The Australian Community Psychologist

APS Australian Psychological Society

National Committee of the APS College Of Community Psychologists

Contents

General Information

The Australian Community Psychologist is the Journal of the College of Community Psychologists of the Australian Psychological Society

Current and past issues of ACP can be accessed through Australia's web archive system PANDORA (http://pandora.nla.gov.au/tep/84823)

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Editorial
Rachael Fox

At Volume 30, Australian Community Psychologist finds itself experiencing a bit of a birthday. The journal is older than 30 years in fact: it began as Network: The Bulletin of the Board of Community Psychologists in 1984. In some ways it is also younger; it became Australian Community Psychologist in 2006. During all this time it has remained one of the few community psychology peer reviewed journals which is open access. It was started in 1984 by Art Veno, who sadly died earlier this year. Heather Gridley has far more knowledge than I of both Art and the history of the journal, and so the first piece of this issue is a Guest Editorial by Heather. As part of our birthday and as tribute to Art, we have uploaded scanned copies of the back issues of Network to our archive page – the archive is almost complete – if anyone has copies of Volume 1 which we were unable to locate, please do get in touch (we are also missing Vol. 3 No. 1 (1987) and Vol. 6 No. 3 (1990).

This issue includes a special section on Australian migration with 4 papers that describe migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Australia. Puvimanasinghe et al. describe experiences of service providers offering trauma counselling to refugees and asylum-seekers. Khawaja and Hebbani examine factors impacting life satisfaction of refugees in Australia. Hartley and Pedersen examine attitudes towards people seeking asylum in Australia. Fierro Hernandez and Sonn explore experiences of Colombian Migrants negotiating identity and settlement. At a time where Australia's migration policies and rhetoric are as problematic and controversial as ever, as thousands of asylum seekers and refugees are held in detention around Australia, work which seeks to unmask, contest and disrupt is vital. Finally, we have a very thought provoking paper by Nikki Harre: Let's assume people are good: Rethinking research in community psychology, which examines community psychology assumptions around research and how we might act differently. We also have a

book review of Nikki's latest work; The Infinite Game.

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THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY
PSYCHOLOGIST, Vol. 30, Issue 1

Guest Editorial
Heather Gridley (Victoria University,
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When I received the invitation from
ACP Editor Rachael Fox to write this guest
editorial marking the publication of Volume
30 of the *Australian Community
Psychologist*, I was overwhelmed by the
poignancy of its timing. Unbeknownst to
Rachael, I had just attended the memorial
service the previous day for the journal's
inaugural Editor, Dr Arthur Veno, who died
on August 24, 2019. His health had taken a
battering in recent years, and he died just a
few months after his wife Liz who had been
living with cancer for a long time. We were
fortunate that Art came along to a couple of
community psychology events in the last 18
months and caught up with a number of old
friends - he spoke to the students present
about the legacy of generations in the
community psychology family that they
would be taking forward. So I'm taking the
liberty of dedicating much of this editorial to
Art Veno.

Art is remembered fondly by those
who knew him, whether from his early days
in Australia in the 70s and 80s, as a teacher
and mentor at Monash Gippsland, from the
extraordinary 'mobile social justice' trips to
the Maralinga and Yarrabah Aboriginal
communities that he organised in the early
90s, from his work with 'outlaw' motor cycle
groups that saw him shift his focus from
psychology to criminology, or from his
adoption of Quaker philosophy and practices.
He was the recipient of the inaugural APS
College of Community Psychologists Award
of Distinction in 2007 - the College has only
made five such awards in the 15 years since
they were established by the APS across all
nine Colleges. Art was an obvious choice for
the Award because of his foundational and
leadership roles in the College (then Board),
and also for his work in promoting
Australian Indigenous psychology. The
Award also recognised Arthur's mentoring

role to students and practitioners over the
years. A few of his achievements are listed
below:
- He taught Community and Social
  Psychology from 1985-1994 at Monash
  University.
- He was National Chair of the APS Board
  (now College) of Community
  Psychologists from 1987-1990.
- From 1984-1989, he was Editor of the
  first editions of *Network: The Bulletin of
  the Board of Community Psychologists*,
  now published online as *The Australian
  Community Psychologist.*
- In 1990 and 1993, he organized
  workshops involving extensive travel to
  Aboriginal communities for the Board,
  and became the inaugural (acting)
  convener of the APS Interest Group on
  Aboriginal Issues
- In 1992, he joined forces with David
  Thomas in New Zealand to edit a joint
  Community Psychology textbook which
  was the first non-United States book in
  the area.

Arthur's own blending of research and action
exemplified best practice in applied
community psychology. His work with the
policing of motorcycle groups represents one
of the most innovative early applications of
Community Psychology theory to an
Australian community context, and saw him
win several state and national awards for
peace and violence prevention. In sum,
Arthur's deep commitment to community
psychology earned him a place of regard as
one of our elders. He made a truly
substantial, though often unorthodox,
contribution to the profession and discipline,
all in the context of enhancing community
wellbeing.

But back to the caterpillar-to-butterfly
story of *Network's* metamorphosis from print
newsletter to refereed journal to online open
access publication as *The Australian
Community Psychologist*. Art Veno produced
the first issue of Network from the
photocopier at Gippsland Institute of
Advanced Education in Churchill, Victoria
(now a campus of Federation University, via
20+ years as Monash Gippsland).

The early issues combined newsletter items with feature articles from local and overseas contributors. It was a vehicle to establish a distinct approach to the discipline,... with special issues over the years on areas as diverse as peace psychology, community mental health, and the impacts of tourism (Gridley, Fisher, Thomas, & Bishop, 2007, 3).

There were five issues in 1986 (Vol 2) and four in 1987 (Vol 3). A fascinating inclusion in Volume 2 (2) was the offer of a 'Pre Publications' service:

With the publication lag of major psychological journals being upward of 18 months, journal readers often read articles after they are up to 2 years old. To further facilitate the networking of members' current research and projects, this column is designed alleviate this problem by implementing a pre-publication service for readers. If anyone has recently had an article accepted for publication, please forward a copy of the abstract, article and relevant publication and pre-print details to the editor. The following authors have agreed to make their articles available to interested members of the Board of Community Psychology, either gratis or at cost. Please send your request directly to the senior author or to the person indicated (Veno, 1986, p.12).

The offer was taken up over the next few issues by a number of internationally renowned community psychology researchers, including Art himself – all by snail mail, years before the internet and social media made open access and pre-publication promotions possible.

Succeeding Arthur Veno at the end of 1989 was Des Hatchard from Latrobe University College Bendigo. Making the case for the newsletter to be upgraded to refereed Bulletin status, Des noted that by that time, the newsletter had 'established [a] national and a growing international reputation for its quality articles (and occasional humorous sallies)' (Hatchard,

1989, p.1). Des's first issue at the helm, Volume 5 (2), was one of the most memorable, and probably most widely read, across all thirty volumes. Devoted to the theme of Peace Psychology, it was guest edited by Ann Sanson, Convenor of Psychologists for the Prevention of War (now Psychologists for Peace) – how's this for a Table of Contents:

- Conflict Management and the prevention of war - Connie Peck.
- Growing Up in a Violent World - Ann Sanson & Margot Prior
- The Relevance of Experimental Social Dilemma Research to Understanding the Arms Race - Jenni Rice
- Teaching Skills to Resolve Conflict - Lyn Littlefield, Eleanor H. Wertheim & Anthony Love
- Explaining the Nuclear Paradox - Michael le Grande

In 1992 the National Committee of the Board of Community Psychologists moved to Western Australia, and *Network* accompanied it across the Nullarbor to be edited by Brian Bishop. And there it stayed for the next 25 years/21 volumes. Volume 8 (1993) comprised three issues, including a special rural issue edited by Anna Shadbolt with papers drawn from a 1991 symposium in Albury-Wodonga. Interestingly, one of the contributions was from a 'rural consultant' named Cathy McGowan, better known now as the ground-breaking former independent Federal Member for Indi (2013-10). Her credentials as a 'Voice for Indi' were already evident in her paper: 'Co-operative ways of working in communities: What does it mean for young people?' (McGowan, 1993, 7).

Volume 9 in 1994 saw the word 'Newsletter' replaced by 'Journal' on the *Network* cover, together with an ISSN number. This was the first Indigenous issue, following the International Year of Indigenous Peoples in 1993. The journal has produced several such issues in subsequent volumes, with increasing degrees of input and editorial control on the part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and sometimes Maori authors.

The move to Western Australia meant

a distinct shift towards emerging areas of focus such as rural-urban transition, environmental degradation, perceptions of procedural fairness in government decision-making, and the identification of localised, 'home-grown' approaches to social impact assessment, community participation, place-based research and intervention, and psychological sense of community in multicultural contexts. As Brian Bishop argued in his editorial for Volume 8 (3):

> Community psychological theory needs to be grounded in the community. The community needs to be involved in setting both the research methodologies and the research questions. Without this input, community psychology could become yet another sterile field of academic nonsense (Bishop, 1993, ii).

Production of *Network* faltered in the late 1990s, with just one issue (Volume 11, 1997) between 1996 and 1999. That issue was edited by the late Mark Rapley, then based at the University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba. Mark subsequently moved to Western Australia (Murdoch University, then to Edith Cowan), and so *Network* returned with him but the editorship eventually passed to Neil Drew and the team at Edith Cowan University, which provided lifesaving publication support coming into the new millennium. By now *Network* was in A4 format and had picked up the formidable subtitle of *The Official Journal of the Australian Psychological Society College of Community Psychologists*. (I have often wondered what unofficial imposters might be lurking somewhere in the publications universe, but the descriptor has stuck fast and now attaches to *Network's* successor, the *Australian Community Psychologist*).

Volumes 12-17 spanned the early 2000s and included a number of themed issues such as the 2002 issue on Disability, edited by Meg Smith, as well as special 'proceedings' issues of the 2001 and 2003 Trans-Tasman Conferences in Community Psychology, held in Melbourne and Perth respectively. The production quality of these issues was particularly impressive, with a specially designed swirly purple cover that looked to me like a vat of milk chocolate. In a seemingly seamless relay, editorship was rolled over to

and shared between Neil Drew. Lynne Cohen, Dawn Darlaston-Jones, and later, Anne Sibbel, Lauren Breen at Curtin University and Sharon McCarthy at the University of Notre Dame, WA right up until the handover to a new editor and team in a new location at the beginning of 2018. Special credit must go to Anne Sibbel who created the layout and formatted the content for the first online issue of ACP in April 2006, and has acted as Production Editor almost continuously since that time.

Ushering in a 'new name, a new look, and new directions' as co-editors of the first issue of the *Australian Community Psychologist*, Dawn Darlaston-Jones and Lynne Cohen declared:

> This is the time for new voices, and new ways of working to emerge within our discipline, it is time to revitalise and renew, and celebrate the partnerships we share with our communities (Darlaston-Jones & Cohen, 2006, 5).

The pendulum of the journal's content has swung over time between predominantly Australian contributions to an international spread from North America, occasionally Asia, the UK and Europe, and increasingly within the southern hemisphere from Aotearoa New Zealand and South Africa as well as Australia.

The earliest issues of the newsletter contained a mix of news, reviews and reprints of articles from international luminaries such as Seymour Sarason and Shulamit Reinharz. But as the field expanded within Australia, Network was able to draw with greater confidence on Australian contributions, often with an Indigenous focus, and these remained the predominant content as it progressed to refereed journal status. When *Network* became an open access online journal there was something of a swing back of the pendulum as it was now easier to solicit and receive manuscripts electronically, and the journal's increased exposure and enhanced reputation made it an attractive target for submissions. Conversely, in the age of impact factors that downgrade and work to exclude local content, it becomes more and more difficult for place-based research on (small-i) indigenous and Indigenous topics to be published in international journals, and so ACP could become the publication of choice for such authors, while being bypassed for higher impact

publications by more empowered or entitled authors.

Time will tell, but we are exceedingly proud of having reached our thirtieth volume, and remain committed to honouring the legacy and vision of Arthur Veno when he launched Network back in 1984.

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Flexibility, creativity and responsiveness in trauma counselling: Working with refugees and asylum-seekers

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Psychosocial interventions with refugee and asylum-seeker clients present particular challenges for mental health professionals. Not only do these clients suffer from posttraumatic experiences, they also encounter a plethora of difficulties with communication, social support and resettlement. To address psychosocial distress, interventions must be effective, efficacious, culturally appropriate and acceptable to clients. This study focussed on how service providers assisted their refugee and asylum-seeker clients to recover from psychosocial distress. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 28 professionals from humanitarian agencies serving migrant and refugee people in Australia. Qualitative analysis of interviews demonstrated four prominent themes: establishing safety, trust and connection; talking about trauma; alternatives to 'talk therapies'; and promoting resilience and growth. Study findings highlighted the complexity of addressing trauma among people from diverse experiential and sociocultural backgrounds. They demonstrate the importance of flexibility, creativity and responsiveness when balancing and integrating individual, group and community modalities, diverse therapies, and evidence-based and client-focussed approaches.

Supporting mental wellbeing, resilience and recovery is central to working with refugees and asylum-seekers. Refugees are people who have fled their country of nationality because of a well-founded fear of persecution and are unable or unwilling to return to that country (UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 1951). People who have fled their country and have similar experiences to that of refugees but are awaiting their claims to be recognised as refugees are considered asylum-seekers. This study focussed on service providers' experiences of addressing the psychosocial distress and trauma of their refugee and asylum-seeker clientele, through a multitude of individual and collective therapeutic interventions. As such, this study encapsulates important principles of community psychology - going beyond traditional, individual, psychotherapy to focus on social, cultural, economic and other influences that promote positive change, health, and empowerment of a marginalised group of people.

The introduction contains a discussion of the relevant literature pertaining to the biopsychosocial impact of experiencing trauma, trauma recovery, compounding factors of resettlement stressors, evidence- and practice-based treatment modalities and the Australian context relating to refugees and asylum-seekers.

The traumatic experiences of refugee and asylum-seekers such as threats to life, serious injury, sexual violence, torture, other human rights violations and multiple losses including separation from loved ones, home, community and culture can result in posttraumatic symptoms (e.g. PTSD), depressive, anxiety and psychotic states, substance abuse, existential problems, and identity crises (Drozdek & Wilson, 2004). Higher exposure to traumatic events is associated with more severe distress (dose-effect; Mollica, McInnes, Poole, & Tor, 1998); sometimes persisting for decades (Steel, Silove, Phan, & Bauman, 2002).

Although most cope with and recover from trauma over time (Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick, & Stein, 2012; Fazel, Wheeler, & Danesh, 2005); -with or without formal interventions, some refugee and asylum-seeker adults and children experience serious and ongoing mental health problems. This study explored how those providing services to refugees and asylum-seekers utilised flexible and creative treatment modalities to address the mental health concerns of their clientele, in order to inform future practice.

Before introducing this study of the experiences of people caring for refugees and asylum-seekers, we will briefly review the literature on refugee mental health, and introduce the Australian context. Posttraumatic symptoms include: reliving of past traumas as flashbacks during waking hours and nightmares during sleep; hyperarousal or hypervigilance; avoiding distressing memories or external reminders of trauma including social withdrawal and emotional numbing (Briere & Scott, 2014). People with posttraumatic symptoms may experience intense emotions without a clear memory of any corresponding event; or remember traumatising events in detail without emotions; or be in a continued state of vigilance, irritability or rage without knowing why (Herman, 2015). Although humans are endowed with a complex, organised and well-integrated system to deal with distress encountered in the ordinary course of life, traumatic events can render people helpless and terrified; overwhelming and disorganising this self-protection system (Herman, 2015).

Traumatic experiences also interfere with memory. Although trauma survivors can be frequently reliving their traumatic past (via flashbacks and nightmares), associated memories are usually not integrated into normal memory leaving survivors without a fluid narrative of events that can be assimilated into their life story (Van der Kolk, 2014). Thus trauma not only destroys actual security (e.g. threat to life), but also shatters survivors' assumptions concerning the safety, predictability of the world, and their trust in others, sense of self-worth and control, as well as their construction of self in relation to others, resulting in alienation and social disconnection (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Accordingly, some trauma experts suggest that creating, retelling and revising trauma stories enables people to integrate their fragmented memories, process their traumas, ameliorate posttraumatic symptoms and reconnect to society (Agger & Jensen, 1990; Drozdek & Wilson, 2004; Schauer, Neuner, & Ebert, 2011).

Although recovering from trauma is not a straightforward process, Herman (2015) proposed three stages of trauma recovery: establishing safety and security, acknowledging and consolidating traumatic memories, and moving from isolation to social connection. Highlighting the importance of creating a sanctuary within the therapeutic setting, Van der Veer and Van Waning (2004) identified four aspects of establishing safety—safety from the past, safety in present living conditions, safety in the therapeutic setting and for the therapist to feel comfortable with the client of diverse cultural backgrounds (safety for the therapist). It follows that socioeconomic difficulties in resettlement or the perception of living in an alien culture can perpetuate a sense of insecurity among refugees, maintaining or worsening their trauma. For instance a study by Steel and colleagues (Steel, Silove, Bird, McGorry, & Mohan, 1999) demonstrated how pre-migration trauma interacted with post-migratory stressors to exacerbate posttraumatic symptoms, and worsen settlement outcomes. Silove (1999) has suggested that post-migratory factors impacted on five core adaptive systems including safety, attachment, justice, identity-role, and existential meaning.

People with refugee experiences commonly encounter a plethora of difficulties in resettlement. They must learn a new language, adapt to new cultural values, food, traditions and worldviews, and navigate new systems of healthcare, governance, transport, and trading (Murray, Davidson, & Schweitzer, 2008). Berry

(1997) suggested that migrants including refugee people who were able to interact with the host society by maintaining some of their cultural values while also adopting aspects of the new culture (integration), had better settlement outcomes and higher wellbeing than those whose resettlement experience was one of assimilation, separation or marginalisation. However, learning the language of the host country, vital for successful integration, can be difficult for those suffering from concentration and memory issues (Herman, 2015). They also have responsibilities for family and kin they have left behind who they continue to try to help.

Evidence-based Treatment Modalities

For all these reasons, addressing trauma among refugee and asylum-seeker people presents particular challenges for mental health professionals. Most psychological interventions for traumatised people have involved intense exposure to their most traumatising experiences in a safe and secure environment. The primary objectives of exposure treatments are consolidation of memories and development of coherent narratives. Such exposure therapies can also include culturally appropriate components for calming the body and regulating emotions, such as meditation, mindfulness exercises, progressive relaxation, visualisation, and localised rituals. Nevertheless, they require strong commitment from therapists and clients, to undertake and complete the treatment program while working through intense and frightening memories and emotions. Examples of such well-established, evidence-based therapies used with trauma survivors include Culturally-adapted Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CA-CBT; Hinton, Rivera, Hofmann, Barlow, & Otto, 2012), Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET; Schauer et al., 2005) and Testimony Therapy (TT; Agger & Jensen, 1990).

As an alternative to prolonged exposure, Briere and Scott (2014) suggest that 'titrated' exposure within a therapeutic window that is not too emotionally overwhelming or underwhelming to the

trauma survivor, might be more effective. There is also support among practitioners for using non-verbal forms of trauma treatments – such as psychomotor, music or relaxation therapies, – based on the understanding that the body encodes and stores memories of trauma, which are then expressed through the body (Van der Kolk, 2014). For refugees and asylum-seekers, group and community interventions have particular advantages; potentially addressing social isolation, loss of trust, and multiple traumatisation, and also being more compatible with collective cultures and identities (e.g. the Den Bosch treatment model; Drozdek & Wilson, 2004). There are few empirical studies supporting these alternative approaches, however, in part because the interventions and their evaluations are more complex.

The Australian Context

The present study was conducted in the Australian state of South Australia. Australia is a multicultural society and many residents are first, second or third generation migrants, reflecting active government immigration and refugee resettlement programs throughout the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty first centuries (Hugo, 2011). In June 2018, there were 68.5 million displaced people and 25.4 million refugees in the world respectively (UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), 2018). In 2015-2016, Australia accepted approximately 17,555 humanitarian entrants including 12,000 displaced from conflicts in Syria and Iraq (Department of Home Affairs (DOHA), 2018).

Migrants to Australia often elect to settle in the large cities (Sydney or Melbourne) which offer more employment and training opportunities and have larger migrant communities including people from migrants' own background, country and ethnicity. Nonetheless, the Australian Government actively encourages settlement in other areas, including South Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011). In Australia, there are two main government support programs for refugee people: The Humanitarian Settlement Services program (HSS) offers essential services for the initial

6-12 months; accommodation, household goods, and assistance to register with social security, universal basic health insurance, health services, banks, and schools. The Settlement Grants Program (SGP) affords less intensive support for up to five years after arrival (Department of Social Services, 2016). Humanitarian entrants are offered 510 hours of free English language classes and have access to 24-hour telephone translating and interpreting services (TIS). Although trauma counselling and specialised healthcare services are also available free of charge to humanitarian entrants, eligibility is assessed according to stringent criteria.

In contrast to the humanitarian program, Australia's policies towards asylum-seekers are particularly harsh, including mandatory detention of adults and children in offshore facilities, extended use of indefinite 'temporary protection' visas, and blocking family reunion. Only limited services (e.g. individual and group counselling for past trauma) are available to them. Numerous experts in refugee mental health have documented the devastating psychological impact on already vulnerable adults and children (e.g. Newman, Dudley, & Steel, 2008; Silove, Steel, McGorry, & Mohan, 1998; Steel et al., 2006); posing special challenges to mental health professionals to provide culturally safe, sensitive and competent services to asylum-seekers awaiting their claims to be processed (Khawaja & Stein, 2016).

Study Aims

The present study formed part of a larger research project exploring the experiences of healthcare, mental health and resettlement workers, caring for refugees and asylum-seekers in South Australia. This study focussed on the ways in which service providers addressed the psychological distress and trauma of their refugee and asylum-seeker clients, whether through individual trauma counselling or other therapeutic interventions. In order to inform future practice, we aimed to ascertain the extent to which participants used individual, group and community intervention modalities, and to elicit, report, and reflect

on their experiences of helping people from refugee backgrounds. Through the qualitative analysis of interviews, we identified four prominent and recurrent patterns relevant to the study aims.

Method

Participants

Twenty eight service providers, employed by agencies in three sectors (mental health, healthcare and resettlement services) working with people from refugee and asylum-seeker backgrounds were interviewed for this study. They were doctors, nurses, psychologists, counsellors, agency managers, service coordinators, or case workers working in Adelaide, South Australia. Their work experience ranged from 18 months to 30 years with the majority reporting 2-5 years of experience working with refugees. Participants worked at either non specialised or specialised 'refugee' agencies. About one third of participants were recent migrants (some from refugee backgrounds), while the remainder were born or had lived more than 10-15 years in Australia.

Because of the relatively small population and number of agencies providing services to refugees and asylum-seekers in South Australia, organisational affiliations and participant descriptions that could potentially lead to identification have been omitted, to ensure participant and organisational confidentiality. Table 1 contains a description of participants. (Further information regarding participants can be found in: Puvimanasinghe, Denson, Augoustinos, and Somasundaram, 2015).

Data Collection

Conduct of the study was approved by the Research Ethics Committees of the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Health Department. The first author contacted and met with agency managers or team leaders of relevant organisations and after discussing details of the research study requested permission to interview staff. Most study participants were recruited through a passive snowballing technique. Managers or team leaders circulated an email request to staff members,

Table 1. Characteristics of participants.

N=28	
Gender	
Women	19
Men	9
Previous experience working with refugees	
Less than 2 years	3
2-5 years	10
5-10 years	5
More than 10 years	7
Not specified	3
Profession / current position [a]	
Doctors	2
Nurses	3
Psychologists	3
Counsellors	9
Managers	3
Program officers / case workers	8
Nature of Organisation [b]	
Healthcare	5
Mental health	12
Settlement	11
Background [c]	
Non-CaLD background or long-term migrant	17
Refugee	5
Recent Immigrant / CaLD [d] background	6

[a] Denotes either specialisation (doctor, nurse, psychologist) or current position (e.g. counsellors included people with tertiary qualifications in counselling, social work, nursing or psychology).

[b] Denotes the main service provided by the organisation to which a worker was affiliated and not necessarily the worker's specialisation (e.g. a social worker at a mental healthcare service was considered a 'mental healthcare worker').

[c] Refugee background included workers from South Asia, Middle East and Europe; Recent Migrant/CaLD background included those from South Asia, Europe and South America.

