

**‘Like gold scattered in the sand’:
Human rights as constructed and understood by
African families from refugee backgrounds**

Submitted by

Maree Higgins

Bachelor of Social Work (Honours, Class 1)

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Discipline of Social Work

School of Allied Health

Faculty of Health Sciences

Australian Catholic University

26th February 2019

Declaration

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the Australian Catholic University Human Ethics Research Committee (ACU HREC) (Ethics Register Number: 2012 313N).

Seven transcripts were prepared by Transcript Divas.

Professional editing services were provided by Hazel Blunden, Corvus Consulting.

Signed.....

Date.....26 February 2019.....

Acknowledgements

I owe a debt of gratitude to so many people.

I thank my two supervisors, Joanna Zubrzycki and Jean Burke. Your incredible mentoring, collaboration and curiosity have sustained and guided me throughout this research experience.

I also thank the research reference group and participants in this study. Each of you are very precious to me and have become a part of my life story. I hope this research is meaningful to you and your families and communities, and that together we can continue to build a more just, respectful and safe community.

I thank the Australian Catholic University (ACU) for providing research funding that enabled my attendance and presentation at the ASSWA 2012 International Conference at White River, South Africa: Social Work: Towards Inclusion, Social Justice and Human Rights. I am grateful for the training I received in NVivo and Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), for the research seminars and research culture, and for funds that enabled transcription of interview files and purchases of gift vouchers for participants.

I have valued being part of the intellectual communities of the Australian Catholic University (ACU) network, the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP), Australia and New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Education and Research (ANZSWWER), and UNSW Sydney. Your collective wisdom, collegiality, guidance and intellectual rigour are woven into this thesis.

My thanks also go to Hazel Blunden who edited my thesis.

I am blessed with loyal friends and mentors. Sr Sally Duigan, Sylvia Winton, Pat Hansen, Paul Andrews, Jane Dennis, Neil Hall, Agata Rostek-Robak, Mary-Lou

Desmond and the members of the Sydney University Graduate Choir and Via Dei Choir: thank you for nurturing and listening to me, recreating my spirit and believing in me. The same is true for my amazing work colleagues: Richard Hugman, Jane Mowll, Caroline Lenette, Sonia Graham, Michael Bowen, Ina Ismail, Eileen van Dijk and the Work Integrated Learning Unit. Mim Fox, I am grateful for your creativity, unflagging enthusiasm for ideas and determination to live life on your own terms which has continually opened new vistas for me. Bawa Bindi Bennett, you trod this path before me and always knew just what to say and when to say it. Thanks for calling out the greatness in me especially when I could least see it in myself. Bagaan Sue Green – thank you for opening my eyes to knowledge through your precious collection of books, and for asking Baiame to protect me. And Jan Breckenridge, I value your mentoring and ability to ground me with humour more than I can say.

I feel fortunate to be surrounded by an amazing family. Thank you to Mum, Dad, Bernard, Catherine, Anne Maree, Jeremy, Steve and all the little ones. I am particularly grateful to you, Emma, for leading me on the path of learning as my older sister, and for reading chapters of this thesis before they were entrusted to anyone else.

Jon Drummond, you and your girls came into my life eminently suited to the task of accompanying me through my thesis and beyond. I feel truly blessed. Thank you for creating wonderful spaces in which I found my voice as a writer.

And finally, Jasmine, my joy and delight, the focus of my heart and my intellect. I treasure your awe, your listening, your discipline, your pragmatism and your belief in me. Everything I've done has been as a witness to you of what I think constitutes goodness and fierceness and honesty in the world.

Abbreviations used in the thesis

AASW	Australian Association of Social Workers
ACHPR	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
ACU	Australian Catholic University
AFSAAP	African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific
AHRC	Asian Human Rights Commission
ALRC	Asian Legal Resource Centre
ASC	Asylum Seekers Centre
ASSWA	Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CERD	Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DRIP	Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation/Genital Cutting
HREC	Human Ethics Research Committee
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
IWS	Immigrant Womens' Speakout
NFPs	Not For Profit Organisations
NSW	New South Wales
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PALMS	Paulian Association Lay Missionary Society
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia
SIEV X	Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel X
SSI	Settlement Services International
STARTTS	Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors
TMHC	Transcultural Mental Health Centre

UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
USA	United States of America

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	7
1. Introduction and Thesis Overview	18
1.1 Impetus for the study	19
1.2 Who I am and how this shaped the focus of the present study	19
1.3 Background to the study.....	23
1.4 Human rights in African and social work scholarship	27
1.5 Guiding theoretical perspectives	28
1.6 Aims of the study	31
1.7 The research question	31
1.8 Methodology	32
1.9 Ethical conduct of the research	33
1.10 Key research terms	33
1.11 Overview of the thesis	34
1.12 Conclusion	38
2. Human rights	39
2.1 Introduction.....	39
2.2 Human rights definitions	39
2.3 Positive contributions of human rights.....	42
2.4 Human rights in Australia	44
2.5 Human rights and social work	48
2.6 Limitations of human rights.....	53
2.7 Human rights in African discourse	56
2.7.1 <i>Dignity</i>	56
2.7.2 <i>Communitarian principles</i>	58

2.7.3	<i>Holism</i>	60
2.7.4	<i>Socio-economic priorities</i>	60
2.8	Universalism, cultural relativism and pluralism in human rights discourse	64
2.8.1	<i>Universalism</i>	64
2.8.2	<i>Cultural relativism</i>	65
2.8.3	<i>Pluralism</i>	66
2.8.4	<i>Pluralism in Australian human rights discourse</i>	67
2.9	Conclusion	68

3. Lived experiences of human rights 70

3.1	Introduction	70
3.2	Rationale for the phenomenological, hermeneutic and critical nature of the inquiry.....	70
3.3	Phenomenological inquiry	70
3.4	Hermeneutic inquiry	71
3.5	Contextualisation of lived experience in hermeneutic phenomenological research	72
3.6	Pre-arrival experiences	74
3.6.1	<i>Kenya</i>	75
3.6.2	<i>Liberia</i>	75
3.6.3	<i>Rwanda</i>	76
3.6.4	<i>Sierra Leone</i>	76
3.6.5	<i>South Sudan</i>	77
3.7	Post-arrival experiences	78
3.7.1	<i>Cultural heritage and values</i>	79
3.7.2	<i>Gender relations</i>	80
3.7.3	<i>Relationships between parents and their children</i>	82
3.7.4	<i>Health and mental health services</i>	83

3.7.5	<i>Educational services</i>	84
3.7.6	<i>Employment</i>	85
3.7.7	<i>Housing</i>	86
3.7.8	<i>Language barriers</i>	87
3.8	Qualitative expression of lived experience.....	88
3.9	Conclusion	94
4. Intercultural social work		96
4.1	Introduction.....	96
4.2	Critical analysis of service provision	96
4.3	Knowledge, skills and values for practice	96
4.4	Services provided.....	97
4.5	Critique of service provision	99
4.6	Social work ethics and practice standards.....	100
4.7	Theoretical perspectives for intercultural practice	107
4.8	Practice Tools.....	112
4.9	Theories of culture.....	112
4.10	Social work and theories of culture	113
4.11	Structural analyses of culture	115
4.12	Current debates, silences and gaps	120
4.13	Social work interventions	123
4.14	Conclusion	126
5. Research Design		127
5.1	Introduction.....	127
5.2	The research approach	127
5.3	Research epistemology.....	128
5.4	Research reference group	129

5.5	Construction of the interview guide	130
5.6	Sampling	134
5.7	Recruitment	134
5.8	Participant information letter and consent form	135
5.9	Interview recording and note-taking	137
5.10	Participant checking of transcripts	137
5.11	Provision of interpreters and translators	138
5.12	Availability of counsellors	140
5.13	Contributions to participants	140
5.14	Voluntary participation	141
5.15	Confidentiality and anonymity	141
5.16	Ethical considerations	141
5.17	Compliance with research standards	142
5.18	Critical reflection	143
5.19	Respect	144
5.20	Reciprocity	146
5.21	Beneficence	146
5.22	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)	147
5.23	Reading and re-reading	148
5.24	Initial noting	149
5.25	Developing emergent themes	149
5.26	Searching for connections across emergent themes	150
5.27	Looking for patterns across cases	151
5.28	Visualisation of data	151
5.29	Writing	152
5.30	Conclusion	153

6. Introducing the Participants	154
---------------------------------------	-----

6.1	Introduction	154
6.2	Demographic data	154
6.3	The Poetry of Lived Experience	158
6.4	Participant Introductions and We Poems.....	161
6.4.1	<i>Mamoudou, West Africa</i>	161
6.4.2	<i>Angelina, Liberia</i>	163
6.4.3	<i>Annitah, Kenya</i>	165
6.4.4	<i>Patience, Kenya</i>	167
6.4.5	<i>Daniel, South Sudan</i>	169
6.4.6	<i>Gloria, Kenya</i>	171
6.4.7	<i>Nelson, South Sudan</i>	173
6.4.8	<i>Solomon, Sierra Leone</i>	175
6.4.9	<i>Emmanuel, Sierra Leone</i>	177
6.4.10	<i>Chanise, Rwanda</i>	179
6.4.11	<i>Albert, South Sudan</i>	181
6.4.12	<i>Sia, Sierra Leone</i>	183
6.4.13	<i>Nola, Sierra Leone</i>	185
6.5	Conclusion	187
7. Ways of Knowing Human Rights		188
7.1	Introduction.....	188
7.2	A lexicon for human rights.....	188
7.3	Simile and metaphor	189
7.4	Mother-tongue words for human rights.....	197
7.5	English words and phrases	202
7.6	Not knowing	214
7.7	Learning about human rights.....	219
7.8	Conclusion	225

8. Ways of Being Human Rights	227
8.1 Introduction	227
8.2 Back home and back then.....	227
8.3 Here and now	244
8.4 A warning.....	249
8.5 Conclusion	252
9. Ways of Doing Human Rights.....	254
9.1 Introduction.....	254
9.2 Fears about doing human rights.....	254
9.3 Prosecution and imprisonment	254
9.4 Threats to physical and mental wellbeing	260
9.5 Shaming and social isolation.....	262
9.6 Falling in the fire and driving a train.....	265
9.7 Ways of doing human rights	268
9.8 Good words pull kola nar mot	268
9.9 Kon madang – Just wait.....	271
9.10 Transforming people and practices through consultation	275
9.11 One day, you wake up and you don't see me.....	279
9.12 I have expressed it in song, and people have danced it	280
9.13 They didn't want to accept, until when [s]he speaks the language.....	282
9.14 It's so easy to do whatever you are doing, once you put a face to a name....	285
9.15 Circles of Peace.....	287
9.16 Conclusion	289
10. Discussion and Conclusion	290
10.1 Introduction.....	290
10.2 Pluralism in human rights discourse and human rights from below	291

10.3	Integrated model: Knowing, being and doing human rights	292
10.4	Not knowing human rights	296
10.5	Acculturation and lived experience of human rights.....	299
10.6	The third space and cultural collaboration around human rights	302
10.7	New insights and contributions to intercultural social work practice	305
10.8	Employing imagery and metaphor	307
10.9	Acknowledgement of values and norms	308
10.10	Meaningful collaboration	312
10.11	Engagement with ways of knowing, being and doing	316
10.12	Re-centring African worldviews.....	317
10.13	Family-inclusive human rights education	318
10.14	New insights and contributions to research.....	319
10.15	Dialogical tools: storytelling and metaphor.....	320
10.16	Approach to expertise in the research	323
10.17	Interpretive phenomenological analysis.....	325
10.18	Conclusion	326
11. References.....		328
12. Appendices.....		374
12.1	Appendix 1 Summary of human rights documents to which Australia is a signatory, as provided in the AASW Code of Ethics (2010)	374
12.1.1	<i>Human rights treaties</i>	374
12.1.2	<i>Relevant human right declarations</i>	375
12.1.3	<i>National legislation</i>	376
12.2	Appendix 2 Scoping of types of human rights in organisational websites.....	377
12.3	Appendix 3 Historical review of selected countries in annual list of top 20 refugee source nations	381

12.4	Appendix 4 Ethics approval letter	382
12.5	Appendix 5 Research flier	383
12.6	Appendix 6A Semi-structured interview guide 2015	384
12.7	Appendix 6B Semi-structured interview guide 2013	385
12.8	Appendix 6C Pilot interview guide 2013	387
12.9	Appendix 7 Service information and referral pack	388
12.10	Appendix 8 Participant information letter.....	394
12.11	Appendix 9 Consent forms	399
12.12	Appendix 10 Initial noting conducted for one transcript.....	401
12.13	Appendix 11 Emergent and superordinate themes.....	403
12.14	Appendix 12 Handwritten mind map	405
12.15	Appendix 13 NVivo supported analysis – mind maps.....	405
12.16	Appendix 14 NVivo supported analysis – word clouds.....	410
12.17	Appendix 15 Examples of contributions made by reference group members in the research, and ways the researcher reciprocated	412

List of Tables

Table 1: Indicators that refer to human rights in the AASW Practice Standards (2013)	50
Table 2: Gender by Country of Origin	155
Table 3: Parenting Status by Age	155
Table 4: Age Range and Employment Status.....	155
Table 5: Year of arrival, region of origin and educational attainment.....	156
Table 6: Scoping of types of Human rights in organisational websites.....	380
Table 7: Refugee Source Countries.....	381
Table 8: Emergent and superordinate themes.....	404
Table 9: Examples of contributions made by reference group members in the research, and ways the researcher reciprocated.....	412

List of Figures

Figure 1: Handwritten mind map.....	405
Figure 2: Understanding human rights.....	406
Figure 3: Constructing human rights.....	407
Figure 4: Links to social work practice	408
Figure 5: Culture	409
Figure 6: Participant transcripts	410
Figure 7: Researcher memos	411

Thesis Abstract

Social workers engage with African families from refugee backgrounds in many practice settings. Human rights principles underpin social work and are especially relevant in social work practice with people from refugee backgrounds. This is because gross human rights violations instigate refugee movements, while human rights principles facilitate refugee determination and resettlement. Yet, key human rights theorists argue that human rights discourse is too grounded in Western-centric ideals and needs to be more inclusive of African and other worldviews. In addition, Australian studies highlight that African families from refugee backgrounds face unique challenges and experiences during resettlement and integration. Australian human rights frameworks that are more cognisant of African worldviews have the potential to enhance intercultural practice with African families from refugee backgrounds.

A hermeneutic, phenomenological study of human rights was developed to explore the research questions, **how are human rights constructed and understood by African families from refugee backgrounds living in Sydney, Australia, and what might this mean for social work practice?** Members of African families from refugee backgrounds were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. As part of the commitment to participatory research methods a research reference group was formed to provide advice on cultural safety and ethical process. Data was analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, aided by NVivo and other software tools. Emphasis was placed on the meaning of lived experience of human rights in the lives of participant families and communities.

In total, six men and seven women from a variety of African countries, who had resided in Australia for three-14 years, and were aged 25-64 years, took part

in the study. The findings highlighted rich and varied perspectives on human rights of participants and their families and communities. Some perspectives resonated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, while others were distinctively informed by the lived experience of families and communities. Participants conveyed meaning mainly via storytelling and metaphor which revealed layers of human rights understandings from conversant to 'not-knowing' human rights, and ways of knowing, being and doing human rights that were informed by African worldviews. Structural factors such as gender, poverty, upheaval and corruption appeared to shape understandings of human rights and affect power and agency of individuals, families and communities. Participants provided views on how social work and human service practitioners could be more helpful. This study demonstrates that privileging the perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds about human rights can extend human rights discourse and makes an important contribution to the field of social work.

1. Introduction and Thesis Overview

Sometimes yes, culture can clash, as you can see, but at the same time they can come back together and sort out things, or fix out things. There is a saying that parallel lines cannot meet, but this is my opinion: philosophically, parallel lines can meet. When this come, this come. Through mutual agreement, or mutual understanding, they will come slowly, slowly, slowly and meet. (Solomon, Sierra Leone)

The above metaphor of parallel lines meeting was provided by Solomon¹, from Sierra Leone, who was resettled to Australia in the mid-2000s due to gross violations of human rights which occurred in his home country. In 2015 Solomon was one of the research participants in this study. His perspectives, along with those of 12 other research participants, are reported and analysed in this doctoral thesis.

For Solomon, the metaphor of parallel lines meeting symbolises both challenge and opportunity in understanding and applying human rights across cultures. He provided this metaphor when I asked him to describe how his family and community's perspectives about human rights could contribute to social work practice. Solomon suggests that 'mutual agreement, or mutual understanding' about human rights need to be reached in intercultural social work practice contexts, and that this would be of benefit to his community.

¹ As with all names utilised in this thesis, Solomon is a pseudonym.

Solomon's metaphor of the meeting of parallel lines meeting alludes to knowledge, skills and values that could strengthen and support social work practice with African families from refugee backgrounds. It thus exemplifies what I hoped to achieve in the present study. In addition, the metaphor foreshadows key research findings about how human rights are expressed, and the funds of knowledge which these expressions imply, which will be elucidated in this thesis.

The present study utilised an interpretive phenomenological approach to critically explore how human rights are constructed and understood by African families from refugee backgrounds who have settled in Sydney, Australia. The insights from this study have important practical implications for social work practice. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the impetus for the study, guiding theoretical frameworks and research design. It then presents relevant terminology and provides an overview of the contents of each chapter.

1.1 Impetus for the study

There are three elements in this section on the impetus for the study. Firstly, I will provide an account of who I am and how this shaped the focus of the research, in keeping with the reciprocal, person-centred approach taken in this study. Secondly, I discuss the background to the study and the rationale for the human rights focus. Lastly, I outline the guiding theoretical frameworks, the research topic and aims of the study.

1.2 Who I am and how this shaped the focus of the present study

I was born, attended school, live and work in Sydney, on the lands of the Bedegal people of the Eora Nation². My family is of Irish heritage, dating back to the transport of my great-great-grandparents from County Clare to Australia in the late 1700s. I am the second of four children and was christened *Maree Suzanne* in a ceremony that occurred when I was very little. I have found it a source of connection with others that the name Maree is recognisable in many languages, with slight modifications, for example, the French *Marie*; the Arabic *Mariam*; and the Mediterranean *Maria*.

I have two other given names which originate in the Limpopo region of South Africa. These names are *Mpho*, and *MmaMokgadi*, from the Northern Sotho, or *Sepedi*, language. *Mpho* means *gift*, and was given to me by MmaMakgalo, my Sepedi teacher at St Brendan's College, Dwars River, South Africa. *MmaMokgadi* means *mother of Mokgadi*. The name Mokgadi is a little complicated to define, referring, as I understand it, to *the role of the female family member who organises funerals*, these events being incredibly significant in the culture of the Northern Sotho people. MmaMelita, who administered St Brendan's and was like my second mother, named me MmaMokgadi, thereby naming my future daughter. I believe MmaMelita foresaw, or perhaps gifted me with my only child, Jasmine Mokgadi, mentioned in my acknowledgements, and whose character encompasses the generous mix of service, courage and pragmatism inferred by this African name that was given us.

² The Bedegal people are one of about 29 clan groups who are the traditional custodians of the area we now call Sydney (Heiss & Gibson, 2013).

It was to St Brendans College in South Africa that I was posted by the Paulian Association Lay Missionary Society (PALMS), just after completing my social work degree). My goal was to develop greater insight into other cultures and communities, and to share my skills and knowledge in an environment that had fewer resources than the one in which I grew up. I was at St Brendan's for two years, from 1998-1999, working with teenagers and teaching staff in the role of Careers and Guidance Counsellor. This experience was an important source of connection with participants in the present study.

The late 1990s was an inspiring time to be in South Africa from a human rights perspective. Nelson Mandela served as President-elect until mid-1999, and many human rights initiatives were in operation at that time, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Affirmative Action policies that focused on securing rights for black South African students and workers in the new democracy. While there, I gained numerous insights about intercultural practice, for example: to be sensitive to nuances of meaning, to be decisive yet thoughtful, to lead from the front but value consensus, and to locate my practice firmly within the ethical framework of the social work profession. This overseas experience instilled in me a sustained passion for engaging with diverse peoples and perspectives and a commitment to an inclusive and collaborative social work practice.

When I returned to Australia in January 2000, I was offered a position at the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC), a small non-government service working with refugees and asylum seekers in Sydney, New South Wales (NSW). Over a period of six years, I worked for just and humane outcomes for refugees and asylum seekers, further developing my advocacy skills and learning more about how

trauma and marginalisation impact upon clients' lived experience of human rights. In 2006, the opportunity arose to move from frontline social work into university teaching, research and work integrated learning (WIL) management. In my current capacity, I have retained a focus on human rights and issues relating to social work with refugees and asylum seekers to support refugee students' cultural and family transitions, management of trauma, livelihoods and social inclusion.

Although my perspective on human rights drew from different cultural reference points and experiences than those of my research participants, I did not identify completely as an outsider researcher in the present study, and nor was I seen as one. Rather, my experience living and working in South Africa, and then working with families from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds at the Asylum Seekers Centre in Sydney, placed me on a continuum; an in-between place where I could construct my role in nuanced ways (Bhabha, 1994; Bridges, 2001; Ritchie, Zwi, Blignault, Bunde-Birouste, & Silove, 2009). I designed the study with Greenwood and Levin's (2006, p. 104) concept of 'friendly outsider' in mind, as it enabled me to collaboratively explore possibilities for enhancing social work practice, and to find a necessary balance between the tasks of critique and support. Similarly, Gair's (2012) notion of the researcher as 'deep listener' who can imagine and empathise with communities through the research process was fundamental to the design of this research.

Experience and scholarly accounts indicate that African families from refugee backgrounds engage human rights in ways that might be instructive for social workers and the human rights discourse. Their experiences before and after arriving in Australia involve refugee trauma, flight, resettlement, and adjustment to a new culture. This differentiates their experience of human rights

from Anglo-Australians and potentially other migrants in the Australian community. These experiences provide the background to the present study as will be briefly addressed below.

1.3 Background to the study

During the 10 years from 1997 until 2007, armed conflict significantly undermined peace, stability and security in many African countries. This displaced large numbers of people, many of whom found their way to refugee camps; the influx prompted the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to prioritise resettlement of African refugees above other groups from 2004-2007 (UNHCR 2009).

In the years that followed, community leaders and service providers in Sydney and other parts of Australia expressed concerns about African families from refugee backgrounds' adjustment to life in Australia as they observed their lived experiences and listened to their stories (see for example, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Lejukole, 2008; McArthur, Thompson, Winkworth, & Butler, 2010). Some scholars drew attention to a range of adversities refugees faced in Australia, such as disruptions to family composition and structure, workplace discrimination and educational disadvantage (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Dhanji, 2010; Hebbani, Obijiofor, & Bristed, 2010; Lejukole, 2008; McArthur et al., 2010). Salient differences between African and Australian family values, norms and power dynamics, with many studies highlighting community frustrations with how the police and the legal system responded to family disputes, and the perception that financial supports and other services undermine the power of parents and the male household head were also noted (Australian

Human Rights Commission, 2010; Bartolomei, 2009; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Lejukole, 2008; Lewig, Arney, Salveron, & Barredo, 2010; McArthur et al., 2010; Milos, 2011; Pine & Drachman, 2005; Pittaway, 2005; Wille, 2011). There is evidence to suggest that these differences in values, norms and approaches to power in resettlement contexts cause many African families to feel misunderstood and disrespected in the Australian community, and increases the risk of families breaking down and/or members being discouraged from engaging with the wider community (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Lejukole, 2008; Milos, 2011; Muchoki, 2013). Studies have also documented salient resilience factors relating to cultural and religious traditions including spirituality, communal responsibility, concern for the dignity of others, and desire to succeed (Hutchinson & Dorsett, 2012; Schweitzer, Greenslade, & Kagee, 2007).

Overall, this body of research elucidates constructive and destructive lived experiences of human rights and indicates there may be gaps in practice, policy and service provision. Much of the evidence links adverse lived experiences with structural themes in resettlement, including gender, poverty, trauma and power. Some of these studies highlight that African people from refugee backgrounds may continue to experience social exclusion and discrimination years after resettling in Australia, and all indicate that families are subject to multiple and complex risk factors in resettlement. This provides the rationale for the focus on phenomenological understandings of human rights from the perspective of African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in the Australian community, and reflection upon what the data means for social work.

Social workers and other professionals are expected to respond ethically, knowledgeably and skilfully to the needs of African families from refugee

backgrounds. Yet the literature highlights that these professionals operate in contexts where legislation, policy frameworks and organisational imperatives may not fully support culturally sensitive or competent practice, exacerbating tensions experienced in supporting, protecting and advocating for these vulnerable communities (Bates et al., 2005; Bromfield & Holzer, 2008; Bromfield, Lamont, Parker, & Horsfall, 2010; Pine & Drachman, 2005; Sawrikar, 2009). Several studies document the failure of mainstream services to comprehensively address the needs of African families from refugee backgrounds in Australia. These include Colic-Peisker and Tilbury's (2007) seminal study on the impacts of visible difference, McArthur et al.'s (2010) study of families' experiences of services, and the report of the Australian Human Rights Commission (2010) *In Our Voices* which was startling because it highlighted so many areas of life in which African people from migrant and refugee backgrounds had experienced barriers, discrimination and social exclusion. Limited access to services such as health care and legal support, and hurdles to participation in education, employment and sport are some examples of the findings of this report.

According to Briskman and Cemlyn, 'there are particular difficulties in realising social work's transformative potential in a hostile policy climate' (Briskman & Cemlyn, 2005, p. 721). Briskman and Cemlyn's analysis emerged during a period in which Australian public discourse about refugees, asylum seekers and cultural minorities became increasingly vitriolic (Glendenning, 2015; Marr & Wilkinson, 2004; Nipperess & Briskman, 2009). Marr and Wilkinson (2004) provide an investigative account of high-level decision-making surrounding several significant events that occurred in the early 2000s that shaped public policy and attitudes towards human rights. These included the Tampa affair of August 2001; the attacks on the American World Trade Centre in

New York in September 2001; the subsequent military interventions of the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK) and Australia in Iraq and Afghanistan; and the 'Children Overboard' incident and the Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel X (SIEV X) tragedy, which both occurred in October 2001.

These events, and their ramifications, continue to influence Australian public policy and government responses to refugees and asylum seekers, as documented in Glendenning's (2015) analysis of Australian refugee policy from 1954, when then Prime Minister Menzies committed Australia to the 1951 Refugee Convention, to 2015. Glendenning characterises the national discourse on people movements as divisive, reactive and singularly oppressive for refugees and asylum seekers. He states, 'in a very real sense, we treat asylum seekers and refugees as if we were at war with them' (Glendenning, 2015, p. 27).

These findings do not sit well alongside the policy of A Multicultural Australia, which intends that 'all Australians share the benefits and responsibilities arising from the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our society' and sets goals of equity, social cohesion, community participation, inclusiveness and respect (Department of Home Affairs, 2018, p. 1). This is why I argue, alongside the commentators cited above, that social work and human services professionals face competing priorities and demands that make it more difficult to support African refugee families and communities who resettle in Sydney. In the light of these claims, this study focuses on human rights from the perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds to enhance and reinvigorate social work knowledge and practice. Below, I critically examine human rights and discuss the standing of human rights concepts in African and social work scholarship.

1.4 Human rights in African and social work scholarship

Universal framings of human rights extend the reach of human rights concepts into very vulnerable communities, yet cultural analysis suggests they draw upon a narrow frame of reference. This study notes the vigorous and somewhat polarised debates between universalist and culturally relativist positions and argues for a pluralist, inclusive discussion of human rights more informed by African perspectives (An-Na'im, 1992; De Feyter, 2011; Fanon, 1967; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001; Shivji, 1989). African human rights scholarship focuses us on communitarian principles, dignity, holism, duty, responsibility, and socio-economic justice (Addo, 2010; An-Na'im, 1992; Legesse, 1980; Obioha, 2014), while scholarship that aligns with Western liberal principles focuses on individual rights and freedoms, and protection of civil and political rights (De Feyter, 2011; Flynn, 2005; George, 2008; Ife, 2016; Merry, 2005; Nasu & Saul, 2011; Zou & Zwart, 2011). Similar to Outhred's research with women in the Volta region of Ghana, participants in the present study were thought to bring a 'distinctive angle of vision' (Outhred, 2010, p. 79) that could potentially inform social work practice.

Social work scholarship asserts that human rights perspectives are fundamental to diverse areas of social work practice (Bricker-Jenkins, Barbera, Beemer, & Young, 2012; Flynn, 2005; Ife, 2012; Nipperess & Briskman, 2009). According to Bricker-Jenkins et al. (2012), human rights reaffirm the principles of empowerment, participation and liberation, and underpin strengths-based practice in social work. They also argue that human rights are key to resisting oppression, challenging injustice, creating community and promoting health, social inclusion, equality and full participation (Bricker-Jenkins et al., 2012). In addition, Nipperess and Briskman suggest that human rights provide a framework

for critiquing structural oppression and provide benchmarks for good policy and practice (Nipperess & Briskman, 2009). Ife (2012) has consistently argued that human rights provide strong reference points for discerning need, a robust ethical framework for practice, and opportunities for praxis. Furthermore, Flynn (2005) claims that human rights in social work practice are helpful in thinking globally and cross-culturally.

The present study is stimulated by human rights critiques and defences, and aims to extend the discussion through dialogue with African families from refugee backgrounds about the meaning of human rights in their worlds. With all this in mind, Solomon's metaphor, presented at the beginning of the chapter, of parallel lines meeting can represent intercultural dialogue, and alert us to the unique, and thus far overlooked, perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds. It is a metaphor within the tradition of 'human rights from below' (Ife, 2009, p. 128), which refers to practice that consciously incorporates community wisdom to socially construct human rights. In this thesis, I explore how social workers could recognise and harness the creative emancipatory potential of human rights to enhance social work practice with African families from refugee backgrounds resettling in cities such as Sydney, NSW. This exploration is guided by relevant theoretical perspectives, as outlined below.

