## A.5 Consent form

ID number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Consent Form

#### **The role and place of homestay hosts in the New Zealand international education industry**

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. I consent to be voice recorded and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that confidentiality will be preserved. I understand also that I may withdraw from the project at any time up to March, 31<sup>st</sup> 2009, including withdrawal of any information I have provided. I understand also that I have the right to review the audiotapes or transcripts of the interviews, and ask for any information to be excluded. On this basis I agree to participate as a subject in the project.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## A.6 Interview schedule homestay hosts

### Interview Schedule homestay hosts

*NB: This interview schedule is indicative of the questions which will be asked of homestay hosts. While providing a broad general structure to the interview, the exact nature of the questions will be shaped by the situation of the homestay host.*

- Can you tell me how you became a homestay host?
  - ExplainWhy did you become a homestay host?
- How did you prepare yourself/your family and your home before the arrival of the first homestay student you had?
  - How did you prepare for the homestay students that arrived afterwards?
- Can you tell me about your homestay experience?
  - How long have you been involved in homestay hosting?
  - How many homestay students have you hosted so far? Where did they come from and how long did they stay? How old were they and what kind of education were they seeking in New Zealand? How many homestay students usually reside with you?
  - How much time does usually lie between the arrival and departure of old and new student?
  - Are financially reimbursed for hosting someone?
  - What responsibilities do you have for the international homestay student? In what ways do you look after them?
- How was your day to day life like living with a homestay student? What kind of activities did you do with them? What was a typical day?
- Did you have any particular rules that you asked the homestay student to follow? (E.g. how about inviting guests to your home?)
  - Have you had any problems with the international homestay student? What sort of problems? Have you been able to resolve these? How?
  - What expectations did you have?

### Home

- What does “home” mean for you?
- How did you manage your life at “home” before you engaged in homestay hosting?
- How do you manage it now? How does the international homestay student affect your life at home?

- Did anything change in your home while you were having an international homestay student staying with you? What sort of change? How has the use of space changed since hosting a homestay student? Any cultural influences? New habits?
- If there was a change in habits while you were hosting a homestay student, did you change back into your old habits after the student had left?
- How does it feel to live with someone together who is initially not part of your family?
- What happens in the time between the departure of the old and the arrival of the new homestay student in your home?
- How did your other family members feel about having somebody else living with them?

### **Homestay organisation/arrangement**

- Who arranged the homestay situation? How is it arranged? Can you tell me a little bit about the application process to become a homestay host?
  - if arranged over a homestay agent
    - Do you have contact with the homestay agent? What sort of contact? On what matters?
    - Would you like more support from the agent?
- Do you have any contact with the school/university/language school the homestay student attends? What sort of contact? On what matters? Would you like more support from the school/university/language school?

### **Globalisation**

- Do you still have contact with any of your previous homestay students?
  - If so, how do you stay in touch?
- Is there anything that you learned from your hosting experience? Or your international homestay student?
- What do you think about the home countries of the students you have hosted? Did hosting a student from a certain country change your view of this country and their people? How did hosting a student of a particular nationality affect your view of his/her home country and its people?
- Does the community benefit from the presence of international homestay students in any way? And if so, how?
- Did your hosting experience change the way you see yourself as a New Zealander? How did hosting international students affect your way of seeing yourself as a New Zealander?

### **Conclusion**

- What did you enjoy most about your hosting experience? What did you enjoy least about your hosting experience? How about other family members?

- What is your overall view of the homestay hosting experience?
  - Positive/ negative? In which ways?
- What do you think makes successful homestay host?
- Do you have contact to other homestay hosts?
- Are planning to host another international homestay student in the future? Why? Why not?
- Is there anything else you would like to add that I have not asked you about?

## A.7 Interview schedule homestay agent

### Interview schedule homestay agent

*NB: This interview schedule is indicative of the questions which will be asked of homestay agents. While providing a broad general structure to the interview, the exact nature of the questions will be shaped by the situation of the homestay agents.*

- Can you tell me about the agency's involvement in the arrangement of homestay placements for international students?
  - How long has your agency been involved in this business? How long has your school been accepting international students?
  - How many homestay arrangements do you make per year?
  - What kind of students do you usually place? How old are they? Where are they from? Are they fee-paying or exchange students? What kind of educational institution will they study at? How long do they stay with their host family?
  - How long have you been working in this role as homestay agent/coordinator?
- How would you describe the typical homestay host?
- How long do homestay hosts stay in the hosting "business"?
- Can you tell me about the recruitment process of new homestay hosts?
- What do homestay hosts need to provide in order to be accepted as homestay hosts? What selection criteria are used in the recruitment process?
- What sort of information do you receive about the student and which information do you pass on to the family?
- What criteria are used to match homestay hosts and students?
- What responsibilities do the homestay hosts have for their homestay student?
- Do you stay in contact with the homestay hosts after an international student has been placed? If, so how?
- Is there any form of orientation prior to the placement or during the placement available to the homestay hosts?
- Are there any processes or tools for monitoring the homestay arrangement?
- What happens if there is a problem between the homestay student and the hosts?
  - What sort of problems appear?
  - How are they solved?
  - How often do you have to replace a student?
- Are there any tools for quality assurance?

- How has the code of practise for the pastoral care affected your homestay agency/school?
  - Do you see the code as an advantage? Or disadvantage?
  - Are there any areas that would need to be improved? Changed?
- Do you have any contact to the educational institution the homestay student is placed at?
- From your perspective, what role do homestay hosts have in the education industry?
- How significant are homestay hosts for the success of the international education industry?
- What significance does the acceptance of international students have for your school?
- Have you noticed any changes in the demand for homestay families during the last years?
  - If so, what sort of changes?
  - How do these changes affect the recruitment process of host families?
- How would you describe successful homestay hosting?