[d] CaLD = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

those interested in participation contacted the first author. Two participants who worked as private practitioners were approached directly: they were interviewed in their personal professional capacity notwithstanding any organisational affiliation. Participants were offered the option to be interviewed individually or participate in a group discussion. All participants except two opted for individual interviews. Signed informed consent was obtained from each participant before their interview.

Interviews lasted 1-2 hours and had a semi-structured format comprising several open-ended questions. The interview protocol focussed on areas such as: participants' experiences working with people from refugee backgrounds; challenges faced by clients and service providers; observed strengths and resilience of clients; and recommendations for improving services. All interviews were audio-recorded.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013) was used to identify prominent and recurring patterns in the data identified at a semantic or explicit level of analysis. The NVivo version 9 qualitative data analysis program was used to facilitate analysis. Data analysis comprised the following stages. First, the audiotaped interviews were transcribed orthographically and checked for accuracy. Second, interviews (including interview notes) were read and re-read to gain familiarity with the data set. Third, interviews were coded, and the initial codes generated were searched for themes which were then reviewed, defined and named. Analysis included moving backward and forward between the data set, the generated codes, analyses being produced, and theoretical concepts (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Interviews and primary analyses were conducted by the first author, then a recent migrant to Australia. All authors participated in subsequent analyses including refining themes and extracts, as well as linking to theoretical concepts. The themes and subthemes identified through analysis together with their relationships with

each other are depicted in Figure 1.

Analysis

As depicted in Figure 1, we identified four major themes: (1) establishing safety, trust and connection, (2) talking about trauma, (3) alternatives to 'talk therapies', and (4) promoting resilience and growth. Detailed analyses are set out below.

Establishing Safety, Trust and Connection

Participants described the importance of establishing safety, not only in therapy but in everyday life including easing resettlement stressors. Other than concerns for family and kin left behind, there was consensus that refugees' primary concerns usually revolved around practical resettlement issues: healthcare, employment, children's schooling, learning English and, in particular, accommodation. The serious shortage of public housing and affordable private rental properties in South Australia was a major problem. As one agency manager explained, refugee people had already faced multiple displacements, losing homes, families, possessions and livelihoods. Secure and affordable housing was essential for a sense of stability and safety. Thus, most participants' work included advocating for clients' resettlement needs, or referring clients to services providing for such assistance. One resettlement worker emphasised the importance of her mediatory role in creating a trusting and confident relationship between her refugee clients and various services (health, housing, social security); another aspect of safety.

Advocating for clients and assisting with practical needs had the advantage of building a trusting relationship between clients and service providers, considered essential to the commencement and progress of therapeutic work. Therapists sometimes needed to spend months or even years developing connections with their clients. One counsellor described creating trust with clients by offering 'the counselling room as their space and the counselling time as their time', 'working with people at their own pace' and 'addressing their concerns at any given time'. Others described visiting clients at home, meeting their families and sharing
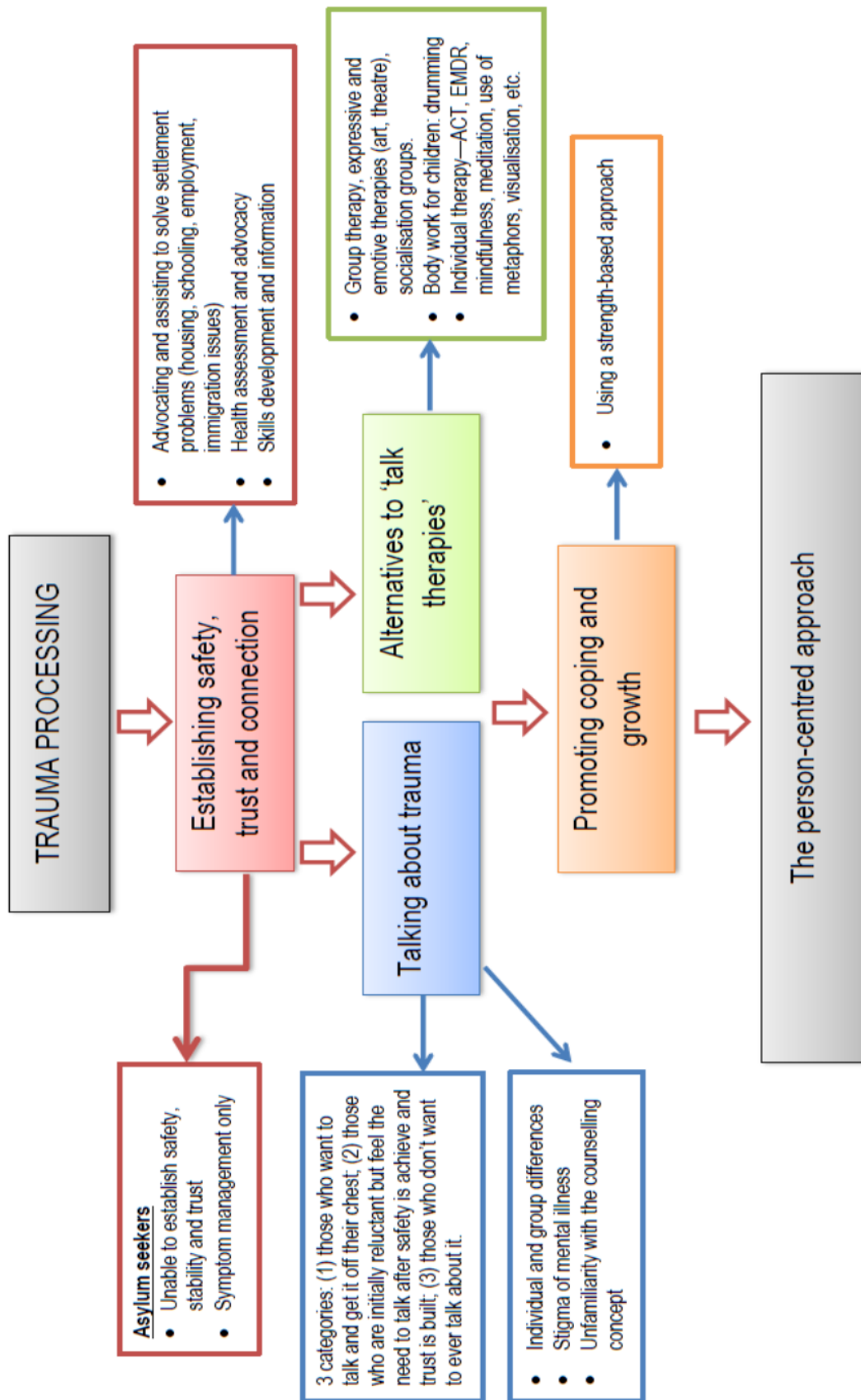
Figure 1. The theme and subthemes revealed by data analysis

food and everyday activities (e.g. cooking or sewing) with them to overcome the barrier of strangeness.

Some mental health workers considered establishing safety, stability and trust with clients as the primary focus of their work–together with addressing clients' immediate needs and managing current symptoms of traumatisation such as sleeplessness, nightmares, loss of appetite and concentration, nervousness and irritability. According to **AB**, a mental health worker, restoring safety and trust was more important than processing trauma. He explained:

> We all experience trauma of some kind. I don't think the magic or the mystery is in being able to process that event as much as the consequences of that event - that is that people don't feel safe anymore. They don't feel that the world is predictable, they don't feel that their rights or the things that they hold really valuable are safe. And it's those feelings that need to be restored. And we restore them in different ways such as letting people know that …therapy is a choice, that it has a beginning and an end, they can leave any time you know, [and] tell that you are there for them. So, lot of little experiences add up to restore a sense of safety and a sense of trust in people.

CD who worked at a healthcare agency shared a strategy he employed to develop a trusting relationship with clients—to bring himself into the therapy including his personal weaknesses such as feeling angry, nervous or lost. For example, he said:

> …yesterday, a woman I'm working with; I was actually feeling quite angry in some ways because I couldn't get my point through to her very well. And I said to her at the end 'We had a bit of a fight today didn't we?' and she said 'Yes we have'. And this was a real opening. We built a bridge, a

conduit that we were able to open up to connect much better even if we had to do it through the interpreter. But it really worked very well.

Many participants said that once safety and trust were established, clients usually felt more comfortable and confident to disclose and address past traumatic experiences. Healthcare workers noted clients' gradual willingness to share more of their history as they progressed through the health assessment. Participants working with asylum-seekers, however, highlighted the difficulty of establishing safety, stability or trust while their clients' lives were surrounded by uncertainty and instability – as explained by **EF**, a mental health worker:

> …one of the really important things…before talking about traumatic memories is the idea of safety and stability. And asylum-seekers don't have that. So because they don't know when they're going to be sent back; if they're going to get their visa, if they'll be deported, if they'll be sent to Nauru, even at the moment there is so much uncertainty about where people are gonna go, it's really hard to establish that sense of safety to be able to start talking about trauma.

Therapeutic progress with asylum-seekers was additionally hindered by the uncertain duration of therapist-client relationships. Mental healthcare workers were reluctant to commence trauma exposure programs with clients who might be deported or transferred at short notice. Hence, they limited their input to support, advocacy and symptom management unless the client actively initiated discussion of his or her past experiences (as described below).

Asked specifically about differences between types of client in their ability to feel safe and build a trusting relationship with service providers, participants providing mental healthcare to their clients were very reluctant to generalise. Some cautiously observed a difference between older women,

who sometimes had difficulty engaging with the counselling process, and younger women – seen as more assertive, articulate and ready to establish relationships. **GH** an experienced counsellor, described the challenges of working with a group of older women as follows:

> …when we work with [them], it is hard because [they] had come from generations of wars. It's not just one war; it's series of 'wars'…they were kind of forced to get married at 11, 12 years old. And sometimes…they had their husbands being abusive… women who had lived in remote villages…inserted into this society and expected to do many things. And so…it was quite hard to establish that sense of safety and to develop a relationship because they … have confronted so much suffering, so much pain…that once here, some of them initially were paralysed by pain…and [indicated] profound depression and sadness.

Talking about Trauma

The benefits of verbalisation or disclosure of past trauma were acknowledged by the majority of participants who identified three categories of clients depending on their ability and willingness to talk about past traumatic experiences: clients who willingly elaborated traumatic events and experiences; clients who were initially unwilling or incapable of verbalisation, but gradually with time and the establishing of safety and trust wanted to share the traumatic experiences of their lives; and others who never wanted to, could not, or got more disturbed when disclosing past trauma.

Almost all participants indicated that they had encountered clients who readily shared details about past traumas and described how some people would tell their entire life story despite not being required to do so (e.g. during initial assessment). Some participants observed that people told stories not necessarily because they wanted to do so, but because they considered it a 'necessary evil' in order to obtain vital practical assistance or because they believed that

divulging past trauma would motivate service providers to give tangible assistance, such as writing letters to support their eligibility for public housing or disability payments. According to one counsellor, as a survival technique or active coping strategy used by clients that was 'not necessarily a bad thing'. A psychologist observed that now he simply asked clients during the first session what agency support letters they wanted, so he could write them and then perhaps begin therapeutic work. Many people declined ongoing therapy once the tangible help was provided, but some of those returned much later, requesting treatment.

Nonetheless, several participants acknowledged that sharing trauma stories was beneficial for trauma survivors because they previously had little opportunity to do so, and they needed validation of their previous traumatic experiences and to find meaning for those events. Even clients who had families and community, refrained from confiding in significant others because they did not want to burden them. These participants believed that the privacy and confidentiality of the counselling room facilitated disclosure. Sometimes trauma narratives occurred spontaneously and briefly, taking service providers by surprise as described by **IJ,** a counsellor, in the following extract:

> So during assessment…someone will just come in and 'blah' just tell you everything in the first two hours, absolutely everything, to the point that…I'm not ready and I'm quite upset from what I'm hearing. And when you finish the session, they are visibly quite happy because they've purged; just got rid of all this information that they wanted to talk about for so long because no one has ever asked them. And then suddenly you say 'ok, this is a process that can be ongoing for several months; are you interested?' 'Oh no, no; I don't want to see anyone else again…thank you so much'. And they are gone; because

they've done what they wanted to do.

Participants indicated both individual and group differences in clients' ability and/or capacity to talk about trauma in response to interviewers' questions, although many said they were reluctant to stereotype clients or be influenced by prior assumptions. When they did identify cultural and other group differences, they emphasised that these were general observations and that individual differences usually surpassed group differences.

According to one mental health worker, if the human rights violations had received international recognition, clients were more inclined to describe the details of their torture and trauma. Another observed that for some clients the experience of torture and trauma had become their predominant identity, impeding their ability to move on, heal and establish a new life. Conversely if survivors' stories of violation, deprivation and suppression were relatively unknown or had not received public or personal validation (e.g. asylum-seekers), they might be less willing to describe their past. One participant working with a group of young male asylum-seekers observed a slightly different trend among his clientele, most of whom had made dangerous sea journeys to Australia and spent several years in detention before being released into the community. According to him, they were proud to describe their stories of escape, endurance and bravery.

Several mental health and healthcare workers mentioned a distinction they observed between Middle Eastern and Asian women, and their African counterparts. African women were identified as being more articulate, assertive, and willing to engage with the therapeutic process whereas Middle Eastern and Asian women were perceived as more hesitant to share intimate details of their traumatic experiences, possibly because of the stigma attached to such disclosure or they feared ostracization from their families and communities, if what they disclosed became public.

According to one psychologist, sexual traumatisation was the most difficult topic to discuss for both women and men, but for different reasons. For men, sexual violence perpetrated against them brought about a personal sense of shame about masculinity and manhood; whereas in some cultures, sexually abused women were considered to be unclean or to bring dishonour on their families. Hence, he observed, women were doubly traumatised: first by the perpetrators and then by their own families and communities.

In the following extract **KL**, a counsellor from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) background shared his opinion of the benefits of culturally appropriate disclosure of past trauma even though silence is a coping strategy in many cultures.

> Supressing the issues is one technique and in some communities it's common… [in] some Eastern or African cultures…one of the conflict resolution techniques…[is] just keep it quiet. It means you don't disturb the issue; you don't talk about it. You just keep quiet. But I don't believe it. We are talking about human beings; culture is second… first is human being. [So] I believe in verbalisation…it is very useful but it has to become part of the culture…if that woman or man is from that culture you can't expose them to those techniques [immediately]. So you have to be careful.

Most participants agreed that counselling, which involves revealing one's inner-most personal thoughts and feelings with a stranger (and possibly an interpreter), usually in a counselling room, was a western concept not necessarily familiar or acceptable to people from diverse non-western cultures. Most refugees would understand discussing problems with family, friends, religious leaders, or tribal elders, but western counselling remained an alien concept, with many languages not including a word for 'counselling'. Settlement workers from two South Asian communities confirmed their communities' unfamiliarity with the counselling concept and their

discomfort with the practice.

An initial step of mental health work with clients therefore involved informing them about counselling and ascertaining their willingness to participate. One healthcare worker described taking the opportunity to introduce the concept of counselling when clients complained of physical ailments (headaches, backaches, shoulder pain), suggesting that maybe worry and distress was causing the physical pain. However she would refer them for counselling only if she observed willingness in clients because, she explained, counselling was similar to giving up smoking; a client had to be willing to change and to do the hard work involved. Contrastingly a mental health worker said he preferred to 'give the tablet' (i.e. refer clients to a General Practitioner - GP or Psychiatrist to obtain medication) most clients expected for their physical pain, so he could focus on the therapeutic process. Although there was never a complete acceptance or understanding of counselling among clients, participants said that increasing familiarity and reduced distress enhanced clients' willingness to talk and to share. However, when certain clients or groups appeared not to benefit from individual sessions, mental health and healthcare workers were called upon to expand their imaginations and design unique and innovative programs for their clients (detailed in the next section: alternatives to talk therapies).

Most participants mentioned the stigma attached to mental illness in many communities and the barriers to accessing mental healthcare faced by refugees. Sometimes, people were wary to seek assistance for fear of being labelled 'crazy' or 'mad'. Confidentiality was also a concept not totally comprehended despite explanation; people worried that what they disclosed during counselling would reach their communities, through the interpreters or otherwise. Although membership in a close-knit community was considered an important coping strategy (see under 'promoting resilience and growth') it also limited the privacy of community members. These perceptions were validated by several workers from CaLD and refugee backgrounds.

Alternatives to 'Talk Therapies'

Most participants said they had met clients who were reluctant to talk about their difficult experiences. Some declined to return to the darkness of the past, instead focussing on the present and future. For mental health workers, a client-focussed approach was acceptable in these instances and they continued to address clients' day-to-day needs; giving them information, empowering them to access essential services, making referrals, and otherwise facilitating their resettlement.

Nevertheless, the ultimate goal was to progress through advocacy and the establishment of trust to intervention and recovery: by actively assisting refugee clients to process trauma. With some clients however little progress was made despite months or years of conventional individual treatment. Hence it was imperative to be innovative and introduce culturally more acceptable alternatives for trauma recovery. In the following extract **MN**, a counsellor, described how she successfully used non-verbal techniques with people who were unable or unwilling to talk about past trauma:

When there is a block… then the person will just repeat the same thing again and again…So I use relaxation and meditation and visualisation and metaphors…like talking about a tree you know… And it works really well. It works really well. Because it's a way of expressing differently. I use art therapy as well which is externalisation and metaphors as well.

Observing the lack of progress with groups of clients in individual counselling sessions, mental health workers had initiated group sessions for older women and younger men. For instance, in a women's group, despite the women's earlier distrust of counselling and fear that their stories would be revealed to their communities, they actively participated in group sessions, readily taking turns to share their experiences

with each other. These women's groups were later developed into 'theatre therapy' involving women depicting their trauma and distress collectively through body movements without using words. The success of group work was enthusiastically explained by **OP** in the following extract:

> We found that with the group it was fantastic. At [agency name] we started an even more challenging process…We started a theatre group…based on Augusto Boal's 'Theatre of the Oppressed'…and this kind of theatre…is more than talking; it is working with the body but to liberate people…women initially were fearful...a woman may sit and talk but will not move the body…During the theatre group the women would do things...like these body movements that were incredible.

The women's groups organised by settlement agencies were also quite successful in promoting the sharing of coping strategies. Overcoming isolation, they provided a venue for women to learn from each other and for settlement workers to understand the challenges they faced.

Participants working with men reported encountering similar problems. According to mental healthcare workers, among some Middle Eastern and African men, talking about feelings was a weakness; and together with the stigma attached to mental illness, led to reluctance to share traumatic experiences. Unaccompanied young men, without family and sometimes estranged from community, were especially isolated. Hence a young men's group was established for the men to meet and socialise with each other and with a counsellor in a group setting. This also allowed a counsellor to sensitively monitor any deterioration in clients' well-being or circumstances.

The flexibility extended to adult clients by professionals and their organisations was also evident in services offered to children. One mental health worker indicated that because some refugee children exposed to trauma had accelerated heart rates, and were quick to react and get angry, they were getting into trouble and being expelled from school. Sitting and talking to individual children about trauma was unproductive, so this worker together with colleagues had started an innovative program to teach children to calm their bodies through drumming. During a lengthy interview, she described establishing a drumming group for children identified by schools as difficult to manage – and with the assistance of an instructor, teaching children to drum to the rhythm of the heartbeat. The results were described by QR as follows:

> …I remember doing it once at a school with a group of boys, and they picked all the difficult boys in the school…They were put into this drumming program…as I was watching them drumming, some of them were getting quite glazed in their eyes and looking a bit tired; and some asked if they could just lie down for a while. It was really funny…because the teacher…said to me: "Oh, this is not good; nobody is participating…and she was panicking because at least five boys were lying on the floor and having a bit of a nap. And I said to her 'this is fantastic'. Because basically we were seeing right in front of us, all those systems that need to calm down or regulate are actually doing that.

Some mental health workers delivered specific therapies such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), or Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET), whereas others adopted eclectic approaches, for example including narrative and art therapy, writing in journals, relaxation, meditation, or visualisation. Psychologist ST found ACT especially useful for trauma recovery because, he explained, it recognised that people's thoughts and feelings were not necessarily dysfunctional, unlike 'pure' cognitive behavioural therapy. ACT assisted people to accept, tolerate and manage uncomfortable thoughts and emotions. According to him, implying or telling his

clients that they 'should not feel like that' would be abusive, because sometimes people were justified in thinking and feeling the way they did, for example the hopelessness felt by asylum-seekers simultaneously dealing with past trauma and brutal immigration department procedures.

Promoting Resilience and Growth

The majority of interviewees highlighted the importance of assisting trauma survivors to process their trauma, whether through disclosure and exposure, or non-verbal methods. They also emphasised that people's ability to feel safe again, sense of predictability in the world, and trust in humanity needed to be restored. According to an agency manager with a refugee background, it was appreciation for freedom and the beauty of life that enabled clients to rebuild their lives, overcome trauma, and continue despite adversity.

Several mental healthcare workers said they utilised a strengths-based approach; not merely to teach clients coping strategies, but also observing and uncovering the strengths clients already possessed; because most refugees had enormous resilience even at times when they could not see beyond their present predicaments. Listening to clients' stories was a good way of exploring potential sources of strength and resilience and reminding them of their achievements (escaping wars, safeguarding children, overcoming obstacles and surviving). Similarly, participants encouraged clients by giving positive feedback on current achievements (e.g. learning English, getting a job). For most refugees, thinking about their families, financially supporting relatives overseas whenever possible, and maintaining hope for reunion were coping strategies – although official barriers to family reunion produced desperation and hopelessness.

The enormous resilience of clients was readily identified and elaborated by several participants. To them, clients experienced tremendous stressors settling into a new society, navigating through a strange system and, learning an alien language. Simultaneously many were suffering the consequences of past traumas and continuing

to be distressed about separation or loss of immediate family members, home country culture and community. Yet they continued to care for their children, educate themselves, and gain employment, much to the admiration of participants who found their clients' perseverance personally inspiring (how service providers learned lessons from their refugee clients is further described in Puvimanasinghe et al., 2015).

Participants working with asylum-seekers—especially unaccompanied minors—marvelled at the resilience of some clients. They had left their families and made the perilous journey to Australia, endured detention, and were constantly worried about deportation, but still enthusiastically learnt English, used social media, attended school and gym, and engaged in other activities common to adolescent boys.

Community factors. Participants in all three categories (mental health, healthcare and resettlement) considered community an important source of strength for refugees to get a sense of belonging, maintain communal identity, associate with others from a similar culture, speak the same language, share food, and prevent social isolation within the new environment. Social networks were particularly important for newcomers to get practical help, receive information and ease the burden of resettlement. For example, a resettlement worker described how the Afghan community in Adelaide came to the aid of asylum-seekers, welcoming and sharing their homes with them. The support received by Tamil asylum-seekers from their community in Melbourne was also described. According to mental health workers, clients' sense of community enhanced the therapeutic relationship during counselling and workers facilitated the communal spirit in the counselling room by for example, booking the same interpreter for all sessions with a client.

Mental health and resettlement workers facilitating group work described how group members shared their stories and their coping strategies with each other (praying for family overseas, religious rituals, gardening). Resettlement workers explained the benefits

for one refugee community of living in a small country town in South Australia rather than being isolated in the outer suburbs of a city. They described a symbiotic relationship between clients and the town's inhabitants: the refugee workforce supported a specific local industry; and in return, the local people offered refugee families communal support and friendship. The local health centre organised meetings where older Italian and Greek immigrant women shared their experiences with the newcomer women, giving hope for the future.

According to some participants, however, community was a double-edged sword. Communities could be divided on past ethnic and religious antagonisms; people could be stigmatised for deviating from cultural norms; and inter-generational tensions developed between younger and older generations within communities and families. Some communities were working to unify their diverse members. Nonetheless, some people remained isolated with only agency workers and volunteers to befriend and support them. **UV**, a nurse, described the twin-edged nature of community as follows:

> Some people want to connect to community; and others don't. And it depends a lot on their circumstances. So sometimes connecting to community can mean…connecting to home; but it can also mean taking the problems from home and planting them in a new country...[they] absolutely don't want to…meet people here that back home were responsible for the very trauma they have.