1.5 Guiding theoretical perspectives

First and foremost, the present study of human rights embraces a transformational agenda, based on critical analysis of power and oppression. To support this agenda, this thesis will establish the importance of critical, power-based analyses of human rights. Human rights from below (Ife, 2010a), a framing which seeks to understand human rights from the perspective of oppressed

populations, extends the 'basic rights and fundamental freedoms inherent to all human beings' (United Nations, 2012) to those on the margins (Bricker-Jenkins et al., 2012; Ife, 2010a; Outhred, 2010). In the present study the goal of examining human rights from below is informed by studies of the wellbeing of African families from refugee backgrounds which highlight multiple, complex and intersecting impacts of pre- and post-migration trauma in this population (see for example, Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Drummond, Mizan, Brocx, & Wright, 2011; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010; Wille, 2011).

The national study of human rights and social inclusion of African-Australian refugees and migrants completed by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) (2010) was a pivotal resource. It highlighted major concerns about the appropriateness of services offered to African-Australians across multiple sectors including training and employment, education, health, housing and engaging with the justice system. The AHRC report established a goal of 'knowing your rights' and promoted collaborative approaches to engaging with African Australian communities (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010).

Secondly, interpretive phenomenology is a key element of the conceptual framework guiding this study of human rights understandings and constructions. The study is founded on Heidegger's (1889-1976) idea that 'humans are hermeneutic (interpretive) beings capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives' (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007, p. 174). Heidegger considered 'forestructures of understanding' to be influential in the hermeneutic process, comprising research participants' practical familiarity or background practices, socio-cultural knowledge, and expectations or anticipation (1962, p. 191). In this study, African families from refugee backgrounds were assumed to have

forestructures of knowledge about human rights, grounded in their lived experience and socio-cultural context. It was hoped that safe, collaborative and discursive engagement with participants might provide rich and potentially unique understandings and constructions of human rights. To support this, the research prioritised cycles of reflection upon the data utilising Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Thirdly, the study engages with the conceptual underpinnings of African worldviews. African and Afro-centric authors position African worldviews as unique (An-Na'im, 1992; Asante, 2006; Fanon, 2004a; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980). These authors emphasise duties and responsibilities to kinship group and the wider community over individual rights. They also discuss mutuality, communitarian values, sovereignty, holism, and affective and spiritual themes. The present study stands in solidarity with authors such as An-Na'im (1992), Gomez Isa (2011), and Outhred (2010) who make the case for grassroots engagement with African communities in human rights dialogue.

Finally, the concept of the third space concept provides a framework for deep and reflexive engagement with African families from refugee backgrounds. Bhabha conceptualises the third space as an 'in-between space that carries the burden of the meaning of culture' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 56). This borderline or overlapping space, where cultural displacement occurs and values are negotiated, potentially leads to transformation of all parties to the dialogue. It is an affirming and potentially productive cross-cultural space (Bhabha, 1994). Some scholars critique the third space because it does not readily align with accepted bodies of knowledge but draws one into an uncertain and exploratory space. In the present study, however, this theoretical framework allowed me to

reflect upon and critique accepted cultural practices. It supported intellectual curiosity and critical analysis of human rights in this research project.

1.6 Aims of the study

This study aimed to explore the meanings that could be derived from African families from refugee backgrounds' lived experience of human rights, and to see what this knowledge could offer social work practice. I hoped this research might assist practitioners to explore the creative potential of human rights with clients and communities. My research positioned African families from refugee backgrounds as capable human rights actors who can produce reliable accounts about their experiences and support creative constructions of human rights from below. This was reflected in the research questions and design, which are presented below.

1.7 The research question

To appreciate the 'distinctive angle of vision' (Outhred, 2010, p. 79) that African families from refugee backgrounds potentially bring to human rights discourse, and the implications of these insights for social work practice, I conducted an interpretive phenomenological study. My research question was twofold, asking: *how are human rights constructed and understood by African families from refugee backgrounds, and how might this contribute to social work practice?* To operationalise the research question, I developed a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix 6A, subsection 12.1), informed by Ife's (2010a) human rights community consultation framework and Holstein and Gubrium's (2003) work on race, subjectivity and the interview process. Also influential was African and Afrocentric research, which emphasises holistic and subjective explanations of phenomena and a participatory, dialogical relationship between

researcher and participants (Asante, 1988; Schreiber, 2000). The study's phenomenological focus on lived experience of human rights informed the construction of the interview guide.

1.8 Methodology

Hermeneutic phenomenology and a critical cultural lens were employed to explore African families from refugee backgrounds' understandings and constructions of human rights. Throughout the study, lived experience is viewed as a conduit for culturally relevant human rights knowledge and processes by which participants might have come to understand human rights. The phenomenological approach facilitated constructing meaning from participants' expression of lived experience and accumulated knowledge. It involved deep listening to participant voices, their articulations of human rights, in their own language where possible. The hermeneutic approach facilitated cycles of reflection upon the data, consideration of African, Australian and social work perspectives on human rights to identify areas of overlap, linkage and divergence, and the implications for practice.

The study involved 13 participants in total, six males and seven females. Participants were between the ages of 25 and 64, and from African countries of origin including Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and West Africa. Data collection occurred between 2013 and 2016, with participants' length of residence in Australia ranging between three to 14 years at the time of interview. Characteristics of the sample population that were noted during data collection included languages spoken, family roles, family and community responsibilities, and educational and employment status. Participants were interviewed singly, in couples, or in small groups. They were asked to share

stories, poems, songs, pictures or experiences that illustrated their family and community views about human rights. Data that was elicited is presented in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

1.9 Ethical conduct of the research

The research was strengthened by adherence to formal standards of ethical conduct of research and the research reference group, comprised of six community leaders, workers and contacts from African families from refugee backgrounds who advised on all aspects of the research design. I drew upon available theory regarding cultural safety and responsiveness to mitigate potentially oppressive social, cultural, economic and interpersonal forces and promote critical self-awareness, consistent with a critical phenomenological orientation (Crotty, 1998; Dryzek, 1995; McLaren, 1997). A service information and referral pack and processes for building rapport, securing informed consent and promoting voluntary participation in the research safeguarded participants and ensured the study was compliant with ethical guidelines. IPA enabled me to privilege the voices of participants and their communities over dominant discourses, and to develop robust and supportable accounts of the data through adherence to recommended processes.

1.10 Key research terms

For the purposes of this study, *African families from refugee backgrounds* are defined as men, women and children who have come to Australia from regions of Africa that have been affected by war and conflict. An inclusive view of extended family and kinship networks was utilised in this research, and the study was grounded in *African worldviews*, described by the late Dumisani Thabede, Professor and Head of Social Work at the University of Venda in South Africa, as

comprising 'the scientific, the irrational, the intuitive, the affective, and the spiritual modes of knowing and being' (Thabede, 2008, p. 236).

Intercultural practice 'focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deep relationships' (Schriefer, 2016, p. 1), while *intercultural* 'describes communities in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures' (Schriefer, 2016, p. 1). *Human rights* are defined as 'those basic rights and fundamental freedoms that are inherent to all human beings, inalienable and equally applicable to everyone' (United Nations, 2012, para 2). *Understandings and constructions* are defined as meaning emerging out of lived experience, in the phenomenological sense of 'experience which is of particular moment or significance to the person' (J. A. Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 33).

To this point I have described the impetus for the thesis. In the next section an overview of each chapter is provided.

1.11 Overview of the thesis

Chapter 2, Human Rights, establishes an understanding of human rights and human rights debates. The chapter evaluates human rights concepts and practices, paying attention to culture, power and impact of human rights concepts on a local and global scale. Relevant critiques of human rights are explored, particularly those emerging from African and African-American scholarship. Questions about the applicability and efficacy of human rights frameworks and approaches for African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in Australia are then examined.

Chapter 3, Lived experience of human rights, outlines the rationale for phenomenological understandings of human rights and hermeneutic knowledge

building in the present study. It then provides a comprehensive review of relevant literature on how African families from refugee backgrounds experience human rights. To do so, it analyses pre-arrival and post-arrival experience, noting, where possible, the influence of factors such as gender, age, marital status, religion, and ethnicity. It then discusses aspects of service provision relating to the lived experiences of African families from refugee backgrounds, and explores the human rights consequences of these issues. Finally, the chapter discusses evidence from the literature about the ways African families from refugee backgrounds prefer to express their knowledge as they engage with researchers.

Chapter 4, Intercultural social work, analyses social work practice literature to understand the current context of intercultural social work practice. It begins with an overview of intercultural social work practice theories, ethics and standards. In doing so it highlights theoretical frameworks and practice approaches tailored to people from refugee backgrounds, and, through analysis, identifies relevant debates, silences and gaps in the literature. It then explores the multifaceted meanings of culture and their applications in intercultural social work practice. Finally, it discusses why a critical cultural lens is required to engage with families from African refugee backgrounds' understandings of human rights.

Chapter 5, Research Design, presents the ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology chosen to address the research questions of this phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiry. The chapter firstly outlines the research approach, then describes the data collection process. Next, ethical considerations are elucidated, together with an overview of strategies implemented to ensure sound research practice. Lastly, processes for meaning making in the research are described.

Chapter 6, Introduction to Participants, introduces the participants and brings their roles, identities and concerns to life. It begins with demographic data, then utilises a form of data analysis, the *We Poem*, that was inspired by Heidegger's view that lived experience is deeply poetic. *We Poems*, which distil participant statements about their cultural backgrounds and provide context for their comments about human rights that follow in Chapters 7-9, are presented in chronological order, paired with brief synopses of participant lives.

The terms *here* and *there* were often utilised by participants to convey where their experiences occurred. They recur throughout Chapters 6-10 in the excerpts provided from transcripts and in my subsequent analysis. The reader will note that *there* can connote up to three distinct, but related, locations: participants' home countries, countries in Africa that participants visited either before or during refugee flight, and/or the African continent. *Here* connotes Australia.

Chapter 7, Ways of Knowing Human Rights, is the first of three results chapters. It presents the rich and varied perspectives on human rights held by members of African families from refugee backgrounds who participated in the study. Chapter 7 reveals layers of human rights knowledge, from conversant to 'not-knowing' human rights. The reader will note that some perspectives presented are distinctively informed by individual experience as well as family and community norms, priorities and ways of communicating, while others resonate with the Human Rights Convention and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights. Thus, attention is paid in this chapter to the means of expression chosen by participants to convey their understandings about human rights including simile, metaphor, mother-tongue words and English words and phrases. A critical cultural lens is utilised in this chapter to analyse these findings,

highlighting socio-economic and historic factors such as gender, poverty, upheaval and corruption which shape understandings of human rights and reveal insights about power, agency, and the hopes and fears of individuals, families and communities in resettlement contexts.

Chapter 8, Human Rights Ways of Being and Becoming, examines how participants employ storytelling and narrative to illustrate their personal, family and community meanings of human rights. Thus, it builds upon the analytical claims in Chapter 7 regarding modes of expression of human rights. In Chapter 8, selected narratives contribute important insights about how human rights understandings develop and connect to personal and community identity. They illustrate how gender, age and power influence processes of *being* and *becoming* and explain attitudes to human rights. Time and place are analysed as key features within the narratives regarding human rights. In addition, the influence of family and familial relationships on participant human rights understandings and constructions is illuminated in the discussion of selected narratives provided by participants.

Chapter 9, Ways of Doing Human Rights, presents data which highlights ways of doing human rights informed by the experiences and concerns of African families from refugee backgrounds. It begins by presenting the risks and barriers to exercising rights that were identified by participants. It then reveals a range of approaches and behaviours highlighted by participants as helpful in promoting human rights in their families and communities. The analysis highlights how relationships mediate the negotiation of rights within the multi-layered social, cultural, locational and temporal contexts of participant communities. Analysis of the data elucidates how human rights frame the needs, hopes and fears of

participants and their communities, and highlights responsibility as a value that is culturally and practically relevant to exercising human rights. Chapter 9 discusses insights for social work practice by presenting participant perspectives on how families can be approached when human rights issues need to be addressed.

Chapter 10, Discussion and Conclusion, outlines the contributions of the present study to African communities from refugee backgrounds, social work and human service professionals and to the human rights field. It explores human rights ontologies identified in the study and discusses the implications of these ontologies with regard to acculturation and lived experience of human rights among African diaspora. New insights, contributions to practice and research are presented together with insights into intercultural social work practice provided by participants.

1.12 Conclusion

The key premise of this Doctoral thesis is that privileging the perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds about human rights has the potential to extend human rights discourse and contribute to the knowledge base on culturally sensitive social work practice. By participating in this study, African families from refugee backgrounds had the unique opportunity to provide rich and varied human rights understandings, clarifying, critiquing and extending dominant perspectives in this field. It was important to understand and engage with existing scholarship on human rights frameworks to make sense of participant perspectives and identify potential contributions to social work practice. Chapter 2 reviews human rights theory and practice, and presents germane debates relating to human rights.

2. Human rights

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to evaluate human rights concepts and practices, paying attention to culture, power, and impact of human rights concepts on a local and global scale. Through a review of literature, the chapter establishes an understanding of human rights, and human rights debates to explain why the following research question was chosen: *how are human rights constructed and understood by African families from refugee backgrounds, and how might this contribute to social work practice?* First, Australian and social work perspectives on human rights are presented. Then, relevant critiques of human rights are explored, particularly those emerging from African and African-American scholarship. Lastly, questions about the applicability and efficacy of human rights frameworks and approaches for African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in Australia are examined.

2.2 Human rights definitions

My review of social work and wider literature confirmed how complex and contested human rights are. Human rights concepts originate from diverse standpoints, with theoretical and practical implications. Many authors define human rights as fundamentally embedded in, and expressed through, international conventions, treaties, instruments and tools (see for example, Donnelly, 2007; Saleebey, 2013; Wronka, 1998). According to Donnelly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) established ‘the contours of the contemporary consensus on internationally recognised human rights’ (2003, p. 22). The global human rights consensus to which he refers centres on several prominent ideas, including ‘the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable

rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world' (United Nations, 1948, p. 1). Donnelly, a prominent proponent of human rights, addressed equality, cultural relativity and how universalism might practically accommodate different perspectives in his work.

Similarly, in defining human rights, Wronka (1998) pointed to the evolution of the global human rights discourse in three phases, based upon his analysis of the relative importance of the different kinds of rights articulated in the UDHR and subsequent documents, such as the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP). While priority was first placed on civil and political rights, Wronka noted a shift towards economic, social and cultural rights, and later, towards collective rights such as those of women, children, Indigenous peoples and people with disabilities.

Some definitions, rather than referring to human rights instruments, emphasise the ethical and values base of human rights (see for example, Banks, 2012; Hugman, 2012). These scholars highlight theoretical underpinnings of human rights, particularly natural rights (Locke, 1632-1704), deontology (Kant 1724–1804), and consequentialism (Bentham, 1748-1842; Mill, 1806-1873). The importance of elucidating these theoretical underpinnings of human rights, according to Hugman (2012, p. 9), is that the values they encompass 'are expressed in our social and political structures and have effects throughout all aspects of our social relationships'. Thus, human rights values, as both Banks (2012) and Hugman (2012) demonstrate, do not exist in isolation, but connect

with other values and principles, such as human dignity, freedom and social justice.

The ways in which human rights are defined highlight different elements of the discourse. For example, Nipperess and Briskman highlight the universal, indivisible and inalienable aspects of human rights and our common humanity:

Essentially human rights are those entitlements that people possess simply by virtue of their humanity. The emphasis on humanity indicates that human rights are usually considered to be universal – that is, they belong to everyone, regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation, simply on the basis of being human. Human rights are also considered to be indivisible because they are all equally important. Finally, human rights are considered to be inalienable because another person, government, organisation or other entity cannot take them away. (Nipperess & Briskman, 2009, pp. 62-63)

In contrast, Sen (2005) and Nussbaum (2002), who construct human rights in utilitarian terms, place strong emphasis on the meaning of equality, dignity, needs and justice in relation to human rights. Nussbaum (2002, p. 143) describes human rights as ‘a list of urgent items that should be secured to people no matter what else we pursue’, while Sen (2005) conceives of human rights as capabilities, that is, personal and societal resources. Alternatively, Ife (2016), who defines human rights as discursive, illuminates how human rights are claimed through interactions with the legal system, advocated for by intermediaries, and, importantly, negotiated and constructed by individuals and communities themselves.

In the work of Sen, Nussbaum and Ife, we see emphasis on, and critique of, different aspects of human rights such as needs, resources, entitlements and legal frameworks. Despite recognisable ontological differences, these and many other authors argue that human rights are the positive framework that emerged out of a dark period in modern history, in response to the atrocities committed in the Second World War. Below I outline several positive contributions of human rights.

2.3 Positive contributions of human rights

First, international treaties, conventions and protocols articulate shared human rights ideals. Implemented in the aftermath of the Second World War, and further developed and refined through research, debate and consensus building, current human rights instruments are the result of significant international collaborative endeavour over the past 70 years (Engstrom, 2010). Human rights instruments and frameworks hold symbolic and practical significance to peoples and nations across the globe (Ibhawoh, 2018; Nasu & Saul, 2011; Wronka, 2017).

Second, human rights ideals are considered 'inspirational, aspirational and ultimately hopeful' (Nipperess, 2014, p. 2). A key reason for this is that human rights ideals offer universal rights and protections. As discussed earlier, universalism is a fundamental principle of modern human rights. This ideal is upheld by peoples from all parts of the world, embedded in all regional human rights articulations including the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2017a), the Asian Human Rights Charter (Asian Human Rights Commission & Asian Legal Resource Centre, 1998) and the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) 1990). The universal human rights ideal is that all

nations offer their citizens political, civil, social, economic, cultural and collective rights. Embracing universal rights and protections provides opportunities for nations to work together and to hold each other accountable for failures to uphold human rights.

Third, the human rights framework contributes to the setting of a global standard: that all people deserve basic human dignity, freedom, safety, wellbeing and access to resources. Human rights scholarship is closely linked to standards-setting in the international, national and professional arenas (Mutua, 2001; Nipperess, 2014; Nussbaum, 2002). Nussbaum writes about human rights as a 'system of side-constraints in international deliberation and internal policy debates' (2002, p. 143). Mutua (2001) discusses the role of human rights in setting standards relating to the conduct of nation-states in their treatment of individuals. In addition, human rights standards are at the heart of initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2018a), Human Rights Up Front (United Nations, 2016), and Faith for Rights (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2018). These initiatives establish baseline measures and monitor progress towards acceptable global standards regarding health, social and economic wellbeing, and civic life.

Fourth, human rights unsettle the status quo by posing complex and difficult questions in relation to fundamental aspects of human life. In Australia, questions about social policy and its impacts, resource distribution, inclusion and exclusion and national sovereignty are raised by individuals and communities animated by human rights ideals (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Bennett, Green, Gilbert, & Bessarab, 2013; Garkawe, Kelly, & Fisher, 2001; Glendenning, 2015; Marr & Wilkinson, 2004). Internationally, Engstrom notes how human rights draw attention to complex problems requiring cooperation

between neighbouring countries, collaboration across borders, and monitoring of progress towards acceptable human rights norms and standards (2010).

This section has presented a range of positive contributions made by human rights, focusing largely on the international landscape. Section 2.4 below locates human rights within a context to better understand the national human rights landscape. It considers the mechanisms established to promote and protect human rights in this country, and outlines major strengths and limitations of implementing the ideals of human rights into legislation and practice in Australian settings.

2.4 Human rights in Australia

Australia was a founding member of the United Nations and influential in drafting the UDHR (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018b). The majority of human rights instruments developed by the United Nations have been ratified by Australia (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018d). Human rights declarations and treaties to which Australia is a signatory, as well as national legislation that enacts human rights declarations and treaties, are contained as appendices in the AASW Code of Ethics, and, given they are relevant to this doctoral thesis, are provided as a reference at Appendix 1.

International human rights treaties do not automatically translate into Australian domestic legislation, but must be specifically incorporated through courts and judgements or the parliamentary legislative process. Having said that, some international human rights provisions existed in national legislation prior to Australia agreeing to be bound by relevant treaties. An example is the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Australian Government, 2018b), which was in place before the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted in 2006 (United Nations, 2006). The Disability Discrimination Act 1992

makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability in many areas of public life. In contrast, some international human rights provisions required legislation to embed and localise human rights principles. Examples include the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Australian Government, 2015) and the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Australian Government, 2018a). Some international human rights provisions have never been actualised into Australian law; for example, Scotland and France have laws that enshrine the right to housing, while Australian law does not (Mercy Law Resource Centre, 2018).

The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), which was established by the Federal Government of Australia in 1986, is an independent statutory organisation that undertakes human rights policy and legislative development, education, investigation and conciliation of complaints, and monitors compliance with international human rights obligations (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018a; Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Human Rights Branch, 2017). The Australian Human Rights Commission plays a vital role in promoting and protecting human rights nationally by making submissions to parliaments and governments to develop policies, programs and laws, and providing independent legal advice to Australian courts in cases involving human rights principles (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018a).

Human rights, according to the Australian Human Rights Commission, are 'an inextricable part of our lives' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018c). Indeed, according to Ife (2012), human rights principles are embedded in Australian institutions and social provisions. The present study confirmed this by conducting a scoping exercise. The researcher utilised three search terms, *human rights*, *rights and responsibilities* and *rights*, to identify whether, and how, Australian institutions claim to promote and protect human rights.

According to the websites of government organisations and most not-for-profit organisations, these organisations promote and protect human rights in a variety of ways. Statutory bodies such as the Department of Human Services, NSW Health and Family and Community Services NSW, outline key responsibilities between customers and the state, emphasising organisational procedures and duties that enable their customer's rights, and advising how complaints and risks will be managed. Other organisations, particularly local government and not-for-profit services (NFPs), facilitate human rights information sharing and community education. In addition, NFPs recognise individuals and organisations that are dedicated to realising human rights, and raise awareness about significant social milestones and achievements. Appendix 2 provides details of the organisations included in the scoping exercise, along with brief notes about the human rights issues addressed on their websites, and links to the web pages.

Though a contributor to human rights promotion and protection in Africa and other continents, Australia has been strongly criticised by local and international observers for aspects of its human rights record. For example, our anti-terrorist measures, treatment of asylum seekers, and relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, have attracted domestic and international censure (Bardwell, 2017; Bennett et al., 2013; Glendenning, 2015; Miller, 2017; UNHCR Regional Representation in Canberra, 2017). In addition, two separate Royal Commissions recently established by the Federal Government of Australia revealed significant failings of key Australian institutions to uphold basic human rights. These included widespread failures to protect children by inadequately responding to child sexual abuse, and failures to safeguard people's financial assets through mismanagement in the banking and

financial sectors (His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd), 2017; The Hon. Justice Peter McClellan AM et al., 2017).

Human rights as defined in the UDHR and subsequent documents are strongly influenced by Western philosophical thought. Such thought originates in the Age of Reason or the Enlightenment Period in Europe between 1600-1800, with priority given by scholars including Comte, Schlick and Ayer to order, reason, logic and humanistic ideals (Crotty, 1998). Ife (2016) argues that the philosophy of the Enlightenment period has influenced Australian cultural, economic and social arrangements including systems of governance and leadership, methods of producing and evaluating knowledge, systems of behaviour and belief, economic structures, welfare provisions, approaches to liberty, and constructs of professionalism. He further suggests that Australian economic, cultural, and social arrangements are also grounded in western philosophical thought (Ife, 2012). Others argue that the notion of the *fair go* is deeply embedded in Australian culture and mythology (Bullivant, 1986; Herscovitch, 2013). The idea of the *fair go* reflects beliefs about the right to equal opportunity, or the opportunity to improve one's lot in life, and, it can be argued, also resonates with some of the language and intent of the UDHR.

Not only are human rights considered intrinsic to Australian society, for the social work profession, human rights are core values. My social work training emphasised human rights as highly relevant to practice (Fook, 1993; Wronka, 1998). As a practitioner I have drawn upon human rights ideals to advocate for clients and families, challenge inadequacies in systems, understand and confront oppressive processes and procedures, and, through dialogue, create a shared vision of a fairer and more just world (Allan, Briskman, & Pease, 2009; Saleeby, 2013). Some social work scholars argue that human rights principles are not just

core values of the social work profession, but that social work is a human rights profession (Healy, 2008; Ife, 2012). To further elucidate professional frameworks for practice, I discuss the important relationship between human rights and social work below.

2.5 Human rights and social work

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) placed human rights principles at the heart of the profession's definition thirty years ago (1988). This focus has been retained, with the most current Global Definition of Social Work stating that human rights are central to social work:

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels (International Federation of Social Workers, 2018).

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) first enshrined human rights as a key principle for practice in the AASW Code of Ethics (1999). This document outlined core beliefs and principles that confirmed a commitment to human rights: 'every human being has a unique worth, each person has a right to well-being, self-fulfilment and self-determination, consistent with the rights of

others' (Australian Association of Social Workers, 1999, p. 8). The revised AASW Code of Ethics (2010), published eleven years later, strengthened the profession's human rights language and updated its reference base to incorporate relevant human rights declarations, treaties and legislation. The 2010 AASW Code of Ethics affirmed that members of the profession work to:

...achieve human rights and social justice through social development, social and systemic change, advocacy and the ethical conduct of research... This involves subscribing to the principles and aspirations of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other international conventions derived from that Declaration, as well as other human rights documents (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010, p. 7).

As previously noted, the AASW Code of Ethics (2010) provides an appendix listing the international conventions and other human rights documents that Australia has ratified and the principles and aspirations that the profession draws upon. I considered this list relevant to my study and thus have provided a copy at Appendix 1.

The Australian Practice Standards for Social Workers released in 2013 also enshrines human rights principles. They state, 'social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work' (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2013, p. 4). The Practice Standards document outlines eight components of practice that are common to all areas of social work endeavour, including: values and ethics; professionalism; culturally responsive and inclusive practice; knowledge for practice; applying knowledge to practice; communication and interpersonal skills; information recording and

sharing; and professional development and supervision. Further, several indicators are attached to each component of practice to elucidate how the standards are applied and assessed across diverse areas of practice. Three of these eight components of practice make explicit reference to human rights, as presented in the table below.

Components of practice contained in the AASW practice standards	Indicators that explicitly reference human rights
Values and Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practices within a social justice and human rights framework • Facilitates people’s empowerment and works to eliminate all violations of human rights • Challenges policies and practices that are oppressive and fail to meet international standards of human rights, social inclusion and social development.
Professionalism	N/A
Culturally responsive and inclusive practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively and respectfully promotes the rights of culturally diverse and minority groups in society
Knowledge for practice	N/A
Applying knowledge to practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically reflects on and evaluates practice with a particular focus on principles of self-determination, empowerment, inclusion, equality, human rights and social justice
Communication and interpersonal skills	N/A
Information recording and sharing	N/A
Professional development and supervision	N/A

Table 1: Indicators that refer to human rights in the AASW Practice Standards (2013)

Interest in human rights approaches for social work practice has intensified in recent years (Nipperess, 2014). A number of comprehensive articulations of social work practice frameworks based on human rights now exist, including frameworks developed by Jim Ife (2012), Sven Hesse (2014), Colleen Lundy (2011), Elisabeth Reichert (2011), and Joseph Wronka (2017). These human rights frameworks are important as they extend social work knowledge, skills and values across a range of social work practice methods and population groups. Of these, Ife's framework of human rights from below is particularly significant for the present study. Ife proposed a 'discursive view of human rights... an ongoing and ever-changing discourse about what it means to be human and what should comprise the rights of common global citizenship' (2012, p. 183). According to Ife, ground rules for this process of negotiation of human rights include:

- Realisation of the claimed right is necessary for a person or group to be able to achieve their full humanity, in common with others.
- The claimed right is seen as *either* applying to all of humanity, and is something that the person or group claiming the right wishes to apply to all people anywhere, *or* as applying to people from specific disadvantaged or marginalised groups for whom realisation of that right is essential to their achieving their full human potential.
- There is substantial universal consensus on the legitimacy of the claimed right.
- It is possible for the claimed right to be effectively realised for all legitimate claimants.
- The claimed right does not contradict other rights. (2012, pp. 22-23)

Social work scholarship has examined the relevance of human rights frameworks for a range of social work practice methods. Practice methods which incorporate human rights include community development (Briskman, 2014; Fiske, 2006; Ife, 2016; Lundy, 2011); international development (Healy & Link, 2012; Hugman, 2015); social activism (Nipperess & Briskman, 2009; Outhred, 2010; Wronka, 2017); practice with individuals, families and groups (Lundy, 2011; Reichert, 2011; Wronka, 2017); social work education (Nadan, Weinberg-Kurnik, & Ben-Ari, 2015; Nipperess, 2014); cross-cultural practice (Fairfax, 2016; Lundy, 2011; Mbazima & Sekudu, 2017; Thabede, 2008); social policy (Reichert, 2011; Wronka, 2017); research (Rowe, Baldry, & Earles, 2015; Stevenson, 2010; Wronka, 2017) and ethics (Banks, 2012; Hugman, 2012; Li, 2006; Lundy, 2011). Practice methods that incorporate human rights emphasise anti-oppressive, strengths-based and person-centred practice. All the literature cited above affirms a commitment to, and extends knowledge about, advocacy, fair and inclusive social structures, and decolonisation of research, policy and practice. Human rights are thus central to social work practice.