Religion and spirituality. Most participants said that religious values and beliefs could be a protective factor, sometimes preventing desperate people from committing suicide (because suicide was against most religious precepts). Some participants made a distinction between religion and spirituality: rigid religious beliefs could defeat the therapeutic objective because people could be resistant to change (e.g. 'it is God's will that I suffer') whereas a personal relationship with a higher power

was identified as a consolation in times of need. However, religion and culture intersected in many ways, connecting clients to their past and affording a sense of belonging to a religious community including benefits of socialising at religious festivals and partaking of religious rituals. **WX** a mental healthcare worker, explained the twin-edge of religion as follows:

> Though religion was a powerful source, rigid fatalistic religious beliefs are difficult to work with in the counselling room; because sometimes clients' fatalistic religious beliefs becomes an uphill battle against God.

Organisational support. One agency manager explained that organisational assistance was vital for refugees' confidence and support. It was a consolation to have a place where they were understood, a place they trusted and could visit and talk to someone and where they got social support ('my counsellor will come to visit me today and make sure I am alright'). A settlement agency had a volunteer program with around 150 volunteers who assisted newcomers in numerous ways, especially people who had little social support elsewhere. These volunteers provided their clients with the necessary skills and information to be confident and resolve their own resettlement problems.

Sometimes, however, participants explained that some clients indicated no coping strategies or strengths, and had no community supports available. Then, agencies and their workers served as a scaffold for clients to lean on until their situations improved.

Discussion

This study focussed on the ways in which service providers addressed the psychological distress and trauma of their refugee and asylum-seeker clients, whether through individual counselling or other therapeutic interventions. In order to inform future practice, we aimed to (1) ascertain the extent to which workers used individual, group and community intervention modalities, and (2) draw on their experiences

of assisting traumatised people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds to overcome trauma and distress. Through the qualitative analysis of interviews, we identified four prominent and recurrent patterns relevant to the research aims, namely how service providers in South Australia assisted people. The four identified themes were: (1) establishing safety, trust and connection; (2) talking about trauma (3) alternatives to 'talk therapies' and (4) promoting resilience and growth.

As emphasised consistently, we found strong support for the importance of establishing safety, stability and trust with refugee clients. Almost all participants considered resettlement issues to be a major obstacle in establishing a sense of safety and stability. Inability to secure essential needs such as housing necessitated participants to spend long hours advocating on behalf of clients to establish a sense of basic security. Sometimes that was the extent of the therapeutic service mental healthcare workers afforded, considering the multitude of needs and the recurring nature of problems clients encountered. Establishing safety and trust and creating a 'safe therapeutic sanctuary' is a pre-requisite to any psychological intervention (Van der Veer & Van Wanning, 2004). Considering the first aspect of safety; most refugee clients had achieved safety from past threats—although this did not extend to asylum-seekers who lived in perpetual fear of deportation. Service providers strove to create a sense of safety in the present by advocating for clients' essential resettlement needs (e.g. affordable housing). Mental health workers were utilising advocacy to build a safe and trusting relationship in the counselling setting. The mostly cooperative relationship between mental health, health and settlement agencies in South Australia described by participants also facilitated the creation of a safety-net and stability for refugees in the present (cf. Vander Veer & Van Wanning, 2004).

According to participants, supporting asylum-seekers was particularly arduous (workers' experiences of vicarious traumatisation are described in Puvimanasinghe et al., 2015). Clients' uncertain plight and intense fear of deportation were not conducive to establishing safety and stability. Hence some mental health workers were left with little option but to limit their work to addressing basic needs and managing posttraumatic symptoms. One settlement agency's use of a volunteer program to assist asylum-seekers' material and psychosocial needs was especially useful in this regard—mainly because volunteers were not restricted by funding mandates (most of which specifically excluded asylum-seekers). Another important strategy for establishing safety in the present (as well as safety in the therapeutic setting and for the therapist) was to ensure the cultural and language sensitivity of services, because being in a culturally alien place was a potential cause for insecurity and mistrust (Gartley & Due, 2017; Murray et al., 2008). Accordingly, participants from all three categories (mental health, healthcare and resettlement) elaborated the measures they took: to be sensitive to the cultural, conceptual, gender, age and experiential differences of their clients; to accommodate and respond to clients' differential expectations; and to maintain flexibility in service delivery (Khawaja & Stein, 2016; Puvimanasinghe et al., 2015). Two additional ways of enhancing safety were normalising responses (reminding clients that other migrants and refugees had faced similar situations and survived) and giving control (offering clients choices and opportunities in the therapeutic process) as described by Van der Veer and Van Wanning (2004).

Notwithstanding that most people require a sense of security and stability to share their most traumatic and intimate experiences, some clients made spontaneous disclosures in the midst of instability. This finding supports the narrative impulse of human beings (Bruner, 1990), where people told stories about their lives as an essential exercise of making meaning of otherwise incomprehensible and meaningless occurrences. Apparently, the mere fact that someone was willing to listen, bear witness

and validate clients' stories was sufficient for some clients to feel the safety and trust required to share their experiences. The benefits of disclosing traumatic experiences in a safe and secure environment as described by participants tends to support the efficacy of culturally modified psychological interventions involving intense detailed exposure to past traumatic experiences (e.g. Agger, Igreja, Kiehle, & Polatin, 2012; Hinton et al., 2012).

The client-focussed approach emphasises the importance of being sensitive to particular individual needs of clients (Joseph, 2004). Many participants advocated this approach as an alternative to exposure-based trauma interventions, because they recognised individual and group differences between clients in their current capacity to feel safe and enter into a trusting relationship and their willingness to share past trauma (e.g. variations in cultural, gender and age, visa status, nature of trauma). Our findings highlighted the adaptability and innovation utilised by participants in designing non-standard therapies and strategies for clients unable to benefit from standard approaches. The benefits of alternative therapies in group settings such as drumming, dancing and art work, to reduce symptoms, increase wellbeing and give meaning to life to traumatised people from refugee backgrounds, has been acknowledged (Dhillon, Centeio, & Dillon, 2019; Marsh, 2012; Rowe et al., 2017).

There was also some evidence that for some clients, verbalising past trauma was not indicated, either because they had not established the basis (safety, stability, trust) for doing so or they had alternative coping strategies to process trauma. Previous research has found kinaesthetic measures and culturally based rituals to be more important for some groups of people than 'talk therapies'. For example Somasundaram (2010) utilised cultural and religious rituals in therapy to bring about positive remissions in a group of Muslim refugees and asylum-seekers in South Australia. Although Somasundaram measured study outcomes qualitatively, there is potential for study

findings to be utilised to develop standalone/adjunct interventions or for adapting established therapies for culturally diverse populations (e.g. CA-CBT; Hinton et al., 2012).

These study findings regarding refugee clients' differing preferences for and ability to utilise verbal or non-verbal methods are consistent with the findings of a narrative study conducted with former refugees from two African communities also living in South Australia. Whereas members of one community afforded elaborate and evaluative narratives of past traumatic events, members of the other community preferred to maintain their silence regarding painful past events (Puvimanasinghe, Denson, Augoustinos, & Somasundaram, 2014).

Most participants utilised what they described as a strengths-based approach that focused on listening to clients' stories to explore and learn about clients' resilience and traditional coping strategies. Interviewees identified a range of strengths such as family and community support, spirituality and religious observances and rituals—now well-established in the literature (Goodman, 2004; Khawaja, White, Schweitzer, & Greenslade, 2008; Tempany, 2009). Conversely, however, some potential resources (community, religion) could become stressors for some people. These findings illustrate the complexity and diversity involved in working with people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds. Although learning about people's cultural and national backgrounds was important, participants warned against simplistic assumptions. They emphasised the need for openness, on-the-job learning from clients, and the need for flexibility to address complexity.

Study limitations. The snowballing technique of participant recruitment through specific agencies and the purposive sampling utilised in the study may have resulted in the findings being unrepresentative of the experiences of the general population of service providers working with people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds. Participants who worked in these agencies,

and volunteered for interviews, may have had more positive experiences than others who did not. Participants' attempts to portray themselves in a positive light, especially regarding their commitment to their clients and their work, cannot be discounted. However, we believe the study strategies of using open-ended interview questions; adopting an informal interview that prompted elaboration and discussion of thoughts and ideas; and the request for stories, to some extent, safeguarded against this limitation.

Finally, the exploratory nature of the research precludes us from making causal linkages within our study findings. Nonetheless, the rich data shared and collected; and the insights into the importance of establishing safety and trust, trauma disclosure, and resilience undoubtedly adds to the literature on working with people from refugee backgrounds.

Conclusion

The present study explored how mental health, healthcare and resettlement workers in South Australia assisted their refugee and asylum seeking clients; specifically, how they helped them recover from psychosocial distress and trauma. Four prominent themes were identified: establishing safety, trust and connection, talking about trauma, working with silences, and promoting resilience and growth. The study underscored the complexity of working with people from diverse experiential and sociocultural backgrounds, and the flexibility required in this type of trauma work—and also the rewards of such work.

Our findings suggest that key aspects of successful counselling approaches in the refugee context include a strong focus on relationship-building and safety; sensitivity to individual and cultural needs and preferences; responsiveness to settlement needs; and a flexible array of approaches (individual, group and community) including client-focussed, exposure-based, non-verbal, and positive (strengths or resilience-based) interventions.

These findings may be utilised when developing training and supervision programs for workers caring for refugees and asylum-seekers, to raise awareness of the skills, commitment, flexibility and reflexivity required to work in this area: Figure 1 provides a possible template. These findings may also inform personnel recruitment, highlighting the personal rewards and social value of this diverse and flexible therapeutic work.

Participants' accounts provided additional evidence of the inadequacy of asylum-seeker policies in Australia. Traumatic in their own right, they also specifically deny refugee people many potentially therapeutic experiences including security, trauma treatment, and family reunion, all of which promote resilience. Future research could focus on designing larger studies of more agencies, with more representative sampling, including workers who have left the field. Formal evaluation of the flexible and culturally appropriate interventions described here is also imperative if the field is to develop further: it would permit these useful and acceptable psychosocial approaches to be admitted as evidence-based practice.

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Factors impacting life satisfaction of refugees in Australia:
A mixed method study

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Individuals from war-torn countries seek refuge in Australia. Their life satisfaction, which depends on a range of personal and contextual factors, is not fully understood. The present study used a mixed method approach to explore the life satisfaction of former refugees in Australia. In the first phase, former refugees (N=197) from Ethiopia, Congo and Burma completed a battery of questionnaires with the help of interpreters. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to investigate the effect of demographic factors on life satisfaction. Life satisfaction of the participants differed on the basis of country of origin, employment status, and English proficiency. Multiple regression analysis indicated that although age, length of stay, presence of acculturation, absence of acculturative stress and resilience accounted for 40% of the variability in life satisfaction, resilience emerged as the most significant factor. In the second phase another sample comprising 47 former refugees from the three countries were interviewed. Themes emerging from the qualitative analysis supported the quantitative data. The Ethiopian and Congolese participants were relatively more satisfied with their lives than participants from Burma. Those with good problem solving and language skills, and an ability to find resources, services, support and employment, reported experiencing better well-being and life satisfaction. The study has implications for mental and allied health professionals, who work with former refugees. The findings highlight personal and contextual factors that can be enhanced to increase the life satisfaction of former refugees settled in Australia.

There is now substantial evidence that life satisfaction is important for the health and wellbeing of all members of society (Diener, Ng, Harter, & Arora, 2010). A mentally and physically healthy population leads to a society which is well developed socially and economically (Diener, Seligman, Choi, & Oishi, 2018). There is also a consensus that a range of psychosocial, demographic and economic determinants may be responsible for this life satisfaction (Tay, Ng, Kuykendall, & Diener, 2014). Australia is a multicultural society, where many culturally and linguistically diverse communities live along with the larger majority. This culturally and linguistically diverse society also comprises individuals from refugee backgrounds, who have fled war-torn countries for safer haven. Though there has been extensive work with the larger majority, there is limited information about the life satisfaction of those from a refugee background (termed for brevity in this paper 'former refugees').

Along with demographic factors, this population is significantly influenced by a number of other migration related experiences such as acculturation and acculturative stress. Despite these challenges, they demonstrate resilience and personal strengths which may contribute to life satisfaction. As the primary goal of the resettlement process is to help former refugees attain a satisfactory life, it is vital to understand personal and contextual factors that promote the life satisfaction of this population (Dako-Gyeke & Adu, 2017).

Therefore, the present study used mixed methods to explore the life satisfaction of former refugees in Australia. Factors that may promote or hinder life satisfaction were examined. Taking into

account the refugee communities that emerged in the last decade, former refugees from Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Myanmar who fled their home country due to natural calamity, civil war, ethnic, religious, or cultural discrimination, were the focus of this present investigation (Refugee Council of Australia, 2015).

Life Satisfaction and its Determinants

Life satisfaction is defined as an individual's subjective and cognitive appraisal of his or her quality of life and well-being. It is based on one's personal criteria and judgement (Diener, Tay, & Oishi, 2013) and can range from positive to negative (Diener et al., 2018). To date, most of the research conducted in the West has identified a range of demographic and psychosocial factors associated with life satisfaction.

Economic security and stability has emerged as a salient factor associated with life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2010). Quality employment, which enhances economic security, is positively correlated with life satisfaction (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Khattab & Fenton, 2009). A number of employment related factors are also connected with life satisfaction. For example, educational qualifications (Davis & Friedrich, 2004) as well as ongoing attempts to undertake training to develop further professional skills (Hillman & McMillan, 2005; Yamashita, López, Stevens, & Keene, 2017) increase the probability of employment and consequently promote life satisfaction (Brown, Woolf, & Smith, 2012; Colic Peisker, 2009). Researchers studying the relationship between gender and an individual's satisfaction with life have found mixed outcomes. Some studies have found gender has no effect on life satisfaction (Berg, Hassing, McClearn, & Johansson, 2006), while others have found women experience more distress than men and a lower level of life satisfaction (Tay et al., 2014). Similarly, studies on age have produced mixed results. McAdams, Lucas & Donnellan (2012), found no relationship between aging and life satisfaction, while other researchers (Cooper et al., 2011; Twenge, Sherman, & Lyubomirsky, 2016),

found life satisfaction to be higher during adolescence and to decline with age.

According to these researchers, older people, compared with younger people, were unhappy. Along with these objective measures, a range of other psychosocial and cultural factors associated with one's satisfaction with life have emerged. One's physical health (Bradley & Corwyn, 2004) and well-being in the form of support, a sense of belonging and connectedness are argued to be important factors for quality of life (Brown et al., 2012).

Considering the increased trend of global migration, researchers have begun to examine the life satisfaction of those who relocate. War-related or other atrocities and threat to safety have pushed people to leave their country of origin for safe haven elsewhere. Consequently, individuals from a number of countries with conflict or calamity, have sought refuge in Australia. While refugees share many demographic factors with non-refugee populations, a number of variables differentiate them from other migrant groups and the host population.

Compared to migrants, refugees often experience physical and psychological trauma in their home country, flee from persecution, are forcibly displaced, lose material gains and often spend protracted amounts of time in refugee camps (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2014). They then move to a vastly different host country with an unfamiliar language and encounter adjustment challenges. Thus, it is important to study the factors associated with life satisfaction of this vulnerable population, once they have relocated to their adopted country.

Life Satisfaction Research with Refugee Populations

A review of the literature indicates that most previous investigations have focussed on psychological distress and adjustment of former refugees. There is now a growing agreement among researchers that despite personal and environmental challenges the majority of these individuals adjust to their new environment and experience a

satisfactory life (Colic-Peisker, 2009; Var, Poyrazli, & Grahame, 2013). However, these positive developments in former refugees have not been explored extensively. The relationship between demographic factors and the life satisfaction of former refugees has not yet been investigated thoroughly. Most of the information about the life satisfaction of former refugees is inferred indirectly through studies focussing on other issues related to their resettlement in a new country, such as employment or acculturation (e.g., Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Hebbani, Obijiofor & Bristed, 2012). Though the findings of these studies are not conclusive, they provide some directions about the role demographic and psychosocial factors may play in the life satisfaction of refugee populations.

Refugees encounter a range of challenges related to demographic and psychosocial factors. Learning a new language is a major sources of stress for newly arrived refugees and these skills develop over time (Kim, Ehrich, & Ficorilli, 2012). Limited proficiency in the language of the receiving country is associated with a low level of life satisfaction (Watkins, Razee, & Richters, 2012). Additionally, language proficiency is directly associated with employment (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012; Hebbani & Preece, 2015), which enhances life satisfaction (Matsuo & Poljarevic, 2011). Refinements in education and skills are related to a surge in life satisfaction (Botha, 2014; Mansourian & Rajaei, 2018) in those who have migrated and relocated to a new country. Consistent with research on members of wider society, employment has emerged as an important factor associated with the life satisfaction of refugees as it provides financial support and income to this population (Tilbury & Colic-Peisker, 2007). As having a flexible and open outlook towards employment is helpful, those who have a more flexible attitude to employment and are willing to adapt have more success in finding a job (Campion, 2018). Nevertheless, studies have also indicated that life satisfaction varies depending on the type of experiences encountered in a work environment. Refugees who encounter biases and prejudicial treatment at work have reported a lower level of life satisfaction (Colic-Peisker, 2009). Murray's (2010) study with Sudanese refugees in Australia also found that discrimination and other barriers in finding employment were key areas of dissatisfaction.

Taking into account that women can encounter more traumatic challenges in the migration and resettlement process, there is an assumption that their life satisfaction may be lower than that of men (Brand, Loh, & Guilfoyle, 2014; Schubert & Punamäki, 2011). Similarly, although the association between age and life satisfaction has not been fully examined, there are indications that older refugees may be more dissatisfied with their lives and the resettlement process than younger refugees (Chiem, 2008). Further, as refugees in Australia are from different parts of the world socio political backgrounds of these countries vary. Therefore, the pre-migration experiences of former refugees can differ, depending on the duration and complexity of civil war or unrest in these countries. While there is at present no reported relationship between the country of origin and life satisfaction, pre-migration traumatic experiences are reported to negatively impact the life satisfaction of refugees (Choi et al., 2017). The directions highlighted by the literature require further investigations.

Acculturative Stress, Acculturation and Resilience.

There is now substantial evidence that adjusting to a new country is challenging (Berry & Hou, 2016). The psychological distress experienced as a result of these adjustments is referred to as acculturation stress (Berry, 2006). Refugees encounter a range of resettlement related stressors such as social isolation, and exposure to a new language, environment and culture, which can cause psychological distress (Berry, 2008). Day to day hassles of resettling in a new country can impact negatively on the wellbeing of newly arrived refugees (Seglem, Oppedal, & Roysamb, 2014), and

can lead to more severe mental health concerns (Khawaja & Milner, 2012). Mental and physical health along with poverty and trauma negatively impact life satisfaction (Gana, et al., 2013; Onyut et al., 2009). Recent studies on refugees indicated that acculturative stress is associated with a low level of life satisfaction (Birman & Tran, 2008). There is evidence emerging that as refugees spend more time in their adopted country (Hillman & McMillan, 2005) they acculturate and adapt more to the new setting, become more adept at communicating and navigating the new environment and systems, and consequently their life satisfaction improves (Birman, Simon, Chan, & Tran, 2014). As a result, length of stay in a new country is reported to be associated with an increase in life satisfaction (Bowen, 2004).

Acculturation refers to the changes that occur as newly arrived people interact with the host society (Berry, 2008). Refugees' ideas, behaviours and communication styles change as they are exposed to the cultural norms of the host society (Khawaja & Milner, 2012). Newly arrived refugees can adopt different strategies to acculturate. However, a bi-dimensional approach, which involves retaining one's own original heritage, tradition and values and adopting the culture, values and norms of the host society, appears to be the most suitable outcome (Berry, 2005). This integration of the original belief systems and values along with the new skills and societal rules enable the newly arrived to effectively interact with the host society and problem solve in their new environment (Khawaja, Moisuc, & Ramirez, 2014). Integration is supported as a positive way of adapting and adjusting to the new environment (Berry, 2008). There is now emerging evidence that this type of acculturation is associated with life satisfaction (Berry & Hou, 2016). Taking into account these recent developments, the link between the integration of former refugees and their satisfaction with life warrants further exploration. Despite challenges and limited material gains, former refugees demonstrate immense personal

strengths and resourcefulness, which are reported to help them manage migration related challenges (Dako-Gyeke & Adu, 2017). Resilience, in terms of refugees and resettlement, can be defined as, "an ability to cope and withstand the stress associated with becoming a refugee, and recovering from these challenges" (Brand et al., 2014, p. 102). Personal strengths and qualities, such as hope, optimism, rational problem solving, cognitive reframing of the situations and religious beliefs are associated with wellbeing and life-satisfaction (Lam, 2004, Khawaja, White, Schweitzer, & Greenslade, 2008; Seglem et al., 2014). Further, resourcefulness, in the form of social support from their own ethnic group, and/or the larger society, and a sense of belonging and connectedness is associated with their life satisfaction (Birman et al., 2014; Mansourian & Rajaei, 2018). Considering that the evidence emerging from the investigations conducted on former refugees throw light on resilience and its links with life satisfaction, this relationship is an important area to explore further.

Present Study

There is extensive evidence that life satisfaction is important for health and wellbeing. Further, determinants of life satisfaction have been explored using the general populations in the West. Increasingly, Western countries including Australia, are resettling refugees from non-Western countries on humanitarian grounds (UNHCR, 2014). It is therefore important to explore the personal and contextual factors that are associated with their subjective experiences of life satisfaction. There is a dearth of research on the life satisfaction of those who are from refugee backgrounds as very few studies have directly examined this construct. The limited data that is available indicates that demographic factors such as employment, English language proficiency, gender, age, duration of stay and the country of origin may be related to the life satisfaction of former refugees (Botha, 2014; Bowen, 2004; Brand et al., 2014; Chiem, 2008; Choi et al., 2017; Matsuo & Poljarevic, 2011). Links are also highlighted

between migration related factors, such as acculturative stress and bi-dimensional acculturation and life satisfaction (Birman & Tran, 2008; Berry & Hou, 2016). Finally, personal resources such as resilience are emerging as associated with life satisfaction (Seglem et al., 2014). These findings are based on few studies and further investigations are warranted.

Taking into account that life satisfaction of refugees is a new area of research and the fact that it has not been explored extensively in communities from refugee backgrounds in Australia, the present study utilised a mixed methods approach (in line with Colic-Peisker's 2009 study). McKim (2017, p.203) argued "studies that use a mixed methods approach gain a deeper, broader understanding of the phenomenon than studies that do not utilise both a quantitative and qualitative approach". Firstly, in Phase 1, a quantitative method was used with a larger sample of former refugees to examine a series of hypotheses. Secondly, in Phase 2, to gain a more detailed insight, a smaller number of former refugees were interviewed. It was expected that data collected from the two approaches would provide a more comprehensive picture of the factors associated with the life satisfaction of the former refugees, allowing triangulation and adding rigor to the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Keeping in mind that a number of demographic variables promote the resettlement of former refugees in a new country (for details, see Khawaja, Hebbani, Gallois, & Mackinnon, 2019), it was hypothesised that in Phase 1, life satisfaction levels would differ on the basis of education level, English proficiency, and employment status. It was hypothesised that those who are employed, with higher education and English proficiency, would report higher levels of life satisfaction. As past literature on gender has had mixed outcomes, no hypothesis was specified for the life satisfaction of men and women. Further, as there is limited information about the resettlement of the three country groups in communities in the West, no hypothesis was specified for the

differences among the life satisfaction of these communities. Finally, it was hypothesised that age, length of stay, acculturation, and resilience would all be positively associated with life satisfaction, while acculturative stress would be negatively associated. The goal of Phase 2 was to develop a deeper understanding of life satisfaction related experiences. We envisaged that data from both phases combined would provide us with a holistic picture of refugee life satisfaction in Australia.

Phase 1: Quantitative Study Method

Procedure

Ethical, health and safety clearances were first obtained from the respective universities. Data were collected in South-East Queensland as a part of a larger study funded by an ARC Linkage grant (LP120200076). The aim of this larger study was to explore the employment aspirations and inter-generational communication of former refugees from Burma, Congo and Ethiopia (Hebbani et al., 2016). Access Community Services Limited, a local refugee employment services provider (named in the rest of the paper as 'Access') was the partner organization and assisted in the data collection. Bilingual and Bicultural Assistants (BBAs) from Access as well as representatives from the ethnic communities were consulted in the modification and translation and back translation process of the questionnaires. The bilingual and cultural experts assisted in making the questionnaires easy, user friendly and appropriate (for details please see Khawaja et al., 2019). This process involved shortlisting appropriate items or rewording the items to make the process of completing surveys easier.

Access' BBAs disseminated information about the study among the three targeted refugee communities. Members of these communities were invited to participate in the study. Those who volunteered to participate in the study completed questionnaires at Access offices, churches, or community venues after religious or cultural events. The inclusion criterion was set at a

minimum of one year of stay in Australia. It was expected that a minimum of one year would allow the newly arrived refugees a reasonable time to overcome initial culture shock. Written informed consent was obtained from the participants. The questionnaire was available in English or the participants' native languages. Participants proficient in English or their native language were able to complete the questionnaires themselves. Those who had literacy difficulties were assisted by researchers and / or a BBA in completing the questionnaires. Each participant received a $20 grocery voucher as compensation as most accrued some expense to travel to the data collection venue.

Participants

One hundred and ninety-seven former refugees, from Burma (50%), Congo (32%) and Ethiopia (18%), who lived in South-East Queensland took part in Phase 1. They were 49% men and 51% women. Their mean age was 42 years (range: 21-84 years; SD = 9.92). Forty-one per cent had some primary education, while others had attended high school (30%) or tertiary studies (24%), and a small proportion (5%) had no education. Most reported being able to speak English 'a little' (64%); some were fluent (19%); and others had no English language skills (17%). The participants were employed (34%), unemployed (32%), and 34% were unemployed and undertaking vocational training. Overall, their duration of stay in Australia ranged from 1 to 22 years. The mean duration of stay for those from Burma was four years (range = 1-12 years; SD = 2.4), for those from Congo was five years (range: 1-12 years; SD = 2.80), and for those from Ethiopia was 10 years (range: 1-22 years; SD =5.29). Ninety-two percent of the participants were Christian, while others were Muslim, Buddhist or Hindu.

Measures

Demographic Form. A demographic form collected information about the participants' age, gender, country of origin, duration of stay in Australia, education level, employment status, and English proficiency. Three items used a 3-point Likert scale (not

at all, a little, and fluent) to measure their self-reported ability to speak, read, and write English.

Life Satisfaction. The research team developed a scale to measure the life satisfaction of participants from a refugee background. The goal of the new scale was to understand how the participants perceived their current wellbeing and satisfaction with life after their relocation to a new country. One of the items (I am satisfied with my life) was taken from Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin, (1985) original The Satisfaction with Life Scale. After taking into account the literature on refugees and migrants, six other items were generated. The content of these additional items reflected well-being ('My health is good'; 'I am satisfied with my financial situation'), and aspects of life that are important for migrants and refugees to resettle and establish a supportive network in the new setting ('Australia is a good country to live in'; 'I live in harmonious family / household'; 'I have a supportive community'; 'I have good Australian friends/ work colleagues/neighbours'). Based on the present data the Cronbach alpha for this new scale was .66.

Acculturation and Resilience. Acculturation and resilience was measured through the subscales of the Adult Acculturation and Resilience Scale (AARS) (Khawaja et al., 2014). The 27-item scale, with three factors, Acculturation (11 items), Resilience (14 items) and Spirituality (2 items), was developed using a culturally and linguistically diverse population in Australia. The subscales Acculturation and Resilience were included in the measures, while Spirituality was excluded. The Acculturation sub-scale measures respondents' bi-dimensional acculturation reflected by retention of original cultural strengths and acceptance of host society's values ('I am proud of my cultural background'; 'I like the Australian way of living'). Higher scores indicate higher levels of integration into Australian society. The sub-scale of Resilience measured personal strengths, ability to bounce back from migration-related difficulties and skills to solve problems and

cope with the new situations ('In a difficult situation, I usually find my way out'; 'I am confident with my personal strengths/skills'). Four items, such as 'I can manage my two worlds' were excluded as they were considered too abstract, inappropriate for a population with limited education, and difficult to translate. Khawaja et al. (2014) reported satisfactory internal consistency for Acculturation (.83) and Resilience (.89) subscales. The authors reported that test-retest reliability for Acculturation (.65) and Resilience (.80) was sound. These outcomes were based on ethnically diverse individuals in Australia. Based on the current data the Cronbach alphas for the Acculturation and Resilience subscales were .78 and .76 respectively.

Acculturative Stress. Seven items extracted from the Multidimensional Acculturative Stress Scale measured acculturative stress (MASS: Jibeen & Khalid, 2010). This 24-item scale was developed to measures the stressors of Pakistani migrants settled in Canada. The five subscales focussed on the migrants' experiences of discrimination, lack of opportunities for occupational and financial mobility, threat to ethnic identity, homesickness and language barriers. Modifications included changing 'Canada' into 'Australia'. The key items from each subscale, which covered societal prejudices, mismatched expectations, cultural dissonance, and increased burden of family responsibilities, were retained. The selected items covered discrimination ('I feel like a foreigner in Australia'; 'I feel that Australians do not treat me with respect'; 'I think that many opportunities are denied to me because I am from another country'); threat to identity ('I am often unsure how to act because Australian customs are so different from my country's customs'); lack of opportunities for occupational and financial mobility ('I am disappointed that my life is not what I hoped for before coming to Australia'); and homesickness ('My family responsibilities have increased after coming to Australia'). Based on the present

data the Cronbach alpha for this scale was .77.

The original Likert scales of the above measures were reduced to 3 (not at all, a little and a lot) to simplify the test taking process for participants, who were not familiar with the paper and pencil measures. Visual cues, which consisted of small, medium and larger circles were added to make the Likert scales easy to comprehend.

Design

A cross-sectional design was used. Assumptions of normality were investigated. Internal consistency for the measures used in the analyses was examined. To address the first hypothesis, a series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine if life satisfaction differed on the basis of demographic factors. Gender, country of origin, education, English proficiency and employment and occupational training were the independent variables and scores on life satisfaction were the dependent variable. As per ANOVA rules, a minimum of 30 participants per group were required and this requirement was met. Multiple regression was used to address the second hypothesis. Age, length of stay, acculturation, resilience and acculturative stress were entered as independent variables and life satisfaction was entered as the dependent variable. A G power analysis indicated that a regression with $\alpha = .05$, a medium effect size, five independent variables and one dependent variable would require a sample of 98 participants.

Results

Data were examined for assumptions of normality and missing data. Data were randomly missing for 25 cases, which were deleted from the analyses. Hence, the total number of participants after excluding the missing data was 197. The average score on the Life Satisfaction scale was 10.64 (SD: 2.60; range: 3-14). Scores on the Life Satisfaction scale were negatively skewed, with more participants scoring high and expressing a satisfaction with life. Data were not transformed as it was regarded as an accurate reflection of the communities under investigation.

Impact of Demographics on Life Satisfaction

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to investigate the impact of various demographic factors on life satisfaction. Assumptions of normality were not met for this sample, due to the significant negative skew. However, ANOVA is considered robust to violations of this assumption (Allen & Bennett, 2012).

Gender and Country of Origin

For gender, the ANOVA was not significant, $F (1, 194) = .04$, $p = .843$. The ANOVA was statistically significant for country of origin, $F (2, 194) = 13.15$, $p < .001$. The effect size for country of origin is medium to large, $f = .368$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD (using an α of .05) revealed that participants from Ethiopia ($M = 12.16$, $SD = 2.09$, $p <.001$) and Congo ($M = 11.02$, $SD = 2.64$, $p = .009$) had significantly higher scores than participants from Burma ($M = 9.82$, $SD = 2.47$). There was no significant difference between life satisfaction scores of participants from Ethiopia or Congo.

Education and English Proficiency

The ANOVA was not significant for education. In the case of English proficiency, the ANOVA was statistically significant, $F (2, 194) = 4.67$, $p = .010$. The effect size for English proficiency was medium, $f = .22$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD (using an α of .05) revealed that participants with medium ($M = 10.81$, $SD = 2.45$, $p = .043$) or high levels of English proficiency ($M = 11.26$, $SD = 2.70$, $p = .011$) had significantly higher scores on life satisfaction than those with a low level of English proficiency ($M = 9.74$, $SD = 2.66$). There was no significant difference between life satisfaction scores of participants with medium and high levels of proficiency.

Employment and Occupational Training

Participants' employment status was categorised into three groups: those who were employed, unemployed, and unemployed and undertaking vocational training/studying. The ANOVA was statistically significant, $F (3, 192) = 5.47$, p = .001. The effect size for employment is medium, $f = .29$. Post-hoc analyses with Tukey's HSD (using an α of .05) revealed that participants who were employed ($M = 11.32$, $SD = 2.14$, $p = .004$) or unemployed ($M = 11.32$, $SD = 2.66$, $p = .01$) had significantly higher scores on life satisfaction than participants who were unemployed and undertaking vocational training ($M = 9.8$, $SD = 2.67$).

Multiple Regression

To estimate the proportion of variance in life satisfaction that could be accounted for by age, length of stay, acculturation, resilience and acculturative stress, a standard multiple regression analysis was carried out. Inspection of the normal probability plot of standardised residuals and the scatterplot of standardised residuals against standardised predicted values suggested that the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity of residuals were met. Mahalanobis distance indicated two multivariate outliers, with values exceeding the critical χ^2 for df = 5 (at $\alpha = .001$) of 20.52. These outliers were excluded from the analysis. A bivariate correlation among age, length of stay, acculturation, resilience and acculturation indicated minimum to moderate correlations (Table 1).

The independent variables (age, length of stay, acculturation, acculturative stress and resilience) accounted for 40% of the variability in life satisfaction, $R^2 = .40$, adjusted $R^2 = .38$, $F (5, 139) = 18.78$, $p = .001$. An effect of this magnitude can be considered large ($f^2 = .67$). Unstandardised (B) and standardised (β) regression coefficients and squared semi-partial (or 'part') correlations (sr^2) for each predictor are reported in Table 1. The semi-partial correlations indicate variance in life satisfaction uniquely explained by each variable. It can be seen that resilience explains 20% of the variance in life satisfaction.

Table 1.
Relationship of Age, Duration of Stay, Acculturation, Acculturative Stress and Resilience with Life Satisfaction

Variable	B	[95% CI]	b	sr^2	Life Satisfaction	Bivariate r 1	2	3	4
1. Age	.002	[-.034, .039]	.009	.000	.030				
2. Length of Stay	.073	[-.010, .155]	.124	.013	.222**	.162*			
3. Acculturation	.053	[-.059, .165]	.072	.003	.365**	.015	.045		
4. Acculturative Stress	-.084	[-.184, .015]	-.111	.012	.020	.024	-.058	.151*	
5. Resilience	.326	[.232, .421]	.550**	.201	.531**	-.063	.204**	.519**	.115

Note. $N = 146$, CI = confidence interval. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

To summarise, hypotheses in Phase 1 were partially supported. Country of origin was associated with life satisfaction as participants from Burma were less satisfied (possibly as they were relatively recent arrivals as compared with the other former refugee groups) than the Ethiopian and Congolese participants, which requires further exploration. Similarly, consistent with previous studies, English proficiency was associated with increase in life satisfaction (Hebbani & Preece, 2015; Matsua & Poljarevic, 2011). In line with Berg et al.'s (2006) findings, there was no difference in life satisfaction on the basis of gender. The responses on the Life

Satisfaction scale indicated that men and women were encountering similar experiences. Age was not related to life satisfaction as has been found previously (McAdams et al., 2012). Being in the younger or older age group did not impact these refugees. Contrary to previous outcomes (Botha, 2014; Davis & Friedrich, 2004) life satisfaction was not influenced by participants' level of education. Rather, participants with varying levels of education had similar levels of life satisfaction. In the case of employment status, contrary to past results (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Tilbury & Colic-Peisker, 2007), life satisfaction was not different for participants who were employed or unemployed. However, those who were not working but undertaking vocational training had lower life satisfaction. It is possible that studying aggravated pressures in these unemployed newly arrived individuals (Hillman & McMillan, 2005). This is an area which requires further investigation.

Acculturation and an absence of acculturative stress were not significantly associated with life satisfaction. It is possible that participants, who had limited interaction with the mainstream population due to their limited English skills and employment opportunities, interacted more within their own ethnic enclaves. It may have been the personal strengths and positive coping that contributed to the well-being of these participants. Consistent with previous studies, the findings indicated that resilience was significantly associated with life satisfaction (Dako-Gyeke & Abu, 2017; Lam, 2004, Khawaja et al., 2008; Seglem, et al., 2014). To gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' life satisfaction, a qualitative approach was undertaken in Phase 2 of the study.

Phase 2 –Qualitative Study

After the quantitative analyses, qualitative data were gathered from individual interviews with former refugee participants from Burma, Congo, and Ethiopia.

Method

Participants

Forty-seven participants, who resided in South-East Queensland, took part in qualitative interviews. They were 55% women and 45% men. More than half of the participants were from Burma (54%), and the remaining participants were from Ethiopia (23%) and Congo (23%). The years spent in camps prior to arrival in Australia ranged from 4-30 years for those from Burma, 2-31 years for those from Ethiopia, and 1-12 years for those from Congo. The number of children in the family unit ranged from 1-11. Fifty-one per cent of participants had been in Australia for more than six years (mainly participants from Ethiopia), while the duration of stay for the others was less than six years (mainly participants from Burma and Congo). Nearly half (54%) of the participants were employed and 47% were unemployed. Of those who were employed, 16 (64%) had been in Australia more than six years. Ninety-five percent of them were Christian, the others were Buddhist.

Procedure

After the completion of Phase 1, information about the Phase 2 study was distributed among the three refugee communities with the help of Access. The inclusion criteria for Phase 1 were repeated in Phase 2. In order to get a balanced perspective, an attempt was made to recruit men and women, who were employed or unemployed. The semi-structured interview probes were developed by the researchers. The participants were asked about their life ('Are you happy with your life?' 'What makes your life happy or unhappy?' 'Can you please give us some examples?' 'Can you tell us more?'). The semi-structured interviews were conducted in participants' homes, or at other locations which were agreeable to participants such as at church services or in a public park. The aims of the study, consent form, and confidentiality were explained to the participants at the start of each interview and written consents were obtained. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any

time without any consequence. Access'
BBAs helped during the interviews as
interpreters when needed. The interviews
lasted from half an hour to an hour and each
participant received a $20 grocery voucher as
compensation.

Data Analysis

The interviews were audiotaped and
then underwent verbatim transcription by a
professional transcription service
experienced with multilingual transcription.
The second author and two other members of
the larger team used a Thematic Analysis
approach (Braun & Clark, 2006) from a
realist perspective (Maxwell, 2002) to
analyse the data as this was an exploratory
study. All transcripts were read multiple
times to become familiar with the data and
the emerging patterns. Codes were generated
and labelled by the three analysts. All
members then read each transcribed file
individually to assign codes to the text.
Codes were combined to form overarching
themes that depicted data. The three
members reviewed emerging themes for
member checking and triangulation (Denzin
& Lincoln, 1998).

Findings

Data analyses identified two main
themes, which focused on factors that
promoted or hindered participants' levels of
life satisfaction. Participants further
elaborated on how various aspects of their
life contributed to their subjective happiness
or distress.

Factors Promoting Life Satisfaction

**Country of Origin, Duration of Stay,
and Employment.** When asked to comment
on how the participants thought their lives
were, the narratives revealed that the
Ethiopian participants reported higher levels
of life satisfaction when compared to the
other two national groups. They made the
highest number of references to being happy
and contented with their life. The content of
their verbalisation indicated that they felt that
they were settled in their lives, with a
reasonable income, and a satisfactory family
life. Those who were parents of school or
university aged children described being very
happy with their children's academic

achievements. One woman from Ethiopia
explained that she had been in Australia for
20 years. She had worked for 15 years at a
nursing home, and when she got laid off, she
completed the necessary qualifications to
start her own home day care:

> *So yeah, just be happy, and always
> possibilities. When you didn't get
> this one, you will get something
> different. What I get today, I just
> thank God. And tomorrow is
> tomorrow. Because like we didn't
> know, like what's happening
> tomorrow.*

On the other hand, participants from
Burma were the least satisfied with their
lives; they reported feeling unsettled and still
finding their way in the new country. Those
from Congo fell between the two groups.
The comments on life satisfaction were
related to their duration of stay in Australia.
With the passage of time, the overall quality
of life improved. A subjective feeling of
fulfilment was also related to being
employed. Once again, those from Ethiopia
commented on having stable jobs, while
participants from the other communities were
struggling to find employment. A trend was
noted that those from the Congo wanted to
be self-employed. One self-employed woman
from Congo was very happy to manage her
own business: "oh, I'm so happy, you
know". Most of the participants from Burma
were attending English courses in an attempt
to secure a job.

Safety. In general, participants across
the three communities considered the safe
and peaceful life in Australia as a factor
contributing to life satisfaction. They
expressed happiness about being in a
relatively safe and peaceful country after
being displaced and living in refugee camps
for many years. An unemployed woman
from Burma said "um, at the moment, my
life, comparing [compared] to what my life
in Burma, a lot better, because I have here I
can see you have a safe[ty], in my country, I
don't have any safe[ty] ". Another employed
woman said "the good thing is living in this
country is freedom and I can go where I want
to go. I do not need to be too scared, like
back home". Similarly, an unemployed man

from Congo stated "my first happiness is that there is peace". An employed man from Ethiopia who had been in Australia for 16 years, had a Masters in Business Administration (MBA), but still drove a taxi and said:

> For me, Australia, the benefit which I found from this country is that [the] best thing is peace. It's very peaceful situation. I can stay, I can sleep without any you know problem, suspicious things. That's the good thing. That's the best thing which I didn't have in Ethiopia.

Thus, being safe from threats, dangers and war related atrocities was perceived positively by the participants.

Resilience. Despite their varied struggles, all participants reported being resilient through their reliance on their religion and faith in God. The vast majority of them had very strong ties with the Christian church. In general, it was customary for all families to spend nearly half of the Sunday together as a part of church related activities. Religious activities were combined with cultural and social activities. There was a strong sense of being a survivor. An unemployed woman from Congo added: "we thank God that we are alive and we happy we're eating, and children are going to school, so that's the most important thing". A sense of community also helped them cope as they provided emotional and practical support to each other. An unemployed man from Congo said, "you know, in Western World they only count the children that you gave birth to but in my culture, everybody that I'm caring for is my child and I have a very long and big chain". Lastly, there was also a sense of hope and optimism that life in the future would be better, particularly for their children.

Factors Hindering Life Satisfaction

Unemployment. Nearly half of the participants in this phase of the study were unemployed. They described their life satisfaction as "medium to low." Not earning an income caused financial stress and hampered their future job prospects, which in combination resulted in lower levels of subjective well-being. There was a general consensus that financial hardship due to unemployment was severe, despite getting some financial support from government assistance. Although there was appreciation for the funds they received from the government, the overall concern was that the money was not enough for their large families. As an unemployed Congolese man with eight children reported:

> *I appreciate the Australian government but in terms of life, there is still a little bit of stress and I should also acknowledge the fact that the Australian government gives a little bit of support to job seekers. But I can't be distracted with that little amount we get and I'm also not satisfied with it. I would like to do more.*

Some participants, who were single parents, experienced even more distress. An unemployed woman from Ethiopia explained that it was difficult to survive solely on government funding (i.e., Centrelink payment): "but, just you know the money they gave us is like, you know to cover only for the bill, mm, spend the electricity high, gas is high, telephone is high. Everything you know. The amount left is not much". Being separated from her husband, she lacked the support system she would have had back home and found it difficult to raise the children by herself.

Participants lacked the resources to set their own goals and activities. There was a general sense that being unemployed with no structure and purpose created monotony. Two unemployed women from Congo described their lives as 'boring' or 'not exciting' as they were unsuccessful in finding work. Some participants reported that even their efforts to improve their skills and qualifications did not result in securing a job. One unemployed mother from Congo explained that she was unemployed despite completing courses in aged care, cleaning, disability, food service and shop retail. She had to pay for these courses out of her own meagre funding and subsequently, she was unhappy: "there is life is not really happy

because you have spent much time in studies. And then end up you don't get job, so is boring". Similarly, an unemployed father kept renewing his security licence every year and was unable to find a job - his interpreter explained:

> *Yeah, he is a bit unhappy with the whole working experience. The fact that he's tried, like, when he went to security companies and he's renewing his licence a couple of occasions and you renew the licence and you don't get a job but other people still getting those jobs, and you know, when you look at [that you wonder] why not me?*

English Proficiency. Most participants who were unemployed also reported limited or no English proficiency. The language barrier impaired the chances of securing a job, which then affected the levels of life satisfaction of these individuals. Those who were unemployed due to poor English proficiency were aware that it was affecting their future employment trajectory. Language was more problematic for those who had been in Australia for a shorter duration. Most of the participants from Burma were still attending English language courses organised by the Australian government which they perceived as a source of distress. There were other participants, who had casual jobs, but were unable to improve their employment conditions due to limited English proficiency. One man from Burma, who had been in Australia for three years was earning some money, but was unable to pursue his ambition of setting up his own grocery store as he was not fluent in English. An examination of the comments indicated that acquisition of language was more difficult for older individuals. These participants were pessimistic about their future as they did not see themselves becoming employed. An interpreter for an unemployed older farmer from Burma, explained:

> *He is not very comfortable right now, because he doesn't get the job yet, but in future [he says] I have hope that I will - I want to buy the house, live like normal*

people. Mostly, yes, English is his main problem.

Moreover, an absent or limited English proficiency made adjustment to, and navigation within, the Australian infrastructure very difficult. A number of participants across the three groups referred to the challenges of communicating in English with a range of government and non-government organisations. It was a challenge to organise their financial support, or to talk to someone about employment prospects. English language barriers also prevented them from interacting with school teachers, even when it was important to go and see them about their children's issues or help them with their studies. An unemployed mother of six from Congo said, "I can't [help them] because I can't read English. So it's hard for me to know exactly what's going on with their studies".

Health Issues. Some participants reported that personal or family members' illnesses prevented them from working, which affected their life satisfaction. Nine out of 25 participants from Burma commented on being unemployed either due to their own ill health or due to being the primary carer for an ill spouse. Some participants, who had chronic illnesses, reported being pressurised by Centrelink (government assistance) to find employment. One unemployed woman from Burma, who ran a business in her country of origin was very ill and required repeated hospitalisation. She reported being hard-pressed by Centrelink to work despite her poor health. It seemed that government authorities sometimes misinterpreted the health issues as an excuse to not try hard to find a job. Another seriously ill mother from Congo reported that being sick with a job was worse than being unemployed. According to her, unemployed people were at least able to receive some financial support, while those who were unable to work due to health problems were neither paid nor given any financial support and subsequently were unable to support their families:

> *I'm on medication from the first to the thirtieth of each month. Since I had this problem, it's been three*

*years and there is no improvement.
I'm on medication and that's the
only problem I have. When I'm
unemployed, at least I still getting
the government welfare.*

It also became apparent that those participants who were caring for a sick family member felt unsupported and did not know how to organise professional assistance. One woman from Burma had to quit her job at a medical practice to look after her ill mother, who became incapacitated after an incident as reliable help was not available. She explained:

*They [her employer] said that,
don't worry, yes, you can go [to
work] and then someone will come
and look after mum. And then when
I came back [home], it's – she [my
mum] started screaming [at me as
she was left all alone]. Yeah,
sometimes this happen to us. For
us, we cannot say anything [to our
boss]. If you not happy with your
job, quit. That's why I would like to
started my own business.*

Acculturative Stress. Participants reflected on stress as a result of settling in a host culture which is vastly different from their original culture. They commented on being isolated and away from their family support. An unemployed Ethiopian woman who had been in Australia for five years stated that: "the difficulty is the sense of loneliness because it's a different culture from Ethiopia. We grew up in a large family". Another woman from Ethiopia said that she was happy in Australia, but at the same time, it was hard to be away from family:

*Would you like to leave your kids,
your family? But it happens a lot.
Just go somewhere else to live,
start from the scratch, learn their
language, try to cope, everything.
How would you feel?*

It was interesting to note that some participants, who were working and dealing with the larger society, noticed prejudices and biases of the larger society. Sometimes, such behaviours were difficult to manage. An

employed woman from Burma, who was working as a teacher-aide said:

*I have the problem of how to use
computer [at work] and then some
colleagues - they want to look
down [on] me but I try to learn.
Yeah, myself, sometimes I want to
quit my job. You know, I'm so
disappointed.*

Resettlement in a different country was not free from challenges. Participants reported disrupted social networks and isolation. Further, interactions with the locals were not always easy because of the prejudices and biases of the larger society.