In Australia and abroad, population groups for whom human rights ideals are considered by social work scholars to be highly relevant include children and families (Bromfield et al., 2010; Cemlyn & Briskman, 2003; Gerrand & Nathane-Taulela, 2015; S. E. Laird, 2016; Micklewright, 2002); women, especially women of colour (Quinn & Grumbach, 2015; Zimmerman, 2015), and refugees and asylum seekers (Fiske, 2006; Nipperess & Briskman, 2009). Individuals, groups and families, and many professionals who work collaboratively and inclusively with them, have employed human rights concepts to understand their unique experiences of oppression, to enhance power, and to link personal outcomes with broader political goals.

Human rights ideals are considered to be powerful in the face of discrimination, oppression and marginalisation (Garkawe et al., 2001; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980). Yet, human rights concepts and approaches have been criticised for privileging certain voices, or perspectives, over others (Ibhawoh, 2001; Ife, 2012; Mutua, 2001; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Nipperess & Briskman, 2009). In addition, Nipperess (2014) examines how Australian social workers position human rights in practice and education and the implications of this for critical social work. Her key recommendations are for social work education to 'move beyond rhetorical commitments regarding human rights, to in-depth explorations of human rights and its relationship to critical social work practice' (Nipperess, 2014, p. 3).

The discussion thus far has revealed some of the complexity of human rights. In the section below, I present prominent critiques that elucidate important limitations of human rights, and explicate the relevance of these critiques to the present study.

2.6 Limitations of human rights

Nearly 50 years ago, Fanon's work challenged 'the [French/Western] discourse of rational confrontation and universality' (Bhabha, 2004, p. xxi). The current dominance of privileged voices in human rights discourse, according to Ife, means that human rights mechanisms are inaccessible to the vast majority of the world's peoples, and that human rights remains a 'discourse of the powerful about the powerless' (Ife, 2012, p. 184). This discourse can reinforce dominant and disempowering structures, and utilise mediums of communication that exclude those at the margins. For this reason, many authors urge that professionals in law, journalism, social work, education, and academia, carefully consider their power, authority and privilege in comparison to their clients,

consumers and/or stakeholders. Human rights scholars from Africa and Australia alike criticise racialised, stratified and elitist worldviews that inform assumptions about superiority and inferiority and play out in modern global relations, calling for inclusive dialogue about how human rights ideals can be enshrined in legislation and practice (Ibhawoh, 2001; Ife, 2016; Mutua, 2001; Nipperess & Briskman, 2009).

African feminist perspectives also critique power and privilege embedded in human rights and related discourses in ways similar to the scholarship above (Arndt, 2002; Mekgwe, 2008; Mikell, 1995; Ntseane, 2011). According to Arndt, African feminism aims at 'transforming gender relationships and conceptions in African societies and improving the situation of African women' (2002, p. 32). However, African feminist scholars are highly critical of the 'extreme individualism, militant opposition to patriarchy, and hostility to males' they feel characterises Western feminism (Mikell, 1995, pp. 405-406). They highlight, in contrast, approaches that are 'pragmatic, flexible and group oriented' (Mikell, 1995, p. 405), and emphasise the values of 'female autonomy and cooperation; nature over culture; and the centrality of children, multiple mothering, and kinship' (Mekgwe, 2008, p. 168). Ntseane, who specialises in adult education at University of Botswana, argues: 'the continued marginalisation of gender and its diverse cultural contexts denies new insights into the positive development of a useful critical theory' (Ntseane, 2011, p. 321). This feminist scholarship, like that of Fanon, Mutua, Legesse and others from the African continent, reiterates how human rights discourse can reinforce dominant and disempowering structures, and reproduce exclusionary processes.

A second criticism of human rights is their universalism. Many argue that failures of leaders and nations to address poverty and underdevelopment as part

of a global human rights mandate indicate the illegitimacy of universal human rights norms (Ibhawoh, 2001; Mutua, 2001; Nussbaum, 2002; Sen, 2005). Nation-states that do not have the resources or conditions to preserve economic and social stability cannot guarantee their citizens even basic levels of wellbeing, and struggle to protect their populations from corruption, wars and natural disasters. Poverty, underdevelopment, and instability disproportionately affect Africa, Asia and other post-colonial regions, where endemic resource inequities often coalesce with corrupt or ineffective governments and institutions to perpetuate human rights abuses, exacerbate conflict and violence, and hence contribute to refugee flight (Asian Human Rights Commission & Asian Legal Resource Centre, 1998; Mutua, 2001).

Little wonder that some scholars describe human rights ideals as hegemonic and inherently problematic in theory and practice. Indeed, scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds contend that universal human rights concepts embed inherently individualistic philosophies and marginalise peoples who value collective rights and responsibilities (Addo, 2010; An-Na'im, 1992; De Feyter, 2011; Legesse, 1980; Li, 2006; Merry, 2005; Nasu & Saul, 2011; Outhred, 2010). These individualistic human rights norms are considered to have colonialist underpinnings (Ife, 2008).

Dialogue and rational argumentation in human rights discourse as a means of stimulating social change follows in the critical tradition of Habermas (Dryzek, 1995). Frantz Fanon, from the French colony of Martinique, emphasised the power of critical dialogue to liberate Africa from its colonialist roots (1967). In the same tradition, African writer Legesse (1980, pp. 123-124) argued that 'different societies formulate their conception of human rights in diverse cultural idioms'. This perspective still has currency according to South African authors

Mbazima and Sekudu (2017), who emphasise that focusing on African worldviews supports reclaiming and re-centring African philosophy and culture from colonised positions that 'other', reify and/or denigrate these alternate worldviews. It is perhaps unsurprising then that global social work scholarship has seen a resurgence of efforts to incorporate African values and worldviews into human rights frameworks for practice (Bent-Goodley, Fairfax, & Carlton-LaNey, 2017; Fairfax, 2016; Ross, 2008; Thabede, 2008). The present study explores methods of re-centring African philosophy in human rights scholarship. Key ideas from African and African American scholarship regarding human rights are discussed below.

2.7 Human rights in African discourse

African human rights scholarship takes a communitarian stance consistent with African moral and political philosophy and tends to emphasise duties and responsibilities over individual freedoms (Ibhawoh, 2018). In addition, many African authors argue for nation-building and robust standards to strengthen rights and freedoms while progressing economic and social goals (An-Na'im, 1992; Fanon, 2004b; Ibhawoh, 2018; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001). African conceptualisations of human rights emphasise dignity, communitarianism, holism, spirituality, the sacred, and socio-economic responsiveness, which distinguishes African conceptualisations of human rights from Western-centric ones. These concepts are exerting growing influence in social work and other professions grounded in human rights. A detailed explanation of each of these African ideas about human rights is provided below.

2.7.1 Dignity

Ideas of dignity are central to African conceptualisations of human rights. African concepts of dignity are contrasted with Kantian, or Enlightenment, concepts of dignity that are grounded in rational agency and free will. For example, Metz (2012, p. 26) argues that African concepts of dignity are grounded in community and combine 'identity and solidarity'. According to Metz, this framing of dignity as communitarian includes the capacity to conceive of oneself as 'we', and holds as ideals the ability to provide mutual aid and to exhibit sympathy. It incorporates 'capacity for communal or friendly relationships, understood as the combination of sharing a way with others and of caring about their quality of life' (Metz, 2012, p. 35).

However, Metz (2012) is cautious about grounding human rights in certain kinds of beliefs about dignity. He explains that concepts of life force, or vitality, comprise dignity in many African communities, and can be thought of as relevant to a model of human rights. In this framework, dignity as life force comprises 'health, strength, growth, reproduction, creativity, vibrancy, activity, self-motion, courage and confidence' (Metz, 2012, p. 25). He notes that this conceptualisation of rights is essentialist and links rights to core aspects of being human. However, he then argues that this formulation of human rights runs the risk of excluding those who cannot or do not enjoy 'life force' to the fullest extent, such as people with disabilities.

Murithi, Head of the Justice and Peacebuilding Program at the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation in Cape Town, South Africa, argues that ideas of dignity are closely linked to the concept of *Ubuntu* and should be recognised as fundamental to African conceptualisations of human rights:

Specifically, there are lessons that can be drawn from the African worldview known as Ubuntu. Ubuntu is an ancient African code of

ethics; it emphasises the importance of hospitality, generosity and respect for all members of the community, and embraces the view that we all belong to one human family... In effect, Ubuntu advances a framework of human dignity or 'humanness' that resonates with the notion of human rights (Murithi, 2007, p. 281; 282)

Obioha, a Nigerian scholar, also emphasises the connection between African conceptualisations of dignity and human rights: 'Africans recognise the dignity of the human being and, in consequence, hold a deep and unrelenting concern for human welfare and happiness' (2014, p. 13).

2.7.2 Communitarian principles

Communitarian principles are also considered central to African conceptualisations of human rights. Communitarian principles underpin the African view of dignity described above, and present an important contrast to individualistic human rights principles in the discourse (Fairfax, 2016; Metz, 2012; Ntseane, 2011; Obioha, 2014). Gyekye, a Ghanaian author, describes communitarian moral and political theory thus:

Communitarian moral and political theory, which considers the community as a fundamental human good, advocates a life lived in harmony and cooperation with others, a life of mutual consideration and aid and of interdependence, a life in which one shares in the fate of the other—bearing one another up—a life that provides a viable framework for the fulfilment of the individual's nature or potential, a life in which the products of the exercise of an individual's talents or endowments are

*(nevertheless) regarded as the assets of the community as such,
a life free from hostility and confrontation. (1997, p. 44)*

This quote explains the important interconnections between individuals and society in African cultures. Community, Gyekye argues, provides a framework – a *viable* framework – in which an individual can attain their potential (Gyekye, 1997, p. 44). Gyekye argues that community offers a sustainable, worthwhile, reasonable and practical route to personhood. In this framework, individual talents and abilities belong to the community. Viewed as such, they minimise conflict and facilitate harmony, cooperation and provision of assistance. One's fate is intertwined with others, and one's duty is to bear the others up.

Similarly, Fairfax (2016, p. 10), an African-American scholar, highlights communitarian principles via the concept of African personhood, 'a self-conception that one's being is connected to and informed by family/community and one's behaviour should exhibit certain moral, spiritual, and ethical qualities that contribute to the family/community'. Here again the emphasis is on the relationship between family and community rather than individual freedom or individualised notions of wellbeing.

The Zulu Personal Declaration, written by an unknown author, affirms similar communitarian themes (Anonymous (1825), as cited in Asante & Abarry, 1996). The rights which are addressed in this poem include the right to be heard, to feel at home and to realise the promise of being human, where 'I am all [and] all are me' (Anonymous (1825), as cited in Asante & Abarry, 1996, p. 373). Three protections, or warnings, are expressed, relating to duty, selfishness and obstruction of others: 'Imposed love is a crime against humanity'; 'I have no right to anything I deny my neighbour'; and 'I can commit no greater crime than to frustrate life's purpose for my neighbour' (Anonymous (1825), as cited in Asante

& Abarry, 1996, p. 373). Fields, who deconstructs this poem as part of an analysis of human rights conceptualisations, believes it reinforces that mutuality, commonality, self-discipline and responsibility are key components of African human rights concepts (Fields, 2003).

2.7.3 Holism

Holism is another influential element of African conceptualisations of human rights. According to Metz (2012), this holism emphasises African values of mutuality, commonality, relationship of the self with the community, and responsibility. Thabede (2008), a black South African scholar, describes holism in African discourse more broadly still, emphasising 'the scientific, the irrational, the intuitive, the affective and the spiritual modes of knowing and being' in African worldviews (Thabede, 2008, p. 236). Thabede's description of African worldviews emphasises that scientific explanations about circumstances and events will sit side by side cosmological, emotional and intuitive explanations, and will at times defy rationality.

Botswanan academic Ntseane described this holism, and the knowledge underpinning it, more favourably: 'Afrocentric methods as well as generated knowledge must reflect the primacy of spirituality, as well as the interconnectedness with all things' (Ntseane, 2011, p. 313). She connects this spirituality with obligation to one's community, one's ancestors and one's extended family. These multifarious features of emotion, spirituality, and ancestral wisdom, together with mutuality, commonality, communitarian principles and responsibility, while contested, are significant aspects of African conceptualisations of human rights.

2.7.4 Socio-economic priorities

Lastly, important African scholars of human rights claim that divergences of human rights scholarship across cultures are explained by persistent, pressing socio-economic priorities. According to Ibhawoh (2001, p. 59), the 'constraints of poverty and underdevelopment in Africa' underpin the assertion by many Africans that economic and social rights must take precedence over civil and political rights. It is true that prioritising economic and social rights over civil and political rights is commonly asserted throughout African moral and political discourse. Fanon (2004b, p. 9) speaks of the dignity conferred by the ability to feed oneself from one's own land and labour: '...the most essential value, because it is the most meaningful, is first and foremost the land: the land which must provide bread, and, naturally, dignity'. Others on the African continent echo these sentiments. In his essay on stability and change in Africa, former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere writes about freedoms: 'only as [the subsistence farmer's] poverty is reduced will his [sic] political freedom become properly meaningful and his right to human dignity become a fact of human dignity' (Nyerere, 1969, pp. 31-32, as cited in Ibhawoh, 2001, p. 59).

Colonialist critiques raised by African authors nearly half a century ago claimed that Western imperialism created and perpetuated vulnerability for Africans (Fanon, 2004b; Mutua, 2001). These critiques remain timely. African authors contend that these social and economic realities disrupt and unsettle African communities and nations and must be addressed for human rights to flourish on the African continent (An-Na'im, 1992; De Feyter, 2011; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001; Shivji, 1989). Meanwhile persistent gaps in social and economic rights in Africa are acknowledged by the United Nations:

[In Africa], major gaps remain in reducing vulnerabilities for many developing countries... Access to essential medicines at

affordable prices remains highly problematic, with many households squeezed out of the market due to high prices and limited availability... And while the rapid expansion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has allowed several billion people in developing countries to join the information society, a major digital divide is still in place. (United Nations, 2015, p. iii)

Sustained challenges to the legitimacy and applicability of international human rights constructs within African contexts have driven the development of a regional framework for human rights in Africa, and continue to underpin human rights discourse in the region and beyond. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights, also known as the Banjul Charter, was developed in 1981 by the Organisation of African Unity, informed by the above critiques of international human rights frameworks. This internationally-recognised framework 'sets standards and establishes the groundwork for the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa' (Organisation of African Unity, 1981, p. 1). The Banjul Charter has several unique features that reflect important values, norms, needs and circumstances of the peoples of the African continent. In keeping with communitarian principles, it emphasises duties in tandem with rights and strongly endorses collective social, cultural and economic rights. The Banjul Charter articulates strong supports for human rights and fundamental freedoms generally, and, importantly, discourages relaxation or exemptions to human rights during emergencies and special circumstances (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2017b).

Measures that safeguard and promote human rights in Africa have been implemented through the Banjul Charter. In 1987, the African Commission on

Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) was established to promote and protect human rights on the African continent. The ACHPR website states that the organisation arranges events to raise awareness and disseminate information about human rights, supports regional communication, settles disputes, facilitates state reporting, and implements urgent appeals (African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, 2018). Another measure that safeguards and promotes human rights in Africa is the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights which was established in 2004 to support the work of the ACHPR by responding to cases or disputes about the interpretation and application of regional human rights instruments (African Court, 2018).

The above sections have elucidated African ideas of human dignity, communitarianism and its links to duty and responsibility, holism and spirituality, and highlighted how and why pressing socio-economic priorities are influential in African human rights discourse. The discussion has also described African human rights commitments and frameworks and pointed to scholarly engagement with human rights across the African continent. It should, therefore, concern social workers and human rights scholars that some proponents of universal human rights object to incorporating these, and other, diverse views on human rights. Indeed, universalism and cultural relativism are often presented unhelpfully as binary opposites. The present study argues against these polarised perspectives, which can dominate discussions about human rights and disrupt human rights initiatives in intercultural contexts. The section below presents the main arguments contained in the literature reviewed that relate to universalism, cultural relativism and pluralism in the global human rights discourse. In doing so, it reinforces the importance of the current study's focus

on how African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights.

2.8 Universalism, cultural relativism and pluralism in human rights discourse

2.8.1 Universalism

Universalism is the 'belief in universal truths, such as human rights, applying everywhere, regardless of context' (Ife, 2012, p. 336). Ibhawoh (2001) summarises arguments made in support of universal human rights, and against cultural relativism, throughout the 1990s. He outlines Donnelly's and Howard-Hassman's arguments in favour of having agreed moral standards to which individuals and states may be compared, and international human rights structures that allow individuals and states to be held accountable for abuses and human rights violations.

It is true that Donnelly (2003), in his early work, argued that pluralist or discursive processes might weaken the international protection framework. He was critical of perspectives that, in his view, overly relativised and undermined human rights frameworks, portraying the global consensus on human rights as somewhat fragile. His later writing tends towards moderate cultural relativism, emphasising human rights as durable and widely applicable, pointing to achievements of the global human rights frameworks and instruments, and advocating for consolidation and strengthening of accepted human rights norms (Donnelly, 2007).

In contrast, Howard-Hassman, who writes from a feminist standpoint, levels strong and sustained critique of African values and practices that appear to uphold patriarchal structures, violent systems of government and curtail human rights in Africa (Howard-Hassmann, 2010). In reflecting upon Howard-Hassman's

and Donnelly's arguments, Ibhawoh acknowledges there are dangers inherent in relativist approaches to human rights for vulnerable populations, such as cultural, religious and ethnic minorities, people from the GLBTI community, and women.

He states:

In independent Africa, arguments for collective rights and national solidarity rights have often been used to justify violations of individual civil liberties and minority rights. The most notable contemporary examples of political and culture-based rights exclusions are the continued restrictions imposed on women's rights and the rights of sexual minorities. (Ibhawoh, 2018, p. 224)

Yet, Ibhawoh's assessment of the status of human rights in Africa is arguably also applicable to the Australian context. As has already been noted at section 2.4, some policies and practices of Australian governments and social institutions, ostensibly informed by human rights, clearly restrict civil liberties and/or have been criticised as exclusive, abusive and/or divisive.

It is true that African scholarship has produced strong arguments in pursuit of nationalism, decolonialism and sovereignty, which are often interpreted as culturally relativistic and opposed to universal human rights (An-Na'im, 1992; De Feyter, 2011; Fanon, 1967; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001; Shivji, 1989). Below I briefly define cultural relativism in relation to human rights and then outline the culturally pluralist stance advocated by many human rights scholars.

2.8.2 Cultural relativism

Cultural relativism 'rejects the universalism of human rights' and advocates that human rights be constructed according to context (Ife, 2012, p.

336). An extreme cultural relativist position might 'accept a few basic rights with virtual universal application, but allow such a wide range of variation for most rights that two entirely justifiable sets might overlap only slightly' (Donnelly, expounded by Danchin, 2018, p. 2).

Scholars that support the pursuit of cultural understandings of human rights more frequently advance a moderate cultural relativist position (Donnelly, 2007). Plural approaches to human rights advocate inclusive approaches and consensus building about human rights across cultures. They are underpinned by a postmodern ethic which embraces moral uncertainty and puts faith in moral competence of all members of society (Bauman, 1993). These approaches are premised on a view of human rights, like Wolfe's view of morality, as a practice 'negotiated between learning agents capable of growth on the one hand and a culture capable of change on the other' (Wolfe, cited in Bauman, 1993, p. 32). The argument that 'human rights are relative, in particular that they are a Western construct and are therefore not necessarily applicable to non-Western cultures' is one with which several Australian scholars of social work have also advanced (Nipperess, 2014, p. 39).

2.8.3 Pluralism

There are many examples of a pluralist approach in human rights scholarship, both on a theoretical and practical level (George, 2008; Ibhawoh, 2001, 2018; Merry, 2005; Nussbaum, 2002; Zou & Zwart, 2011). Pluralism underpinned the formation of the UDHR and other international human rights instruments and protocols, which were achieved through international consensus building and dialogue (Donnelly, 2003; Nasu & Saul, 2011; Wronka, 1998). Ibhawoh reviews arguments made about cultural relativism and universalism and concludes that it is possible, and important, to agree on 'basic human rights

standards, but enriched by the African cultural experience' (2001, p. 58). This resonates with Martha Nussbaum's scholarship which is concerned with developing human rights benchmarks across cultures, while acknowledging that human rights and needs can differ from context to context (2002). Merry (2005) illuminates the important work of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and local communities in many parts of the world in addressing gender violence by translating human rights into 'the vernacular' and tailoring human rights messaging to the local context. George (2008) discusses virginity testing in South Africa and espouses a pragmatic approach that recognises and harnesses cultural pluralism in addressing human rights issues such as HIV transmission and teenage pregnancy. Zou and Swart (2011) draw on their experience of promoting human rights in China to argue that we can learn from the 'diversity and richness of knowledge and practices of non-Western societies' in building human rights discourse and create 'knowledge that can serve humanity' (p. 251).

2.8.4 Pluralism in Australian human rights discourse

Australian society prides itself on being pluralistic and multicultural in character (Department of Social Services, 2017). It is governed according to national and state-based legislative frameworks that establish norms and rules in matters such as family law, the use of public space, employment and trading law, road and traffic laws, immigration law and citizenship provisions. The manifesto of A Multicultural Australia intends that 'all Australians share the benefits and responsibilities arising from the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our society' and sets goals of equity, social cohesion, community participation, inclusiveness and respect (Department of Home Affairs, 2018, p. 1).

Pluralist approaches to human rights combined with understandings of multiculturalism and African cultural critiques of human rights raise important

questions for the present study. If African, African-American and other scholars think that human rights frameworks exclude or minimise African values and worldviews, what do African families from refugee backgrounds think? What do these families make of their human rights experiences, learnings, and challenges prior to and following resettlement? Moreover, how relevant are African, Australian and international human rights instruments to African families from refugee backgrounds, forced to flee and be resettled due to serious violations of human rights? And, what does this mean for social workers, whose professional values are fundamentally informed by a human rights framework? With rich and culturally relevant data, these questions are answered in this thesis.

2.9 Conclusion

This review of literature has demonstrated the importance of human rights concepts to social work and located these concepts within a national and international context. While African approaches to human rights are characterised by dignity, communitarian principles, holism, and socio-economic priorities, Western-centric human rights perspectives tend to emphasise individual freedoms and liberal ideals. The chapter has summarised these diverse approaches to human rights and explored the strengths and limitations of human rights commonly raised by scholars and practitioners. It has particularly highlighted failures of human rights approaches to promote and protect the human rights of vulnerable populations in Africa and elsewhere, leading to valid questions about the relevance of human rights in African contexts, and of African approaches to human rights. It has highlighted arguments against cultural relativism and hesitance about how well human rights ideals overlap with some beliefs, such as relatively essentialist approaches to dignity. The chapter has identified unanswered questions regarding understandings and constructions of

human rights of African families from refugee backgrounds. These questions are the impetus for this study of human rights.

Chapter 3, Lived experience of human rights, will provide a rationale for the focus on this population in the Australian community. It examines how pre- and post-resettlement experiences, viewed together, raise fundamental questions about African families from refugee backgrounds' experiences of human rights in Australia, presenting a rationale for the present hermeneutic and phenomenological study of human rights.

3. Lived experiences of human rights

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a rationale for this study's focus on understandings and constructions of human rights of African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in NSW, Australia. The chapter begins with an introduction of the phenomenological and hermeneutic underpinnings of the present study. It then presents germane evidence from a review of local and international literature about how African families from refugee backgrounds experience human rights prior to and after resettlement. In doing so, Chapter 3 identifies questions this thesis seeks to answer about these families' lived experience of human rights, gaps and silences, and areas where social work practice might require further development.

3.2 Rationale for the phenomenological, hermeneutic and critical nature of the inquiry

This study was underpinned by phenomenological, hermeneutic and critical approaches to research inquiry. These approaches are explicated below.

3.3 Phenomenological inquiry

According to Wojnar and Swanson (2007, p. 173), 'aat the core of phenomenology lies the attempt to describe and understand phenomena as experienced by individuals who have lived through them'. Scholars of refugee resettlement who have engaged in phenomenological inquiry focusing on lived experience provide both methodological and ethical justifications for doing so (A. J. Harris, 2017; Hurly, 2018; Ndengeyungoma, de Montigny, & Miron, 2014; New, Guilfoyle, & Harman, 2015; Onsando & Billett, 2009; Pham, 2016; Sienkiewicz,

Mauceri, Howell, & Bibeau, 2013). For example, Hurly, who conducted a study about leisure choices with three African women from refugee backgrounds in Canada, states, 'by focusing on lived experience, [I hoped to] illuminate an understanding of [my participants'] subjective, multiple and unique (leisure) experiences' (Hurly, 2018, p. 4). Additionally, Hurly explains that she selected a phenomenological approach because it supported 'an ethic of caring [which] underpins [her] approach to doing research *with*, not *about*, people, regardless of gender, race, class or ethnicity' (ibid., emphasis added by the present researcher). Another scholar, Pham, who explored East African refugee mothers' experiences of trauma and parenting in the United States of America, suggests that phenomenological approaches position participants as 'experts of their own experience' (Pham, 2016, p. 52). These arguments are relevant to the present study, which aimed to reveal subjective, multiple, and potentially unique accounts of human rights in dialogue with African families from refugee backgrounds, focusing on their expertise gleaned through lived experience, and prioritising an ethic of care in the research.

3.4 Hermeneutic inquiry

Not only is the present study phenomenological in its approach, but it is also hermeneutic. The hermeneutic or interpretive form of inquiry aims to 'grasp and explicate [human rights] in a way which is original and intuitive' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 61). The researcher's own experiences and context are recognised as influential in hermeneutic analysis (New et al., 2015; Pham, 2016). This is because the researcher 'interprets and processes the account of the participants' (Pham, 2016, p. 53). According to New, Guilfoyle & Harman, hermeneutic inquiry is a 'recursive and inductive process' that begins at a descriptive level of analysis and becomes progressively more interpretive (2015, p. 57).

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which builds on the scholarship of Heidegger and others, supports idiographic description of qualitative data, and guides the researcher to successive levels of analysis (J. A. Smith et al., 2009). IPA starts with the researcher making general notes about the data, and then attempting to make sense of participant meanings and how meaning is conveyed, before exploring commonalities and/or discrepancies amongst participants (Pham, 2016). Several studies with people from refugee backgrounds that were reviewed for this thesis utilised IPA to support thick description and hermeneutic phenomenological analysis of data (A. J. Harris, 2017; Hurly, 2018; New et al., 2015; Pham, 2016; Rosbrook & Schweitzer, 2010; Schweitzer et al., 2007; Shakespeare-Finch & Wikham, 2009). These studies concentrated on people from refugee backgrounds' experiences of diverse phenomena including wellness seeking behaviours, leisure, school readiness, trauma, home, coping and resilience, and adaption, respectively. Intriguingly, I could find no evidence that people from refugee backgrounds' understandings of human rights have been studied utilising IPA, though the methodology is well suited to the task, and the analysis timely, as the above discussion demonstrates.

3.5 Contextualisation of lived experience in hermeneutic phenomenological research

Heidegger's work on hermeneutics and phenomenology emphasised contextual factors which situate and give meaning to lived experience (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). Indeed, Heidegger made a significant contribution to our understandings of phenomenological inquiry by contending that the purpose of interpretation of any phenomenon was to comprehend *dasein*, which he defined as 'the human way of being in the world' (1962, p. 33). According to Heidegger, *dasein* is constituted by a 'forestructure of understanding' which comprises

practical familiarity or background practices (fore-having); socio-cultural knowledge (fore-sight); and expectations or anticipation (fore-conception) (1962, p. 191). It is therefore puzzling that Bellamy, Ostini, Martini and Kairuz (2016), discount phenomenological approaches in their consideration of methodologies for the study of access to medicines and pharmacy services among resettled refugees in Queensland, Australia. They state:

If the focus of a topic is outward, i.e., on the contents of opinion and on actual world experiences and happenings rather than on participants' 'inner feelings'... one should consider a generic qualitative approach [rather than a phenomenological one].

(Bellamy et al., 2016, p. 672)

Similarly to Bellamy et al., the present study focused on actual world experiences and happenings, but it also focused on participants' inner feelings regarding these experiences and happenings. As already alluded to, several scholars have utilised a hermeneutic phenomenological approach with people from refugee backgrounds, appreciating that it enables a focus on lived experience, the researcher's processes of meaning-making, and elements of participants' worlds that situate and contextualise lived experience (A. J. Harris, 2017; New et al., 2015; Pham, 2016). In the present study, attention was paid to psychological and affective as well as social, cultural, locational and historic factors that were relevant to participant understandings and constructions of human rights.

To ethically and effectively contextualise the accounts of human rights elicited in this study, literature that encompassed pre-arrival and post-arrival human rights experiences of African families from refugee backgrounds was

examined and analysed. Findings from this review of literature are presented in the next two sections, pre-arrival experiences and post-arrival experiences.

3.6 Pre-arrival experiences

Peoples on the African continent have suffered historically under repressive colonial rule and, more recently, have endured military conflicts, authoritarian regimes, human rights violations and protracted refugee situations. Their human rights experiences remain significantly compromised by armed conflicts that undermine peace, stability and security across the continent, causing large numbers of people to flee, often to neighbouring countries. Thus, according to the UNHCR (2016), the Sub-Saharan region of Africa hosts the largest number of refugees in the world. Human rights priorities for the large numbers of refugees and internally displaced peoples in the region include access to asylum; registration; protection of women and children; disability support; health and food security; education, particularly literacy; and delivery of life-saving services such as water, sanitation, shelter, healthcare and nutrition (UNHCR, 2018a, 2018b, 2018d).

In the 10 years from 1997 until 2007 there was a drastic deterioration in conditions in many parts of Africa. The severity of the humanitarian crisis facing Central and West Africa between 2003 and 2005 led the UNHCR to request that its member countries prioritise resettlement of African refugee applicants above other groups from 2004-2007 (UNHCR, 2009). Today, international monitors remain vigilant about circumstances in multiple African nations, noting ongoing human rights challenges relating to political participation and political culture, civil liberties, functioning of government and electoral participation (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2018).