Discussion

In summary, the participants from the three country groups differed on levels of life satisfaction. The participants from Burma reported lower levels of life satisfaction as compared to their Ethiopian and Congolese counterparts. Consistent with research, a number of factors were described as hurdles toward life satisfaction (Gana et al., 2013; Onyut et al., 2009; Seligman et al., 2014). English proficiency was an issue, especially for those who had recently arrived and were still struggling to learn the language (Matsua & Poljarevic, 2011; Watkins et al., 2012). In line with previous studies, being unemployed emerged as one of the most widely reported barriers to life satisfaction (Colic-Peisker, 2009; Murray, 2010). Participants were unemployed due to low/nil English proficiency, being in the process of undertaking vocational training and upskilling themselves, personal or family member's ill health, and lastly, due to unknown reasons despite having local educational qualifications. Unemployment caused financial pressure despite some Centrelink support, particularly because refugee families tend to be larger compared to arrivals from other visa categories (Hugo, 2011).

A number of factors were found to promote life satisfaction. Being in a safe setting, receiving some financial support from the government, and having better educational and occupational opportunities after years of conflict and camp experiences

was a source of happiness. Consistent with previous studies, (Brand et al., 2014; Hooberman, Rosenfield, Rasmussen, & Keller, 2010), participants were happy that their children led better lives than they had and were making use of the available educational opportunities. In line with Seglem et al. (2014), despite challenges, personal strengths and resilience played a strong role in their life satisfaction. In line with past studies they were able to draw their strength from religion and faith (Lam, 2004; Khawaja et al., 2008). Similar to findings from Birman et al. (2014), emotional and practical support from their community helped them cope with their difficulties.

General Discussion

A mixed method approach was used to investigate the life satisfaction of former refugees from Ethiopia, Congo, and Burma, settled in Australia. Findings obtained from the two methods complemented each other and provided information about the way former refugees judge their wellbeing and quality of life. Data gathered from the two phases of the study indicated that the three communities, with varying lengths of stay in Australia, differed on levels of life satisfaction. Those who have been in Australia for a longer period felt more satisfied with their lives. Both methods indicated that life satisfaction was associated with English proficiency and employment while language barriers and unemployment caused distress. The qualitative analyses further highlighted the challenges associated with securing a job. Finally, resilience emerged as the strongest predictor of life satisfaction in the quantitative analysis. The qualitative phase assisted in understanding the other sources of personal strength, coping and subjective well-being.

Burmese participants were most dissatisfied with their lives. Information obtained from interviews indicated that consistent with past studies (Choi et al., 2017; Colic-Peisker, 2009), Burmese participants were experiencing more health issues and acculturative stress as a result of their refugee and resettlement experience. In the case of participants from Ethiopia, it is

possible that a longer stay in Australia may have contributed to their satisfaction with life. These outcomes support the arguments reported in other literature that acculturative stress impacts life satisfaction (Khawaja & Milner, 2012; Seglem et al., 2014) and that as refugees become more acculturated and socially integrated (Berry & Hou, 2016; Birman et al., 2014), their well-being improves.

The quantitative and qualitative approaches highlighted factors that facilitated and hindered life satisfaction. Language proficiency and employment play important roles in former refugees' subjective experiences of life satisfaction. Language acquisition allows for a successful interaction with the host society and promotes the acculturation of the former refugees. Consistent with previous outcomes (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012; Hebbani & Preece, 2015; Hugo, 2011), English proficiency is also a known predictor of employment. Similar to Watkins et al.'s (2012) findings, low English proficiency prevented a number of participants from acquiring paid work or improving their employment situation.

The qualitative method helped in unpacking the factors that hindered obtaining employment (Murray, 2010). The interview data showed that poor health, personal and familial, acted as challenges to securing employment. A high number of participants, from Burma in particular, were carers of ill family members, or were ill themselves, perhaps as they had also spent relatively more time in refugee camps than their Ethiopian and Congolese counterparts. Their own ill health, and/or their responsibilities as a carer may have affected their life trajectory and subsequently their life satisfaction. This finding is consistent with past research which has shown health as being one of the strongest correlates of happiness among the general population (Bradley & Corwyn, 2004), and that good health has also been found to be one of the key indicators of successful refugee settlement (Brown et al., 2012; Gana et al., 2013; Onyut et al., 2009).

Data from the two phases supported resilience as a salient factor contributing to life satisfaction. In line with past studies (Birman et al., 2014; Mansourian, & Rajaei, 2018), quantitative data showed that those with good problem solving skills, and an ability to find resources and services and support, experienced greater well-being and life satisfaction. As a response to the interview questions, in line with past research (Lam, 2004; Khawaja et al., 2008), participants reported religion, their faith and community support as main sources of resilience. Qualitative data indicated that consistent with past studies (Botha, 2014; Tilbury & Colic-Peisker, 2007) the former refugees' perceived educational opportunities, provision of basic needs and safety in Australia were salient factors contributing to their well-being. Consistent with other studies (Colic-Peisker, 2009; Hugo, 2011), being in a safe or peaceful country where their basic needs and sense of security were met (i.e., food, housing, some income from Centrelink) emerged as a facilitator of life satisfaction levels. Further, similar to Colic-Peisker's (2009) findings, educational opportunities for themselves and their children, and the progress of their children, were sources of joy. The results supported the notion that material and financial gains were not associated with the subjective appraisal of life satisfaction of those from refugee backgrounds (Birman et al., 2014; Colic-Peisker, 2009; Matsuo & Poljaravic, 2011).

Implications

The study endorses the importance of exploring the factors associated with the life satisfaction of refugees (Var et al., 2013). The findings have implications for policy developers and stakeholders working with former refugees in the community sector. This population requires ongoing support to develop English proficiency. Other hurdles in obtaining employment, such as personal and family illnesses, need further attention. Former refugees need medical and psychological attention to address their own and their family members' mental health issues. It is important to assist former

refugees with casual or part-time jobs, so that their chances of full-time employment increase. Providing some sort of assistance to those with responsibilities of caring for children or an ill family member would enhance the possibility of securing a part-time job.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study is limited to former refugee communities from three specific country groups, settled in South-East Queensland, and subsequently, the results cannot be generalised to the entire refugee population. Future research with participants from a range of communities settled in Australia and other Western countries is warranted. The study was affected by other methodological procedures. Although the questionaries used in Phase 1 were translated and back translated in consultation with language and culture experts, and interpreters were used in the data collection process, it is unclear if meaning was lost through translations and language barriers of the participants. Despite the fact that the scales had adequate psychometric properties, it is unclear if they were culturally valid. Items generated to measure life satisfaction were positively phrased and could have been affected by response bias. Further, the concept of life satisfaction among former refugees warrants further investigation. The qualitative interviews were conducted with the assistance of the BBAs and it is unclear to what extent the presence of the interpreter affected the responses of the participants. Finally, both phases of the study were based on self-report data, and thus, were probably not free from the impact of social desirability in their responses. These are some of the methodology related issues that require attention in future.

Conclusion

In spite of the limitations, the study is the first if its kind to use a mixed method approach to examine the life satisfaction of former refugees from Ethiopia, Congo, and Burma settled in Australia. A combined approach helped in developing a better understanding of the factors related with refugees' life satisfaction. The mixed

method findings indicated that being able to speak English and being in paid work were highly important for the former refugees. Their personal strengths and ties with religion acted as a buffer against their challenges and helped them attain a satisfactory life.

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Notes

[1] In this paper, we refer to refugee participants as 'former refugees' as many have themselves pointed out to us that upon arrival they have permanent residency status or Australian citizenship. They do not want

to carry the stigma attached to the term 'refugee' forever but at the same acknowledge that it was once their identity.

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"They are humans and humanity comes first": The function of attitudes towards people seeking asylum by boat in Australia

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Previous research has found that while many Australians are hostile to people seeking asylum in Australia who arrive by boat (hereafter called asylum seekers), others feel that Australia's treatment of asylum seekers is inhumane. Two bodies of research that can help us understand why people think the way that they do are the function of attitudes research and the values framework as per Schwartz (1992). In the present study, we use these frameworks to explore what underpins attitudes (both positive and negative) towards asylum seekers. A total of 164 Australian community members completed a mixed-methods questionnaire in 2017 investigating why they felt the way that they did about asylum seekers. Quantitative analyses indicated that the most frequently reported function of attitudes was value-expressive, followed by experiential-schematic, and then indirect experiential-schematic. Qualitative analyses (N = 132) indicated that while both accepting and rejecting participants reported similar values, the most important value reported by accepting participants was Universalism and the most important value reported by rejecting participants was (Un)fairness. Two other values were less reported by both groups: Security and Conformity. Our results take previous findings about attitude function and values further by combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to get a richer picture of Australian attitudes towards people seeking asylum.

The world is currently witnessing unprecedented numbers of people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes. At the end of 2016, there were over 22.5 million refugees[1] and 2.8 million people seeking asylum[2] worldwide: a number that surpasses post-World War II numbers of forcibly displaced people (UNHCR, 2017). While the vast majority of the world's refugees and asylum seekers reside in countries in the Global South (UNHCR, 2017), their arrival to countries in the Global North has become increasingly politicised. Refugees and asylum seekers are often met with intolerance, distrust, and contempt by both political leaders and community members of refugee-hosting states (Verkuyten, 2004). In the present study, we concentrate on attitudes towards asylum seekers who arrived by boat (hereafter called asylum seekers) rather than attitudes to refugees.

There has been an implementation of increasingly restrictive measures by countries designed to deter the arrival of asylum seekers (Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2014). In Australia, where the present study was conducted, such measures include the mandatory detention of asylum seekers; intercepting and turning back asylum seekers' boats from Australian waters; and transferring asylum seekers arriving by boat to offshore detention centres on the Pacific island of Nauru and Papua New Guinea's Manus Island with no prospect of being settled in Australia. This is despite the fact that, by global standards, Australia receives relatively few asylum seekers.

In line with these restrictive policies, research has found that many Australians are hostile to people seeking asylum in Australia. However, other Australians feel that Australia's treatment of asylum seekers is inhumane and violates human rights (for a review of this research, see Pedersen & Hartley, 2015). There is a large body of research that highlights several social

psychological factors that may drive negative attitudes such as feelings of fear and threat (e.g., Hartley & Pedersen, 2015; Mancini, Bottura, & Caricati, 2018; Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005), perceptions of illegitimacy (e.g., asylum seekers are 'illegal immigrants' or 'queue jumpers') (e.g., McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2012; Pedersen, Watt, & Griffiths, 2008), demographic and ideological variables (Anderson, Stuart, & Rossen, 2015), and holding false-beliefs about asylum seekers (e.g., Pedersen & Hartley, 2017; Pedersen, Watt, & Hansen, 2006). Another body of research that can help us understand why people think the way that they do is the function of attitudes research. In the present study, we use the function of attitudes framework to explore the question of what underpins attitudes (both positive and negative) towards asylum seekers.

The Function of Attitudes

It has been argued that people hold and express certain attitudes because doing so meets the psychological needs of the individual (Herek, 1987). In ground-breaking work undertaken in the 1990s, Shavitt (1990) argued that there are four primary functions: value expressive (attitudes that involve one's beliefs and values), experiential schematic (attitudes which involve our direct experience with the target group in question), social adjustive (attitudes which involve memberships with important groups or friendships), and ego-defensive (attitudes that help enhance or maintain our self-esteem) (also see Herek, 1986). Other function of attitudes literature has used different coding; for example, Katz (1960). While Katz included the value-expressive and ego-defensive functions, he also included a utilitarian function (relating to maximising positivity in one's life) and knowledge (giving structure to our environment) (see also Watt, Maio, Rees, & Hewstone, 2006). In another study, it was found that value-expressive attitudes predicted donation to charity intention; this was not the case for the utilitarian function which indicates the importance of attitude

functions when attempting to predict attitudes and behaviour (Maio & Olson, 1995).

Pedersen, Contos, Griffiths, Bishop, and Walker (2000) adapted Herek's (1987) Attitude Function Inventory to assess the function of attitudes towards Indigenous Australians in two locations: Perth (the capital city in Western Australia) and Kalgoorlie (a country location). These authors found that the two main functions were value-expressive and direct-experiential schematic (other functions were seldom reported). Interestingly, for the Perth participants, the major function was value-expressive while for the Kalgoorlie participants, the major function was experiential schematic most likely due to the large population of Indigenous Australians in Kalgoorlie. Thus, context can be very important when it comes to the function of attitudes. In another Perth study, Griffiths and Pedersen (2009) introduced another function – the "indirect experiential function" which involves information that people garner through acquaintances and the media with the target groups being Indigenous and Muslim Australians. The major function of attitudes for both target groups was value-expressive; however, both direct and indirect experiential schematic functions were seen as important to the participants in that study. Similar results were found in another Perth study regarding the function of attitudes towards people seeking asylum in Australia (Pedersen et al., 2008).

There are two things that we believe are missing from the literature in this area. The first is that the research that we have cited tends to come from one location. It would be useful to have a representative sample across Australia. What is also missing in the literature is an in-depth analysis of the values involved in attitudes towards asylum seekers and that is what we aim to achieve. This brings us to the next body of literature: "values". Values are integral to people's personality, behaviour, and motivation (Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005); thus, we believe that it is important

that they are taken into account when examining attitudes towards different minority groups.

Values

A major theorist in this field, Schwartz (1992), hypothesised that there are 11 important values that people rely on: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, and spirituality. Spirituality has not been shown to have the same universality as the other 10 values which is not surprising given its context-specificity (e.g., Australia is a more secular nation compared with other countries such as the US). These values have been found in representative samples in 13 different cultures (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Schwartz and Bardi (2001) found that the three most important values were benevolence, self-direction, and universalism followed by security, conformity, achievement, and hedonism. The least important values were power, tradition, and stimulation. There is a great deal of work confirming the validity of these findings (e.g., Lindeman & Verkasalo, 2005; Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995). The Schwartz values have been useful in understanding a number of diverse fields. For example, student decisions as to what they should study (Qureshi, 2016), political orientation (Schwartz, Caprara, & Vecchione, 2010), consumer power (Labrecque, vor dem Esche, Mathwick, Novak, & Hofacker, 2013), personal goals and attitudes/sociality (Boer & Fischer, 2013), and values and prejudice (Heaven, Organ, Supavadeeprasit, & Leeson, 2006).

In another study, the present authors (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012), investigated qualitatively the role of values with respect to attitudes towards Muslim Australians. They found five values to be particularly relevant. The most prevalent value was universalism (including broadmindedness, equality generally, and a world at peace), followed by self-direction (involving freedom of speech), conformity (to Australia or to Islam), extremism/anti-fundamentalism, and benevolence (helping others). The only

value that was not anticipated by the work of Schwartz (1992) was extremism/anti-fundamentalism which is not surprising given the context-specific nature of the target group.

In another study by Greenhalgh and Watt (2015), it was found that prejudice was linked with a perception of dissimilarity towards asylum seekers, as well as self-enhancement values (e.g., achievement or power) and self-transcendence values (e.g., universalism; benevolence) (Schwartz, 1992). What is not known, at this stage, is the specific content of these values; for example, what do people spontaneously list as important to them with regard to their attitudes towards asylum seekers? This knowledge could be useful for anti-prejudice strategists.

Overview of the Present Study

Aims and hypotheses. There was one overarching aim of the present study which was to investigate how attitudes towards asylum seekers related to the function of attitudes and values literature. As the current study involved a mixed-methods questionnaire, there were two aims based on the quantitative and qualitative data. Based on previous research (e.g. Pedersen et al., 2008), the first quantitative hypothesis predicted that the most important function of attitude would be value-expressive, although the experiential schematic and indirect experiential schematic functions should also be relevant. In the present study, we separate out participants who were high in prejudice (rejecting participants) vs participants who scored low in prejudice (accepting participants) to examine the similarities and/or differences in the values they espoused. We then link these themes to the values espoused by Schwartz (1992). Thus, our aim in the present study is to investigate quantitatively the most prevalent function of attitude and to qualitatively investigate the most relevant values of both accepting and rejecting participants.

Regarding our qualitative analysis, we used a "theoretical thematic analysis" rather than in inductive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 8) as our interest lay in both the

function of attitude literature and the values literature. As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, themes may be refined as the analysis progresses and it may be that there is an inductive element to our analysis. To achieve this aim, we used NVivo Version 11.

As noted, we have used both *quantitative* and *qualitative data*. We have done so because we believe that both forms of analyses can make a study stronger. As Cohen (2007) argues, all methods have their strengths and weaknesses. Here, we hope to minimise weakness and maximise strength. We note that the categories we used were not mutually exclusive: in the "real world" people can often have overlapping opinions; sometimes contradictory ones. We acknowledge that some of the themes identified overlap, leaving non-mutually exclusive categories. As noted by Pedersen and Fozdar (2010), there is overlap in the "real world".

We would like to put our political position upfront before going any further. As noted by Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthom, and Siddiquee (2011), critical community psychology is "a moral project". We are community/social psychologists (and see no inconsistency with this label) and have been refugee advocates and activists for approximately 15 years. As such, all our findings should be seen through that lens of social justice research. We agree with many community psychologists before us (e.g., Elias, Neigher, & Johnson-Hakim, 2014) that social justice is an important value, or guiding principle, which should be taken into account before any community research is carried out.

Method
Materials and Procedure.

Data in an online questionnaire were collected between 8th and 13th November 2017. The Qualtrics database contacts panel members throughout Australia by email and gives them the opportunity to engage with research via online questionnaires. Participants entered their age in numerals, and indicated their gender (1 = *male*, 2 = *female*, 3 = *gender diverse/other*), ethnic background (1 = *Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander*, 2 = *African*, 3 = *Asian*, 4 = *Caucasian/European,* 5 = *Indian*, 6 = *Middle Eastern,* 7 = *Pacific Islander*), religious affiliation (1 = *Buddhist*, 2 = *Christian*, 3 = *Hindu*, 4 = *Jewish*, 5 = *Muslim*, 6 = *No religion*), level of education (1 = *did not complete secondary school*, 6 = *part or completed higher degree – Masters or PhD*) Participants also reported their general political orientation on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly left*, 5 = *strongly right*). It was explained that "right or right-wing' views means a conservative political viewpoint; and 'Left or left-wing' means a progressive viewpoint". Participants were also provided with the option of selecting Other to enter text in the ethnic background and religious affiliation questions.

Qualitative question about attitudes towards asylum seekers. First, we gave the following definition of what an asylum seeker was for the purposes of the present study, followed by a question:

A person seeking asylum, or an asylum seeker, is someone who arrives at another country and asks to be accepted as a refugee. A refugee is someone who fled their home and country and cannot return to it due a well-founded fear of persecution. There are also asylum seekers who arrive by plane but we are only looking at those who try to arrive by boat in this study. In the space provided below, we would like you to describe what you feel about people who seek asylum in Australia and arrive by boat, and then why you feel the way you do. That is, please describe and explain your attitude towards asylum seekers.

Function of Attitudes towards asylum seekers. Directly after the qualitative equestion, respondents were asked quantitively about their function of their attitudes towards asylum seekers. We chose to measure the three most prevalent functions as per a past research study (Pedersen et al., 2000); thus, the defensive or social-expressive functions were not measured here. We used the following

functions: value expressive (e.g., 'my moral beliefs about the way things should be', experiential schematic (e.g., 'my acquaintance with asylum seekers'), and indirect experiential schematic (e.g., 'the things other people have told me about their experiences with asylum seekers') as per previous Australian research (e.g., Griffiths & Pedersen, 2009). The items were adapted from the Attitude Function Inventory developed by Herek (1987). Responses varied from 'This is an extremely important reason for me holding my views' (5) to 'This is not at all important to me'(1). Respondents were classified as 'value expressive' if their score on this function was higher than their score on the other two functions. Respondents were similarly classified in the other two categories. Attitudes toward Asylum Seekers (the "ATAS" scale). This was measured by a 14-item scale (Pedersen, Attwell, & Heveli, 2005); originally the scale consisted of 18 items; however, because of changes in the political landscape, four items were discarded. Items were responded to on a seven-point Likert scale (1= 'disagree strongly' to 7 = 'agree strongly'). Reverse coding was used on positively worded items so that the higher the score, the higher the negativity. An example from the ATAS scale is 'If asylum seekers are not happy, send them home'.

Participants.

The sample was comprised of 164 Australian adult participants recruited using the online Qualtrics software platform. The sample contained 49.4% males and 50.6% females and ranged in age between 18 and 81 years with an average of 45.07 years (SD = 16.14).

Regarding political orientation, 48% of participants indicated a centred political preference, followed by 20.7% indicating they were somewhat left, 18% indicating they were somewhat right, 4.7% indicating that they were strongly left, and the remaining 8.7% indicating that they were strongly right. Regarding education levels, 10% had completed a postgraduate degree, 5.3% had completed a graduate diploma or

graduate certificate; 22% had completed a bachelor's degree; 13.3% had completed an advanced diploma, 18% had completed a Certificate III/IV, 14.7% completed Year 12, and 16.7% completed Year 11 or below. Regarding ethnic background, almost half the participants (46.7%) indicated that they were of Caucasian/European background, with the next largest group (20.7%) indicating that they were of Asian descent.

Of the remaining participants, 5.3% indicated Indian, 4.7% indicated Middle Eastern, 4% indicated Indigenous Australians, and 1.3% indicated Pacific Islander. A total of 17.3% reported being "other" (being American Indian/South African/Australia, Australian, European, Mixed Aboriginal/Chinese/Scottish; New Zealand/Egyptian/Italian; or white). In terms of participants' religious background, 53.3% of people identified as Christian, followed by 30.7% indicating no religious affiliation. Of the remaining participants, 5.3% indicated Muslim, 2.7% indicated Hindu, 4% indicated Buddhist, 0.7% indicated Jewish, and the remaining 3.3% reported that they were Anglican, Christadelphian, or Uniting Church.

Regarding location, 1.3% of participants came from the Australian Capital Territory, 32.7% from New South Wales, 0.7% came from the Northern Territory, 19.3% came from Queensland, 8.7% came from South Australia, 3.3% came from Tasmania, 24% came from Victoria, and 10% came from Western Australia.

Results
Quantitative Data

Reliability was satisfactory for all three function scales as well as the ATAS ranging from between a = .81 and a = .93 (see Table 1). In support of the study's prediction, the most frequently reported function of attitudes was value-expressive (81.3%), followed by the experiential-schematic function (10.7%), and the indirect experiential-schematic (8.2%). However, respondents reported more than one value as being important. Using scores between 2 and 5 inclusive (values being important to these participants), 92.7% of respondents reported that their values

were important, 68% reported that indirect experience was important to them, and 66% reported that personal experience was important to them. However, for the purposes of this study, we concentrate on the most important function: the value-expressive function.

According to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (Refugee Convention), a refugee is any person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country

A person seeking asylum, or an asylum seeker, is someone who has sought protection as a refugee, but whose claim for refugee protection has not yet been finalised. A 2x9 MANOVA was then conducted to ascertain whether differences occurred with the three function of attitudes variables by way of the ATAS. The analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups on the value-expressive function ($F(1,133) = 2.90$; p = .08), the indirect experiential function ($F(1,133) = 3.75$; p = .10), or the experiential function ($F(1,133) = 2.95$; p = .09). In other words, according to the quantitative data, there was no difference between rejecting and accepting participants on which function they used.

Qualitative Data

For the thematic analysis, we only included data from participants who saw values as being important (that is, they did not say that values "just doesn't apply to me"; the other four categories showed varying degrees of importance). Seven participants were excluded because they reported that their values did not affect their views. We also excluded 15 participants who were neither accepting nor rejecting by way of the ATAS. This left 132 participants (86.3% of the original sample) who were included in analyses.

We then separated the participants into two categories "rejecting" and "accepting" using the midpoint of 4 on the ATAS as the separation point (as noted previously, 15 participants were excluded as their score lay on the separation point). With the remaining data, 50 participants (37.8%) were classified as accepting and 82 (62.1%) were classified as rejecting.

In an attempt to enhance rigour, both authors analysed the data. We were in agreement about how to categorise the vast

Table 1. **Descriptive Characteristics of Scales**

Function Scales	Mean	SD	No of items	α	Range
Value-expressive	3.47	1.06	5	.81	1-5
Experiential Schematic	2.54	1.27	3	.86	1-5
Indirect Experiential Schematic	2.60	1.18	3	.83	1-5
ATAS	4.31	1.29	14	.93	1-7

majority of participant comments. However, there were nine comments which needed deeper analysis which we proceeded to do. By the end of the process, both authors were in agreement about all items.