A review of the 51 major refugee source countries undertaken by the UNHCR in 2015 placed many African nations in the top 20 refugee source countries for lengthy periods of time. These included Angola, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mauritania, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan and Sudan, Togo, Uganda and Western Sahara (UNHCR, 2016). Kenya, although not listed in the top 20, still produced significant numbers of 'people of concern' to the UNHCR. Geographic, historic and current data is presented below about human rights issues in five African countries, representing the nations from which participants in the present study originated. These are Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Sudan/South Sudan. One country is not discussed here, as a participant requested that his country of origin be undeclared in the study. Appendix 3 provides a historical review of how often origin countries of participants have been listed in annual top 20 refugee source countries.

3.6.1 Kenya

The people of Kenya require ongoing monitoring of human rights due to violent interference of government forces in national elections; unlawful killings by police; failure of governments to adequately investigate abuses; and limited freedom of expression and association, as human rights activists and journalists face obstacles and harassment (Human Rights Watch, 2018a). Social issues such as high unemployment, crime and poverty; droughts; activity of militant movements; inheritance laws and sexual assault are also closely monitored in Kenya (BBC News Services, 2018a).

3.6.2 Liberia

During the protracted civil war of 1989-2003, the people of Liberia suffered human rights abuses in the form of rape, mutilation, killings and conscription of child soldiers. Today, many in Liberia are classified as stateless, there is widespread unemployment and illiteracy, and shortages of electricity and running water (BBC News Services, 2018b). In 2013-2016, the Ebola virus predominantly affected the Liberian population, exacerbated by inadequacies in the health system (ibid.).

3.6.3 Rwanda

The people of Rwanda suffered recurrent violence throughout the 20th century due to ethnic tensions between Tutsi and Hutu peoples, exacerbated by colonial rule from the late 1800s. This culminated in a government-sponsored genocide in 1994 (BBC News Services, 2017a). Ongoing civil unrest and political tension, which intensified again in 2009, continues to drive violence and criminal activity in Rwanda (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018). Freedom of speech and political activity is reportedly limited, and journalists and civil activists experience harassment and unlawful detention (Human Rights Watch, 2018b). Human Rights Watch has documented instances of people being held incommunicado and tortured in recent times (ibid.).

3.6.4 Sierra Leone

The people of Sierra Leone experienced a brutal civil war from 1991-2002, with many suffering rape, mutilation, killings and forced conscription as child soldiers. Trials for war crimes were initiated in 2004, and since then Sierra Leone has focused on establishing political stability and economic development. Although Sierra Leone has experienced substantial economic growth in recent years, widespread poverty and the lasting effects of the damaging civil war are still areas of concern (BBC News Services, 2017b). The outbreak of the deadly

Ebola virus in 2014 had a significant impact in Sierra Leone, where a state of emergency was declared for two years, and deaths numbered in the thousands (BBC News Services, 2017b).

3.6.5 South Sudan

The people of South Sudan have experienced one of the longest periods of post-independence conflict in the whole of Africa (United Nations, 2018b). Separately, the people in the west of Sudan have suffered since the early 2000s due to conflicts between farmers and herders over routes and grazing (Caritas, 2018). The UN reports:

The humanitarian situation in Sudan remains one of the most complex emergencies globally... triggered by new and protracted wide-scale population displacement [with] climatic and socio-cultural conditions leading to crisis levels of food insecurity and malnutrition (United Nations, 2018b).

Conflicts in Sudan and South Sudan have forced millions of people to flee their homes, and enabled looting, destruction and abandonment of key towns and essential infrastructure including hospitals, clinics and schools (Human Rights Watch, 2018c, 2018d). Human Rights Watch reports ongoing censorship of the media and repression of political activists and the population in general, with many Sudanese and South Sudanese subject to detention, ill-treatment and torture (2018c, 2018d). In 2011, the ten Southern-most states of Sudan gained independence from Sudan, forming the new nation of South Sudan. This was accompanied by cessation of guerrilla warfare in the region however civil war resumed in 2013 linked to conflict between senior members of the newly formed government (BBC News Services, 2018c). Conflict between Sudan and South

Sudan has continued, related to oil revenue and border demarcation (BBC News Services, 2018d). The UNHCR is actively working to address human rights issues in Sudan and South Sudan relating to land tenure; water sustainability; local infrastructure and basic services including energy access; trade and peace; gender-based violence and protection of children in armed conflict (UN Peacekeeping, 2018; UNHCR, 2018c).

Protracted refugee situations and human rights abuses in Africa contribute to lasting trauma and disadvantage. Refugees from the region arrive in Australia having experienced grief and loss, separation from loved ones, physical privation, abuse and sometimes torture. They arrive having fled their homes with little notice and minimal preparation. Many feel they cannot return safely to their homelands and many experience survivor guilt.

3.7 Post-arrival experiences

Numerous scholars have researched the lived experience of refugees and asylum seekers resettled to Australia from Africa, pointing to multiple, complex and intersecting issues associated with adaptation after resettlement including, for example, educational and vocational inclusion, family violence, health care, media representations of families and communities, and ability to maintain cultural values and norms (Abu-Duhou, 2006; Bajraktarevic-Hayward, 2009; Glendenning, 2015; Lenette, 2014; Lewig et al., 2010; Marlowe, 2009; Muchoki, 2013; Ochala & Mungai, 2016; Outhred, 2010). The Australian Human Rights Commission (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010) highlighted major concerns about the appropriateness of services offered to African-Australians, and promoted a collaborative approach to engaging with them:

In some instances, services and interventions can inadvertently undermine the collectivist basis that is crucial to African

Australian communities, particularly the family unit. Some community members expressed the view that family breakdown was increasing, which was attributed, in part, to inappropriate interventions based on a limited understanding of the background, experiences and cultures of African Australians. Other factors, such as internal tensions, external pressures and the stress of change, also contributed to instances of family breakdown... It is clear that a collaborative approach is required, which builds on the strengths and assets of African Australian communities, promotes their genuine participation, appreciates their different backgrounds and patterns of arrival, respects their diverse cultures and also recognises, for some, particular vulnerabilities and risks. (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010, p. 9)

Issues raised by the Australian Human Rights Commission about appropriateness of services are discussed below, and related scholarship is explored. Utilising the framework and language of the *In our own words* report (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010), the following review of literature encompasses lived experience of African families from refugee backgrounds, and evidence generated from practice.

3.7.1 Cultural heritage and values

The *In our own words* report highlighted the importance placed by participants on preservation of their cultural diversity and cultural heritage, though also noting participant recognition that some cultural practices, though legitimated by tradition, could conflict with human rights (Australian Human

Rights Commission, 2010, p. 34). Several studies reviewed describe African culture, heritage and values and note the similarities and differences to Australian values and norms (Hebbani et al., 2010; Lejukole, 2008; Losoncz, 2011; Milos, 2011; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). Hebbani, Obijiofor and Bristed (2010) noted in their study with Sudanese women from refugee backgrounds that the extended family and community played a large role in the resolution of marital disputes, child care and child discipline, and obedience and conformity to cultural norms was highly valued. In addition, research by Milos (2011) confirmed that South Sudanese communities widely utilised their traditional family and community mediation processes, and emphasised the respect and power afforded to community leaders. Families in these studies, especially women and children, experienced negative outcomes such as increased family conflict, isolation and/or restrictions on their activities in adjusting to local gender and age-related norms in resettlement.

3.7.2 Gender relations

It appears that specific gender norms contribute to pressures experienced by African men and women resettled in Australia. According to Hatoss and Huijser (2010), who studied gender barriers to resettlement of Sudanese refugees in Australia, Sudanese men tend to retain the role of patriarchal head of the family and were expected to work and provide for the family, while the women were expected to stay at home, bear children and provide care for the children and the home once resettled. Conflicts arose where these norms were challenged or reversed within families. Overseas studies support these findings, including studies of employment outcomes for African women from refugee backgrounds in the United States. A study by Deacon and Sullivan reported that 'greater daily freedoms than [women] or their families are accustomed to' were,

in some cases, a trigger for domestic violence (2009, p. 273). These authors also reported findings that African women from refugee backgrounds are relatively more vulnerable than their male counterparts, often possessing 'less formal education and weaker foreign language skills', which exacerbated financial insecurity and social isolation in resettlement (Deacon & Sullivan, 2009, p. 273).

Specific pressures on African women from refugee backgrounds in resettlement contexts are highlighted in recent Australian scholarship. In a study by Lenette (2014), widowed women discussed their experiences of exclusion from their ethnic communities, including the families they had married into, when they refused to marry a surviving relative of their late husband. Based on her analysis, Lenette warns against romanticising notions of solidarity among refugee women as a homogeneous group. In a separate study by Ochala and Mungai, African mothers from refugee backgrounds who had been through divorce reported experiencing harassment from men in their communities, and rejection by their peers (2016). Similarly to those in Deacon and Sullivan's study, their experience of harassment interacted with poverty, a lack of knowledge about available services, few specific and culturally relevant services, and feelings of isolation, to undermine their lived experience of human rights. In both Australian-based studies, African women from refugee backgrounds faced significant barriers to enjoying human rights.

Research evidence also suggests that dissonances in gender values and norms create pressures for African men. For example, Muchoki (2013, p. 78) reported that his participants from the Horn of Africa drew attention to 'new ways of organising gender relations that differed significantly from those of their previous societies' and viewed themselves as 'victims of Australian gender arrangements' because of the privileged position women from their communities

obtained upon arrival. A striking phrase was utilised as the title of Muchoki's article: '[In Australia] what comes first are the women, then children, cats, dogs, followed by men' (Muchoki, 2013, p. 78). His study demonstrated that shifting gender roles and family norms challenge men's expectations of themselves, their wives and their children, and impact on their status, sense of control and self-esteem. An earlier study of Sudanese families in resettlement by James Wani-Kana Lino Lejukole similarly emphasised that shifting gender roles are perceived to undermine men's status and power, and initiate re-evaluation of norms, resulting in men's confusion and distress (2008).

The evidence presented thus far about lived experience of African men and women from refugee backgrounds suggested that pressures on traditional gender values and norms could contribute to destructive or isolating experiences in resettlement, and thus informed the present study's exploration into human rights and intercultural social work practice.

3.7.3 Relationships between parents and their children

Dissonances in human rights values and norms create pressures for children and parents of African families from refugee backgrounds as well (Lejukole, 2008; Losoncz, 2011; Milos, 2011; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). Intergenerational issues resulting from an erosion of norms, language barriers and differences in time taken to acculturate include power struggles between parents and their children and parental discomfort about changed roles and status (Lejukole, 2008; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). Lejukole, and Renzaho and Vignjevic, noted that acculturation rates intersect with socially-influenced changes in children's roles, ways of dressing and expressing themselves, affecting family functioning and contributing to intergenerational conflict in African families from refugee backgrounds (Lejukole, 2008; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011).

A series of human rights issues are observed to ensue from intergenerational conflict regarding values and norms. One example is child rearing and parental discipline, where differences between African and Australian values and norms have been documented by local scholars (Lejukole, 2008; Losoncz, 2011; Milos, 2011; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). Renzaho and Vignjevic's (2011) study of sub-Saharan refugee and migrant parenting values and practices in Victoria, Australia, highlighted the negative influence of traditional views, such as children being expected to submit to parental authority, the use of corporal punishment and resistance to children's freedom of expression (Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011).

In addition, institutional authority is sometimes perceived by African parents from refugee backgrounds as threatening to family norms and wellbeing and can lead to resistance and disengagement with the wider community (Losoncz, 2011; Milos, 2011). Milos' research uncovered that families did not have a good understanding of Australian norms, values or legal processes. This and Loconsz' (2011) study confirmed that lack of knowledge, combined with resistance to norms, were emerging risk factors for conflict with school authorities and involvement with police and child protection services. Their research brought to light the need for education of African families from refugee backgrounds in the areas of human rights, Australian laws and regulations. However, these studies also highlighted the importance of greater understanding and recognition of African traditions and customs, which this study contributes to.

3.7.4 Health and mental health services

Representations made by African-Australians who took part in the Australian Human Rights Commission consultations (2010) highlighted a number of factors that undermined the physical and mental health of African families from

refugee backgrounds, as well as their capacity to get the support they needed. The physical impact of torture and trauma, poor oral health, and issues arising from time spent in refugee camps including poor nutrition and limited access to immunisation and health care facilities were emphasised (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). Drummond, Mizan, Brocx and Wright (2011) extended these findings in their West Australian study with women from refugee backgrounds, documenting fears of hospitalisation and being judged during treatment, and pointing to impediments for female refugees in accessing health care services. A striking finding of this study was that barriers to accessing health services were often 'greater for the more-educated refugee women and strengthened with years of residence in Australia' (Drummond et al., 2011, p. 206).

3.7.5 Educational services

Negative experiences in schools, universities and other educational services were reported in the Australian Human Rights Commission (2010) study, associated with lack of cultural competency and flexibility within the institutions, and discrimination and racism in these settings. In the same year, the Refugee Council of Australia released a report highlighting the educational disruptions experienced by African students from refugee backgrounds before being resettled, which impacted their experience of educational inclusion and success when resettled (Olliff, 2010a). One year later, scholarship by Marlowe and Harris (2011) highlighted that greater understanding was needed by university staff to provide more appropriate responses to African students from refugee backgrounds experiencing pressures including high community expectations, difficulties studying in another language, inadequate home study environments, and challenges accessing academic support and study materials.

3.7.6 Employment

According to several studies, Australian labour market values and norms exclude African refugees and asylum seekers, with human rights implications relating to dignity, social inclusion and livelihoods (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Lejukole, 2008). For example, Colic-Peisker & Tilbury's (2007) study of labour market discrimination noted that people from cultural and religious backgrounds whose differences to white Anglo-Australians are more recognisable, perhaps because of their accent, skin colour, physical features, and attire, were less likely to experience social inclusion and successful employment outcomes in the Australian workforce, despite having suitable qualifications and skills. The Australian Human Rights report reinforced these findings, stating that many African people from refugee backgrounds reported barriers to suitable employment and training, including lack of information, confusing and inaccessible support services; problems having previous knowledge and qualifications recognised; discrimination when applying for jobs, being interviewed and in the workplace; and, lack of knowledge or experience of Australian workplaces and employment conditions (2010).

The unemployment rate of migrants from non-English speaking countries including refugees and humanitarian entrants was reportedly double that of English-speaking groups in the 2006 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Refugees and humanitarian entrants fared worse than those in other migration streams in finding employment and had much lower participation rates, according to the then Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) (DIAC, 2009a, 2009b). Further, the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) showed that African families from refugee backgrounds and other people from refugee backgrounds experience 'overrepresentation among the ranks of

underemployed, lowly paid, low-skilled, precariously employed and casualised members of the labour force' (2010b, p. 3).

These unfortunate trends are noted to adversely impact families by shifting roles and responsibilities in families (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Lejukole, 2008; Muchoki, 2013). Impacts of these changes on status and role due to unemployment or underemployment, more commonly experienced by men from refugee backgrounds resettled to Australia, have received ongoing attention in the literature (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Lejukole, 2008; Muchoki, 2013).

3.7.7 Housing

The Australian Human Rights Commission study (2010, p. 24) emphasised that refugees and humanitarian entrants are 'among the most disadvantaged groups' when attempting to secure housing that meets their basic needs and drew attention to racial discrimination experienced by African families from refugee backgrounds when seeking housing. The AHRC study expressed concerns that African families from refugee backgrounds lacked information, were not sufficiently aware of their tenancy rights, struggled to find affordable and suitable housing, especially in the case of larger families, and experienced delays in accessing public housing, factors that created severe housing disadvantage for African families from refugee backgrounds (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). The AHRC findings were extended in a study by Flatau, Colic-Peisker, Bauskis, Maginn & Buergelt (2014) which highlighted rates of primary homelessness, especially among single African men from refugee backgrounds, and criticised the lack of housing affordability, suitability and availability in Melbourne and Perth, two Australian cities. Flatau et al.'s study also highlighted 'a general lack of communication or unfriendliness amongst neighbours who were also concerned about the 'visibility' of groups of refugees,

particularly young people, congregating in public places' (2014, p. 2). This suggests persistent issues implementing human rights in practice.

3.7.8 Language barriers

Several studies highlight that language barriers can exacerbate confusion and entrench misunderstandings across cultures and are perceived by African families from refugee backgrounds to impact adversely on their lived experience of human rights in resettlement contexts both here and abroad (see for example Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Lejukole, 2008; Mitschke, Praetorius, Kelly, Small, & Kim, 2016; Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). Limitations with English are perceived by African families from refugee backgrounds as a primary cause of many of the challenges faced adjusting to life in countries of resettlement like Australia and the United States (Lejukole, 2008; Mitschke et al., 2016). The Sudanese families in Lejukole's (2008) study varied in their on-arrival English skills, from no spoken or written English to high levels of fluency, and considered English language proficiency pivotal to their employment outcomes. Meanwhile, in Mitschke et al.'s (2016) study, refugees from the French-speaking countries of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi highlighted language barriers as detrimental to their mental health and wellbeing.

Thus far, I have presented literature reviewing African families from refugee backgrounds' settlement experiences. The body of research presented in this chapter raises questions about the adequacy of current service provision to support African families from refugee backgrounds' adjustment during and following resettlement to Australia. I have emphasised how these inadequacies affect African families from refugee backgrounds in their everyday lives and at significant moments in their lives.

In the design of the present study, I drew upon the concept of 'The First Voice' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010, p. 39). The AHRC described The First Voice as a partnership approach, whereby human rights workers and researchers seek the input and advice of African-Australians as a powerful tool of empowerment and change, stating: 'The First Voice involves consultation on the basis of respect and equality, collaboration on the basis of ownership and participation, and action on the basis of substantive equality' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010, p. 7).

Readers will note that I asked participants for stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences that might illustrate their family and community views on human rights (see Appendix 6A, Semi-structured interview guide, in section 12.6; also see Chapter 7, 8 and 9 where the findings are presented and analysed). This was guided by my review of African and Afrocentric research which identified emphasis on holistic and subjective explanations of phenomena and a participatory, dialogical relationship between researcher and participants (Asante, 1988; Schreiber, 2000). The evidence pointed to storytelling and metaphor as important forms of qualitative expression in African research and literature. This evidence is presented below.

3.8 Qualitative expression of lived experience

African storytelling embeds and reiterates beliefs and worldviews within communities from generation to generation, a feature it has in common with other cultural groups including Maori, Australian Aboriginal and Latin American peoples (Asante & Abarry, 1996; Bacon, 2016; Comas-Díaz, 2011; L. T. Smith, 1999; Thabede, 2008). Thabede (2008) states that 'African knowledge of God is expressed in proverbs, idioms, short statements, songs, prayers, names, myths,

stories and religious ceremonies [and are] easy to remember and pass on from one generation to another' (2008, p. 240).

Molefi Asante, an African-American Professor, and his colleague Abu Abarry, developed a book of African sources in which cultural knowledge is expressed in stories, poetry and essay form. They refer to the 'emphasis on the sacred idiom' in African sources and note a characteristic attention to holism, including 'creating universes and establishing the presence of the divine, explaining the source of nature, and the role of humans in nature, and establishing the foundation for agriculture, human relations, science, law, customs, totems, art, architecture and society' (Asante & Abarry, 1996, p. 11). Bacon, an African-Australian migrant, uses the form of a 'self-reflective, auto ethnographic account' to examine his experience of discontinuity and reflect on matters of identity, drawing broader conclusions about 'how a narrative on trauma can offer the potential for catharsis to both the writer and reader' (Bacon, 2016, p. 129). These authors demonstrate that African narratives explore larger questions both at home and abroad, such as how a human being should conduct themselves.

Storytelling is also recognised by non-African authors as an important vehicle for conveying lived experience and culturally located understandings and perspectives (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hughes, 2014; J. Laird, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995; Sandelowski, 1991). Bek-Pedersen suggests that experiential stories facilitate insight into how meaning is constructed around complex and changing social realities, allowing exploration of people's perceptions about their lives (2006). J. Laird endorses narrative methods as 'highly respectful, collaborative and non-hierarchical, [which] encourages the expression of multiple ideas and possibilities, avoids blame or pathologising,

searches for strengths rather than defects, is grounded in a values stance and fosters transparency' (2000, p. 31).

It is for these reasons that narrative methods are considered well suited to working with people from refugee backgrounds (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hatoss, 2012; Hughes, 2014; Lenette, Brough, Schweitzer, Correa-Velez, & Murray, 2018; Ncube, 2006; Ochala & Mungai, 2016). Hence, storytelling was considered useful in the present study for exploring how human rights might be embedded within the family and community, the collective to whom an individual has responsibilities, and for making meaning of everyday experiences, duties and roles they fulfil.

Narrative researchers Bek-Pedersen and Montgomery (2006) identify that social context is an important but complex feature in interpreting refugee narratives of experience, as it can both mitigate and exacerbate experiences of trauma. Bek-Pedersen and Montgomery also draw attention to the importance of time, emphasising that the past has a prominent influence on the present in refugee narratives. Building on this scholarship, Lenette et al. highlight the way refugee narrators in their study emphasise turning points or crises as they tell their life stories, as well as 'key messages' where they 'lean back from the plot and tell us something of the meaning of their stories' (2018, p. 27). Lenette and her fellow scholars also draw attention to participant agency, as demonstrated by their choices, such as recounting childhood memories and deciding what to 'dwell in' (authors' phrase), in narrating their stories (2018, p. 13). These were important contributions to the researchers' understanding of participant identities.

Metaphor is another vehicle for conveying lived experience and culturally located understandings and perspectives. Examples of metaphorical writing abound in African literature. The collection of works produced by Asante and

Abarry 'African Cultural Heritage' provides some excellent examples such as those found in The Zulu Personal Declaration, including 'I am the circle which encompasses infinity' (Anonymous (1825), as cited in Asante & Abarry, 1996, p. 373). Another example is the excerpt from a poem by John Pepper Clark-Bekederemo (previously known as J. P. Clark), partially referenced by Chinua Achebe in Asante and Abarry's compilation of African sources (1996, p. 383):

Mother is busy now deploying

About our roomlet and floor.

Although it is so dark

I know her practiced step as

She moves her bins, bags and vats

Out of the run of water

That like ants gain possession

Of the floor.

(J. P. Clark, cited by Chinua Achebe in Asante & Abarry, 1996,

p. 383)

Metaphor has an established position in human rights scholarship due to the efforts of authors such as Gregg (2016), Kleinig and Evans (2013), Mutua (2001) and Perelman and Young (2010). Gregg, a sociologist, invokes a metaphorical community when he proposes a 'human rights state' that allows creative thinkers to envision justice beyond the sovereignty of the nation-state, aided by their 'human rights backpack' which carries 'deontic powers' (Gregg,

2016, p. 897). In contrast, philosophers Kleinig and Evans present a ‘flourishing’ metaphor which they contend illuminates an ‘aspirational framework for thinking about human development and obligations’ (Kleinig & Evans, 2013, p. 539).

Law academics Perelman and Young introduce the metaphor of ‘rights as footprints’, which they argue is more accessible, but roughly similar, to speaking of human rights precedents, covenants, anecdotes and blueprints. Their footprints metaphor originated during a human rights campaign in Accra, Ghana, and was later recounted to them in a press conference by Nihad Swallah, a young Muslim woman from Ghana. As Perelman and Young argue, the footprint metaphor ‘engag[es] with the more open-ended processes of negotiation [and] leverage[s] mobilised community power to uproot previously immune public institutions’ (p. 39).

Some metaphors provide ‘trenchant critique of human rights advocacy’ (Perelman & Young, 2010, p. 27). As examples, Perelman and Young offer the metaphor of ‘rights as myths’, which arises when rights fail to translate into legal remedies for the grievances of ‘socially disadvantaged groups’ (2010, p. 27). They also note that rights are sometimes represented as being double-edged or having ‘dark sides’ in that overlapping rights claims can demobilise some groups and crowd some perspectives out (Perelman & Young, 2010).

Makau Mutua, Professor of Law and Director of the Human Rights Centre at the State University of New York, provides a different metaphor – one that critiques human rights advocacy: the ‘savages-victims-saviour construction’ which, he claims, interrogates and debases non-Western cultures (Mutua, 2001, pp. 201-202). In addition, Peggy Ntseane, Professor of Adult Education at the University of Botswana, cites ‘the Setswana myth about a hen scratching the ground for a lost needle’, a metaphor that evokes ‘complexities, dangers and

possibilities' experienced by African women struggling for gender equality (Ntseane, 2011, p. 314). These two metaphors provide perceptive critiques of dominant human rights frameworks.

There are several examples of the employment of metaphor in working with people from African backgrounds (see for example, Denborough, 2014; Ncube, 2006). Ncube is responsible for the 'tree of life' metaphor which he utilised in his work with traumatised Southern African children. He is referenced by Denborough who adapted his ideas for use with African youth resettling in Australia (Denborough, 2014). Denborough discussed his employment of some interesting metaphors with people from African backgrounds in Australia, including the 'tree of life' and the 'team of life' (a sporting metaphor). He also discusses a kite metaphor through which 'the strong winds which affect families' are co-examined with a group of Indian women (2014).

Other examples of the use of metaphor with refugee populations are provided by Hughes (2014), Lenette et al. (2015) and Tascon (2012). Hughes illustrates the effective use of the tree of life metaphor with Afghani mothers from refugee backgrounds resettled in London. This metaphor 'enabled parents and children to develop empowering stories about their lives, which were rooted in their cultural and social histories', and separated the person from the problem by using 'externalising conversations' fostering 'trust and a spirit of collaboration' between the mothers (Hughes, 2014, pp. 139, 144, 146).

Similarly, Lenette et al. illustrate the richness and power of metaphors, including 'threads of life', and xenophobia as poison, that emerged in their digital storytelling project with refugee women (2018, p. 22). The 'threads of life' metaphor emerges in Najiba's story, a weaver and an embroiderer, a woman from Afghanistan. Najiba's family heritage is the ability to create woven carpets,

and the act and materials utilised in the weaving becomes a metaphor for her life experiences. Egenie, from Africa, and another participant in the study by Lenette et al., likens prejudice against people from other countries to a 'poison' that 'ripped through people's minds' in her community of origin (2018, p. 22). These are powerful and evocative metaphors that facilitate and enrich the dialogue.

Likewise, Tascon draws upon an evocative metaphor in her discussion of human rights films. She argues that these films reveal 'the human face' of human suffering and exploitation, causing individual stories to embody or signify 'loftier principles' (2012, p. 867). These examples of metaphor in human rights analyses evidence relatively unexplored possibilities for deploying different forms of expression to discuss and represent human rights issues in research.

Against this backdrop, this study considers African families from refugee backgrounds capable of providing perspectives on human rights that offer new and useful insights for social work practice, contributing knowledge that could enhance promotion and protection of human rights and enable all families to flourish economically, socially and culturally within our plural society. Recognition that African families from refugee backgrounds continue to experience social exclusion and discrimination years after resettling in Australia, and are subject to multiple and complex risk factors, focuses attention on the need for proactive and inclusive service delivery models.

3.9 Conclusion

Chapter 3 has provided a rationale for the timely focus on phenomenological and hermeneutic research inquiry about human rights. By studying the experiences of African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in the Australian community, it has highlighted gaps, inconsistencies and unanswered questions about the lived experience of human rights prior to and

after resettlement. In addition, the chapter explored African literature to identify forms of expression that are usefully employed to discuss matters of significance to African communities. This highlighted the utility of metaphor and storytelling for the present analysis of human rights issues.

Chapter 4 will review social work practice literature to understand current contributions made by the profession to human rights practice. It will explore social work conceptualisations of practice, examining aspects of human rights that are endorsed and critiqued.

4. Intercultural social work

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews social work practice literature to understand the current context of intercultural social work practice. It begins by critiquing service provision and then provides systematic analysis of social work practice by discussing ethics and practice standards, theoretical perspectives informing practice and approaches that are considered relevant to social work with people from refugee backgrounds. Theories of culture that are significant to social work practice and the aims of the current study are then presented to deepen the analysis. Current debates, silences and gaps in practice knowledge are analysed, which provides a rationale for the critical cultural lens utilised in the research.

4.2 Critical analysis of service provision

In this section evidence provides an overview of the range of services provided to people from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds in Australia. It draws upon national and international research, presents principles for practice, outlines services provided, and analyses and critiques social work practice approaches.

4.3 Knowledge, skills and values for practice

The scholarship relating to service provision with families from refugee backgrounds emphasises key knowledge, skills and values for practice (Lewig et al., 2010; Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, Victorian Government, & Health, 2009; Social Policy Research Centre & Community Services, 2010). According to Lewig, Arney, Salveron and Barredo (2010), important factors include cultural and religious sensitivity, awareness of language

and communication issues, ability to respectfully provide and reinforce clear and accessible information, and awareness that they may feel suspicious and potentially fearful of social workers, government officials and authority figures, and carry feelings of shame. These findings are reinforced in a set of practice notes developed by the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) and NSW Community Services (2010). In addition, the Victorian Government highlights the importance of a whole-of-organisation approach where cultural responsiveness and a partnership approach is evident at all levels of the service (Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services et al., 2009).

In addition, strengths-based approaches are highlighted by US social work researchers Pine and Drachman (2005). These authors demonstrate the importance of relationship-based practice involving a partnership approach with families, in combination with efforts to raise awareness within families of their resilience and strengths, and willingness to examine systems of support to enable family preservation (Pine & Drachman, 2005). They also advocate responsiveness to mental health needs arising out of the refugee experience, effective use of interpreters, networking and communication with refugee communities to encourage help-seeking outside of the community and facilitate flow of information, and collaborative interagency work (Pine & Drachman, 2005).