Most themes did relate to values as might be expected by the results of the quantitative data. Three themes were found that related to the Schwartz (1992) values with respect to both the accepting and

Table 2. **Examples of themes in qualitative data**

Theme	Example	Percentage of participants espousing theme
Universalism (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Accepting Group**	They are people in need who should be helped on humanitarian grounds (Participant No 6)	*N* = 42 out of 50 84%
Universalism (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Rejecting Group**	I have no qualms on taking in people who genuinely need to leave the country they are born into (BUT I do tend to question those that come here illegally.) (Participant No 7)	*N* = 11 out of 82 13.4%
(Un)fairness (as per Lind, Kulik, Ambrose, & de Vera Park, 1993) **Accepting Group**	(They should be given safe haven in Australia, because they haven't got anywhere else to go). They should not be given jobs in preference to Australians (Participant No 134).	*N* = 8 out of 50 16%
(Un)fairness (as per Lind, et al., 1993) **Rejecting Group**	Strongly oppose anyone coming here by either boat, or not having gone through the proper channels to be here legally (Participant No 132)	*N* = 36 out of 82 43.9%
Security (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Accepting Group**	I accept them as long as they are not going to be terrorising our country (Participant No 14)	*N* = 6 out of 50 12%
Security (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Rejecting Group**	Australia is spending too much to help asylum seekers who may not be real and pretending to be under persecution. Many of them can be terrorists (Participant No 80).	*N* = 11 out of 82 14.4%
Conformity (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Accepting Group**	I believe they need to be critically evaluated to ensure they are not terrorists, are conducive to accepting our values and way of life and are genuine refugees. (In these cases I believe we should accept and support them. All others should be rejected and returned to their country of origin) (Participant No 54).	*N* = 2 out of 50 *4%*
Conformity (as per Schwartz, 1992) **Rejecting Group**	I think they should be sent back to their country of origin and they never seem to integrate in Australia (Participant 37)	*N* = 6 out of 82 *7.3%*

Note: *N* = 132 (Accepting *N* = 50; Rejecting *N* = 82). Because there are overlapping themes, the percentages do not

add up to 100%

rejecting group. The first was Universalism, which involves protecting the welfare of all of society - within Schwartz's category of self-transcendence. The second was Security, which involves the safety and stability of oneself, one's relationships, and society in general, and the third was Conformity, which involves actions that could hurt ingroup members or violate cultural norms. One other theme relating to values was found that was not hypothesised by Schwartz (1992): Fairness or (Un)fairness. Often underlying this theme was the belief that it was unfair that asylum seekers who arrived by boat rather than through, say, humanitarian camps overseas, were given visas.

With the accepting group, the most prevalent theme was Universalism (84%), followed by (Un)fairness (16%), Security (12%), and Conformity (4%). With the rejecting group, the most prevalent theme was (Un)fairness (43.9%), followed by Security (14.4%), Universalism (13.4%), and Conformity (7.3%). The prevalence of some themes was quite similar in two instances: Conformity and Security. But Universalism was more relevant to the accepting group and (Un)fairness was more relevant to the rejecting group. See Table 2 for an example of each theme.

Discussion

The findings of our mixed-method study offer a number of important contributions. As hypothesised, and in line with previous research (Pedersen et al., 2008), it was found that values were the most prevalent function of participants' attitudes. While the direct and indirect experiential schematic functions were relevant, they were not at the forefront of participants' minds when completing the questionnaire. It is worth noting that the present study found very similar results with respect to the importance of values with previous work.

Given that approximately ten years exists between the present study and the Pedersen et al. (2008) study, especially the amount of debate that has taken place, this may indicate the intractability of attitudes once formed. Having said this, attitude change is possible and is discussed later in the paper.

With respect to the qualitative data, there were three major themes which support the theorising of Schwartz (1992). These were Universalism, Security, and Conformity. Schwartz et al. defined Universalism as "Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature", Security as "Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self", and Conformity as "Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms" (p. 664). However, there were differences between the accepting and rejecting participants in the importance of two themes: Universalism was the most prevalent value for accepting participants and (Un)fairness was the most prevalent value for Rejectors.

With respect to Universalism, themes in the present study revolved around the protection of all people – not just our Australian ingroup. As Participant No 105, an accepting participant, noted: "They are humans and humanity comes first. They have a right to live peacefully as equally as all of us do. They should be provided shelter and jobs so they can feed their families". The Universalism theme was also found by Greenhalgh and Watt, (2015) under Schwartz's category of Self-Transcendence.

One unexpected theme that came up frequently in our data was (Un)fairness which was not explicitly contained in the Schwartz et al. (2012) list of values. Having said that, this theme could potentially be incorporated into the Universalism category. However, we chose not to do this because even though this involves principles of justice, Universalism as defined by Schwartz is subsumed within the category of Self-Transcendence and as can be seen by the example given below, this is not always related. For example, Participant No 19 (a rejecting participant) stated: "they get the best treatment, Australian people should get the best treatment as this is our country". However, this value supports other research such as Anderson et al. (2015). Another

study found that the "fairness heuristic" related to whether fair procedures are involved (Lind, Kulik, Ambrose, & de Vera Park, 1993). In their study, the fairness heuristic was strongly related to judgments of procedural justice with respect to the process relating to lawsuits and their outcomes (also see Peterson, 1994). It is not surprising, in retrospect, that Fairness was such a prevalent theme. As found by Bongiorno and Pennay (2018), the concept of (Un)fairness (or as they put it the "fair go") is alive and well in Australia. These authors cited research by the Social Research Centre that asked respondents to rate the most significant events in their lifetimes in Australia. Results indicated that 45% of participants cited events concerned with human rights (e.g., marriage equality) which the authors argue is linked with "a fair go".

We now turn to the more minor themes. With respect to Security, themes revolved around feelings of threat or terrorism. As Participant No. 57 (a rejecting participant) noted, "We have enough terrorism happening now due to the government letting them onto our country".

With respect to Conformity, themes revolved around actions by an outgroup that could hurt the Australian society. As Participant No. 45 (a rejecting participant) argued: "I do not believe in multiculturalism I believe that integration into the Australian way of life is more important than bending to their beliefs". It is likely that giving corrective information will change perceptions of unfairness. For example, it has been found that the giving of accurate information, together with other strategies, reduced prejudice against Indigenous Australians, false beliefs regarding them, and the perception that they receive preferential treatment (Pedersen & Barlow, 2008).

Interestingly, the two themes discussed in the preceding paragraph were also found in another Australian study examining values underlying attitudes towards Muslim Australians (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012). However, there were two themes not frequently mentioned in the present study that were present in the Pedersen and Hartley

study – Benevolence and Self-Direction. It should be noted that Self-Direction often related to the perception of Muslim women, and Benevolence was not mentioned as frequently as the three common themes.

Interestingly, a high number of the (Un)fairness comments could also be classified as false beliefs. For example, Participant 7, a rejecting participant, stated: "There are ways and means of entering Australia, it is a pity that most of them tend to do it illegally". This supports a great deal of research linking asylum seekers with false beliefs (e.g., Pedersen & Hartley, 2017). This latter study found a significant relationship between prejudice against asylum seekers and false beliefs. If we are looking for a cohesive society, prejudice against any group is negative.

Some respondents reported both negative and positive thoughts. For example, Participant No. 4 (an accepting participant) said: "I am sympathetic to asylum seekers but I feel they need to arrive in Australia by official channels. They are an issue of public safety, are terrorists & [and bring] illness, diseases that are not found in Australia as we have eradicated them." He showed sympathy towards them (Universalism), the belief that they should arrive by official channels ((Un)fairness), and the fear of terrorism and infection (Security). This finding supports Braithwaite (1997) who found that Security and Harmony (which could be seen to relate to Universalism) significantly correlated with one another even though they were independent. This holding of different views on the same topic could also relate to the cognitive dissonance research; or, more accurately, to the limitations of cognitive dissonance theory.

Cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1962) posits that people strive to have their cognitions consistent. As he put it, cognitive dissonance is "the existence of nonfitting relations among cognitions" (p. 3). This does not seem to be the case in the present study. However, as Welles (2017) notes, people can be quite comfortable with diverse and contradictory views. These findings augur well for anti-prejudice

interventions: there is something for conveners to work with. While the attitudes of some participants in such an intervention might be almost impossible to change; for example, Participant No. 8, a Rejecting participant, stated that: "they are all chicken shit lying pricks", there was a sizeable minority of participants with attitudes that might be open to change.

Limitations, positives, and future research. Our findings support previous research; for example, Braithwaite (1997) found that two values were influential in predicting political attitudes: Security and Harmony. Our study was also valuable in that – unlike many psychological studies – it measured the attitudes of the Australian community; not university students – and unlike many studies, education levels were not uniformly high. As noted by Schwartz (1992), there is a need to explore the theory of values with people with lower levels of formal education. Indeed, we – the authors – have fallen into this trap of confining our research to university students in previous studies. Also, by providing qualitative data as well as quantitative data, our participants gave us a rich understanding of why they thought the way they did. It is interesting to note that while quantitative analyses found no difference on the three functions with regard to the ATAS, the qualitative data showed a more nuanced pattern of the accepting participants' most prevalent value being Universalism and the rejecting participants' most prevalent value being (Un) fairness. As argued previously in this paper, both quantitative and qualitative data have their place in psychological enquiry. Future research could investigate what underlies direct and indirect experiential schematic functions with regard to asylum seekers. As noted in the Results section, it wasn't that those functions were unimportant, it was simply that the value-expressive function was the most important.

Also, given the importance of values in the present study, it would be interesting to investigate the antecedents of other marginalised groups (e.g., Indigenous Australians; LGBTI+ people; disabled people; other marginalised groups) in a similar manner - perhaps investigating the intention to take social action in support of the marginalised group being investigated.

As noted by Boer and Fischer (2013), we cannot look at the relationship between values and social attitudes outside their environmental and cultural context. Similarly, as Kagan et al. (2011) note, critical community psychology emphasises power and values in an ecological setting. What might apply in the present study regarding asylum seekers might not apply to other marginalised groups even though power and values are involved with all research. Furthermore, the present study was a cross-sectional study – we cannot establish cause-and-effect here. For example, do people who value Universalism accept other cultures more readily, or does the dire situation of asylum seekers (say) in offshore detention spark Universalism? Only future research can unravel this question.

We also note that believing that comments about "unfairness" could well be simply a justification for negative attitudes that existed before. In other words, it could be to avoid appearing to be immoral or holding socially undesirable views. Future research could also attempt to untangle this issue.

Conclusions

In the context of unprecedented numbers of people being forcibly displaced, and the implementation of increasingly restrictive measures by countries designed to deter the arrival of asylum seekers, understanding the social psychological factors that drive both positive and negative reaction to asylum seekers is important.

Although there is a large body of literature that has explored the factors that underpin negative attitudes to asylum seekers (for a review, see Pedersen & Hartley, 2015), there has been less focus on understanding what might underpin positive compared with negative attitudes. Understanding positive attitudes is important in the context of an anti-prejudice strategy. For example, if the positivity stemmed in part with the acknowledgement of privilege, it might be

useful to bring this into any strategy. The present study investigated the under-researched role of values in attitudes towards asylum seekers, both negative and positive. Given the emphasis given to values by our participants, our findings are important. Not only do they provide a significant contribution to the social/community psychology of attitudes towards asylum seekers, there are practical implications as well. As noted by Heaven et al., (2006), "values are important in setting the framework within which our social and political attitudes are expressed" (p. 606). Knowing how values can drive attitudes can help in fostering social action in support of people seeking asylum.

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Notes
[1] According to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol (Refugee Convention), a refugee is any person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country

[2] A person seeking asylum, or an asylum seeker, is someone who has sought protection as a refugee, but whose claim for refugee protection has not yet been finalised.

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In Between Two Worlds: Colombian Migrants Negotiating Identity, Acculturation, and Settlement in Melbourne, Australia

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Latin American immigration experiences have been documented in terms of acculturation, settlement and belonging. While there is an increase in research interest, there is a need to recognise the diversity of the Latin American region, as well as within countries, in terms of culture, history, and histories of colonialism. This exploratory qualitative work examines the experiences of 15 Colombian immigrants living in Melbourne, Australia and considers implications for identity, acculturation and settlement. Thematic analysis of in depth-interviews generated three themes that represent their acculturation and settlement: identity negotiation between home and homeland, constructing Colombian identity in Australia and navigating barriers to settlement. Migration was mainly experienced as a loss and represented as a negotiation between home country and host country where the structures of support were crucial in making home in Australia. This has shed light on the meanings, expectations and challenges associated with the migration process to Australia. This analysis reveals how accents, cultural values, and discrimination play a role in the ways Colombians construct and negotiate identity and settlement in Australia.

This paper focuses on Colombian immigrants to Australia who comprise a small but rapidly growing group. "The first records of Colombians in Australia date back to four people included in the 1911 Census" (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015, para. 24). The Department of Social Services (2015, para. 5) reports that "the latest census in 2011 recorded 11,318 Colombia-born people in Australia, an increase of 98.2 % from the 2006 census.

Considering that Australia provides opportunities for students and professionals, recent Colombian migrants usually come under a student visa, skilled migration visa or partner visa. In view of the growing number of Colombian immigrants, the study explored the reasons for migration and the various factors that would influence the acculturation and settlement experiences for a sample of Colombian migrants to Melbourne, Australia.

Migration, Acculturation, and Settlement

Migration, acculturation and settlement are challenging processes. "Migration implies constant mobility and instability, an often-endless search for belonging to the constantly changing other, as well as having to cope with constantly shifting legal and bureaucratic requirements for social acceptance and divergent parameters for recognition" (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008, p. 98). Sonn and Lewis (2009, p. 116) note that: "the experiences of immigration and settlement are ongoing, and often involve dislocation and the loss of taken for granted resources and systems of meaning. It also means gaining new opportunities for participation and resources for living". The challenges of immigration and settlement for migrant communities have often been understood using the notion acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2006). Acculturation is "the process of cultural change that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with each other" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 146). Researchers in community psychology have argued that acculturation is

a contested process that involves relations of power between migrant and receiving communities which are typically reflected in experiences of exclusion, discrimination, as well as the pursuit of a sense of community and wellbeing (e.g., Garcia- Ramírez, de la Mata, Paloma, & Hernández-Plaza 2011; Luque-Ribelles, Herrera-Sanchez, & García-Ramírez, 2017; Sonn & Lewis, 2009, Sonn & Stevens, 2017).

Some scholars have theorised acculturation as a process of identity and community making. The process involves more than the simple negotiation of host and home culture; it is contested within and between different communities and contexts along various structural dimensions and social group memberships based on race, ethnicity, migration status, class, gender and intersections among these dimensions (Andreouli, 2013; Buckingham et al., 2018).

Some researchers have shown how cultural racism shapes the experiences of various migrant communities who are made strange and deemed as not belonging to Australia because they are not white (e.g., Due & Riggs, 2010; Hage, 1999; Harris, 2009; Sonn & Lewis, 2009; Wise, 2010). For example, Sonn and Lewis (2009) illustrate how ideologies of race and ethnicity are prominent in how South African migrants construct identities, and how memories of racism in their home country as well as experiences of being racialised based on appearance, hair, and skin colour in Australia influence how they define themselves and the extent to which they can claim belonging in Australia. In a study with people of Cypriot-Turkish Muslim background, Ali and Sonn (2010) reported that experiences of ethnicisation based on appearance, or visible markers such as wearing a veil or a hijab may mediate experiences of belonging and exclusion. In other contexts, such as the UK (Andreouli & Howarth, 2013) and Italy (Cicognani, Sonn, Albanesi, & Zani, 2018) researchers have similarly shown how language, accent, dress, and other markers can be used in processes of othering which create borders to group membership and impacts upon acculturation, participation in everyday settings, and opportunities for belonging.

Nevertheless, people do not simply submit to cultural racism and othering, they develop various psychosocial strategies of resistance, coping, and resilience. Sonn and Fisher (2003) and more recently, Sonn, Ivey, Baker and Meyer (2017) have shown how South African immigrants to Australia respond in different ways to experiences of racism including rejecting negative and externally imposed identity labels, constructing alternative identity categories, and constructing hyphenated identities and understandings of self. Racialised migrants are proactive in acculturation-settlement experiences as they negotiate changing social, political, and cultural landscapes (Bhatia, 2018; Katsiaficas, Futch, Fine, & Sirin 2011; Sonn et al., 2017). Communities construct alternative settings away from unreceptive dominant group spaces, and in those settings they can deconstruct racialised encounters and find support and communality. They also provide opportunities for people to articulate memories from their home communities that are vital to the acculturation-settlement process and for crafting multi-layered selves and ways to belonging (Hall, 2000; Katsiaficas, et al., 2011; Sonn & Fisher, 1998).

When migrants arrive and try to settle in a new place, they carry traditions, memories and experiences of the places they used to live. These memories and experiences play an important role in the acculturation and settlement experience. For example, in the United States Bhatia (2007) showed that Indian migrant's memories of home, colonial histories and the accompanying nostalgia influence how they think about themselves in the host country and in the development of their identity and negotiation of their belonging. In Italy, Barbieri, Zani, and Sonn (2014) have highlighted that migrant adaptation is a negotiation between and within cultures; migrants bring symbols, practices and rituals from their culture while at the same time they appropriate new symbols from the new

culture. For instance, for immigrants, the term community may have different meanings related mainly to religion, culture (language, food, music) and a common past. Hence, in the process of acculturation, they relate community principally with their home country.

Although, memories of home can be a source of strength, recollecting experiences of oppression, violence, and stigmatisation can influence acculturation and identity construction in a new place (Collier & Gamarra, 2001; Guarnizo, Sánchez & Roach, 1999; Moriah, Rodriguez, & Sotomayor, 2004; Valderrama-Echavarria, 2014). For example, in research with Colombian migrants in the United States, Moriah et al. (2004), have suggested that, "a long history of violence, distrust, narco-trafficking, armed conflict, poverty, corruption, and social exclusion has diminished Colombians abilities to accurately mobilise through networks, to coordinate efforts and to act for mutual benefit" (p. 11-12). Others have noted that dominant stereotypes that associate Colombia with drug trafficking have implications for identity construction of people who migrate (Guarnizo et al., 1999). For example, Valderrama-Echavarria (2014) suggested that many Colombians reported feeling shame with the notion of Colombia associated with drug cartels or violence. These stereotypes of Colombia can manifest in people's acculturation dynamics in particular the process of identity construction.

Given this review, the understanding that acculturation and identity construction is the process of meaning making in social ecological context and the paucity of research studies on Colombian migrants in Australia, this present exploratory study aimed to shed light on the experiences of Colombians who have migrated to Australia. The paper addresses the following questions: 1) why do Colombia people immigrate to Australia and why do they choose to stay; and 2) what factors influence acculturation experiences and social identity construction?

Methodology

Building on similar previous studies with different immigrant groups in Australia (Ali & Sonn, 2010; Sonn & Lewis, 2009; Sonn, Stevens, & Duncan, 2013), this study was guided by the assumptions that people and culture are intertwined and that realities are constructed socially through language and thereafter are maintained through narrative (Freedman & Combs, 1996). In this approach the stories that people tell about themselves and others are constructed within social, cultural, historical and political contexts (Rappaport, 2000) are in line with an interpretivist epistemology (Willig, 2013), which claims that humans always negotiate and give meaning to the dynamics of their world, and focuses on the meanings that interviewees attach to their experiences (Williamson, 2002). For this reason, adopting an interpretivist approach to this study allows consideration of the meanings migrants attach to their experiences. These stories provide a window into how Colombians make sense of their identity and belonging; their words, voices, and the discourses that they navigate as part of their acculturation process.

Participants

All participants were recruited through the networks of the first author, who is Colombian and lives in Australia, by 'word of mouth'. No rewards or payments were offered. All interested participants were directed to contact the student researcher via telephone, text message, email or messaging via Facebook. Those who expressed interest were given detailed information about the research, its purpose, and the nature of the question. Participants were informed that potential emotional discomfort may occur, and that they can withdraw at any stage of the process, as well any additional time was given for any questions or concerns.

A total of 15 Colombian immigrants in Melbourne participated in the study: nine women and six men. The ages of the sample ranged from 25 to 45 years old. The majority of participants were born in Colombia, except for one male participant, who moved to Colombia from Venezuela at the age of one and who is a Colombian citizen. Eleven participants were from Bogotá, two from

Medellin, and one from San Gil. All the participants identified themselves as Colombian. They have lived most of their lives in urban areas in Colombia, especially Bogotá and Medellin. At the time of the study, all 15 participants were residing in Melbourne. The participants had been in Australia between one year and 16 years. In relation to migration status: five participants were already Australian citizens; five were permanent residents; one is in the process of gaining permanent residency; two currently hold a student visa; one is dependent on her partner's student visa; and one holds a temporary graduate visa. All but two participants had tertiary education, and most were employed in technical and professional roles (Table 1).

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview guide was developed based on previous studies (Ali & Sonn, 2010; Sonn et al., 2017) to guide one-to-one interviews that averaged 30 to 50 minutes. The interview guide included open-ended questions that were pilot tested with three Colombian people to ensure feasibility, face validity, and efficient ordering.

Fourteen interviews were conducted face-to-face and one was conducted using Skype, as was the preference of one of the participants. While most of the participants can communicate in English, Spanish is their first language. Given this, participants had the option to be interviewed in Spanish or English, and information to participants and consent forms were available in both languages. All participants decided to be interviewed in Spanish, except one person who decided to respond in English. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. At the completion of this process, the interviews in Spanish were professionally transcribed by a Colombian native Spanish speaker. To ensure that the translation was functionally equivalent, the first author checked that transcriptions against the original audio recording (Brislin, 1970). A native English speaker transcribed the interview that was conducted in English and the researchers checked it against the audio recording to ensure accuracy.

Data Analysis

With a focus on the reasons for migration and for staying in Australia, and factors that influence acculturation experiences and social identity construction, data was analysed using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clark (2006). Verbatim transcripts were used for analysis: the first author of this manuscript who is fluent in Spanish and English languages read the transcripts several times to familiarise with the responses and the content. Descriptive labels created emergent coding, followed by categories refined by both authors. A final set of main themes were generated and summaries of these were sent to participants to gain additional input as part of the process of member checking. All the participants agreed with themes and accentuated that their status as immigrants mean that they will continue to feel "between" Colombia and Australia.

Findings and Interpretation

The findings suggest that participants had similar motivations for leaving Colombia and choosing to remain in Australia. The main themes generated from the interviews show that acculturation and settlement is a contested and challenging process and that physical and cultural displacement creates a sense of being "in-between worlds" for migrants. This sense of being in between involves the process of cultural remooring and navigating various social and symbolic representations and mechanisms of structural exclusion. The themes identified are: 1) "I don't feel from here, but I don't feel Colombian either"; 2) "I love my cultural identity": Constructing Colombian identity in Australia; and 3) Settlement: Accents, cultural values, and discrimination. Verbatim excerpts are used to illustrate themes. Participants' real names are replaced by pseudonyms.