4.4 Services provided

Australia is considered to be a world leader in refugee resettlement due to its planned resettlement program (Olliff, 2010a), and Australian settlement services have internationally-recognised expertise in responding to the needs of people from refugee backgrounds (Olliff, 2010b). Refugee resettlement services are provided mainly by government and non-government services but are

supplemented by organisations that rely mainly on volunteer support (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013).

Social workers are employed in positions which respond to the needs of African families from refugee backgrounds in a specialised capacity for 6-12 months (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Hugman, 2010; Lewig et al., 2010; McArthur et al., 2010; Refugee Council of Australia, 2010). These helping professionals provide early support to newly arrived African families from refugee backgrounds through the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy that provides case management including on-arrival reception, assessment, information, referral, assistance to find accommodation and short term torture and trauma counselling (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013; Refugee Council of Australia, 2011). They also offer general settlement services to African families from refugee backgrounds, like Migrant Resource Centres, Migrant Service Agencies and organisations funded under the Community Settlement Services Scheme (Refugee Council of Australia, 2011).

After the first 12 months, the Settlement Grants Program provides limited funding that is allocated according to need (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013). Some social workers are in a position to facilitate the development of new and emerging communities via the administration and management of the Settlement Grants Program (SGP) that provides funding to support communities and localities in greatest need of settlement services (Refugee Council of Australia, 2011). Finally, social workers work with African families from refugee backgrounds in mainstream services such as hospitals, child and family support services and mental health services (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007; Hugman, 2010; Lewig et al., 2010; McArthur et al., 2010; Refugee Council of Australia, 2010).

4.5 Critique of service provision

Recognition that African families from refugee backgrounds continue to experience social exclusion and discrimination years after resettling in countries such as Australia, and are subject to multiple and complex risk factors, focuses attention on the strengths and failings of social work practice. Some authors point to practice dilemmas in relation to supporting, educating and protecting African families from refugee backgrounds. It is argued that organisational resources have a significant impact on practice with African families from refugee backgrounds (Hugman, 2010; Olliff, 2010b; Pine & Drachman, 2005). Moreover, the highly politicised nature of the sector influences the morale and job satisfaction for social workers and human service professionals within the context of their employing agencies, given there are so many stakeholders to whom professionals are accountable in their work (Briskman, Latham, & Goddard, 2008; Cemlyn & Briskman, 2003; Crock, Saul, & Dastyari, 2006; Marr & Wilkinson, 2004). These stakeholders include government ministers and their departments at the federal, state and local level, the media, the non-government and not-for-profit sector, the business sector, and family members themselves. The evidence suggests that service providers often struggle to prioritise the perspectives of their clients from refugee and refugee-like backgrounds, and to fulfil the requirements of families and communities from diverse cultures.

More broadly, the cultural biases underpinning Western-centric social work are under scrutiny in Australia and elsewhere (Bennett, 2013; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Herring, Spangaro, Lauw, & McNamara, 2012; Križ & Skivenes, 2015; Pinderhughes, 1997; Quinn & Grumbach, 2015). The continued imposition of 'middle-class norms as rigid standards for clients' (Quinn & Grumbach, 2015, p. 205) regardless of clients' unique needs and a shift from 'traditional overt

expressions of White supremacy to an aversive racism that is more subtle' (ibid) is strongly criticised by social work authors concerned with power relations and decolonisation of the profession (Bennett, 2013; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Pinderhughes, 1997; Quinn & Grumbach, 2015; Weaver, 1999).

In Chapter 2, I mapped human rights to the Codes of Ethics and Practice Standards of the Australian Association of Social Work (AASW). Below I discuss the construction and representation of culture in Australian social work ethics and practice standards and review the major trends in intercultural practice approaches.

4.6 Social work ethics and practice standards

Preparation for social work in Australia anticipates that, as graduates, social workers are able to practice:

...at the interface between people and their social, cultural and physical environments. Human needs are always seen [by social workers] in the context of socio-political and environmental factors. While social work practice is diverse, it can generally be broken up into the following areas of practice: work with individuals; work with families; work with groups; work with communities; social policy practice; management, leadership and administration; education and training; research and evaluation. These areas of practice are not mutually exclusive, and social workers frequently work across a number of these.
(Australian Association of Social Workers, 2013, p. 7)

The interconnections between human needs and peoples' social, cultural and physical environments are highlighted in the definition above, and they are

linked to broader socio-political and environmental factors. The areas of practice listed in the definition above draw attention to the wide range of practice methods and potential foci for social work practitioners.

Cultural awareness, culturally competent, safe and sensitive practice, and culturally responsive and inclusive practice, are terms utilised in successive social work documents to articulate standards for intercultural social work practice in Australia. The following section discusses the meaning and import of these terms for Australian social work.

Cultural awareness refers to knowledge about various cultural groups and about cultural norms (Armstrong, 2013). The incorporation of cultural awareness into the AASW Code of Ethics for the first time in 1999 marked a significant shift towards acknowledging the significance of culture in Australian social work practice. Section 4.2.4 of the Code of Ethics endorses the following principles for cultural awareness in practice:

- *Social workers will acknowledge the significance of culture in their practice, recognising the impact their own racial and cultural identities, views and biases can have on their practice and on culturally different clients;*
- *Social workers will obtain a working knowledge and understanding of clients' racial and cultural affiliations, identities, values, beliefs and customs;*
- *Social workers will recognise and acknowledge the diversity within and among cultures, taking into account individual, family, group and community needs and differences;*

- *Social workers will remain sensitive to, and seek to understand, particular perspectives and responses, recognising that these may not always be in accord either with the social worker's own, or with those of the general community;*
- *Social workers will ascertain and take into account the manner in which individual clients wish confidentiality to apply within their cultural context;*
- *Social workers will endeavour to provide services to clients in language they understand, using an independent, qualified interpreter and/ or translator where feasible and appropriate;*
- *When engaged in education, administration, policy development and the like, social workers will promote awareness of cultural and cross-cultural issues and culturally sensitive practice. (Australian Association of Social Workers, 1999, pp. 15-16)*

The social work Practice Standards that followed in 2003 addressed cultural awareness. It stated:

Understanding in this area requires knowledge of, and the ability to critically analyse, social, political, economic, historical, cultural and ecological systems. The processes, facilitators and constraints to change need to be understood, also the trends or evolutions of systems. Social workers also need to be able to critically analyse the structure of society, with particular attention to dimensions of power and disadvantage, and the influence of

class, gender, age, intellectual and physical ability, heterosexism, race and ethnicity. There must be a focus on empowering and non-oppressive practice. (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2003, pp. 5-6)

Although representative of a significant shift towards a culturally aware mindset, there were no specific standards incorporated in the 2003 Practice Standards to ensure, measure or describe cultural awareness in practice.

Concepts of culturally competent, safe and sensitive practice were introduced into the Social Work Code of Ethics in 2010, extending upon articulations of cultural awareness established in the 1999 Code of Ethics and 2003 Practice Standards. Culturally competent, safe and sensitive practice requires recognition, acknowledgement of and sensitivity to diverse world views (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010). The 2010 Code of Ethics outlined that culturally competent, safe and sensitive practice pertains to a range of practice skills including confidentiality, self-determination, and utilisation of interpreters and translators (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010). It enshrined the principle of including people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in constructive dialogue about service development and delivery and discussed the aim of creating 'culturally safe service systems', able to respond holistically to family and community context (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010, p. 18).

Although cultural competence is a central idea in the 2010 AASW Code of Ethics, many theorists believe this concept represents a flawed, elusive, unattainable, top-down, othering and colonising approach to intercultural practice. Scholars from the United States have been particularly emphatic that it constitutes a problematic expectation that a practitioner can develop cultural

expertise or master a skill set (Dean, 2001; Garran & Werkmeister Rozas, 2013; Herring et al., 2012; Isaacson, 2014; Nadan, 2017; L. T. Smith, 1999; Weaver, 2008). Providing one of the earliest critiques of cultural competence, Dean (2001) emphasises that cultural identity is individually and socially constructed and therefore continually changing. Native American scholar Weaver argued, 'the social justice aspect has often been obscured by a conceptualisation of cultural competence that has been highly focused on individual interactions' (2008, p. 21). Garran and Werkmeister Rozas (2013), take this further, urging an intersectional approach to intercultural practice which acknowledges power and privilege in relationships. Israeli scholars Nadan, Weinberg-Kurnik, and Ben-Ari (2017) urge the adoption of a constructivist approach to cultural competence informed by context and power relations. Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian scholars, Herring et al. (2012) recommend practitioners from the mainstream culture focus on becoming informed, taking a stance and reaching out to form trust and networks with diverse communities.

Some of these concerns about cultural competence are addressed in the 2010 Code of Ethics by combining it with safe and sensitive practice. The document advocates formation of 'respectful, collaborative relationships' with colleagues from different ethnic, cultural, religious and other backgrounds and identities. It further advocates inclusion of cultural advisers and/or mentors and the application of anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice principles to 'recognise and challenge racism and other forms of oppression experienced by culturally and linguistically diverse groups' (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010, p. 18). Significantly, Australia's First Peoples were acknowledged for the first time in the 2010 Code of Ethics Preamble. This document was published in the same year as the Federal Parliament made it a permanent feature to mark the opening

of each parliamentary session with an Acknowledgement of Country (Nicol, 2017). These steps in Australian social work and wider society to acknowledge Australian First Nations Peoples mirrored international shifts, such as those occurring in the National Association of Social Workers in America, towards 'an overarching critical consciousness of colonisation, power and oppression' (Weaver, 2008).

Social work scholarship produced during this period examines cultural competence, safety and sensitivity and how they apply in relevant contexts. For example, research to practice notes prepared by the NSW Community Services Practitioner in collaboration with the Social Policy Research Centre emphasised four aspects of culturally appropriate service provision with children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds: critical practitioner reflexivity; respect; clear and accessible provision of information; and awareness of unique circumstances and experiences (Social Policy Research Centre, 2010). They further emphasised that practitioner self-awareness relating to 'personal bias, prejudices and, racist thoughts and feelings' is crucial, urging practitioners to carefully weigh risk and protective factors in the best interests of children, increasing the likelihood of protecting their human rights (SPRC, 2010, p. 3).

The 2012 Australian Social Work Education Accreditation Standards (ASWEAS) defined culture as a 'constantly changing phenomenon of individuals and societies... a socially-constructed and a highly-contested phenomenon within social work discourses' (AASW, 2012, p. 16). These guidelines promote standards for cross-cultural learning within Australian tertiary social work curricula. They accentuate development of 'critical awareness [of social work graduates] as to how both social workers and clients understand and experience their cultural identities that emerge from their unique cultural and social contexts',

advocating that universities strive to develop in their students the ability to reflectively, empathically and knowledgeably engage with people from diverse backgrounds in practice (AASW, 2012, p. 16). Recent revisions of the ASWEAS guidelines aimed to embed the emphasis on critical cultural awareness throughout the document, but in doing so arguably undermined the clarity about cultural awareness that was prominent in the 2012 Standards. Though launched in 2017, the new ASWEAS standards are yet to be validated by universities and the profession.

Signifying further development, the 2013 Practice Standards introduced the concept of 'culturally responsive and inclusive practice', focusing on the importance of 'adequate understanding and knowledge of cultural diversity in order to work in a culturally responsive and inclusive way' (AASW, 2013, p. 11). These concepts expand on cultural competent, safe and sensitive practice and the Practice Standards emphasise working 'respectfully and inclusively with cultural difference and diversity', respecting and striving to 'understand and promote the rights of culturally diverse and minority groups in society' (AASW, 2013, p. 11). This key practice document strengthens and extends upon the concept of cultural sensitivity but does not retain the important focus on cultural safety that was articulated in the 2010 Code of Ethics.

Social work practitioners draw upon a range of theoretical perspectives in their practice. Some are more relevant to micro change and support practice with individuals and groups, while some are more focussed on macro change and support structural analysis and intervention. An overview of each of these theoretical perspectives is presented below, together with reflections on their contributions to high quality practice with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, particularly people from refugee backgrounds.

4.7 Theoretical perspectives for intercultural practice

Whereas the terms 'multicultural' and 'bi-cultural' practice distance or 'other' people from diverse backgrounds, and, perhaps inadvertently, reinforce dominant norms and assumptions, 'intercultural practice' evokes inclusiveness, reciprocity and mutual transformation. Although intercultural practice is a relatively rare term in Australian social work practice literature, I employ the term 'intercultural practice' for the remainder of this literature review and throughout the present study. A definition of intercultural is presented below:

Intercultural describes communities in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures. Intercultural communication focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deep relationships. In an intercultural society, no one is left unchanged because everyone learns from one another and grows together. (Schriefer, 2016, p. 1)

Use of this term ensures that my language aligns with the inclusive and transformative approach of the research and supports critical analysis of past and present approaches to social work practice.

According to Australian social work scholar Connolly, the dual emphasis on micro and macro change is a distinguishing feature of social work as a helping profession (2018). Connolly states that micro change addresses the particular needs of individuals and groups, while macro change focuses on the systems that oppress or disadvantage people. She conceives of micro- and macro-focussed work as represented by a 'change effort continuum' along which social workers locate themselves according to their interests, skills and values (Connolly, 2018, p. 15). Chapter 2 provided a range of references to studies

which elucidate human rights practice frameworks across the change effort continuum.

Ensuring that social work change efforts are approached from both a micro and macro perspective is considered important in social work practice with people from refugee backgrounds. Australian social worker Lynch (2011) writes about the dual relevance of grief and loss theories and structural theories in working with people from refugee backgrounds. Lynch argues that grief and loss theories focus the effort of change towards intrapersonal meaning-making relating to the significant changes that occur in people's lives when they are forced to flee their homelands. She also discusses structural theories which orient the social worker towards anti-oppressive practice frameworks, highlighting broad social, political and economic influences on people's lives in resettlement, particularly explanations of social inclusion and exclusion. Social and psychological losses experienced by people from refugee backgrounds, including loss of family and friends, loss of one's way of life, familiar places, and sense of belonging are thus important areas of focus, but so too are experiences of unemployment, housing stress, family violence, and family and community adaptation.

Five practice orientations have been identified as key to the social work profession: ecosystems, onion-peeling, faulty-engine, story-telling and mountain-moving theories (Connolly, 2018). These underpin intercultural practice expertise in important ways, as is illuminated below.

Ecosystems theories integrate diverse social and cultural systems that impact on individuals and groups, including families and friends, communities and societies, as well as intra-personal dimensions of experience such as life stressors, resilience factors and adaptive processes (Connolly & Healy, 2018). The networks of support in people's lives are key areas of focus for those using

an ecosystems approach (Payne, 2014; Trevithick, 2012). Radical ecosystems perspectives emphasise understanding the connection between structural disadvantage and life chances, and the importance of understanding institutions and how structural change might be brought about (Leonard, 1975; Payne, 2014; Saleeby, 2013; Trevithick, 2012). Individual and familial strengths and interventions that improve the fit between person and environment are used to transform the individual or group's environment in ecosystems approaches (Germaine & Gitterman, 1995; Saleeby, 2013; Trevithick, 2012). Ecosystems theories underpin several models of social work assessment, supporting effective social work responses to the intersecting aspects of lived experience. Examples include Maidment and Egan's Integrated Framework (2015) and Louise Harms' Multidimensional Approach (2010), both of which are applied in social work with people from refugee backgrounds as they incorporate culture and cultural worldviews as important elements of the overall assessment of context and need.

Onion-peeling theories focus on revealing and exploring the client's inner world (Connolly & Healy, 2018). These include psychoanalytic approaches informed by Freudian psychology, and person-centred approaches informed by Rogers' humanistic approach. Several therapeutic models utilised in social work draw partially or fully upon onion-peeling theories. For example, grief and loss models and trauma-informed approaches both focus on meaning-making, and enhancing resilience and coping through trusting therapeutic relationships and partnering with clients to promote change (Lewig et al., 2010; Lynch, 2011; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010). In research to practice notes prepared by researchers from the Social Policy and Research Centre, a trauma-informed approach is advocated, recognising that people from refugee backgrounds may be suspicious and fearful of social workers, authority figures and government

officials, and experience shame when engaging with statutory systems (SPRC, 2010).

Faulty-engine theories focus on identifying and modifying areas of cognition and behaviour that may be adversely impacting on the lives of individuals and groups. Therapeutic models that draw upon faulty-engine theories include cognitive-behavioural therapy, acceptance-commitment therapy, rational behaviour therapy, and many forms of anger and anxiety management. This group of theories receives emphasis in refugee-related research as they can provide relief to clients and support management of post-traumatic stress and related conditions (Aroche & Coello, 2002; Burns, 2009; Lewig et al., 2010; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010). Faulty-engine theories orientate social workers towards the physical, cognitive and emotional manifestations of refugee trauma, including depression and anxiety, impacts on memory, concentration, sleeping and eating, and bodily pain (Burns, 2009).

Story-telling theories underpin narrative and solution-focused therapy (Connolly & Healy, 2018). Storytelling is recognised across disciplines such as social work, sociology, education, and nursing, as an important vehicle for conveying lived experience and culturally located understandings and perspectives (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hughes, 2014; J. Laird, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1995; Sandelowski, 1991). Experiential stories facilitate insight into how meaning is constructed around complex and changing social realities, allowing exploration of people's perceptions about their lives (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006). Narrative methods are 'highly respectful, collaborative and non-hierarchical, [which] encourages the expression of multiple ideas and possibilities, avoids blame or pathologising, searches for strengths rather than defects, is grounded in a values stance and fosters transparency' (J. Laird, 2000,

p. 31). It is for these reasons that narrative methods are considered well suited to working with people from refugee backgrounds (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hatoss, 2012; Hughes, 2014; Lenette, 2014; Ncube, 2006; Ochala & Mungai, 2016).

Mountain-moving theories encompass anti-oppressive practice, intersectionality and empowerment theories. They focus attention on processes that sustain and reinforce systemic inequality and oppression according to personal and group identities which often intersect to magnify the outcomes of oppression, including class, gender, ethnicity, race, caste, sexuality, and physical and mental health status. These theories underscore the importance of social work action that can focus on unique and personal aspects of lived experience while simultaneously recognising the shared and political dimensions of experience (Dominelli, 2009). Mountain-moving theories focus on methods of practice that support individual dignity, inclusion and esteem, while more broadly 'realising social justice principles and strengthening community awareness about human rights and citizenship' (Lynch, 2011, p. 82).

These five key theoretical perspectives in social work – ecosystems, onion-peeling, faulty-engine, story-telling theories and mountain-moving theories – underpin intercultural social work scholarship, policy development and practice in Australia. Some examples of how they have been applied in work with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, and especially people from refugee backgrounds, have been provided above. Social work graduates, though their pre-qualifying training is relatively generic, are expected to tailor their interventions according to the identities, needs and perspectives of their client groups and contexts of practice.

4.8 Practice Tools

Over the past three decades, a plethora of practice tools have been developed to support intercultural social work practice that is responsive to the needs and perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse populations, particularly those resettled following serious human rights abuses. Practice tools that support intercultural social work practice in Australia include 'culturagrams', which produce graphical representations of individual and family culture, developed by Congress and Kung (2013); the 'cultural awareness tool', which supports culturally sensitive exploration of client presenting problems, produced by Seah, Tilbury, Wright, Rooney and Jayasuriya (2002); the comprehensive principles and domains of cultural assessment developed for cross-cultural psychiatric assessment by Andary, Stolk and Klimidis (2003, pp. 20-23); and the cultural auditing tool for multicultural counselling developed by Collins, Arthur, and Wong-Wylie (2010). In addition, Aroche and Coello's systematic approach to treating and rehabilitating torture and trauma survivors has been influential (2002). Narrative approaches which facilitate the sharing of personal experiences by African families from refugee backgrounds in the 'vernacular of everyday life' are also valued because they increase practitioner awareness of past and present oppression and contribute to the decolonising project (Haffejee & East, 2015, p. 7).

A range of cultural theories are influential in social work. The next section outlines four traditions in cultural theory and the subsequent discussion draws links to the plural and intercultural focus of the present study.

4.9 Theories of culture

The examination and classification of people, ethnic groups and societies has been central to the study of culture in Australia and throughout Western-

dominated societies (Hutnyk, 2006; Ife, 2012; Jenks, 2004). According to cultural theorist Jenks, there are four major traditions in cultural theory: the symbolic, semiotic view; the evolutionary, developmental view; pattern theory; and social structure (2004). These traditions define culture in quite different ways. For example, the symbolic, semiotic view is exemplified in the anthropological tradition which sees culture as learned symbols expressing social thought and the social sciences which view culture as expressions of difference (see for example, Geertz, 2002). In contrast, the evolutionary, developmental view is exemplified by the psychological tradition which views culture as aspirational and a state of mind (see for example, Berry, 2001). Pattern theory is exemplified by the constructionist tradition which views human beings as actors who make meaning in their lives using tools such as symbols, image, icons, language, stories and narrative, which are provided by culture but fashioned distinctively by the self (see for example, Benedict, 1971). Lastly, theories of social structure are exemplified by the Marxist tradition which characterises culture as mediating between humans and the means of production, and the classical tradition which prioritises citizenship and belonging (see for example, Saleeby, 2013).

4.10 Social work and theories of culture

A plethora of Australian social work texts discuss social work theories of culture (Alston, McCurdy, & McKinnon, 2018; Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2017; Connolly & Healy, 2018; Morley, McFarlane, & Ablett, 2014). Definitions of culture presented in these texts emphasise symbolic, semiotic views; evolutionary, developmental views; and pattern theories, but somewhat neglect structural views. One text provides a definition of culture as ‘the social meanings and transmitted knowledge, values, beliefs and customs in a given society’ (Sargent, Nilan & Winter, as cited in Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2017, pp. 281-282) and

'values, beliefs, characteristics and behaviours of a group of individuals at a given point in time' (Shovolt and Rivers, 2004, as cited in Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2017, p. 282). Another provides a definition of culture as 'a complex web of meanings which underlie everyday life and behaviour, the understandings and expectations which guide actions and interactions with others' (Quinn, 2003, as cited in Alston et al., 2018, p. 68), and a third defines culture as 'shared ways of life, shared knowledge, beliefs, customs and traditions and ways of doing and being' (Connolly & Healy, 2018, p. 66).

Many African scholars have criticised culturally hegemonic perspectives on culture for omitting structural themes. They point to multifarious binaries, such as tendencies to represent colonising, globally dominant traditions as dynamic and constantly changing, while others are characterised as rigid, static and problematic (An-Na'im, 1992; De Feyter, 2011; Fanon, 1967; Ibhawoh, 2001; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001; Shivji, 1989). Other relevant examples of binary constructions include individualism versus collectivism, secular versus sacred, local versus global, and universal versus particular (Hutnyk, 2006; Jenks, 2004). Locally, Westoby and Ingamells also write about the harm has been caused by the uncritical imposition of Western-centric cultural understandings on non-Western populations (2010).

Analyses of power in relation to culture highlights that different aspects of the self, such as age, capabilities, socio-economic status, and marital status, impact on people's experience of inclusion and autonomy in the wider culture (Allen-Meares, 2007; Garran & Werkmeister Rozas, 2013; J. Laird, 2000; Lenette, 2015; Marlowe, 2009; Pinderhughes, 1997; Sosulski, 2009). This suggests that definitions of culture must accommodate intersectional themes.

Although Australian society prides itself on being pluralistic and multicultural in character, it has been argued that Australian culture and Australian social work itself remains highly influenced by and complicit in the national legacy of imperialism and colonisation that has so deeply traumatised Indigenous peoples and, more recently, refugees and asylum seekers in this country (Glendenning, 2015; Herring et al., 2012; Razack, 2009; Rowe et al., 2015). According to Herring et al., 'helping professions [in Australia] predominantly reflect the make-up and values of the dominant, white-Anglo culture, a dominance that renders culture largely invisible' (2012, p. 107). Counter-narratives to imperialist and colonising discourses can be found in the scholarship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Maori and Pasifika, and other scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds who theorise the ways cultural humility, dynamism, inclusion, responsiveness and safety might support decolonisation of social norms and interventions by the welfare state, from micro-level interventions of counselling, casework and group work, to macro-level interventions of community work, research and policy analysis and development (Bennett et al., 2013; Mbazima & Sekudu, 2017; L. T. Smith, 1999).

4.11 Structural analyses of culture

This thesis pays attention to how these socio-political and cultural dynamics affect African families from refugee backgrounds. In doing so, it is guided by the many cultural theorists who have contributed to rendering culture more visible by producing structural analyses of processes that might otherwise have remained hidden. African critical theorist Fanon produced searing and highly influential structural analyses of culture and the influences of colonisation in Africa (Fanon, 1967, 2004b). Fanon emphasised the power of African oral literature and song, and advocated that colonised African peoples and nations flex their imaginations

and reassert their cultural identities (Fanon, 2004b). He was highly critical of the impacts of cultural stereotypes imposed on African peoples throughout history.

Cultural scholar Bhabha, of Indian descent, has also provided influential structural cultural analysis. Bhabha draws attention to the 'ambivalent processes' at work in structuring meaning where different cultures intersect. He warns that there are polarising forces that can be destructive in models of cultural assimilation. His view is that cultural theorists should engage with cultural hybridity and 'in-between spaces' which are full of creative potential:

From the tension of the liminal state, where differences overlap and displace each other and cultural values are negotiated, individuals often emerge transformed; a cultural hybrid emerges that is continually in transition and always incomplete. (Bhabha (1994) cited in Barlow, 2007, p. 245)

Bhabha describes this cultural hybrid as 'the third space'. According to Bhabha, the third space is a 'contradictory and ambivalent' space where 'cultural signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised, and read anew' (Bhabha, 2003, p. 208). Westoby and Ingamells suggest Bhabha's third space is a useful theoretical concept for examining the refugee experience, as 'refugee groups must negotiate a hybrid matrix of identity, meaning and intelligibility that serves them in their new context' (Westoby & Ingamells, 2010, p. 10). American cultural scholar J. Laird comments that 'any cultural category or identity... seems more salient at the margins', where there is heightened awareness of how one may be defined as 'other' and 'deprivileged' and notes that a person living on the margins keep 'one informed eye on the dominant culture and the other on one's own' (J. Laird, 2000, p. 25). J. Laird describes culture as contextual, performative and potentially improvisational: we 'gather narrative threads, symbols and ritual

possibilities' and combine 'tradition and imagination' in an ongoing shaping of experience with sets of meanings already held (2000, p. 103). J. Laird pays attention to the ways people select from symbols, stereotypes and narratives provided by the larger culture, ethnic group and family, to 'constitute or reconstitute' themselves 'in bricolage fashion' (J. Laird, 2000, p. 27). She highlights the political nature of culture; 'all stories... are not equal; that is, people do not have equal voice in shaping their personal narratives, nor opportunities to have their particular stories prevail' (2000, p. 29). This is why the present research, which was so interested in the views of African families from refugee backgrounds about human rights, prioritised lived experience over formal knowledge of human rights, while also prioritising cultural safety and intercultural responsiveness.

Another cultural scholar whose ideas have provided important structural critique of intercultural practices is Berry, Canadian scholar of Psychology. Berry developed a systemic model of adjustment following migration and refugee resettlement (2001). He explained acculturative processes and intercultural relations at both personal and societal levels, and from the perspective of both migrants and members of receiving communities. Berry identified four positions individuals might take when they come into contact with new cultures: assimilation, separation, integration and marginalisation; and four strategies that communities might take as they receive and incorporate new cultural groups: melting pot, segregation, multiculturalism, and exclusion. Berry's model analyses cultural efficacy and commitment to engagement with difference in societies, elucidating how cultural attributes are included, maintained, developed and negotiated within societies.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work scholars have also made significant contributions to intercultural practice knowledge. For example, Martin and Mirraboopa offer a conceptualisation of culture framed by the interconnected elements of Ways of Knowing, Ways of Being and Ways of Doing (2003). According to Martin and Mirraboopa, Ways of Knowing incorporate how knowledge is purposefully learned, reproduced, and embedded in networks of relationships, and how it is contextualised according to social, political, historical and spatial qualities of experience. Ways of Being encompass relationships amongst people and to the wider world of living things, lands, skies, waters and spirits. Martin and Mirraboopa describe Aboriginal Ways of Being as reciprocal, constitutive of rights and informed by Ways of Knowing. Finally, Ways of Doing incorporate behaviours and actions that express, reinforce and emerge out of cultural identity, evidenced by diverse elements such as 'language, art, imagery, technology, traditions and ceremonies, land management practices, social organisation and social control' (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003, p. 210). According to Martin and Miraboopa, Ways of Doing are shaped by and synthesise ways of knowing and ways of being.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scholars have also focused attention on the ways cultural humility, dynamism, inclusion, responsiveness and safety might support decolonisation of Australian social work at the micro-level of intervention involving counselling, casework and group work, to macro-level interventions of community work, research and policy analysis and development. Decolonisation of Australian social work practice, policy and research requires careful attention to non-dominant worldviews and the ways they are constructed and represented (Bennett, 2013; Rowe et al., 2015).

Moreover, analysis of power in relation to culture highlights its intersectional nature. One's experience of autonomy, access and privilege may be affected by socio-cultural factors and also intensified and mediated by other factors such as age, capabilities, health, socio-economic, and marital status (Allen-Meares, 2007; Garran & Werkmeister Rozas, 2013; J. Laird, 2000; Lenette, 2015; Marlowe, 2009; Pinderhughes, 1997; Sosulski, 2009).

In addition, with increasing global mobility, culture does not simply remain embedded in particular places and times: 'It is also possible for people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds who are distant geographically to share a culture' (Kabagarama, 1997, p. 18). This is the case for African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in Australia, to whose experiences Berry's work on acculturation (Deng & Pienaar, 2011; Marlowe, 2011), Darder's work on biculturalism (Wakholi, 2010), the concept of transnational ties (Lim, 2009) and Bhabha's idea of the third space (Materike, 2009; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010) have been applied.

The above theorists, Fanon, Bhabha, Berry, J. Laird, Martin and Mirraoopa and Kabagarama have much to contribute to the development of intercultural social work practice in Australia, together with local scholars such as Andary et al. (2003), Bennett et al. (2013), Hugman (2012), Lejukole (2008), Materike (2009), Wakholi (2010), Wille (2011), and New Zealand scholar L. T. Smith (1999). Social work codes of ethics and standards of practice increasingly incorporate these dynamic theories of culture, with each new iteration reflecting evolving understandings of culture. Yet further work is required towards decolonisation of Australian social work practice, policy and research (Bennett, 2013; Rowe et al., 2015). This thesis aims to contribute wisdom about how professionals might enable their clients to consciously participate in the socio-

historical transformation of practice, 'as support, and in solidarity, rather than taking control of the process' (Friere, 1985, cited by Ife, 2008, p. 112).

This effort requires careful attention to non-dominant worldviews and the ways they are constructed and represented. Current debates, silences and gaps in Australian social work literature will now be highlighted.

4.12 Current debates, silences and gaps

An expanding group of authors lament and challenge ongoing cultural hegemony and deficit-based representations of cultural minorities in social work, legal, health and welfare research (Fanon, 2004b; S. E. Laird, 2016; Mutua, 2001; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Oyebade, 1990; Thabede, 2008; Westoby & Ingamells, 2010). For example, S.E Laird, who undertook secondary data analysis to examine the pressures relating to parenting in sub-Saharan Africa, invited Western scholars, policy makers and social workers to 'critically engage with dominant notions of supervisory neglect and re-appraise its applicability in cross-national contexts' (2016, p. 303).

Active decolonisation of knowledge is advocated by social work scholars from African countries. South African social work scholars Mbazima and Sekudu (2017) recently wrote:

We therefore submit that contemporary social work, cognisant of its history as well as the socio-cultural, political and economic forces shaping it, should rid itself of built-in biases and begin a process of redefining itself through a fair and collegial engagement that would enable the domain to foreground itself on the basis of inputs and aspirations of all role players as found across the world. The starting point towards addressing current imbalances, inequalities and biases would be to recognise that

all forms of knowledge are particularistic and situated in their local context. Western knowledge too is particularistic to the West, as is Afrocentric knowledge to Africa. (Mbazima & Sekudu, 2017, p. 8)

In accordance with the call for decolonising perspectives that interrogate power and privilege in relation to African worldviews, a critical cultural lens was brought to this interpretive phenomenological study of human rights. This critical lens was formally inspired by Marxist analysis, which illuminates the fundamental influence of economic power on human experience (Bottomore & Rubel, 1961). Marxist analysis has underpinned powerful analyses of political economies, colonisation, and economic exploitation from African and Afro-centric scholars (Oyebade, 1990), and deepened the analysis of the present study by providing a rigorous theoretical framework with which to contextualise and interpret lived experience.

Critical theory contends that 'conditions in society are historically created and heavily influenced by the asymmetries of power and special interests, and that they can be made the subject of radical change' (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009, p. 144). Critical theorists contribute to the social construction of human rights by questioning how power in human rights discourse functions to exclude individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds from the creation of knowledge about human rights (Crotty, 1998; Dryzek, 1995; Flynn, 2005; Ife, 2010b). In the present study, applying a critical lens meant viewing African families from refugee backgrounds as active agents, capable of providing new and useful perspectives on human rights that can inform and influence social work practitioners, social institutions, and, perhaps, broader economic and social processes.

Research informed by critical theory has the potential to 'change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life' (Creswell, 2009, p. 9). This may be because it aims to free people through knowledge (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009; Creswell, 2009). Critical theorists emphasise the value of taking an independent and critical stance in relation to society, institutions and ways of thinking (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009; Crotty, 1998).

Critical cultural perspectives imply a 'transformative agenda' (Crotty, 1998, p. 47) of increased wellbeing, equality and participation, and reduced poverty, disadvantage and marginalisation. This study takes to heart the transformative agenda relating to African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in Australia. It aims to elicit human rights experiences in the hope that they might reinforce stories of survival, resilience and capacity, extend human rights discourse and contribute to knowledge and practice frameworks regarding culturally responsive and inclusive social work practice.

Interesting analysis of the social work practice concepts of cultural competence and cultural humility is to be found in the writing of Isaacson, who followed nursing students during their immersive experiences on an American Indian reservation community (2014). The students in Isaacson's study initially self-identified as possessing adequate cultural knowledge but actually lacked understanding about the culture and were driven by unhelpful stereotypes. These initial assumptions about cultural competence also led to an assumption of superiority. Later, Isaacson noted that their growth process involved a shift towards cultural humility, supported by self-reflection and listening (2014).

There is a paucity of Australian social work literature relating to cultural humility. American scholars suggest that cultural humility invokes the

responsibility to listen actively and at the same time tune in to one's internal responses, engaging in self-reflection and self-awareness and setting aside feelings of superiority (Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, & Utsey, 2013; Isaacson, 2014). They argue that cultural humility is characterised by openness to the beliefs, values and worldview of others and promotes reflection upon relationships to knowledge in social work and the human services (Hook et al., 2013; Ortega & Faller, 2011).

4.13 Social work interventions

Several scholars emphasise that holism in service provision to refugee populations is lacking. Rees, whose analysis of women's experiences as asylum seekers in Australia is informed by principles of social justice, emphasised that wellbeing is 'a holistic state which includes psychological, physical, spiritual, social and cultural contentment and welfare', highlighting the influence of both public and private domains on wellbeing and important gaps she identified in practice frameworks (Rees, 2001, p. 80). In the same vein, Westoby (2010) critiques the individualised biomedical model of mental health service provision. He argues these models of providing care lack 'room for extended compassionate engagement' (p. 2), and condemns the 'wind-back of welfare' (p. 3) that exacerbates these trends, calling for a return to 'emic perspectives and endogenous cultural and community resources' (p. 15).

Overseas, a number of relevant studies critique social work models based on Western-dominated assumptions about what constitutes quality care (Bates et al., 2005; Mitschke et al., 2016; Nadan et al., 2015; Quinn & Grumbach, 2015). For example, Mitschke et al. (2016) critique the predominantly individualistic mental health interventions provided in the United States to refugees from different countries, including a cohort from parts of Africa. Their evidence

suggests that peer-led group mental health interventions more readily overcome mistrust, uncertainty, fear and stigma, and may be more useful supports to African people from refugee backgrounds. Another striking study from the United States illuminated divergence between the explanations of African and non-African caseworkers in regards to contributing factors of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) experienced by young people from Sudan (Bates et al., 2005). While non-African caseworkers in Bates et al.'s study connected the PTSD symptoms with the youths' relative inexperience of family life and unresolved trauma that 'led to resistive behaviours', African caseworkers viewed the PTSD symptoms as a product of loss of responsibilities such as those normally exercised by eldest brothers towards their younger siblings (Bates et al., 2005, p. 641). In both cases, the scholars criticise the assumptions that underlie and/or inform models of care. My inquiry can potentially add weight to these intriguing findings that mental health social workers require greater insight into African worldviews, which appears to mirror the Australian scholarship above.

International studies also highlight structural themes in social work practice with multicultural communities (Nadan et al., 2015; Quinn & Grumbach, 2015). According to Quinn and Grumbach (2015), American social work practice could be better informed, and the client-therapist bond improved, by utilising a 'racialised lens' that focuses on the pervasive influence of racism in the lives of women of colour (Quinn & Grumbach, 2015, p. 215). Israeli social workers Nadan, Weinberg and Ben-Ari (2015) noted that social work educators emphasised micro rather macro approaches in multicultural discourse, and tended to define practice efficacy as the effort to 'gain knowledge of the other' (p 369). This evidence suggests that social workers need to engage more with structural issues in social work practice.

Several studies also critique the preparedness of social workers from dominant cultures in multicultural societies for practice with people in minority cultures (Bø, 2015; Jones, 2014; Križ & Skivenes, 2015; Nadan, 2017; Zimmerman, 2015). Nadan et al. conducted in-depth interviews with social work educators in Israel, noting a preference for micro perspectives in multicultural discourse, and a tendency to define practice efficacy as the effort to 'gain knowledge of the other' (p. 369). They also illuminate the 'immense, sincere difficulty' (p. 371) educators experience in relation to conflict between ethnic groups in their multicultural society. They state, 'whereas silence can be the result of personal choice, silencing involves choices made by other people and is thus associated with social and political judgements of what is acceptable and unacceptable, reflecting and shaping power relations' (Nadan et al., 2015, p. 373). My inquiry can potentially add weight to these findings from the perspective of African families and communities from refugee backgrounds.

In Australia, evidence suggests that the 'mainstreaming' of care can and does lead to lack of culturally appropriate support in many cases (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013). Furthermore, outsourcing of service provision to the non-government sector 'mak[es] coordination and long-term development of institutional capacity difficult' (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013, p. 26). According to the AHRC in 2010, African-Australians were experiencing problems relating to inclusion, respect, understanding and human rights in numerous areas of everyday life including training and employment, education, health, housing and engaging with the justice system. The Commission argues that the Australian community needs to address emerging issues including respecting and maintaining culture, heritage and values, building positive gender relations, addressing intergenerational issues, countering negative media stereotypes,

access to transport, and using sport to promote social inclusion (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010).

The arguments made above connect with representations made by African scholars about the contrast between African values of communitarianism and responsibility for others, and the individualism that characterises many modern Western-dominated cultures. Many of these themes were emphasised by participants in the current study, with local examples provided. Their analysis, particularly how their worldviews and lived experience might contribute to social work practice, is examined in Chapters 7-10.

4.14 Conclusion

Chapter 4 has analysed social work practice literature to understand the current context of intercultural social work practice. Social work theoretical frameworks, ethics and practice standards were discussed and current debates, silences and gaps in social work approaches and service provision were identified. This discussion established the rationale for the timely application of a phenomenological, hermeneutic and critical cultural lens in the present study of African families from refugee backgrounds' understandings and constructions of human rights.

Chapter 5, Research Design, will outline the ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology applied to this study.

5. Research Design

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design chosen to address the research questions: *how do African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights, and how might these perspectives contribute to Australian social work practice?* It outlines the ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology established for this phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiry into human rights. Chapter 5 also demonstrates how the critical cultural lens was operationalised. The research approach is outlined at the beginning of the chapter, then the processes for collecting data. Next, ethical considerations are elucidated, together with an overview of strategies implemented to ensure sound research practice. Lastly, processes for meaning-making in the research, which were supported by interpretive phenomenological analysis, are described.

5.2 The research approach

Chapters 2-4 present a detailed account of the theoretical framework for the present research into human rights, which constitutes a robust research approach to the study, offering a reflexive and potentially creative approach to culture and diverse worldviews, a hermeneutic and phenomenological focus on lived experience, and a transformational agenda grounded in a critical tradition. The reflexive and inclusive framework of human rights from below seeks to understand human rights from the perspective of oppressed populations, extends those human rights and fundamental freedoms to those on the margins (Bricker-Jenkins et al., 2012; Ife, 2010a; Outhred, 2010). Further, the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition that focused the research on contextualised lived experience facilitates meaning-making for participants as well as the researcher

and supports the transformational agenda of the research by attending to contextual features of lived experience (A. J. Harris, 2017; New et al., 2015; Pham, 2016).

The epistemological approach that was taken in order to enable safe, collaborative and discursive engagement with participants to elicit rich and potentially unique understandings and constructions of human rights is explicated below.

5.3 Research epistemology

This hermeneutic phenomenological study with a critical orientation involved interviews with 13 participants in total, seven women and six men. All participants were adults. Data collection centred on metropolitan Sydney and occurred in two distinct phases, August 2013 to February 2014 and September 2015 to August 2016, facilitating iterative reflection on research design and emerging themes.

The study utilised semi-structured interviews which lasted for about one to one and a half hours each. All interviews were conducted face-to-face. The option to participate in kinship group interviews was offered to all participants as scholarship regarding qualitative research emphasised offering these options in research promote safety and demonstrate respect for family norms in African refugee communities (see for example, Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Williams, 2008). Of the 10 interviews conducted, eight were individual interviews, and two occurred in kinship groups.

Informed by epistemological scholarship, the design of the present study had three purposes: first, to maximise confidence and safety of participants to express diverse, potentially critical, perspectives on human rights; second, to minimise the impact of my perspectives about human rights on data collection

and analysis; and third, to reflect deeply, rigorously and cyclically upon the cultural and experiential lenses that the participants and I brought to the research. The epistemological decisions made, and strategies implemented in the research are outlined below, including formation of a research reference group and construction of the semi-structured interview guide.

5.4 Research reference group

Research reference groups in studies with refugee communities offer local and cultural expertise and connect researchers with communities (Halcon et al., 2004; Lim, 2009; Saunders, Roche, McArthur, Arney, & Ziaian, 2015; Williams, 2008). Their importance is well established in qualitative literature. According to Saunders et al., research reference groups ‘provide a sense of trustworthiness about the research’ (2015, p. 14).

For the present study, I formed a research reference group comprising six community leaders and service provider workers from African families from refugee backgrounds. Each member of the group held positions at Sydney-based services including the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC), the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), Trans-cultural Mental Health Centre (TMHC), Settlement Services International (SSI) and the African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP). This group assisted me to be as reflective and critical as possible in the research.

By asking questions, evaluating my assumptions and interpretations, and deepening my knowledge throughout the research process, research reference group members supported reflection on culture, othering and research processes. Members of the research reference group deliberated with me about culturally safe and responsive approaches to relationship building. For example, I noticed participants’ varying preferences regarding individual, couple and group

interviews and discussed my observations with a member of the research reference group. He confirmed that he and his colleagues had noticed similar patterns in their counselling work, where many of their African clients from refugee backgrounds required private spaces to express their issues of concern. The organisation he worked for had implemented new arrangements to enable client access to individual counselling. Thus, the research reference group played an important role in enhancing my ability to navigate language and power differentials, and comprehend participant reasoning and worldviews.

Communication with the research reference group included face-to-face meetings, phone calls and emails used according to what was convenient for each reference group member. Individual meetings promoted a diversity of roles, contributions and insights in the research and avoided groupthink. Contact with reference group members adhered to the confidentiality and boundary requirements of the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee and the Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010). For example, only de-identified data was reported to the research reference group. Thus, the names of research participants were not disclosed to members of the research reference group. Nor was the research reference group involved in preparing participants for interviews.

5.5 Construction of the interview guide

Based on one of the recommendations of the ACU Ethics Committee, the semi-structured interview guide focused on family and community perspectives about human rights rather than tapping into highly personal experiences to minimise harm to participants. The development of the semi-structured interview guide was informed by scholarship about African storytelling and metaphor. The

evidence that African storytelling embeds and reiterates beliefs and worldviews within communities from generation to generation, and that metaphor engages memory and agency in human rights practice in African communities (Asante & Abarry, 1996; Bacon, 2016; Perelman & Young, 2010; Thabede, 2008).

Bacon, an African-Australian migrant, uses the form of a 'self-reflective, autoethnographic account' to examine his experience of resettlement in Australia (2016). In a similar way, the present study recognised and harnessed African narratives and metaphors to explore participant understandings and constructions of human rights. My confidence in seeking participant narratives was also reinforced by local and international scholars who confirmed that narrative methods are well suited to working with people from refugee backgrounds (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hatoss, 2012; Hughes, 2014; Lenette, 2014; Ncube, 2006; Ochala & Mungai, 2016).

The semi-structured interview guide went through three iterations: first, a pilot, then the version used in Phase 1 and finally the version used in Phase 2 of data collection. All three versions are provided in the Appendices (see Appendices 6a, 6b and 6c). Each iteration contained new or revised prompts, included after reflection and consultation. The final version (version 3) of the semi-structured interview guide comprised greetings, demographic and process prompts and the following content prompts:

- Do you have a word or words for human rights in your language? What do these words mean to you? (this was a new prompt)
- I am interested in what human rights mean to your family and community?
- I am interested in how you have come to understand human rights?
- In what ways have human rights been important in your family and community?

- I wonder if you have stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences that illustrate your family and community views about human rights?
- Given what you have told me about what human rights means to you and your family and community, what do people such as social workers need to understand about human rights?
- What do you think encourages and/or discourages people from seeking help when they have personal or family difficulties?
- What helps and/or hinders trust building with people from African backgrounds and what do you think about their relationship with helping professionals?
- What prompted you to participate in this research?

In contrast, the interview guide utilised in Phase 1 of data collection contained slightly different content prompts, for example:

- I am interested in how you understand human rights.
- What do human rights mean to your family and community?
- How have human rights been important in your family and community? In what ways?
- What stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences illustrate your family and community views about human rights?

While the interview guide utilised in Phase 1 contained open and respectfully constructed questions, the interview prompts developed for Phase 2 facilitated participants' engagement in the interview more effectively. The revision to the opening question about human rights from 'I am interested in what human rights mean to your family and community' to 'Do you have a word or words in your language for human rights?' was significant in tapping into participant expertise and sense of certainty about what was expected of them, thus contributing to cultural sensitivity, respect and safety in the research. Other changes focused the participant on content relating to initial themes identified while I was immersed in the data. For example, in version three I incorporated a

prompt to seek participants' views about the importance of the research and their expectations, hopes and/or reasons for participating. I also included a prompt in version three which asked participants how their families and communities learnt about human rights, which elicited more about the influence of time, location and gender on human rights understandings.

The interview guides were structured in three parts.

Part One comprised an explanation of how participant insights would contribute to the research, a discussion of confidentiality and confirmation of my independence from the university, people and organisations that were being discussed. Part One also invited participants to introduce themselves and their cultural background. At this point demographic data was collected, including age, gender, number of years in Australia, level of education, country of origin and cultural background. This information supported analysis of similarities and differences in views across transcripts.

Part Two comprised an invitation to talk about human rights in their own words, and discuss the meaning of human rights to their family and community. Participants were asked to share stories, songs, poems, pictures and experiences to illustrate their views, taking a community and cultural focus rather than a personal one.

Part Three asked participants to highlight aspects of their understandings and experiences of human rights that might be important for the helping professions to understand. Contextual detail and demographic information that remained unclear, as well as concepts and experiences, were further explored by telephone, email or follow-up interviews.

5.6 Sampling

Two kinds of sampling were employed in the present study. First, a purposive sampling technique was employed, meaning that I reached out to participants through my research reference group and network of social workers to identify participants who might be especially relevant to the research project (Patton, 2015; Sarantakos, 2013). Eligibility criteria included that participants were of African descent, refugees or from refugee-like backgrounds, over the age of 18, living in Australia for at least 1 year, and interested in talking about human rights issues relevant to their families and communities. My contacts displayed the research fliers (see Appendix 5) on their agency notice boards and handed out or emailed the flier and the participant information form to people they thought might be interested in participating in the study, encouraging them to contact me.

Second, a snowball sampling technique was employed, meaning that I asked study participants themselves to recommend other participants (Patton, 2015; Sarantakos, 2013). Several qualitative researchers studying refugee families have employed this sequence of sampling, because it facilitates trust building between researchers and the populations with whom they are seeking to engage (Halcon et al., 2004; Lim, 2009; Williams, 2008). Snowball sampling in this sense engages informed participants as 'cultural liaisons' who vouch for the researcher (Lim, 2009, p. 1030).

5.7 Recruitment

The use of vouching to safely and respectfully invite members of African families from refugee backgrounds to participate in the study supported exploration of human rights from below. I found, as have other scholars in this field, that word of mouth, or vouching processes, were much more effective than written information to publicise the study (Halcon et al., 2004; Lim, 2009; Williams,

2008). The research reference group and study participants acted as cultural liaisons in the research (Halcon et al., 2004; Lim, 2009; Williams, 2008).

Initial contact with potential participants was made via email and phone. I explained my reasons for contacting them and explored their interest in being part of the study. I then sent the participant information letter via email and arranged an interview time and venue by email, phone or text soon after sending the letter.

Two phases of data collection occurred, with six participants interviewed between August 2013 and February 2014 and seven participants interviewed between September 2015 and August 2016. In between, I transcribed interviews, undertook initial data immersion, reflected upon the research design, and consulted with the research reference group and thesis supervisors. This provided impetus to review the semi-structured interview guide, as discussed above. The second set of interviews facilitated implementation of important learnings about culturally safe research methods while augmenting the available data and illuminating emergent themes more fully.

In some cases, there was an appreciable delay between initial contact and meeting participants for the research interview. An example was a participant who re-contacted me to set up an interview time after a delay of several months, explaining that overseas travel commitments as well as the birth of his son had delayed our meeting.

5.8 Participant information letter and consent form

This study committed to implementing and evaluating culturally safe and engaging protocols with participants. I followed protocols for negotiating informed consent, and utilised templates provided by the university for each interview. The participant information letter, the topic and the planned interview process were

explained verbally at the beginning of each interview. Participants were then asked to sign a consent form before commencement of the interview. The participant information letter and consent form are provided in the Appendices section of this thesis, see Appendix 8, section 12.10 and Appendix 9, section 12.11, respectively.

Processes for seeking informed consent were designed to establish rapport and set participants at ease, noting Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei's (2011) view that informed consent is usefully approached as 'a process, rather than an event' in qualitative research (2011, p. 1238). However, obtaining consent to conduct the interview at the beginning of the meeting, and obtaining permission to record the interview, initially proved time consuming, stressful and somewhat unproductive for myself and the participants. I noted that most participants did not read the participant information letter I provided before the interview, and the first few participants hesitated when asked if I could record the interview. One of these participants expressed worries about who would listen to the recording, and another asked me whether he would be expected to provide positive or negative comments about human rights. In both cases, I focused on rapport building and explaining the research, only asking participants to sign the consent form and turning the recorder on when they gave verbal consent.

These experiences prompted consultation with the research reference group, whose advice led to small but significant changes to procedures in the research. One step was to utilise the initial phone call to participants more consciously to introduce myself and the research, and gather some biographical information about the participant. This established initial rapport and I noted that participants recognised my voice and remembered things about me when we met for the research interview. As before, I sent the participant information letter and

consent form by email but introduced a new step which was to provide a brief, personalised message to each participant. A second change prompted by these early experiences was to enhance the semi-structured interview guide to provide structure to assist with negotiation of consent, provide greater clarity about my expectations of participants and emphasise the importance of their knowledge about human rights, as discussed above (and see Appendices 6a, 6b and 6c, Semi-structured interview guides).

These interactions familiarised participants with the processes, consolidated participants' understanding of the purpose of my study and, according to the research reference group, were important for building trust and connection. Practically, these steps meant that I could introduce the hard copy forms and ask whether I could record our discussion at the beginning of the interview with greater confidence that these steps had been anticipated and understood.

5.9 Interview recording and note-taking

All interviews were recorded so that they could be transcribed later and analysed in depth. All interviews were recorded with permission from participants, using a digital recorder. I made brief notes during interviews and immediately afterwards, documenting salient details such as non-verbal cues, interruptions, challenges encountered, and noticeable emotions or phrases from the interview.

5.10 Participant checking of transcripts

Following each interview, the recording was transcribed and provided to participants for checking. Inviting participants to review, extend, clarify or withdraw their comments if wished is recommended by numerous scholars (Guba & Lincoln, 2011; Liamputtong, 2013; Silverman, 2018). Participant transcripts

were made available to interviewees as soon as possible after interviews occurred, and I kept a spreadsheet to track the stages of transcript preparation and checking. I followed up with a gentle reminder in cases where I received no initial response from participants. Aware that transcripts could be translated into another language if required, all participants nominated English as their preferred language to receive transcripts for participant checking. The majority responded to confirm they had read the transcript and commented briefly on the data provided. In a few cases, participants chose not to respond.

One couple requested to withdraw from the study at the stage of participant checking. Although they did not provide explanation, their withdrawal from the research confirmed that the research processes enabled participant choice. After these participants withdrew from the study, I reflected on possible causes and implemented two changes to address potential errors on my part. The first was to ensure faster transcription of recorded material, aided by engaging professional transcription services. The second was to maintain a higher level of communication through brief, positive text messages or emails following the interview and throughout the remainder of the project. Thus, the experience strengthened the research.

5.11 Provision of interpreters and translators

Language conveys both meaning and identity (Ruzzene, 1998), so welcoming a diversity of languages to the human rights dialogue was important. Moreover, together with the research reference group and the ACU Human Research Ethics Committee, I acknowledged that language and cultural issues could impact on participant's levels of comfort and understanding throughout the study, potentially excluding individuals and groups with an interest in the study, as highlighted by pivotal studies (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010;

Lejukole, 2008; Mitschke et al., 2016). Thus, processes were established to facilitate requests for interpreter assistance, and the translation of documents.

Unfortunately, reaching out through my networks to access participants who required an interpreter proved unsuccessful despite consistent effort, so these provisions were not utilised. I consider this to be a limitation in the study and have reflected on elements that could explain this outcome. Other studies have documented barriers to participation in research such as cultural and linguistic dissonance, issues of trust, and higher than average levels of stress and burden in the daily lives of vulnerable individuals and families (Court & Abbas, 2016; Deacon & Sullivan, 2009; Lenette, 2015; Liamputtong, 2007). In the present study, the above might have been issues. Some of the interactions I had with participants did suggest that participants and their families and communities faced cares, responsibilities, and/or disconnections that influenced their participation in the study.

For example, Participant 9 suggested that his wife and some of her friends might be willing to participate in the present study, but then did not contact me for many months. When I next heard from him, I discovered he had been travelling overseas as a representative of inclusive programs for refugee youth. In the interim, his wife had given birth to their third child and was now too busy with caring responsibilities.

A second example is of a woman who was known to be interested in human rights and could have required an interpreter to participate most fully. She was from the same church community as another participant in the study. However, when I explored this a bit further, my previous participant told me that their church community had dispersed, and no-one had seen this woman for a while.

These experiences illustrate that even people who did participate had busy lives. Apart from meeting the demands of family, community and work, they were taking up opportunities to travel internationally in support of information sharing, fundraising for causes in their homelands, and raising awareness about important human rights issues.

5.12 Availability of counsellors

An important step to reduce harm to participants in the study was to secure the services of trained bicultural counsellors with experience working with people from refugee backgrounds. Willing and able to be available at short notice, and with suitable expertise, two members of the research reference group agreed to provide immediate assistance to participants as required. This assurance was provided in writing as part of the Ethics Application.

5.13 Contributions to participants

In the interests of beneficence in the research, I provided a nominal contribution of a \$10 supermarket gift voucher to each participant per interview. This strategy was arrived at through discussions with my thesis supervisors and members of the research reference group, with the key concern being to compensate participants for some of the costs of attending the research interview. The strategy was proposed to the ACU Ethics Committee and subsequently approved. In accordance with my understanding of African family norms, I also provided food in the interviews to demonstrate hospitality and gratitude for the gift of participants' precious time and their willingness to share their perspectives.

5.14 Voluntary participation

Similarly, the study adopted strategies to communicate and facilitate voluntary participation in the research. The information letter and brief introduction to the research assured participants that they could conclude the interview or withdraw from the study at any time. One couple took up this right to withdraw after reviewing their transcript, without providing an explanation.

5.15 Confidentiality and anonymity

In storing and writing up the data I changed participant names to pseudonyms of their choosing to protect people's identities whilst preserving the very personal and intimate nature of my conversations with participants. In addition, I changed countries of origin where requested and removed other identifying information from the transcripts, such as place names, service names and other friends and contacts to reduce the risk of links being made to individual participants and their associates by those who read the research outputs, including supervisors. Only pseudonyms, codes and aggregated data were reported in discussions, presentations and publications. The Participant Information Letter and Consent Form outlined the processes adopted to ensure confidentiality of data, and explicit discussion of confidentiality occurred at the beginning of each interview.

5.16 Ethical considerations

Scholars in the fields of human rights, refugee research and social work confirm that ethically sound research requires sophisticated and reflexive approaches to study design and implementation (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Hugman et al., 2011; Liamputtong, 2007; Williams, 2008). These authors exhort researchers to go above and beyond the principle of

protecting participants from harm, to ethically navigating power differentials and multilayered cultural, ethnic and gender identities present in studies involving people from refugee backgrounds.

Guided by this literature, the current study implemented a range of strategies to protect participants from harm and to embed an ethic of care and responsibility in all aspects of the research. The study was carefully crafted to facilitate sound ethical practice and responsiveness. This included forming a research reference group, compliance with National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) and Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) guidelines, willingness to provide interpreters and translators, a carefully structured interview guide, ensuring availability of counsellors, gaining informed consent, supporting voluntary participation, maintaining confidentiality, and payment of participants. In addition, commitments to respect, power sharing, reciprocity, beneficence, justice and transformative research practices were operationalised continuously and iteratively throughout the study. Each of these strategies is outlined and evaluated below.

5.17 Compliance with research standards

The expectations of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) were complied with, as were the expectations of my professional body, the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW), expressed in the AASW Code of Ethics (2010). Ethics approval was obtained from the ACU National Human Research Ethics Committee, which upholds the rights and interests of participants and adheres to the values outlined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007 respectively; 2018). The Ethics Approval Letter is provided at Appendix 4.

5.18 Critical reflection

Reflexivity in relation to the experiences, beliefs and personal history of the researcher and their contribution to the research process is considered essential in qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 2011; Liamputtong, 2013; Silverman, 2018). I kept a research journal which supported thick description, assisted me to plan and implement the research, and recorded the many aspects that aroused my curiosity or suggested new ways of looking at things. In addition, I engaged with the research reference group, my thesis supervisors, and with communities of scholars during conferences in Australia and abroad, including the Association of Schools of Social Work in Africa (ASSWA) (2012), International Federation of Social Work (IFSW) (2014), Higher Degree Research conferences of the Australian Catholic University (2014, 2015 and 2016) and African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) (2016 and 2017).