The socio-political factors that make people leave a country for another country are diverse. Migration is the result of push and press factors (Krishnakumar & Indumathi, 2014; Phizacklea, 2000). The reasons why Colombians migrate to Australia, as well as the reasons to stay in Australia are shown in Table 2. The findings

Table 1. Participant's demographics

Participant	Age	City-Country	Gender	Ethnicity	Education	Occupation in Australia	Marital status
Antonio	33	Venezuela/Cali-Colombia	M	Hispanic-Latino	Degree of Business Administration, Colombia	Systems Project Officer	De facto
Carmen	45	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Hispanic-Latina	Master of Science in Public Policy and Management, Australia	Spanish tutor	De facto
José	36	Medellin-Colombia	M	Latino	Master of Accounting / Commerce, Australia	IT Consultant	Single
Pilar	39	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Latina	Master of Education, Australia	Spanish teacher	Married
Manuel	28	Bogotá-	M	Latino	TAFE	Warehouse	Single
Carolina	30	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Latina	Petroleum Engineering degree, Colombia	Shoe store manager	Married
Susana	33	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Latina	Master of Counseling, Australia	Counseling and Wellbeing Coordinator	Divorced
Alberto	29	Medellin-Colombia	M	Latino, Colombian, mestizo	Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, Australia	Warehouse assistant	Single
Sara	44	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Colombian	Master of Environmental Education, Spain	Public servant	Married
Rafael	37	San Gil-Colombia	M	Colombian	Master of Public Policy and Management, Australia	Own business	Married
Monica	34	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Mestiza	PhD (Science), Australia	Researching	Married
Cristina	25	Bogotá-Colombia	F	Mestiza	Master of Energy Efficient and Sustainable Building, Australia	Marketing and maintenance of an IT web store	Married
Valentina	37	Medellin-Colombia	F	Mestiza	Master of Urban Planning, Colombia	Own business	Married

Table 2. *Colombian migrants' reasons for migrating to and remaining in Australia*

Participant	Time in Australia	Current Visa	Reason to leave Colombia	Why Australia?	Reason to stay in Australia
Antonio	8 y	Australian Citizen	Lack of opportunities	English Studies /Australian Partner	Opportunities, Australian culture, economic stability. Australian partner
Carmen	8 y	Australian Citizen	Social and political situation in Colombia	English studies/ Clear migration policies	Australian values, equality, safety
José	10 y	Australian Citizen	English Studies	English Studies/ friend in Australia	Safety/Job stability
Pilar	7 y	Australian Citizen	Social and political situation in Colombia	Quality of life	Safety, Society, collaboration, respect, freedom
Manuel	11 y	Permanent Residency	Social and political situation	English studies	Safety, Australian culture
Teresa	11 y	Permanent Residency	Abusive relationship	English studies/ family in Australia	Easy to develop projects, freedom, equality
Francisco	6 y	Temporary Graduate Visa-485	Develop as a person	Tertiary studies	Safety/Australian culture
Carolina	1 time: 10 m 2 time: 2 y 2 m	Permanent Residency	English Studies	English Studies	Australian partner
Susana	1 y 7 m	Student Visa	Social and political situation in Colombia	Quality of life/ Migration /Tertiary studies/weather	Safety
Alberto	4 y	Student Visa	English studies	English studies/family in Australia	Economic and social system
Sara	16 y	Australian Citizen	Threats of violence	English studies/ weather	Opportunities, economic stability, quality of life, equality.

show that for five of the participants social and political factors propelled them to leave and that education made it possible to go to Australia. The majority of participants also reported that they have no intention of returning to Colombia because of safety and security and the freedoms offered to pursue their life goals in Australia. This narrative is consistent with the stories of many other voluntary and involuntary migrants in Australia.

"I Don't Feel From Here, But I Don't Feel Colombian Either"

The migration and settlement are rewarding, but it is also very demanding of people's psychological, social and cultural resources. For many the process involves intense challenges generated by feeling torn between a host and a home community. Participants described various tensions and challenges in Australia, including the notion of an 'in between status' (Sonn & Fisher, 1998). They feel in between the two worlds and that this is an ongoing process of negotiating displacement.

The of sense of being in-between can be observed as a recognition of the slow process of adjustment and various psychological, social and cultural aspects that people need to negotiate. The excerpts below illustrate that acculturation is a negotiation process reflected in being "in-between worlds". The process for the participants revealed shared aspects such as the deep sense of their cultural identities and the slowness of acquiring ways of thinking and behavioural repertoires.

As time goes by, I feel more Australian, obviously there would be things that never change and that will be always part of my identity. As an identity I feel Colombian, but I am very grateful to Australia and I have been adopting different ways of thinking and adjust to their lifestyle (Antonio).

Teresa noted that:

My resettlement and adjustment processes have been long, I believe I am still in these processes. At this stage I feel part of the place but not of the Australian

culture. I know the streets, the neighbourhoods, different places and I have friends, but I do not feel Australian. I don't feel part of the Australian culture. I believe that it is a much longer process, and it will take a lot of time (Teresa).

Another participant highlighted a partial sense of belonging:

I feel partial Australian, ...well because of my studies here I feel part of Australia and part of the world however, because I don't have permanent residency in a certain way, I don't feel connected to Australia, but I believe it is just for bureaucratic hurdles (Francisco).

The process of negotiating belonging was not only from the position of settling in Australia but also from how they are perceived in Colombia or by Colombians once they return home to visit:

When I visited Colombia, I went to buy shoes, and somebody asked me: Where are you from? I answered I am from Bogotá (Colombia's capital city), then the person told me: but you have an accent. I just said I was born and raised three blocks from here... I think with these situations you realise your identity... At my parents' neighbourhood and for my friends in Colombia, I am Australian...for them I am no longer Colombian (Sara).

The analysis identified various ways in which Colombians conveyed a sense of being 'in-between' worlds, which included place, culture, and structures. As Fortier (2000) stated, "Immigrant populations vacillate between 'national identity' and 'e'migre' identity', producing a cultural citizenship that is grounded in multilocality" (p. 97).

"I Love my Cultural Identity": Constructing Colombian Identity in Australia

The migration process involves renegotiating taken for granted identities and the range of symbolic and material resources that they draw upon in this process. The various excerpts below include the reference to cultural values and practice, language, and shared history which are all central to a

strong sense of Colombian cultural identification. For example, Alberto stated:

I love my cultural identity because it is different, and Australian people like it, we bring nice things here, the culture, the food, the music and we share our history, that Latino part, that Colombian part that we have, we are proud to represent Colombia here (Alberto).

Teresa made similar comments about the role of culture contributing to the aliveness of countries, noting:

I think about my identity as the identity of any immigrant. It is an asset to Australia; it is what is building the country. In other words, as a Colombian and as an immigrant I provide my culture, which makes this country alive. It is what gives colour to Australia.

Sara mentioned that shared emotional connection amongst the Colombian diaspora around the world:

I think there is not a Colombian that will deny their identity, in spite of the violent stories, our identity is deeply rooted, our sense of belonging is stronger than the Australians sense of belonging. We give our lives for Colombia and we cry every time we listen our national anthem, here Australians barely know the lyrics of their anthem. Also, our sense of community is extremely strong... the sense of belonging is so strong that it doesn't matter where you are in this world you will have it.

One participant used the term *Colombianidad* [1] to explain how, over time, there may be a 'lessening' of an 'authentic' Colombian identity but a rearticulation of it in a different way in Australia. This is captured in the excerpt from Manuel who speaks of loss and reclamation, and rearticulating ways of being Colombian, never fixed, but always changing:

I mean I see myself as a Colombian, but... because I have been here for a very long time, I have lost my "Colombianidad", and you always see people very Colombian in Australia. I haven't experienced enough that Colombian culture, therefore, I can feel

Colombian but in the eyes of others I am less Colombian. For example, I don't follow the Colombian football team, I don't have the Colombian team T-shirt, I don't use Colombian handicrafts, and I don't use the sombrero vueltiao[2]. For me that it is not related to being Colombian, I think I live my Colombianidad in a different way (Manuel).

Yet, while many embraced Colombian cultural identity, some participants also referred to the aspects that they do not like about Colombia nor of being from Colombia. Although most participants describe being proud of their Colombian heritage, one participant reported feeling shame:

Being Colombian is a birthmark, a bad birthmark in the forehead. I don't identify with the culture of Colombia. I don't catch up with Colombian people, I don't celebrate Colombian festivities...and for me Colombia is a place far away, there is my mum, she is the only link that I have with Colombia, the family that I have over there (Pilar).

Unlike other participants, Pilar distanced herself from Colombia. She uses the metaphor of a stain, a bad birthmark. Pilar feels out of place in both Australia and Colombia. Responses from other participants are also instructive about how people negotiate negative stereotypes about Colombia. For instance, Manuel commented:

People ask always the same question: where are you from? And when you say Colombia they ask: Are you Mexican? Or they ask if Colombia is in Mexico or if we speak Mexican. Being Colombian in Australia means answering awkward questions related to drugs or Pablo Escobar (Manuel).

Valentina made similar remarks:

When you say you are from Colombia and, more when you say that you are from Medellin everyone asks for cocaine or for Pablo Escobar. It's just very annoying. I can't even deal with that situation I always get angry because I think it's ignorance. I mean they can just google Colombia (Valentina).

Other comments referred to values such as intolerance and corruption. For instance, Carmen noted: "Colombian society is very intolerant. We don't appreciate what we have in Colombia, people love others just for a moment and after they destroy them". Carolina had similar thoughts: "We are narrow-minded; we need to open to new things in order to take the next step".

These excerpts show that acculturation and identity-making involves dialogues between both positive and negative representations of home culture. Participants value what they have to offer to Australia while also making sense of negative stereotypical representations of Colombia.

Barriers to Settlement: Accents and Discrimination

This theme captures some of the structural and symbolic factors that hamper the positive acculturation experience for migrants. These factors included language and accent, cultural practices such as how people greet one another, and institutional practices such as non-recognition of overseas qualifications. Despite the positive opportunities for personal and social development brought about by migration, almost all the participants reported obstacles in adjusting to the Australian context and experiences of a sense of alienation and isolation.

Language, accents and borders. Language mastery appeared as an important factor in a sense of belonging and, in the acculturation process for the Colombian migrants, English proficiency was the dominant issue. Interviewees described experiences of alienation or discomfort generated by limited or perceived low levels of spoken English proficiency in different areas of their life such as job hunting, social interactions or integration to the Australian community. Rafael communicated the complex significant personal, social and economic implications of limited English language proficiency:

I think the most difficult part is the English …you can't communicate… one of the poverty indicators in a society is illiteracy. However, when we arrived in

Australia, we couldn't read, write, speak, listen … consequently, we were more than an illiterate person, and that is very hard. This generates many social difficulties and limitations. Hence, we isolate ourselves.

Like Rafael, Antonio stressed that having limited English language competence can make one feel isolated and it can also produce difficulties in communication:

At the beginning it was very difficult… I felt isolated … I had many issues… learning English and communicating effectively. There was a lot of frustration. Once I was hospitalised for an infection and there was nobody who speaks Spanish, that was the first year when I came here.

The experiences of not being able to communicate in English could result in situations that make people feel self-conscious or lead to embarrassing situations. Pilar recollected:

My son remembers when we arrived, he didn't know English at all. He always says to me "Do you think it's easy to be at school and pee your pants?" because when he was 4 years old, he didn't know how to ask for the toilet in English. He was very advanced, intelligent and articulated in Spanish, but he didn't know how to speak English, it was so terrible that he still remembers that feeling of not being able to communicate.

Communicating in the host society's language is extremely important to be able to meet migrants' needs in everyday life as well as to establish a sense of identity and belonging. Susana relayed the significance of language in self-presentation and expression:

It has been a slow process of finding myself in a language that is not mine. It took a lot of hard work, I can say that my level of English was good, but it was very academic… therefore finding my way, my personality in English has been a struggle, and there are still situations where I don't feel confident, I still have difficulties being myself in a genuine way in English.

Some participants have moved from

being competent adults in Spanish language to being immigrants with some limited capacity to express their thoughts and feelings and to engage in social interactions in English with native English speakers. Some participants suggested an accent was a synonym for a lack of language proficiency and that this could result in discrimination.

Others have noted the role of language and accents in shaping interpersonal interaction between people from different ethnic groups. In a US-based study, Latinos reported often feeling monitored by white people when they speak English, and, if some sign of a distinctive accent is detected, they risk being mocked (Cobas & Feagin, 2008). In the United States language relegation of Latinos involves the assessment of English as superior to Spanish (Santa Ana, 2002) and takes place within a longer history of racialized power relations. Tomic (2013) refers to the process of discursively creating a distinction between the native Self and non-native Other as linguicism, which was evident in this study.

Cultural values: everyday experiences and "otherness". Some participants' experiences in Australia were expressed through different cultural values; in behaviour and patterns of interaction. The excerpts below illustrate differences in which participants felt that their cultural values influenced their lived experiences. Sara emphasised family closeness and expressions of physical affection and how these are seemingly at odds with "families in Australia":

In Colombia, families are close-knit, and you realise it when you compare them with the families here. Families in Australia are very strange, we tend to have more physical contact. It doesn't matter if you are 50 years old your mum still cuddles you, hugs you, even you take a nap with her ... Mums are always looking after you (Sara).

José also highlighted cultural differences in expressions of physical affection of physical affection and how this influences his sense of cultural identity:

We normally kiss each other's cheeks when we say hello, when we introduce ourselves, or when we say goodbye. In Australia people become frightened with that, I think the physical contact, hugging, kissing is very Colombian, and I feel very Colombian in Australia when I do it, and more if I do it to my Australian or English friends (José).

Feeling "the other" in the new environment is associated with lack of familiarity (Furnham, 1990). In these excerpts this sense of otherness is related to differences in lived experiences that are evident when people compare themselves with the stereotypical Anglo Celtic Australian (Zevallos, 2003).

Labour market experiences. Participants described experiences concerning difficulties getting a job and the significance of it in their lives in Australia. Moreover, they found obtaining a job in their professions challenging, and more difficult at the professional level for which they have been trained in Colombia. Some of the participants have university degrees and some have also worked in their professions before arriving in Australia. An important barrier to obtaining a job are visa regulations: the participants for example who have a student visa can work 20 hours per week or 40 per fortnight and can therefore only apply for casual or part-time jobs.

Since I'm studying at the University the biggest difficulty has been to find an ideal job in something that I really want to do. I have been working here but in other areas. It's tough, I have been looking for other jobs but there is a lot of competition and it is necessary to have a certain level of English, a certain level of social skills. I think finding a job it's the hardest to achieve (Alberto).

The hardest part has been finding a job. It was a terrible shock because when I arrived my plan was to organise my resume and in four months get a job. However, I came across a different outcome. I study Engineering in Colombia and I hope to find a job I feel comfortable with… and that I can give the best of me (Carolina).

At the beginning, it was very hard for me working as a cleaner; I remember that I was working at the Crown casino with a friend, who is a Chemical Engineer, and the only way to stop us from going crazy was studying chemical formulas, to talk about something different than cloths or sponges… I didn't spend all my life studying to work as a cleaner (Sara).

As part of the migration process and the migrant condition, individuals build relationships with a wide group of different social groups, and this promotes the development of a sense of identity and belonging. As Aizpurúa (2008) stated, immigrants from Latin America can have difficulties finding suitable jobs that match their labour experiences and educational background and/or economic opportunities and they are often underemployed. Participants associate the feeling of otherness, loss of status and experiences of discrimination with language proficiency, the difference in values and getting a job that meets their previous expectations.

Discussion

This research explored the experiences of migration, acculturation, barriers to settlement and the role of social and other structures in the settlement process for 15 Colombian immigrants in Melbourne, Australia. The findings show that participants in this study moved to Australia (between 1-11 years ago) primarily to further their studies, suggesting that this is a unique sample compared to previous waves of migrants from Latin American countries. Even though they chose to migrate, they still reported that there were strong economic and political drivers for leaving Colombia. Reasons for leaving Colombia were never singular, but instead related to the expectation that they will have a better future and opportunities in Australia combined with the home country's history of violence and corruption. Similar to other investigations the main driver for migration for Colombians was therefore safety and economic stability (Madrigal, 2013; Wood, Gibson, Ribeiro, & Hamsho-Diaz, 2010). In this study, safety and security were the main reasons to stay in Australia, mainly related to the physical safety experienced in Melbourne compared to Colombia.

The findings from this study are consistent with many other studies (e.g., Andreouli, 2013; Cicognani et al., 2018) that show that acculturation is a challenging process of reconstructing lives within the constraints and opportunities afforded by the receiving country as well as mobilising the social and cultural resources of the home country. In this study participants constructed their identity by negotiating their transnational identities while also situating themselves in terms of the discourses and practices in Australia that position them as migrants, newcomers and outsiders. Australia's policies of multiculturalism facilitate cultural inclusion, but as participants indicated, they do not yet feel Australian. They are familiar with the physical and natural place, but there are various symbolic and structural barriers at different levels that influence their acculturation experiences and identity construction. The dynamism of acculturation is noted by Coronado (2014, p. 14): "we transform our identities and cultural practices, and simultaneously keep, to some degree, a sense of cultural control over what we adopt, change and transform".

The findings showed that a strong sense of Colombian cultural identification is advantageous to the acculturation process. Participants expressed their connectedness to cultural and national identities which was central to their self-identification as Colombian. Many participants also identified stigma and stereotypes that consistently associate Colombians with drugs and violence, as factors that influence their identity negotiation in Australia. Hence, acculturation experiences vary according to the migrant's pre- and post- contextual circumstances as well as the host society member's attitudes towards immigrants as is evident in the findings of this study.

English language competence, job satisfaction and the acceptance from others were the main obstacles for Colombian migrants found in Australia. English

competence entails a process of becoming, learning and mastering the language. It implies mastering a set of norms and shared cultural conventions that have been constructed over time that is central to a sense of community and feeling settled. The feeling of lack of language competence can be a result of social and cultural exclusion, which can be a major barrier to a sense of belonging in Australia. Indeed, language is an expression of culture; it represents identity and cultural ties.

Participants also expressed learning language as a process of "finding yourself" in the new context of meaning. It is not just about being functional, but about making sense as part of that new context. This issue has been reported by many other communities for whom English is a second or third language. Not speaking English, a form of dominant cultural capital and proximity to whiteness, is a key site for understanding power relations. As noted by Colic-Peisker (2002), "English spoken with a particular accent becomes a social marker. A non-Australian accent is perceived as a symbol of otherness" (p. 152) as well as requiring reconstructions of identities to fit the confines of the English language.

Colombian migrants recognise that English competence is a key for academic, professional and social integration. One way that migrants respond to the experience of stigma is through internalisation, which "involves the devaluation and inferiorisation of oneself and one's group and diminished self-esteem and self-efficacy" (Küey, 2015). It has been suggested that migrants support the idea that having an accent is inhibiting marking individuals as different (Deaux, 2000; Van Niele, 2014). Accents are associated with positive or negative attributes and they build interactions, perceptions and attitudes towards migrants. From the vantage point of migrant communities, accents and home language maintenance is also an act of survival, of self-protection against stereotypes and expression of identity vitality. Language and accents are powerful markers of identity. They are central in how ethnic groups go about making a home

around memories of their country/cultures of origin and the broader histories of colonialism that privilege some languages and accents over others, in particular, English language which is also an index of white cultural capital (Sonn & Fisher, 1998).

The current research aimed to provide more insight into Colombian migrants' experiences of acculturation and settlement. The importance of this exploratory study lies in the lack of information regarding the experiences of Colombian migrants in Melbourne, Australia through their own voices. Participants reported that migrating has been a challenging process of negotiating multiple identities and belongings after migration, while trying to maintain Colombian identity. The migration process of Colombian immigrants, like other migrant groups, is a dynamic process of acculturation between several structural and psychological forces (Bhatia, 2007): hence, this group should not be viewed as homogenous.

This study has some limitations. The study only reports the experiences of a voluntary group of immigrants from Colombia in Melbourne. Furthermore, the sample of this study does not include people from rural areas in Colombia. The next step in this research is to expand the sample to examine the different experiences of migration in a wider cross section which include city of origin, city of settlement, age, and gender and to identity the various community settings that fosters positive acculturation and opportunities for mutual transculturation. Doing so would give a better understanding of the diversity of Colombian people and the multitude of ways they negotiate displacement and acculturation.

This research has confirmed that migration experiences should be conceptualised as a process of meaning making through which migrants negotiate their identity and settlement. Stuart Hall (2000) has been central to this writing highlighting that identity-making: "is a matter of becoming rather than being. It is produced in and through narratives of both the past and present, a set of positions, within

broader arrangements of power through which people make sense of themselves and their communities" (p. 4). From a community psychology perspective, the focus is often on understanding the histories of those who migrate as well as the history of the receiving community and the context.

Growth in Australia's immigrant population calls for a need to understand and recognise the unique challenges they face. A better understanding of the immigration experiences and factors that either promote or restrain the progress of immigrants is crucial to improving policies and programs that are more equitable and inclusive. As many have noted (e.g. Andreouli, 2013; Bhatia, 2002; Sonn & Lewis, 2009) acculturation is usefully conceptualised as a process of meaning making that involves migrants negotiate their identities and settlement through symbolic and cultural resources within the constraints and opportunities provided by the new environment.

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Notes
[1]Colombianidad: Is it the feeling, the nature and character of being Colombian.

[2] Sombrero vueltiao: The Colombian vueltiao hat is one of the best known, cultural and popular symbols of Colombia.

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Let's assume people are good: Rethinking research in community psychology

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Here I argue for a community psychology based on the worth of all people and focus in particular on what that implies for those of us who do research. I discuss a hermeneutics of suspicion and methodolatry as orientations that can obscure the dignity of persons and offer a community psychology informed by humanism (CPh) as an alternative. CPh as outlined here, works from the assumption that people are good and emphasises a hermeneutics of love. Research involves the commitment to serve a community and an iterative process of working alongside that community while trusting, deepening and challenging your perspective as a researcher. I conclude by giving two examples from my own work and offering five principles researchers may wish to consider if CPh resonates for them.

Community psychology began, at least in part, as a response to the tendency of psychology to focus on the individual as a cause of, and cure for, human problems (Gridley & Breen, 2007; Nelson, Lavoie, & Mitchell, 2007). As a new sub-discipline it brought in fresh perspectives including an emphasis on people in context and a respect for difference. As Rappaport (1977) states in his early text, community psychology refutes the notion that psychologists should "adjust marginal[ised] people to the norm" (p. 1) and instead is based on "a faith in the possibility of a society that is consistent with a belief in the worth of *all* people" (p. 21, my emphasis). Diversity is at the core of this vision, and the role of a community psychologist is to work as an "agent of the local community" (p. 23) and help facilitate as best they can the flourishing of both the community itself and the people within it.

Here I argue for a turn, or return, to the notion of a community psychology based on the worth of all people and focus in particular on what that implies for those of us who do research. I move between outlining the rules and norms that I consider shackle us to particular positions and may inadvertently serve to perpetuate the status quo, and alternatives grounded in the notion of human dignity; that all people are persons, limited by the circumstances in which they find themselves and with something to offer. I offer this as a radical vision, not in the sense

that the elements which make it up are necessarily new, but in the sense that it attempts to go to the root of what community psychology is or could be.

I start by briefly outlining the primary task of research in community psychology being to serve a community and then elaborate on the worth of all people as a core assumption of what I call a humanistic community psychology (CPh). Next, I outline a CPh research process and spend some time outlining the pitfalls of "methodolatry" which, I argue, is endemic in psychology and reverses the emphasis on service and dignity I am advocating here. I conclude by giving two examples from my own work and summarising a list of principles researchers may wish to consider if CPh resonates for them.

The Core Task: To Serve a Community

The core task of research in community psychology as claimed by Rappaport and reiterated in various forms many times since, is to serve a community (e.g., Fine, 2018; Guerin, Leugi, & Thain, 2018; Rappaport, 1977). "Community", however, is a contentious term (Evans, Duckett, Lawthom, & Kivell, 2017; Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthom, & Siddiquee, 2011). Communities are made up of elements that may include shared social practices, subjective phenomena such as "sense of community" (Sarason, 1974) or

"communitas" (McInerney, 2016), geographical boundaries, and/or rules of membership that define people as in or out regardless of their preference. Communities can be comforting, liberating or oppressive, or all of these especially when considered from the perspective of different people. As I am using it here a community is a group of people who exist in relationship to each other (with the further caveat that the group is not a single family). The question is not whether this community is "real" in absolute terms, but whether, in the rough way of fuzzy categories, the people within it are connected in some non-trivial sense. A group of friends is a community in this sense, so is an organisation, a network of people who recognise themselves as sharing a common identity (e.g., as queer, environmentalists, veterans), a city or a nation. In today's world it also makes sense to speak of a "global human community" as everyone is in relationship to everyone else via myriad international networks. Community psychology, then, focuses on people-in-relationship and can be located within any level of human systems beyond the single person and their immediate family.

The emphasis on service means that research from a community psychology perspective does not, or at least ideally should not, start from the premise of knowing what this or that community needs and how to study or "fix" it. It starts instead from a broad concern for the wellbeing of a community and a commitment to work with that community to help those within it, and (again ideally) also those affected by it, flourish. The emphasis on service means that community psychology research is never simply research for the sake of research, an agenda that is commonly signalled by euphemisms such as "knowledge advancement" or "blue skies". Instead it assumes a researcher-in-relationship to actual people who matter. As I will discuss later, an orientation toward service is extremely difficult to uphold in an academic environment that expects both specialised skill and that research of quality should go beyond the "stubborn particulars" (a term

used in the title of a book by Frances Cherry, 1995) of the local context in order to make broad claims.

The Core Assumption: That All People Have Worth

In the version of community psychology I am advocating, the assumption that all people have worth, sits within and informs every aspect of the research process. In various forms, the dignity, worth or wellbeing of the person is often discussed as a foundational principle of community psychology (Gridley & Breen, 2007; Nelson et al., 2007; Rappaport, 1977). However why, exactly, we should consider people inherently worthy, is often less clear. Two sets of questions are important here. First what makes an individual person worthy? Or in other words, why are people, as people, worth our time and effort? The second question is do we mean *all* people? Community psychology has done an excellent job of honouring those from marginalised groups but what of those who do not fit within these groups? And related to this, what does it do to human dignity to have an intense commitment to people-in-categories as is implicit to the focus on marginalised groups?