These reflexive processes supported conscious attention to my role as researcher. Although my perspective on human rights drew from different cultural reference points and experiences than those of my research participants, I did not identify completely as an outsider researcher. Rather, my experience living and working in South Africa, and then working with African families from refugee backgrounds at the Asylum Seekers Centre in Sydney resonated with the continuum theory where researchers are thought to navigate insider and outsider positionality in more nuanced ways (Bhabha, 1994; Bridges, 2001; Ritchie et al., 2009). I found Greenwood and Levin's (2006, p. 104) concept of 'friendly outsider' useful, because it enables the researcher to co-explore possibilities for change and examines how one might balance the tasks of critique and support. Similarly, I was guided by Gair's (2012) notion of the researcher as 'deep listener' who can imagine and empathise with communities throughout the research process.

5.19 Respect

Respectful approaches were implemented in consultation with my supervisors, the research reference group, and relevant literature. Strategies that demonstrated respect in the present study included asking participants to select their preferred date, time of day and location for the interview; dressing in a culturally sensitive manner; paying attention to greetings; focusing on trust building and rapport before, during and after the interview; using welcoming and encouraging language; and following up on opportunities to reciprocate the respect and honour shown to me. These strategies were consistent with the scholarship regarding ethical engagement with African people, families from refugee backgrounds, and vulnerable populations in research (Hugman et al., 2011; Kruger, Ndebele, & Horn, 2014; Lejukole, 2008; Liamputtong, 2007; Molyneux & Geissler, 2008; South African San Institute, 2017).

Describing myself, my family and my work to participants and asking them to describe their roles, responsibilities and cultural backgrounds appeared to convey respect in the research interviews. I noted that the early comments participants made about their roles and cultures were reprised and extended in their later comments about human rights. This suggests that discussions about our lives and participant cultures supported participant agency in establishing parameters for the discussion during the research interviews. Many scholars document the importance of the relational context of research with people from refugee communities, particularly with respect to trust building (see for example, Lejukole, 2008; Lenette, Brough, & Cox, 2012; Lim, 2009).

Respectful processes also involved flexibility. According to Lejukole, flexibility in research with African families from refugee backgrounds is important as it promotes depth and richness in research and the wellbeing of participants

(Lejukole, 2008). In his doctoral thesis, Lejukole described, in some detail, situations in which he had to be flexible and accommodating, relating to participants' family duties, cultural norms, and unexpected interruptions and distractions he experienced while at people's homes. Similarly, I experienced situations in which I needed to be flexible in the research. An example is when I visited Patience's home, a member of the research reference group. When I arrived, I found that she was not alone, but had a large group of people in her home. I had anticipated having a private conversation with Patience, so I gently explored the context. Patience explained that they were gathered to visit the bereaved parents of a beloved child in their faith community. I immediately offered to reschedule our meeting, and inquired about how I could help. This example emphasises the importance of seeing beyond the researchers' own agenda, paying close attention to the needs of others, and placing the highest priority on relationship.

Furthermore, respectful conduct of the research was also embedded in the semi-structured interview guide. Every effort was made to demonstrate respect towards participants, but I found that modifications of the semi-structured interview guide were needed to enhance participants' experience of respect for their worldviews. In the initial version, participants were asked quite directly about their family and community perspectives on human rights. Using the modified version, when asked whether they had a word or words for human rights in their language/s, participants looked physically more proud, confident and certain. They responded more quickly and in more detail. This invitation to speak about their cultures in positive and familiar ways was key to participants' experiences of agency, safety and confidence in discussing their understandings and

constructions of human rights, affording participants respect, power and agency in sharing their lived experiences.

5.20 Reciprocity

In this study, reciprocity took forms such as two-way vouching and information-giving, self-disclosure and mutual affirmation. The cyclical nature of my interactions with research reference group members created more opportunities for reciprocal acts than one-off meetings with most participants. This realisation caused me to pay more attention to embedded, potentially overlooked, possibilities for reciprocity with participants. I utilised conversations that occurred before our meeting to build rapport. I endeavoured to stay in contact with participants, by email and social media, which allowed me to relay relevant information about education, support services and opportunities, communicate interest and support to them, share their concerns about changing political and economic realities in their countries of origin, and attend important community functions.

Sometimes I could provide valuable information or access. In one case I was asked for, and provided, information about eligibility for university courses that interested a participant. In another, I linked a participant with a potential research mentor and encouraged them to further develop their expertise in mental health. I provide these examples because reciprocity is a vital component of social work research ethics (Hugman et al., 2011) but strategies that support reciprocity in studies appear to be underreported in the literature.

5.21 Beneficence

Beneficence in the current study was supported by strategies such as the development and provision of a comprehensive service information and referral

pack to participants at the time of their interview to augment their knowledge of programs and supports available to their families and communities (see Appendix 7). Responsiveness to participant queries before, during and after the interview, as discussed above, also promoted beneficence in this study.

Further instances of beneficence occurred as I combined perceived best practice with new insights. For example, I gave participants the choice to attend the research interview with family or kin as key literature emphasised that family interviews provide an element of the familiar, a less formal setting, and allow for the creation of a safe and affirming context in which to discuss sensitive topics (Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011; Weine et al., 2005; Williams, 2008). Close attention to the choice of participants revealed that most chose to attend the interview alone. I discussed this with members of the research reference group who confirmed there had been a shift away from family interviews in torture and trauma counselling with African families from refugee backgrounds. This experience emphasised the importance of providing choices to participants and respecting those choices.

5.22 Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

As discussed in Chapter 3, the present study utilised Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to attend closely to participant understandings and constructions of human rights. IPA originated in the field of health psychology, developed by J. A. Smith and his colleagues to enhance pluralism in psychological discourse by 'capturing the experiential and the qualitative' (2009, p. 4). The method is well suited to studies where participants are afforded the opportunity to 'tell their stories, to speak freely and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length' (J. A. Smith et al., 2009, p. 56). Such an approach ensures transparency, accountability and depth in the

hermeneutic accounts developed about the data. As discussed later in this chapter, cycles of analysis were carefully implemented according to IPA guidelines to avoid superficial or unsupportable accounts of the lived experience of participants (J. A. Smith et al., 2009).

The utilisation of IPA in numerous studies of experience and meaning-making involving people from refugee backgrounds confirmed the suitability of this form of data analysis for the present study (see for example Hurly, 2018; New et al., 2015; Pham, 2016; Rosbrook & Schweitzer, 2010; Schweitzer et al., 2007; Shakespeare-Finch & Wikham, 2009). Also influential were recent social work studies which emphasised the suitability of IPA as a qualitative method (Hood, 2015; Houston & Mullan-Jensen, 2011; Noble-Carr, 2017).

Data analysis followed J. A. Smith et al.'s (2009) guidelines for IPA. Each transcript followed the same pattern of immersion in the data, followed by initial note making about experience and finally a deeper reading of the transcript to explore participant explanations about their experiences. My analysis of each transcript in this way yielded a new data set that required summary and facilitated comparison and contrasting with other transcripts to identify commonalities and differences between descriptions and to facilitate theory-building. Each step of the process supported development of a rigorous and supportable account of the data (Guba & Lincoln, 2011; Liamputtong, 2013; Silverman, 2018).

5.23 Reading and re-reading

The first step of analysis involved reading and re-reading a single written transcript, combined with listening to the recorded interview and some initial note-taking. J. A. Smith et al. describe this as a slowing down, an immersive process, which signals a phase of 'active engagement with the data' to begin 'entering the participant's world' (2009, p. 82). This step involved noticing my initial reactions

to the data, which at times were very powerful, to consciously set aside distractions, assumptions and expectations, so that the participant became the focus of analysis.

5.24 Initial noting

The next step involved preparing descriptive notes about the text. As encouraged by IPA theorists, I stayed 'close to the participant's explicit meaning', whilst engaging in exploratory analysis, noting 'anything of interest' in the data (J. A. Smith et al., 2009, p. 83). The comprehensive and descriptive note-taking in my study engaged with relationships, feelings, experiences, places, events, questions, struggles, values and principles raised by participants, and the quality and intensity of these features of experience. This included paraphrasing what was being said, then adding linguistic comments during which I questioned what was happening or being described. Finally, I made conceptual comments, which interrogated what was being said against a theoretical backdrop. An example of initial noting conducted for one transcript is provided at Appendix 10.

5.25 Developing emergent themes

In the next phase, I developed emergent themes by reviewing the descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments I had made during initial noting and considered their significance. This is a key aspect of IPA because it prompts rigorous reflection on the meaning the researcher is making of participant's original words: emergent themes 'reflect a synergistic process of description and interpretation' (J. A. Smith et al., 2009, p. 92). In documenting emergent themes I avoided jargon and technical language, retaining and attending closely to the idioms of each participant, as language conveys both meaning and identity (Ruzzeno, 1998). In this way, themes discussed by participants were considered

in their small ideographic parts and also as part of the whole transcript, allowing for 'enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual' (J. A. Smith et al., 2009, p. 92). An example of IPA analysis of one participant's analysed transcript, involving initial noting and developing emergent themes, is provided in Appendix 10.

5.26 Searching for connections across emergent themes

To consider the relevance of the emergent themes to my research questions, and to form a view on how the themes might fit together, I engaged in a process of clustering data into overarching themes (J. A. Smith et al., 2009). As I had completed the initial noting and development of emergent themes using A3 printouts of the transcripts arranged in table form, with columns to add my handwritten notes, I now found it useful to search for connections across themes by reviewing all notes and entering selections into a digital spreadsheet, copying and pasting key elements of the transcripts into one of the columns and transcribing and refining my commentary upon participant accounts.

An important feature of this process, as described by J. A. Smith et al., (2009), was that some themes became magnets to others, drawing themes towards them. I found it useful to copy and paste related segments of a participant's account into the same column and bring together relevant aspects of my commentary, as it helped to identify patterns, consider differences as well as similarities, note how frequently a theme was mentioned, and examine the function of certain themes. This method highlighted ways that power and expertise were revealed or hidden during interviews and drew my attention to the narrative and metaphorical structures which underpinned participant accounts. A tabulation of the emergent themes for one participant is provided at Appendix 11, demonstrating the steps of meaning-making undertaken with the raw data,

incorporating descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments, and emerging themes.

5.27 Looking for patterns across cases

After thoroughly examining each transcript and collating emergent themes per case, I reviewed all the existing data and produced a master summary table using Excel. Mapping themes according to emphases given them by individuals and groups of participants and examining connections between participant accounts facilitated consideration of human rights according to the construct of African worldviews in the research. The table of themes produced by analysis of each case was entered as a separate page behind the master table in Excel, so that it was available for individual consideration as well as consideration as part of the whole. An example of one of these tables of themes is provided at Appendix 11. Computerisation of this data supported development of a detailed 'audit trail' which is vital to document, and demonstrates reflection upon the insights arrived at (Guba & Lincoln, 2011; Johnson & Waterfield, 2004). Two data visualisation techniques supported configuration and reconfiguration of themes, as outlined below.

5.28 Visualisation of data

I created a handwritten mind map of superordinate and emergent themes to tease out the links between the data and the original research questions. This mind map, provided at Appendix 12, demonstrates how I endeavoured to represent 'unique idiosyncratic instances but also shared higher order qualities' (J. A. Smith et al., 2009, p. 101).

NVivo was also utilised at this stage of the analysis to store and closely examine data (Edhlund & McDougall, 2016). Coding of data using this program

occurred using previously developed superordinate and emergent themes. The process of coding in NVivo facilitated deeper examination of themes and development of superordinate themes. In addition, the query functions in NVivo allowed me to search for specific words and phrases, map word frequency, develop word trees and construct electronic mind maps about each theme. NVivo coding and data visualisation reinforced connections and disparities in the data, within and across transcripts, and illuminated some additional important themes, such as the importance of inclusive education, and the incidence of 'not-knowing' in the data. I found, at this stage, that regular movement between NVivo, and my handwritten journal, which was an A4 sized Visual Art Diary in which I kept all field notes, questions, supervision notes and mind maps, actively facilitated rigorous and systematic analysis of the data. Thus, data visualisation and NVivo coding facilitated emergence of supportable accounts of the data. Examples of data maps constructed in NVivo are provided at Appendix 13 and 14.

5.29 Writing

To support rigour in writing up the results of this qualitative study, I presented verbatim what participants had said (Guba & Lincoln, 2011; Liamputtong, 2013; Silverman, 2018). Findings presented are substantial and discursive, as will be seen in Chapters 8, 9 and 10, to illuminate participants' voices and draw attention to how they expressed their understandings and constructions of human rights (J. A. Smith et al., 2009). Writing up the findings raised dilemmas associated with utilising participant narratives that were so personal, revealing, and in parts, emotionally-laden. During preparation and analysis of the data I consulted with participants, the research reference group, and my supervisors to support production of an ethically sound and reliable account of the data.

5.30 Conclusion

This chapter has described the research design chosen to address the present study. The ethical considerations were presented along with a discussion of strategies that ensured sound research practice. These included the assumptions and processes that promoted immersion in, and meaning making about, the rich, ideographic data provided by participants.

Chapter 6, which follows, introduces the participants in the present study and brings their roles, identities and concerns to life. It provides demographic data on participants, then elaborates upon a form of data analysis, the *We Poem*, utilised to analyse data, that was inspired by Heidegger's view that lived experience is deeply poetic. *We Poems*, which distil participant statements about their cultural backgrounds and provide context for their comments about human rights that follow in Chapters 7-9, are presented in chronological order, paired with brief synopses of participant lives.

Then, in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, the data is organised into themes of knowing, being/becoming and doing human rights. Applying and then reflecting upon the research design has led to new understandings of good practice in qualitative research with a critical orientation, and this will be addressed in the Discussion Chapter (Chapter 10).

6. Introducing the Participants

6.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the participants in the study. Data presented in this chapter was gathered during research interviews, and comprises participants' history, current circumstances, family situation, roles, responsibilities, employment situation, and descriptions of their cultural backgrounds. Demographic data is presented first. Then, the phenomenological and hermeneutic underpinnings of the present study are further explored, particularly the aspect of Heidegger's work that constructs lived experience as deeply poetic. I illuminate and extend this concept in Chapter 6 via 'We-poems' that provide crucial insights into participants' worldviews and contextualise data presented in Chapters 7-9.

6.2 Demographic data

This study interviewed 13 participants in total, seven males and seven females, with ages ranging from 25 to 64 years. The participants originated from diverse countries of origin including Kenya, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and West Africa (country withheld at the request of the participant), and were from diverse faith backgrounds including eight who were from different Christian denominations and three who were Muslim.

All participants were multi-lingual, with ability in languages including English (all participants), Krio (4), Swahili (3), Arabic (3), French (2), Kreyol (1), Dinka (1), Kinyarwanda (1), Luo (1), Kono (1), Mende (1). However, no participants requested an interpreter and all were interviewed in English.

The below tables reveal salient demographic characteristics of the study cohort, including country of origin and gender, age and parenting status, age and

employment status and year of arrival, region of origin and educational attainment.

Country of Origin	Number of Participants	Gender	
		Female	Male
Kenya	3	3	-
Liberia	1	1	-
Rwanda	1	1	-
Sierra Leone	4	2	2
South Sudan	3	-	3
Undisclosed	1	-	1
Totals	13	7	6

Table 2: Gender by Country of Origin

Age Range	Number of participants	Parenting Status		
		Grandparent	Parent	No children
25-29	1	-	1	-
30-34	-	-	-	-
35-39	4	-	3	1
40-44	2	-	2	-
45-49	3	-	3	-
50-54	2	2	2	-
55-59	-	-	-	-
60-64	1	1	1	-
Totals	13	3	12	1

Table 3: Parenting Status by Age

Age Range	Number of participants	Employment Status		
		Professional Employment	Self-Employed	Not currently Employed
25-29	1	1		
30-34	-			
35-39	4	4		
40-44	2	1		1
45-49	3	3		
50-54	2	2		-
55-59	-			
60-64	1		1	
Totals	13	11	1	1

Table 4: Age Range and Employment Status

Year of Arrival	Region of Origin			Educational Attainment					
	North	West	East	Middle School	TAFE Certificate	TAFE Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	PG Diploma	Master's Degree
1999	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	-
2000	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
2001	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
2002	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
2003	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
2004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2005	1	1	2	1	1	-	1	1	-
2006		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2007		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2008		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2011		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Totals	3	5	5	1	1	2	4	2	3

Table 5: Year of arrival, region of origin and educational attainment

The study sought information about participant responsibilities in the community, and presents a precis of this information later in this chapter. Most held professional, semi-professional, or volunteer roles. Three participants were unemployed. Roles included counselling, community work, religious ministry, cultural liaison, nursing and childcare.

The decision to recruit people from a diversity of African countries was an important part of this research because I wanted to explore similarities and differences in lived experiences, especially those relating to language and cultural background. All participants were living in Western Sydney at the time of the study, where there are established communities of African families from refugee backgrounds, and formal and informal sites of social and political action that respond to community needs and issues, such as Auburn Diversity Services, Granville Multicultural Community Centre, the Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development International (GLAPD), Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW, the Parramatta Islamic Cultural Association, and various communities of worship.

Though participants' experiences were diverse in many ways, they were linked by commonalities including length of time in Australia, level of education reached and employment in the helping professions. The majority enjoyed stronger networks and levels of connectedness than the literature suggests is representative of African families from refugee backgrounds in Australia. Most participants prepared for our interview by consulting with elders, family members and friends. Thus, I would argue that participants provided a depth and breadth of views in the research as they spoke from their own perspective as well as from the perspective of their families and communities.

I continued with recruitment and participant interviews until I became aware that 'the relationships among categories [were] well established and validated', a point in qualitative research projects that is termed 'saturation' (Sarantakos, 2013, p. 349; Strauss & Corbin, 2014). Although the sample size of the present study was relatively large for an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) study, similar sample sizes are documented by other scholars who have undertaken IPA in their research with refugee populations (Rosbrook & Schweitzer, 2010; Schweitzer et al., 2007; Shakespeare-Finch & Wikham, 2009).

During data collection and data analysis, emphasis was placed on understanding the context of participants' statements to facilitate production of supportable accounts of the data, guided by the tradition of hermeneutic meaning-making. Heidegger, a founder of Interpretive Phenomenology, and a theorist whose ideas underpin the present study of human rights, believed that 'our existence is fundamentally poetic' (1949, p. 283). His reflections about the poetry of being inspired a poetic line of inquiry into participant statements about their cultural backgrounds. This led to consideration of Gilligan's *I Poem* approach to data analysis, as described in her listening guide for qualitative

researchers (2015), and related scholarship. Readers will see the *We Poems* that were produced through this inquiry in section 6.4. Below, I discuss how and why I represented the data in this way.

6.3 The Poetry of Lived Experience

Noting that IPA scholars endorse data exploration utilising a range of qualitative analytical strategies to formulate robust themes at all levels (J. A. Smith et al., 2009), I explored qualitative strategies that could distil the data shared by participants about their cultural backgrounds to represent it succinctly and meaningfully. This cultural data illuminated other statements made by participants in the study. It oriented me to aspects such as the practical familiarity participants brought to dialogue about human rights, and their socio-cultural knowledge. In this way, I considered participant statements about their cultural backgrounds capable of revealing *dasein*, the human way of being in the world (Heidegger, 1962).

According to Crotty (1998, p. 99), Heidegger's scholarship demonstrates that 'poetry can lead us to the place where Being reveals itself'. African literature, too, is replete with poetry that, arguably, reveals Being, that is, cultures, histories, traditions, and philosophies of African peoples throughout the ages (Asante & Abarry, 1996). With this in mind, I selected the strategy of data analysis known as the *We Poem* to support formulation of analytic themes in the present study.

The construct of the *We Poem* is derived from the *I Poem*, developed by Gilligan to support deep listening in qualitative research (2015). Gilligan and her scholarly collaborators argue that *I Poems* are useful because they distil participant meanings and draw attention to participant subjectivities (Edwards & Weller, 2012; Gilligan, 2015). In Gilligan's words:

I Poems pick up an associative stream that flows through the narrative, running underneath the structure of the sentences. The logic of the poems is not linear - the I statements do not literally follow one another. But they do have an associative logic, and listening to the I in this way can evoke a voice that is speaking under a surface of dissociation: an I who knows, and yet may not consciously know what it knows. (Gilligan, 2015, p. 72)

As Gilligan highlights in this excerpt, I Poems can powerfully reveal the knowledge of the speaker, even knowledge of which the speaker is unaware. In developing I Poems, the researcher 'create[s] the conditions in which people can safely tell their stories to someone who is listening and who can be trusted to bring their voices into conversations about human experience' (Gilligan, 2015, p. 75). These important goals underpinned my own search for a way of bringing the rich, ideographic descriptions provided by participants regarding their cultural backgrounds into the conversations about lived experience of human rights.

Similarly, We Poems convey streams of association that flow through participant narratives, but in these poems, it is shared experience that is highlighted, and attention is drawn to aspects of lived experience that are important to people *as members of communities* (Horsford et al., 2014; Kayser, Watson, & Andrade, 2007). Although there was a paucity of evidence about the application of the We Poem concept to studies with people from refugee backgrounds, We Poems are consistent with theories of African personhood and African worldviews that emphasise communitarian values (Bent-Goodley et al., 2017; Thabede, 2008) and proved useful in the present study.

In Gilligan's original study (2006), statements beginning with I were collated and arranged line by line, forming I Poems. In this same way, poems in

the present study were prepared by analysing participant statements about their cultural backgrounds and collating those statements beginning with 'We'. I also observed intriguing characteristics in the data where participants spoke objectively about themselves and their cultures via the pronouns 'You' and 'They'. By distilling data using 'You' and 'They', I discovered that You Poems and They Poems emphasised highly charged or emotional aspects of lived experience, from an individual or community perspective respectively. While the literature provides no precedent for utilising You Poems and They Poems, I included these two variations of the original concept in this study.

Accordingly, statements beginning with We, I, You and They were arranged line by line and assembled for this chapter. Below, these We Poems, I Poems, You Poems and They Poems are presented in chronological order, from first interviewee to last. All poems are accompanied by a brief synopsis of each participant's history and current circumstances, and commentary which highlights personal and cultural values and practices illuminated by the poetry. As stated in Chapter 1, Introduction, all names used in this thesis are pseudonyms.

6.4 Participant Introductions and We Poems

6.4.1 Mamoudou, West Africa

Mamoudou was born in West Africa and was between the ages of 40 and 44 when I interviewed him. He arrived in Australia in the early 2000s as an asylum seeker and was granted refugee status within a short period of time. He undertook nursing studies and now works as a registered nurse. Mamoudou still considers himself unable to return to his homeland safely, and, in our interview, asked for his country of origin to be withheld due to safety concerns. He told me of his regular trips to West Africa to visit his wife and children, who remain there. When in the region, he moves safely and keeps a low profile. Mamoudou's We Poem emphasises the cultural strengths of unity, sharing and coming together as a collective.

Mamoudou's Poem

We love to share

*We love to live in group, where,
if anything happens, if someone has a problem,
all the community are united behind that person with that
problem,
and try to solve it*

*Sometimes if you're happy too, we all come and help you
celebrate,
We do everything in a group*

*We have, like, a community group, where, every meeting, we
continually put in some money,
so this money is put there in case anything happens*

*When your country's celebrating, like Independence Day, we
gather,
celebrate,
bring our culture,
wear traditional clothes,
play the local music, and cook local food, and all this,
and you invite other countries,
and we all come and share*

6.4.2 Angelina, Liberia

Angelina was born in Liberia, West Africa, and was between the ages of 60 and 64 when I interviewed her. She speaks French, Kreyol and English. She has children and grandchildren. Angelina came to Australia in 2005 after almost 15 years of flight from military tensions in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. During this time, she returned to Liberia to search for her husband, without success. Angelina and her very small children spent time in a refugee camp in Guinea, before being offered refugee protection and being resettled to Sydney, NSW by the Australian Government. Angelina commented on her role in her family: 'I was the father, I was the mother, I was everything for them'. Angelina is now a citizen of Australia. She is Christian and a committed member of her church community. Angelina continues to care for her children and grandchildren today, as her decision to study childcare and run a small family day care business from her home attests. Angelina's We Poem, like Mamoudou's, emphasises the cultural strength of unity, as well as support, kinship and shared duties to children of the community.

Angelina's Poem

We love each other, first thing, yeah

*We are one, one, if you see one black person,
you take that person as though
they were out of the same country*

*We are so many Liberians here,
if I see anyone, I will tell you, this is my relative,
though they are not related to me*

*We don't leave each other at the sidewalk,
we don't leave each other at the sidewalk!*

*If you see my child doing wrong,
it's your duty to tell my child or my children,
what you are doing, that is wrong, you don't do it
That's what we do*

*They will not wait for me to come and tell them, "this is wrong,
don't do it"*

So, I bring up my children, and you bring up mine, the right way

6.4.3 Annitah, Kenya

Annitah was born in Kenya, East Africa, and was between the ages of 35 and 39 when I interviewed her. She speaks Swahili and English. She is unmarried and has a child. Annitah came to Australia for a year in the late 1990s and returned in 2008. Annitah is Christian and is involved in her church community. Annitah works as a Registered Nurse, and is studying to be a midwife. Annitah's We Poem emphasises the desire for her child to know his heritage. Her final statement suggests she occasionally feels disempowered in her role as a parent.

Annitah's Poem

We want our children to understand where they've come from

We feel they're Africans, as much as they're Australian, living in Australia, first and foremost, they are African

Growing up in Kenya, we would not do this -, we would not allow this -

Sometimes we feel our hands are tied

6.4.4 Patience, Kenya

Patience was born in Kenya, East Africa, and was between the ages of 35 and 39 when I interviewed her. She speaks Swahili and English. She is the last-born of eleven children, about which she said, 'growing up, I had to respect everybody who was ahead of me, and my brothers and sisters were allowed to discipline me regardless, even the one immediately in front of me'. Patience told me her family had very little wealth but she grew up with a lot of love and laughter. There were always people passing by and coming in to visit. She was a shepherd girl, and she 'took care of a lot of animals back home'. Since being in Australia Patience completed a Bachelor of Theology and began a Masters of Social Work, of which she completed one semester. Patience focuses on her work at the church she is part of, providing 'help through life and issues and praying'. She said, 'I think that's part of being a shepherd, just taking care of people if I can'. She works as a pastoral assistant part time, and as a disability worker part time. Patience's I Poem and We Poem emphasises the cultural strengths of community orientation, duty, discipline, generosity, and the confusion and conflict she experiences translating these strengths into her life in Australia.

Patience's Poem

I come from a very community-oriented culture

*I am a child of my village,
anyone can discipline me if they want,
and I can discipline the little kids*

*I'm just giving, and I'm not expecting anything back,
with or without, you can give whatever you have*

*I love my work at the church,
and just being there to listen*

*We are brought up very communal,
we find it hard not to say hi to our next-door neighbours*

*We find it very conflicting and confusing,
to bring up the rights that we have been brought up with,
and use them here in Australia*

6.4.5 Daniel, South Sudan

Daniel is from South Sudan and at the time of his interview was aged between 40 and 44. He speaks Arabic and English and at least one more language (his mother-tongue, which he did not disclose). Daniel came to Australia in the mid-2000s as a refugee. He is married and has children. Of the time before he came to Australia, Daniel said 'I really live in very, extremely different environment and miserable, had miserable life there. Human being cannot imagine it if he is not born in that situation'. He expressed pride in being an Australian citizen. Daniel was completing bridging studies to enter tertiary education at the time of our meeting. He was recommended to me by a member of the research reference group and by other participants as a respected person with an interest in human rights. When interviewed, Daniel did not have a paid job but was volunteering as a deacon in the church he is part of, a community leader and support person for families with a case at FACS. Daniel's I Poem emphasised his personal experience of trauma, the difficulties in his current life, and his commitment to generous service of others. His You Poem emphasised loss from the third person perspective.

Daniel's Poem

*I was born in the war,
I really live in very, very, extremely, different environment and
miserable,
I face a lot!*

*I try to commit myself to help my people
I applied a little leadership that I had in me,
and the generosity to serve people
Like, to love, let me say, to love each other, to help them,
encourage them how to look after all this, to plan for their new life
in this country*

*It's not that easy!
You don't have a garden,
You don't have cow,
You don't have goat,
You don't have, er, money,
And there is no anyone that's related to you
You don't have relative here: no father, no mum,
Nothing!*

I need to be encouraged, but I try to encourage

6.4.6 Gloria, Kenya

Gloria was born in Kenya, East Africa, and was between the ages of 50 and 54 when I interviewed her. She speaks Swahili and English and at least one other language, her mother-tongue, which she did not disclose to me. Gloria is a vibrant woman with children, grandchildren and nephews and nieces she cares for. When asked to introduce herself, Gloria exclaimed, 'Eh! I don't know who am I! [laughs] I'm a free soul! [laughs]', perhaps subtly reminding me that I had not modelled reciprocity by first introducing myself. Later she told me that she arrived alone as an asylum seeker in the later 1990s and was granted refugee status within a short period of time. She worked hard to bring her children to Australia in the years that followed, obtaining citizenship after about six years. She retains ties to her mother, sisters, brothers and other family and community in Kenya. A few years ago, Gloria completed a Diploma course, focusing on community welfare. Gloria is a leader in the African and Australian communities, in both paid and unpaid capacities. She is a passionate advocate for women's rights, especially creating a culture that prevents rape and violence against women. She also promotes multicultural ideals working in the law enforcement sector. Gloria's I, We and They Poem focuses on relationships, interpersonal dynamics, power and storytelling.