To begin to consider these questions, we need to take a short epistemological detour. How do we, and can we, know that people are worthy? In a sense, the short answer is that we cannot know, or at least not through intellectual or empirical means. Such claims are always devices, or the term I prefer, "plays" (Harré, 2018a); founded on uncertainty and embedded within language, other symbols and knowledge-systems that can never be teased apart from our biological being as women and men, the physical and living world we are surrounded by, or from the history of our people and how we are arranged in relation to each other. These insights are often attributed to postmodernism (see Kvale, 1992), but they also underpin any sensible approach to scholarship in the social sciences. Let's face it, once you have spent a few years in the knowledge game in psychology or related fields you can't help but realise that there is

always pretence at the centre of it (see Carse, 1994; Harré, 2018a; Huizinga, 1950). To quote the philosopher James Carse, all "firm knowledge… floats… in myth" (1986, p. 139).

But once you accept that there isn't a definitive intellectual or empirical route into the core assumptions of, in our case, community psychology, you are still left with the need to take a position. The assumption that people are of profound worth and thus carry dignity, is for me, based on an even more fundamental assumption that people are good (I'll elaborate soon) and is most accurately described as something like a calling. It is a feeling that is light with possibility and hope. While I can be made to doubt its correctness and practical utility, I find it irresistible; that people are good is a mantra that runs through me and charges me with the desire to act with care.

Now, having admitted that the ground on which I am standing is no more solid than a mere calling, I will backfill it with the scholarship that both affirms and has, no doubt, helped shape it. To cut to the chase, the work within psychology that I have found speaks most reliably to the notion of human dignity and goodness is broadly speaking humanistic (e.g., Brinkmann, 2017; Davidson, 2000; DeRobertis & Bland, 2018; Fromm, 1957, 1978; May, 1969; Muramoto, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2002; Serlin, 2011). And a particularly good fit from humanistic scholarship with what I am proposing here is the distinction between a "hermeneutics of suspicion" and a "hermeneutics of love" alongside advocacy for the latter (Robbins, 2016a, 2016b; Selig, 2016).

A hermeneutics of suspicion, as claimed by Brent Dean Robbins in the introduction to a special issue on this topic in the Journal of Humanistic Psychology (Robbins, 2016b), is "widely represented in contemporary critical thought" (p. 220). It assumes hidden meanings and something "intrinsically aggressive and violent" in the character of human life (p. 220). A hermeneutics of love on the other hand, assumes goodwill in both ourselves and in those we encounter that is beyond our actions

and what these function to maintain. It is characterised by "a generosity of spirit" (p. 220) and profound respect for, and desire to serve, others. In her article in the special issue, Jennifer Leigh Selig (2016) analyses the approach of Martin Luther King Jr. as a case study of the hermeneutics of love. In particular she stresses his emphasis on love for all including "one's enemies" as a necessary foundation for his notion of the "beloved community" (p. 238). Application of this approach, Selig suggests, can become a type of "culture therapy" which "[puts] love into action for the healing and transformation of the culture" (p. 241).

It is important to note that love for *all* is fundamental to the hermeneutics of love presented here, as it falls apart if we extend it only to those who are apparently deserving. Having said that, the primacy of this open-ended respect for the other certainly does not remove the need to analyse and challenge the social systems that perpetuate suffering. It is rather that we try not to allow our suspicion of systems to morph into a blanket suspicion of those we see as benefitting from these systems. This separation of what a system functions to do from the people involved, is a move that may sometimes be missed, or seen as unnecessary, in critical approaches to community psychology. For example an article by David Fryer and Adele Laing that offers a critical community psychology approach, states that they are "ultimately interested" in "critical questions" that concern "*who* has… authority" and "*whose* interests are served" (Fryer & Laing, 2008, p. 7, emphasis added). Similarly, the chapters in the Theoretical Foundations section of the Handbook of Community Psychology on critical and feminist psychology (Evans et al., 2017; Riger, 2017) emphasise social justice, power and oppression/subordination.

This emphasis on who does and does not benefit from the status quo risks turning community psychology into an us/them game with the distribution of power at its core. Somehow the nuance, potential and constraints of the actual people involved may slip away in the rigidity by which they are categorised. A hermeneutics of love does not

deny power, but it focuses on what is possible when people are enabled to bring forward the best they have to offer.

While a hermeneutics of love is at its core an act of faith, it is supported by a huge body of research in psychology that emphasises the social nature of people and our desire to belong (see Baumeister, Dale, & Muraven, 2000; Harré, 2018b; Ryan & Deci, 2002). An attachment to others this research would suggest, is much more fundamental than the specific forms it takes including ingroup/outgroup divisions. Even evolutionary perspectives that have helped create the notion of the self-serving individual can be framed to emphasise the cooperation that underpins survival and reproduction (see Nowak & Highfield, 2011; Tudge, 2013). To put it crudely, people want to love and be loved, even when this impulse is derailed by ideology, social history and circumstance.

So, to pull together what I've discussed so far, I am proposing a community psychology focused on service to people-in-relationship that begins and keeps turning back to the assumption that all people are worthy of, and motivated by, love. (Or, to modify the latter part of this claim a little, that we try and look for the love that motivates others.) For the rest of this article, I am going to call this a humanistic community psychology (CPh). I do not mean by this to start a new sub-sub-discipline (and note that there is already at least one community psychology programme that explicitly weaves in humanistic scholarship at Point Park University in Pittsburgh), but to signal the assumptions discussed and their implications for research.

The Research Process from a CPh Perspective

I turn now from this brief outline of the core task and assumption of a CPh to an equally brief sketch of how, ideally, CPh research might proceed. First, such research would begin with the researcher who I will refer to as you. Remember that you are a person and thus required, from a CPh perspective, to treat yourself as someone of intrinsic worth with good intent. In practical terms this translates to a strong sense that the

potential project is worth bringing yourself to as fully and deeply as possible. This is a bigger ask than it may seem at first glance, as academia encourages strategically informed rather than intrinsically informed choices; those based on the likelihood of formal recognition via publication in top journals, citation by peers, appeal to a funding body and so on (see Harré, Grant, Locke, & Sturm, 2017; Moore, Neylon, Eve, O'Donnell, & Pattinson, 2017). Good ways to win the academic game are the same for community psychologists as other researchers: find a mentor, piggyback on their networks, become an expert and stick with it. To do CPh it is important to resist the normative distractions of the academic game and consider instead if you see meaning in the project and are not just echoing a received justification for its value.

Second, you need to recognise in the project you are creating or being invited into, a community that you wish to serve. You may have a strong sense of *your* people, such that it is simply obvious that you will work with those like you to resist, reform, transform and articulate what it is that does not work and how the situation could be improved. For example, in the School of Psychology at the University of Auckland where I work, Jade Le Grice, who identifies as Māori works with, and for, Māori in her scholarship (e.g., Grice, Braun, & Wetherell, 2017). Similarly, Sam Manuela, who is Cook Island, focuses on the wellbeing of Pacific people (e.g., Manuela & Sibley, 2013). Or you may see injustice or need in a community you are not part of and feel drawn to becoming an ally through your work. Another example close to me is the work of two Auckland academics, Shiloh Groot and Darren Hodgetts, with people who are homeless (e.g., Groot & Hodgetts, 2012).

A community may also come to you, and something in their struggle and hopes aligns with what you sense is true of the world we live in. However you have become entwined with a community, you need to have skin in the game; that is a compelling sense of personal recognition rather than just

wanting to help them with their problems. (Or worse, wanting to improve your CV).

Third, the methodology by which you conduct your research should spring from the relationship between you and the community you are working with and reflect your collective hope that it will lead to greater flourishing. This flourishing may be primarily directed within the community itself or include non-human nature and/or other communities within the ecological framework. Crucially, the method should result in outputs that will be intelligible to the community, or at least readily translatable into intelligible outputs. This is in keeping with the philosopher Roberto Mangabeira Unger's (2014) claim that the role of the social sciences is to help imagine the "adjacent possible" or what might happen next if we move in a particular way. In this sense, CPh is strongly aligned with liberation psychology (Moane, 2003; Montero, Sonn, & Burton, 2017) and firmly in the activist-scholar model (see Fine, 2018).

In developing the methodology for a CPh project it is crucial to avoid what Kerry Chamberlain (2000) has called "methodolatry", a trap Chamberlain defines as "the privileging of methodological concerns over other concerns" (Chamberlain, 2000, p. 285). Methodolatry essentially reverses the process discussed here. As it is endemic within psychology and forms a tenacious barrier to the CPh approach I am advocating, I will now discuss its core features.

The Trap of Methodolatry

In psychology, methodolatry is most obvious in the peculiar binary between qualitative and quantitative research and researchers that rips social psychology in two, and seeps into nearby sub-disciplines including community psychology. Both sides in the methodological divide, perhaps self-consciously or perhaps by uncritically soaking up the rules of the game, shore up their position.

Quantitative researchers often drag in their wake standardised measures that distance them from what is happening in people's lives. I have heard students of such

researchers being advised not to change a standardised scale in any way, or it would reduce their ability to publish their findings. It did not matter that the project involved a different group of people to those for whom the scale was designed, or that the student concerned may have read and thought about the underlying concept on which the scale was based and had concerns about its face validity.

Qualitative researchers on the other hand often insist on complex preambles to their work that locate it within a branch of qualitative psychology. Chamberlain describes this as the "canonical approach to methodology" with adherents to a particular type "the *fundamentalists* – the literal interpreters of the one true way, the followers of the canons and commandments of *the* method" (2000, p. 288, emphasis in the original). As Chamberlain discusses, this adherence allows researchers to make claims of "quality" and report on a plethora of associated indicators such as "trustworthiness, authenticity, saturation, meaning-in-context, recurrent patterning, and so on" (p. 290). This is similar to the claim of Paul Duckett and colleagues that "technical discourse has become increasingly dominant in how the concept of the good is applied in judging research" (Duckett, Fryer, Lawthom, Easpaig, & Radermacher, 2013, p. 146).

While issues of technical quality are not meaningless, they may function to create a methodological artifice that sits in the way of research that springs from relationship-in-community and a hermeneutics of love. In one of the research projects I draw on later, we held workshops in which people were asked to literally leave the markers of their social location at the door. They did this by writing down whatever identifiers they would usually offer in the introductory round of a workshop and silently depositing what they had written in a box by the door. This was to signify that, just for this workshop, we were going to focus on commonalities and not differences. When I submitted an article based on data from these workshops for consideration in a community psychology

journal it was rejected without peer review. The editor described two major concerns, one being that there was insufficient description of the participations. In particular the editor drew attention to the lack of information on the age or SES of participants and that it was not possible to tell if the research included participants who were economically or socially marginalised.

Now having invited participants to experience what happens if we set aside our social locations, it would have been very odd indeed to then ask for their age, economic status, ethnicity, and so on. Frankly, I am always uncomfortable asking these questions of participants, as is probably true of many community psychologists who are attempting to work alongside people as people. We did describe the context for each workshop (e.g., that it was staff of a sustainability organisation, school teachers, a community group), but we broke the rules by not collecting and describing the demographic characteristics of individuals. And, a particular faux-pas for community psychology, we could not prove, as we did not ask participants to declare their income level, that some were from marginalised groups. Having made these errors-of-quality, the editor seemed to feel that it was inappropriate for us to even speculate that the findings, with all their limitations, may point to something about what people value. We moved on and the work was published elsewhere (Harré & Madden, 2017; Harré, Madden, Brooks, & Goodman, 2017). I'll leave interested readers to decide if it is "good" research, but it is research aimed at challenging the neoliberal narrative of the self-interested individual, a narrative that we argued stifles action for the common good. And it didn't just aim to challenge this narrative in a journal article, but in the experience of the participants. In our judgement, the workshop would have been incoherent if we had followed the rules drawn on by the edited discussed earlier.

What happens then, in the emphasis on methodology that is labelled as, and follows the rules of, a particular type, is a hardening of approaches to research which at one point

were departures from business as usual, turning them into business as usual. In the example given, the rule that community psychologists should include marginalised people is an attempt to move beyond WEIRD participants (those who are Western, educated, and from industrialized, rich, and democratic countries) whose experiences are then assumed to represent humanity in general. Good. I am certainly not trying to argue against community psychology's emphasis on working alongside people who are most disadvantaged by current systems. However once this becomes a *rule*, researchers want to do their research with/on "marginalised people" which is counter to the notion proposed here that researchers work with communities they are genuinely drawn to, rather than drawn to for strategic purposes. Furthermore, it feeds an assumption that people fall neatly into social categories and these most fundamentally describe them. Their dignity, our dignity as persons then becomes elusive.

Being truly radical, that is engaging in a struggle to name, challenge or evoke that within social systems that stifles and promotes human vitality is very hard indeed because, in part, of the ready tendency of the social system to absorb contradictions (Marcuse, 1964; see also an analysis along these lines in Fryer & Laing, 2008), and ignore or ostracise those who don't play the game (Duckett et al., 2013; Merton, 1965/1979). Methodolatry is one of the tools by which this absorption and ostracism is aided. Methodolatry is part of the focus on our academic peers that is common in universities and that pulls us away from the close observation, vulnerability and open-endedness that accompanies real work in service of community.

Two Projects that Attempted the Art of CPh

Community psychology research informed by humanism (CPh) is best described as an art that involves an authentic examination of yourself as a researcher, a trust in your sense of what matters, a deep desire to serve a particular community and a willingness to find a methodology to suit the

project at hand. While this places relentless emphasis on your development and judgement as a researcher, the entire process evolves through multiple iterations of being in relationship to others. Importantly these others are first and foremost the people you are drawn to "out there" and not academic peers and the rules they enforce. To tease out the art of CPh I will briefly discuss two of my own projects. They are, of course, particular to me and my concerns, and so only hint at what can be, and is being done, by those whose work has a CPh-like foundation.

Project one: Psychology for a Better World, a book, short film, talks and workshops. The first project was prompted by my long involvement in school, local government and community-based environmentalism. Because I am a psychologist, people in these settings often asked me about "behaviour change" as if people are a problem to be solved that along with technology, international agreements and political will just might save us from planetary disaster. At first I would feel an immediate resistance to these requests to, as I saw it, "correct" the actions of others. After a while however, I recognised that this request was not necessarily as it appeared. People wanted, *I* wanted, a cultural shift in which others shared in the struggle we were engaged with. The cry for behaviour change was, I came to think, a cry to be in a world that made sense because people were acting according to the obvious need for those of us living in wealthy contexts to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels, use water wisely, rid the oceans of plastic, preserve biodiversity and so on.

So that was the starting point: a community, in this case one I identified with, and a sense that something which mattered was amiss. I had done, and continue to do, sustainability-related action research projects, but it increasingly felt as if something else was needed (at least from me). To greatly simplify a messy process, I decided to gather all the psychology research I could find that might help me and others inspire people to get involved in sustainability-related projects and advocacy. This became a book Psychology for a Better World (first published in 2011, updated in 2018a), a 15-minute video and a series of talks and workshops in which I shared this research and its implications. The book was initially self-published and available for free in PDF format, meaning it quickly spread through sustainability networks in Aotearoa New Zealand. Simultaneous to my growing sense that this was by far my most worthwhile research contribution to date, I found it tremendously difficult to explain to my more conservative academic peers: this strange combination of research and community service that didn't even result in a "programme" or "policy contribution" that could be clearly attributed to me.

Project two: The Infinite Game. The infinite game project came from my experience with Psychology for a Better World. While doing talks and workshops focused on encouraging involvement in sustainability-related projects, I increasingly saw an alignment between projects to conserve the natural environment and projects to promote community wellbeing that was often overlooked. The failure to recognise our common cause seemed to feed the competitive, life-damaging systems we were attempting to challenge by creating a demand for exclusive allegiance to this or that social movement or analysis. The infinite game then, is a way to both critique and reimagine our lives together that assumes the hermeneutics of love discussed earlier and a social system that often distracts from our potential to contribute to the common good (see Harré, 2018a).

From the beginning of the project I wanted to offer people an infinite game experience under game-like conditions. So, after tossing around ideas with many people involved in social change and doing trials with interested groups, I came up with a research workshop in collaboration with Helen Madden. The workshop involved a series of activities, including asking participants to write down what they considered of "infinite value." Infinite values were defined as that which is "Sacred,

precious or special; of value for its own sake; that which makes the world truly alive."

Over 1,000 people in Aotearoa New Zealand participated in these workshops and Helen and I developed a system to code the data into keywords that represented a minimum of 10 responses. The main reason we set the 10 response threshold was to enable the data to be displayed as a word cloud that would convey the infinite values collected in a form likely to resonate with those working to protect the natural environment and promote social issues. After the first set of workshops, we were able to show the latest version of the infinite values word cloud as part of the workshop itself.

I've already discussed the reception to the infinite values data by a community psychology journal. People who were responding *as people* on the other hand, most often indicated that the word cloud promoted in them the sense they were part of a human community with shared values, and feelings of being reassured, uplifted and hopeful (Harré, Madden, et al., 2017; notably some people were sceptical of the word cloud for similar reasons to the journal editor, this is discussed further in the article cited).

Both projects arose from communities I identified with and were intended to speak to those communities. They played with knowledge, constructing and framing it in ways designed to offer new ways of thinking about what is and what could be. Through this "play I like to think each gave insight into new possibilities and emboldened (some) people's actions for the common good. I often get emails from people saying what they learnt from experiencing a workshop or reading one of the books and how they have incorporated these insights into their practice. Each was also an uncomfortable fit with the academic research game and would never have happened if I had taken the rules written and enforced by (some of) my peers to heart.

Principles of a CPh Approach to Research

To conclude here are five suggested principles for, and signals of, a CPh approach to research.

1. Both the community you work with and the research project itself should be personally meaningful to you. I understand (from considerable experience!) that much of the time this is simply impossible. Students must fit in with their supervisor's projects and we all get drawn into research that seems strategic or worthy even though it doesn't quite make sense to us in the way I mean here. I also know that if you consider yourself privileged, it may seem indulgent to start with something meaningful to *you*. You, seen through a hermeneutics of suspicion, are inherently problematic and cannot be trusted to accurately feel your way into what can be done to promote better ways of living together. However part of what keeps us skimming the surface and feeding the competitive neoliberal game is our fear of deep engagement with what we are drawn to. Be brave, take yourself seriously. If you follow this principle alongside the other principles there will be plenty of opportunities to notice and respond to your inevitable errors of judgement.

2. In developing a research methodology you must be prepared to look for means to shed new light on and help shift the situation in some way, being careful not to see only solutions that fit your pre-existing suite of skills or that simply help community members adapt to the broader society. In doing so, the project may well look very odd to the holders of methodological quality. If it does not look at least a little odd from this perspective, this may signal that you have fallen into the trap of methodolatry.

3. Constantly learn by observing yourself, the communities you are involved with and engaging with scholarship. Be careful not to confine your forays into a single discipline, paradigm or methodological bent, and seek out both broad social analyses and material that takes you into the lives of people not-like-you. By refreshing, deepening and challenging your perspective, what is personally meaningful to you will be increasingly informed by all layers of the ecological system and thus, ideally, your research will gain in its

potential to genuinely challenge the status quo.

    4. An important element of all community psychology is the recognition that the experience of persons and their social location are entwined. It is easy to favour the latter over the former in the rush to negate psychology's emphasis on individuals. CPh is about bringing real people to life, not in stylised forms that assume members of particular social groups have certain experiences and motivations but in forms that make visible "what it is to be me/us". Ask yourself: does this project make visible experiences that are currently hidden from view? And does it make these experiences visible in such a way that radical action is encouraged by those in the community and/or who affect or are affected by it?

    5. Finally, attempt to act as if there is good in *all* others, even those whose actions seem self-serving and perpetuate the systems you despise (a word I use deliberately). It is not only those most disadvantaged by current systems who are trapped within those systems. Too much emphasis on power *holders*, I suggest, turns our endeavour into an us/them game rather than an attempt to bring forward new possibilities for living well together.

    Just as my discussion of what I call a humanistic community psychology is not intended to promote yet another speciality, these principles are not intended as yet another set of rules. Instead I hope that they encourage readers to consider if, and how, their discourse and research practice has fallen into stylised moves that are weighed down with methodological correctness, suspicion, or self-doubt. I also hope they encourage a turn, or return, to a community psychology based on the inherent dignity of all persons.

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Reviewed by Susie Burke PhD, Psychologist, writer, climate campaigner suseburke@gmail.com

Let's begin with a disclaimer - I'm a big Niki Harré fan. Having read, re-read and dog-eared multiple pages of Psychology for a Better World, I was thrilled when her next book The Infinite Game was published, and even more delighted to play the infinite game with Niki when I met her for the first time at the 2018 APS Congress. This book is a beautiful extension of her first collection of ideas for a better world. In The Infinite Game she provides a valuable overarching framework for holding together the many great, innovative, sustainable solutions that are springing up around the world.

The concept of infinite and finite games comes originally from philosopher James P. Carse, who first wrote and spoke about it in the mid 1980's. In Niki's elaboration of Carse's concept, she invites us to imagine life as an infinite game - a playful metaphor for living in society using a different set of rules, in which the purpose of the game is to continue the play, and everyone can join in. In the infinite game, we live our lives based on universal principles of consideration of others (including other species), cooperation, authenticity, creativity and diversity. In contrast, the purpose of the finite game, like the "economic growth game", the "funding game", the "housing market game", the "career game", or the "patriotism game", is to win.

Niki illustrates the broad differences between the infinite and finite games using the example of beach cricket versus test cricket. Beach cricket is a game which invites others in, has flexible rules, provides a deep sense of connection with others, tends towards diversity, uses open and interconnected networks etc. Test cricket, on the other hand, includes only select people, sticks with rules set by the game, tends

towards sameness, has winners and losers etc. Whilst none of this is to detract from the joy, for many, of test cricket, it is a useful metaphor to understand the contrast with an infinite game like beach cricket which thrives when people join in with their different talents, makes everyone feel welcome, and builds on the joy of community.

In the first half of the book, Niki unpacks the problems with a world of finite games which perpetuate the status quo, and invites us to consider the unexpected treasures which we will find when we strive to play the infinite game instead. The second half of the book is about how to apply the infinite game in our lives, despite the fear, doubt and disorientation that inevitably arises when we begin to challenge the status quo, and find ourselves up against a world of finite games. Niki points out that the player striving to cooperate as deeply and broadly as possible may, ironically, often feel alone and foolish. "That is the deal, I am afraid", says Niki. "You give, you feel awkward, and then you sometimes find, as if by magic, that something comes back" (p.156).

The Infinite Game is a book filled with charming and whimsical metaphors and suggestions that Niki uses to illustrate her points. Reading her book itself is like having a chat with a good friend as you hike up a mountain - stimulating and challenging! She inspires you to notice and expand on existing joys, at the same time as challenging you to work harder at living a values informed life. She has an artful way of bringing you along on her journey, as she explores different challenges of playing the infinite game. It is a game she strives to play herself - imperfectly, she acknowledges, but enthusiastically and optimistically - in her roles as a community psychologist, social activist, academic, community member, and parent. She issues an irresistible invitation to readers to join her in this quest.

Niki reminds us to trust the instinct that tells us that communal well-being is enhanced by cooperation. She invites us to be radical cooperators, like, "a discerning bumblebee that pollinates only the plants she

senses bring vibrancy and colour to the system as a whole" (p.154). Be people-like, she says, when attempting to create the good life. Inauthenticity (deadly, deadly dull), is like a one-person logjam that prevents life from flowing freely. Whilst you might have to be a bit uncool to try and be authentic, "when you do act from some deep yearning, based on your values, it is like slicing the status quo open, jumping through and yelling 'Who wants to come too?'"
After reading this book, we will all want to come too!

For a review of the original edition of Niki Harré's book Psychology for a Better World: Strategies to Inspire Sustainability (2011); see Volume 25, No 2 .

Preparation, Submission and Publication of Manuscripts

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The Australian Community Psychologist publishes work that is of relevance to community psychologists and others interested in the field. Research reports should be methodologically sound. Theoretical or area review papers are welcomed, as are letters, brief reports and papers by newer contributors to the discipline. Contributions towards the four sections of the journal are sought.

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