Gloria's Poem

*I've been born in a big family,
family full of love,
I love people!*

*When you know somebody, it's so easy to do whatever you are
doing,
once you put a face to a name*

*We have never, never talked about [our experiences],
so, it's been sitting somewhere
there a lot of rape, there's a lot of abuse,
there's a lot of, there's a lot of war, what happened
You cry and you laugh, you cry, you laugh,
there's a lot of dancing, there's a lot of humour,
stories are told in a - it's like a river, the way it meanders like that*

*You have to open [the door] for them, your husband,
wherever he is,
he comes midnight, or whatever time,
he can't open the door for himself*

*You have to warm the food for them,
anything the husband wants,
you do it*

*You are not supposed to question anything
You're supposed to take any shit*

*They say, you're a woman!
That why you're a woman!
They want you just to be a woman!
They say, a woman's place is in the kitchen
In our culture, there's no divorce*

6.4.7 Nelson, South Sudan

Nelson is from South Sudan, and was the youngest participant, aged between 25 and 29 when I interviewed him. He speaks Dinka, Arabic and English. As a child, Nelson lived with his father in a rural area but was later brought to his mother in a refugee camp. The family sought safety in Ethiopia, Uganda and finally Kenya. He was a good scholar and competed with his brother for academic recognition. In the refugee camp, Nelson was involved in organising dances for the church he was part of, the choir, leadership programs and a human rights club. He joined scouts, and showed leadership through playwriting, debating and soccer. These activities engaged him 'with different, different groups of young people'. Nelson was resettled to Australia in the early 2000s. He completed his HSC here, followed by Bachelors and Masters Degrees. Nelson met a girl before leaving the refugee camp, and they were reunited a few years ago. They are now married and have three children. Nelson has multiple responsibilities in the community, that of bicultural worker, community representative and social sports event coordinator. He is a husband, father, brother and son with attendant roles and responsibilities. Nelson's We and They Poems emphasise the cultural strengths of traditional family and community practices, responsibility, valuing of education, and commitment to truth.

Nelson's Poem

We are strongly traditional and, in essence, do keep some of our traditional practices,

We are a patriarchal society

The value of our community is in the cow,

The cattle, it is the most important element, it is the exchange value

We practise different religions

There was much paganism and animism that we practise, until the missionaries came, and Christianity came into our community

We value marriage and family strongly

We spend a lot of cows on dowries

Every child girl has a price on it, dowry price that is determined by the upbringing, the way they are brought up, and by a particular family background

There is a chief that is in charge of all the legal issues that arise, and social issues

Our system structure is where family intervention happens,

As a head of a family you're not just only yourself are the head of the family, but there are other relatives that actually look after the welfare of your family

[My] people, they are altruists and patriots

They much work for the truth, that's what they stand for, They have that strong principle of standing for truth

We very much are very educated community

6.4.8 Solomon, Sierra Leone

Solomon is from Sierra Leone and at the time of his interview was aged between 45 and 49. He arrived in Australia in the mid-2000s. Solomon is a husband, father, and uncle. Solomon told me he is the 'second to last' of four siblings, and his siblings are still in Sierra Leone. He said: 'right now my role is a family man, got the wife's family and my family. I think I am the only person who is fortunate to be in a country like this.' Solomon obtained a Bachelor Degree before being resettled to Australia, and two postgraduate diplomas since being in Sydney, in community work and counselling. In Australia, he has worked as a community project worker, capacity building officer, interpreter and bilingual support worker. He devotes time to a community development organisation which sends money and items of need back to Sierra Leone. Solomon told me he worked as a journalist prior to arriving in Australia and emphasised his commitment to writing about peace, justice and social development, confirming he regularly writes socio-political pieces for an online newspaper. Solomon's We Poem emphasises the cultural strengths of responsibility for family, decorum based on respect for elders, and ensuring no harm or disturbance to others.

Solomon's Poem

*We have that hierarchical control,
that is to say, the first born is in charge of the sibling coming after
it*

We have this extended family - cousins, uncles, niece

*Culturally, an African child is an asset to the family,
he or she will be taking care of them,
people rely on him*

*We that are fortunate to find ourselves here,
all eyes are on boss, regardless of what you face here*

*Even in Africa, not all strangers [are] always welcome
We are open, but we try test and see how you can respond,
if you are a genuine stranger*

*We are taught that your voice should not be loud,
as long as two, three elders are around,
because they will turn and look
If you raised it, your voice,
when you meet the eyes with one, you will know what it means*

*We are taught,
I should not hit you, I should not insult you
I should not prevent you from crossing here without any help from
me*

*Thou shall not kill
Thy shall bear another man's witness, don't bear false witness
Those are all being taught
Be your brother's keeper, help one another
We are taught not to disturb somebody when he sleeps
It was there, and is still here*

6.4.9 Emmanuel, Sierra Leone

Emmanuel is from Sierra Leone, West Africa, and at the time of his interview was aged between 35 and 39. He arrived in Australia in the early 2000s after fleeing war, moving into Guinea before being offered sponsorship from his uncle and brother as a humanitarian entrant. He speaks Krio and English and is Muslim. He has a wife and children, of whom he is very proud. Emmanuel was in the building industry at home, but when he came here was unable find similar work, so he undertook volunteer work which led to further study. Emmanuel now works as a disability support worker and has a leadership role in a community association formed to revitalise his home community in a district of Sierra Leone. Emmanuel's We Poem emphasised the cultural strengths of family-centred and collaborative arrangements, religious tolerance, self-sufficiency and acceptance of life circumstances.

Emmanuel's Poem

We are Muslims

We have extended family

*We are farmers,
we need these ladies to be helping us to do the work there
We can marry two or three so that they will do some domestic
work,
and it will be easy for us, all the burden will not be on me*

*We don't have that religious separation,
we don't care where you belong to*

*We look after our self,
accept whatever come*

6.4.10 Chanise, Rwanda

Chanise is from Rwanda and at the time of her interview was aged between 35 and 39. She speaks Kinyarwanda, French and English and is Christian. Chanise experienced the upheaval of the 1994 genocide as a teenager, fleeing her hometown and returning some months later. She graduated from school and completed teacher training, before undertaking leadership positions in her home country, overseeing standards of education, then working as a district official and later overseeing sanitation quality. Chanise was offered the opportunity to undertake further study in Australia, arriving in 2011 with her husband and children. Circumstances changed back home so Chanise and her husband applied for asylum, awaiting protection in precarious circumstances. Once granted, Chanise undertook a leadership program and then progressed from work as a cleaner, to multicultural project work and an educational planning role. Chanise's We, I and They Poems emphasise traditional practices including dancing, music and those relating to friendship and exchange of vows.

Chanise's Poem

*We've got 90-something per cent of Christian in my country, that's one thing
it's a bit hard to separate the religion and the culture*

*We've got dances, traditional music, that we used to dance,
and it's very common, because we dance, dancing is very important;
And it's very different from others,
it's not the same as other African cultures*

*We love cows
Cows are very important to our culture, so we value cow
I am a friend of you, or if I got you as a new friend,
I would give you a cow just to show that you're valued to my family
And what you would do,
you would need to come to me,
and just do a little bit of party,
to show me that you are happy with the cow that I gave you
A cow also means something like a dowry in our culture,
if you are going to marry someone, you will give the family of the bridegroom,
would pay, ah, would give a cow, or many cows, depending on how they value the bride
We dance like cows, because we do it like this...
You know, the horn?
We need to put our arms up,
and we do this very elegant, kind of, and move our legs very slow*

*People used to cut, I think, a part of their skin, and take blood and drink blood -
If you are my friend, there was like, a kind of obligation
If you drunk someone's blood, that means that nothing can separate you*

6.4.11 Albert, South Sudan

Albert is from South Sudan and at the time of his interview was aged between 45 and 49. Albert's early life was affected by the first war in Southern Sudan and he was born in a refugee camp in Uganda. He and his parents came back to Southern Sudan in the mid-1970s, after the peace agreement of the first war. Albert spoke about his long-term interests: 'pastoral care, dealing with humanity and looking at typically how the church has been relieving human suffering'. These were strengthened by completing a Bachelors and Masters of Divinity in Sudan and then serving his community, first as a Catholic Brother and then as an Anglican Priest. Albert arrived in Australia in the early 2000s. He speaks Dholuo, Arabic and English. He is married and has children. Since arriving in Australia, he has completed additional Bachelors and Masters Degrees. Albert occupied two roles in this research – he was both a member of the research reference group, and a participant. Like Daniel, Albert's We Poem emphasised the trauma created by war and the difficulties of arriving here as a refugee, but also the cultural strengths of being motivated by shame and honour, social rules, and rites of passage which create a sense of belonging.

Albert's Poem

We experienced...!

*The enormous suffering that we went through is not easy,
where people jump over their loved one's body*

*Our people had a lot of trouble, because of living outside our
country for quite a long time.*

When we came here, life wasn't easy

*We borrow a bit of Mediterranean culture,
where we have what is called shame and honour culture.*

We could be, actually, one of the largest Nilotic tribes in Africa.

*We don't marry our next of kins, we don't marry our nephews or
cousins until a certain generation is gone*

We have a rite of passage

*In the past, a girl or a boy is not allowed to marry before they have
been, they have gone through the rite of passage
this is the group that can now protect a village if there is a fight*

*If there is a rite of passage, a song will be sung,
others would say, sing for us your song,
and that would identify that you are from that group*

6.4.12 Sia, Sierra Leone

Sia is from Sierra Leone and at the time of her interview was aged between 45 and 49. She speaks Krio, English and her mother-tongue, and is Christian. Sia worked as a high school teacher in her country before fleeing her home with her children during the civil war, having been separated from her husband. The family stayed in a refugee camp in Guinea for about five years before they gained passage to Australia in the early 2000s. Sia retrained to work as a settlement services worker, undertaking a Graduate Diploma when she arrived in Australia. Sia's I, We and They Poems emphasised sharing, openness, concern for others, respect for elders, shared duties to children of the community and rites of passage to teach skills for adulthood.

Sia's Poem

*In my culture, what is really, really important is that communal spirit, wherein we share,
and that openness, in terms of, if we have issues, we see ourselves as our brothers' keepers,
and also that respect for elders as well*

*We sometimes say that children are heard and not seen,
but yet, still, there's that concern and care for the children as a rule,
and if I am in an environment, or a situation,
where I see any child that is doing something wrong,
I'm going to reprimand that child,
because it takes a community to bring up a child,*

These are some of the qualities that I love about my culture!

*We see ourselves like brothers and sisters,
and the children are our children*

*We have right of passage for boys as well as girls,
and it's very enriched,
it's where stories of our ancestors are read to the new generation,
that's where also they teach them songs and traditional dance
forecast, you know, as to how to take care of the household and
the family at large,
how to cook, and how to take care of kids or your family when
they're sick*

6.4.13 Nola, Sierra Leone

Nola is from Sierra Leone, West Africa, and at the time of her interview was aged between 50 and 54. She speaks Krio, English and her mother-tongue. Nola told me that as a child she was placed in the care of her auntie who 'had been married for 20 years without a child'. She 'grew up in a polygamy home' and was outspoken whenever faced with 'something that was not ok'. Her observations were often unwelcome and she remembers being told to 'keep quiet'. A police officer during the civil war, Nola had been on duty when the rebels attacked. Her flight from the rebels took Nola and some of her small children to Guinea where she was offered protection and resettlement by the Australian Government. She arrived in Australia in the early 2000s with a few of her children; some were left behind when she fled. It took her two anxious years to locate her remaining children, and they finally joined her in Australia. Nola currently works as a project officer for a refugee resettlement organisation and engages in national and international advocacy on behalf of women and people from diverse refugee backgrounds. Her We Poem emphasised the cultural strengths of family-orientation, responsibility to others, respect for one another and towards elders, shared duties to children, and aspects that bring people together such as food and music.

Nola's Poem

*We believe in family,
we are family-orientated people*

*We don't have age barrier when it comes to responsibility,
if you don't have the upper hand,
you can be 50 years old or 60, depending on people,
the family can still give you a support*

*Individualism, we don't have it,
we don't have something like that, "Mine! It's mine!"*

We respect one another

*We believe in our neighbours to look after our children,
when children are going wrong, doing the wrong thing,
the neighbours can intervene if you are not around*

*We have that culture of respect for elder people,
whether they are your close family or not*

*We have that culture of togetherness and sharing,
together,
we eat in one dish*

*We don't go to school and learn about music,
how to sing high tunes and all those sorts of things,
we love music and we can sing any type of music*

Sia and Nola were interviewed together, and theirs was the last interview I chose to conduct for the present study.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the participants and provided salient details about their roles, current circumstances and lived contexts to the reader. In addition, it has elaborated upon the hermeneutic and phenomenological underpinnings of the present study of human rights, particularly the aspect of Heidegger's work that constructs lived experience as deeply poetic. I Poems, We Poems, You Poems and They Poems were presented in combination with brief synopses that highlighted key aspects of participants' lives, as well as cultural principles and values. This data contextualises the rich, ideographic human rights data presented in Chapters 7, 8 and 9.

7. Ways of Knowing Human Rights

7.1 Introduction

This is the first of three results chapters which answer the research questions: *how do African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights, and what might this mean for social work practice?* It presents the rich and varied perspectives on human rights held by members of African families from refugee backgrounds who participated in the study. Chapter 7 reveals participants' understandings of human rights, teasing out the layers of knowledge that emerged in this study, from conversant to 'not-knowing' human rights. Consistent with hermeneutic, phenomenological inquiry, the chapter focuses on the means of expression chosen by participants to convey their understandings about human rights, including simile, metaphor, mother-tongue words and English words and phrases. The chapter pays close attention to details provided by participants about their everyday worlds and lived experience to promote phenomenological engagement with the data. In doing so, the chapter also highlights prominent themes of time and place, gender and power, culture, values, roles and norms that were present in the data relating to human rights ways of knowing. A critical cultural lens is utilised throughout this chapter to analyse these findings, highlighting socio-economic and historic factors such as gender, poverty, upheaval and corruption which shape understandings of human rights and reveal insights about power, agency, and the hopes and fears of individuals, families and communities in resettlement contexts.

7.2 A lexicon for human rights

This section outlines the lexicon for human rights that emerged from the study, including the similes and metaphors, words and phrases provided by

participants when asked to describe what human rights mean to their families and communities. Participant data contained nuanced and culturally-informed understandings of human rights with some level of accordance across different African countries of origin, ethnic groups and mother tongues. The ways of knowing human rights gleaned in the present study are accompanied by hermeneutic analysis which reveals areas of resonance, hesitance and contradiction within and across the data set, and highlights salient contextual and conceptual factors.

7.3 Simile and metaphor

Similes and metaphors use language to describe something by referral to something else, usually simpler or every day. In this study, participants described human rights by using imagery relating to their everyday lived experience, thereby expressing culturally-located human rights understandings and perspectives. Below, three metaphors are presented: human rights as light, eating from a bowl of rice, and as gold scattered in the sand. These metaphors provide symbolic and thought-provoking language for human rights. They harnessed lived experience and visual imagery from *there* (Africa) and *here* (Australia). They diversify human rights understandings and emphases for social work and related professions in Australia. So too did other metaphors provided by participants during the study, including the metaphor of parallel lines, falling on the fire, battling to the last man in war, the chewing of a kola nut, and circles of peace, which are discussed later in this chapter, or in Chapter 9, Ways of Doing Human Rights.

The simile of human rights being 'like a light' was provided by Daniel from South Sudan. When asked what human rights meant to his family and community, Daniel replied:

Human right, or the right of humanity, it's look like... when you see the light somewhere there... like, somewhere lighting or shining... it brightens around, isn't it?... Human right is something, ok, very powerful... it's like a ministry to the people, all of the mankind... you feel like your right, your life have been excused, and there is something actually about to help your life and it is called a human right. That's why I'm saying human right sometime when we look at it, it look like something, something like a light... yes, and the other end is different from human right. So, if the human right is not alive for everybody, to every country, or to every nation, or every land, and every society, I think the light, the light will dim. (Daniel, South Sudan)

By employing this simile of human rights as a light Daniel expresses positive connotations about human rights, while the figurative language allows him to evoke a level of intensity regarding his encounters with human rights. He conveys that he sees power in human rights to illuminate people's lives for the better. During his explanation, Daniel locates this simile within a religious framework, alluding to TV evangelists and to the role of human rights being 'like a ministry to the people, all of the mankind'. Given Daniel's identity as a deacon providing pastoral care in his community, it seems that his definition arises out of, or is partly informed by, his role in the community.

Daniel further elaborates on the simile of a light, and the simile becomes a complex cultural metaphor. In the quote above we see that the metaphor of human rights as a light emphasises fairness, safety, welcome, hopefulness and clear-sightedness. The metaphor is inclusive: 'if it is not alive for everybody... the light will dim'. Daniel would like to see human rights experienced by every person and in every land.

Daniel's metaphor of human rights as a light evokes his refugee experience. He highlights two states of being - that of being illuminated and that

of being in the darkness. Staying with a light as a meaningful simile/metaphor for human rights in the interview created the opportunity for Daniel to safely describe his family and community's lived experience of human rights. Daniel prioritised describing religious and socio-economic oppression, referring to corruption, killings, lack of freedom, the 'two-decade war in South Sudan' and leaders who 'neglect the human right'. Daniel emphasised the importance of leaders who ensure their country is ruled 'equal, in equality, and dignity, the right and democracy'. He noted the light brought to the darkness by human rights workers 'at home', and the acceptance and relief he had experienced 'here'.

The metaphor of human rights as a light is evocative. Members of the research reference group deepened my reading of this metaphor by reminding me that the daily lives of many African peoples are shaped by the rising and setting of the sun. As one research reference group member commented, 'when the sun goes down, the stars became visible and people gather under the stars to rest and share stories'. My own observations of this came from my time in South Africa where about 80% of rural communities in the Northern Province of South Africa did not have access to electricity. In this setting, the light of a kerosene lamp, a candle, a fire or a battery operated light bulb created a defined space and signified clarity, safety, hope, presence and welcome. Through hermeneutic analysis we can see that this simile and metaphor provided a definition of human rights grounded in Daniel's everyday experience as well as shaped uniquely by his particular experience of fleeing war and violence and becoming a refugee, reiterating the beliefs highlighted in his discussion of cultural strengths earlier in the interview (see Daniel's Poem in Chapter 6), including his personal experience of trauma, the difficulties in his current life, and his commitment to generous service of others.

A second metaphor, that of eating from a bowl of rice as applicable to human rights, was provided by Solomon from Sierra Leone. When asked what human rights meant to his family and community, Solomon replied:

So, like eating with elders. You shouldn't talk when you are eating. Yes, and when you're eating with elders you have to, have to held, or hold on, to the plate so that it will not be swinging, swinging. Yes, and they will watch you how you're eating. They want you to eat that gentle... And within the rice bowl there are boundaries, there are cultural boundaries. You eat here. This is your own area. You should not cross that or that man's area. Normally we eat... you see the rice will stay up here, that one will eat up here... So those are applicable to human rights. To tell you that you eat to this point, the other guy eats to this point, another person eat to this point. Culturally we eat as a family... Yes, so if you do jump that the next person will get hot. Yes. You will realise that you break the barrier. (Solomon, Sierra Leone)

This description of human rights is rich in imagery. Though a man of nearly 50, his comments here tap into vivid memories, and he becomes a youngster, experiencing again how he learnt self-discipline and social norms and customs from his elders. In our interview, Solomon indicated a rice bowl with his hands, showing me the boundaries and conjuring his gathered family. By doing so he conveyed an understanding of human rights that was alive within family and community.

It appears that this metaphor for human rights elucidates three main ideas that are important to Solomon, his family and his community. The first idea that Solomon conveys in the above quote relates to relationship and process. He

describes an expectation that eating behaviours are characterised by gentleness, respect and decorum. Using the metaphor of eating from the bowl of rice, Solomon emphasises social hierarchies in his family and community, and the way social order is maintained. Solomon describes how the elders will watch you while you are eating and ensure that you behave 'gently'. By discussing human rights in this way, Solomon alludes to the important role elders fulfil in his family and community, and underscores their power and influence regarding human rights.

The second idea Solomon conveys with this human rights metaphor of the rice bowl relates to division of resources. This is signified by his emphasis on boundaries within the food bowl. His comments suggest that human rights, like consuming your just portion, are consciously but subtly negotiated; as the lines are not officially demarcated in the bowl, they must be imagined and adhered to. This emphasises the importance of self-discipline and regard for others in a model of human rights.

Finally, Solomon's metaphor makes it clear that crossing the boundaries, that is, eating more than your share, will lead to conflict: 'if you do jump that the next person will get hot'. There are consequences for such incursions. We understand that this is to be avoided. Solomon linked this idea intentionally back to my research question: 'there are cultural boundaries... So those are applicable to human rights'.

The metaphor of the rice bowl reiterated and emphasised beliefs highlighted by Solomon earlier in his interview, including the influence of the elders and highlights important norms of behaviour including gentleness, decorum, respect for boundaries, modesty and awareness of others. These are outlined in Solomon's Poem in Chapter 6. In addition, the metaphor conveys the

social enforcement of codes of behaviour that are taught and internalised, rather than being documented, discussed or otherwise formalised.

A third metaphor, that of gold in the sand as applicable to human rights was provided by Albert from South Sudan. While discussing how social workers might utilise the knowledge he had already shared, Albert commented:

I'm glad to say that at this stage, some of my community members – because we share the cultural background – they are really hardworking. It's very few even in newspapers now, people are talking of Sudanese just sitting there. But we also got to understand as professionals that the government is treating the Sudanese like any Australian, at this time that we are in. Is like, the good example is gold is scattered in the sand. And you are the refugees, you are any sort of Australian, you have to go and get it from the sand. So, if you are lucky, that mean if you get a full time job, the government doesn't say you didn't get it. You got a job, you do it. Keep it. And our people are keeping it, like everybody, and I can see our community are working hard.
(Albert, South Sudan)

The metaphor of gold in the sand conveys at least three different ideas. Firstly, it vividly evokes the principle of equal opportunity as a human right. This understanding appears to reflect the lived experience of Albert's family and community, that opportunities are available to you no matter whether you are a refugee or another kind of Australian. According to Albert, these opportunities are impartial and not influenced by ethnicity. Finding the gold is a matter of luck, but luck that knows no ethnic divide.

Secondly, the metaphor of gold in the sand is symbolic of social order and good governance. Importantly, the government does not interfere to strip people of opportunities they have worked for, such as gaining employment. One might search for the gold unmolested, and retain it once discovered. These statements exhibit admiration and appreciation about the stability and opportunities available in Australian society.

Thirdly, the metaphor of gold in the sand symbolises responsibility and hard work as positive social norms. Equality of opportunity must be combined with strong personal work ethic, represented by willingness to dig in the sand to discover the gold. Fairness, justice and personal and community virtue coalesce as key elements of human rights in Albert's statement. Thus, Albert's metaphor reiterates beliefs highlighted in his introductory comments about the strengths of his culture, including that his family and community are motivated by shame and honour, social rules, and rites of passage which create a sense of belonging. These are outlined in Albert's Poem in Chapter 6.

In addition, the metaphor of gold scattered in the sand evokes the theme of investment of self and society in equal measure to ensure successful cultural adjustment. Albert suggests that the role of institutions and professionals is to provide opportunities in a non-discriminatory way, while the role of the individual is to seek, grasp and retain those opportunities as a duty.

However, there are tensions in Albert's use of the metaphor of gold in the sand and elucidatory comments. Albert says, 'it's very few, even in newspapers now, people are talking of Sudanese just sitting there'. This comment seems to allude to a range of negative stereotypes perpetuated by certain government officials and media outlets. We know from other research reports and media analysis that such stereotypes about the Sudanese in Australia persist (Horyniak,

Lim, & Higgs, 2016; Matereke, 2009; Wahlquist, 2018). These stereotypes are underpinned by, and reinforce, racist assumptions, which damage the good reputation of Albert's community. Perhaps the metaphor of gold in the sand is also a metaphor for the wider population, a reminder that we are 'the lucky country', the land of opportunity, the 'fair go' and multiculturalism.

Metaphor and imagery featured elsewhere in the research data. Solomon provided the idea of cultures meeting in mutual understanding like parallel lines (see Chapter 1, Introduction). Angelina spoke about 'free freedom' (see below in this chapter), Daniel spoke about 'falling on the fire' and Albert spoke about battling to the last man in war (see Chapter 8). Solomon provided the metaphor of chewing of the kola nut, and Angelina provided the metaphor of circles of peace, both of which are discussed in Chapter 10, Exercising human rights. The similes and metaphors discussed above, and those to come, are vivid and symbolic, contextualised by participants' cultural knowledge and informed by their experiences.

Metaphors employed in international human rights literature address similar themes, including stereotypes, justice, development and responsibility, but are more dominated by Western-centric perspectives (see for example, Gregg, 2016; Kleinig & Evans, 2013; Mutua, 2001; Perelman & Young, 2010). However, there is surprisingly little literature about metaphor as utilised by African families from refugee backgrounds to convey human rights understandings in resettlement contexts. As is discussed in Chapter 11, Discussion, the above findings reveal important human rights 'funds of knowledge' (Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992), that is, strategic and cultural resources to which African families from refugee backgrounds have access, and extend our human rights lexicon for social work practice.

7.4 Mother-tongue words for human rights

While all the research interviews were conducted in English, participants were encouraged to express human rights meanings in their mother-tongues or preferred languages. Two phrases from participant mother-tongues and one from French were provided in the present study: *uburenganzira bwa muntu* (Kinyarwanda), *droit de l'homme* (French) and *tweru padano* (Acholi dialect). These are defined and discussed below.

The phrases *uburenganzira bwa muntu* and *droit de l'homme* were provided by Chanise, a multi-lingual participant from Rwanda:

Yes [we have a word for human rights]. Very hard for you to understand although if you would be able to write it. We say uburenganzira bwa muntu. Muntu is human. Uburenganzira is rights, then uburenganzira bwa muntu is like to – [Interviewer: Rights to the human?] Yes, that's it. [Interviewer: Do you want to write it down for me?] Yeah, of course, yes... Sometimes some people use it in French but, droit de l'homme, but we use uburenganzira bwa muntu... What it means to me is actually broad as well. But I think it means a lot. It means that people need to have the same rights, need to be equal, need to be, um, not selected from one culture, from one religion, from the colour of the person... We need the right to life, we need the right to education, to employment, which is a big deal. (Chanise, Rwanda)

Chanise translated each word separately in the phrase *uburenganzira bwa muntu*, and then confirmed that the phrase could be translated as 'rights to the human'. *Uburenganzira bwa muntu* could be an introduced phrase, that is,

translated from the French *droit de l'homme*, which was offered by Chanise alongside the Kinyarwanda phrase.

The Kinyarwanda and French expressions Chanise shared with me, as seen above, had a very particular and dynamic effect on our research conversation. They allowed her firstly to access and convey to me her conceptual knowledge about human rights. Upon stating and defining these two phrases, Chanise listed a range of important aspects of human rights including people being treated equally regardless of colour, culture, and religion, the right to life, to seek asylum, to education, housing and employment. She spoke about social inclusion, freedom from discrimination and equal access to the fundamental requirements for a good life. Although Chanise did not speak about formal human rights instruments, her definition of human rights overlaps with the provisions of the UDHR, specifically Articles 1, 2, 14, 23, 25 and related instruments such as ICESCR (United Nations, 1948, 1966b). It seems possible that Chanise might have conducted some research about human rights and formal human rights frameworks prior to our research interview.

In addition, these phrases allowed her to express the most important aspects of human rights to her family and community, which she then elaborated upon later in the interview. In a way, taking the opportunity to define human rights via her mother tongue and the formal language of her homeland, Chanise sketched out the parameters of our conversation. She then recounted stories of her teenage memories of genocide, her more recent experience of applying for asylum in Australia, her own struggles – and those of her friends – to find work that affords dignity, and the value she places on formal education. Statements such as, ‘um, I thought about an example...’, made soon after providing the above phrases and definitions of human rights, tells me that she might have considered

these matters beforehand and be accessing pre-prepared stories during the interview, strengthened by the structure afforded by her definition of human rights.

Another mother-tongue expression, *twero padano*, was provided by Albert, from South Sudan. Albert, knowledgeable about human rights through his studies in Australia, had consulted with his community elders before meeting me for our interview. When I asked whether he had a word or words in his language for human rights, he said:

The words for human rights in my language doesn't exist. But having said that, the educated class and some of us say the words such as twero. Twero means responsibility. And that word, twero padano mean the responsibility of people. It is not a right word to me, because it would translate as responsibility for human beings. This word does not make a better translation for human rights, because it would mean human responsibility. The word human rights, as I said, does not have great meaning to my family and to my community... Like, we who experienced the war, and the community that have come from war background, the word human right doesn't have meaning, completely... (Albert, South Sudan)

Albert's first statement is significant: 'the word for human rights does not exist'. He says, even within the educated class, the words do not translate. He suggests that living in the village limited the acquisition of knowledge about human rights. If you lived in the cities of North and South Sudan you might have had potentially greater access to human rights learning. Thus, place connects with underlying factors such as access to resources and awareness of ideas not

directly relevant to survival or the pressing needs of family and community. In this excerpt, Albert illuminates the absence of choice in relation to acquiring knowledge about human rights.

The second overarching factor that Albert suggests affects acquisition of knowledge about human rights is time, in the sense of how historical events such as war and displacement affected his generation's access to human rights ideas and privileges. For Albert's generation, human rights do not make sense as they could not be claimed, nor could groups or governments be held accountable for failing to uphold human rights. If his generation had received human rights training, what would they have done with it anyway? He suggests it would not have been useful. Albert's explanation of why human rights do not exist in his community relates to the elements of place and time and the context of his lived experience of abuse and war.

In contrast, human responsibility does make sense, and is a foundational cultural norm. Human responsibility is held by people for others, that is, by individuals towards their families and communities and vice versa. Responsibility for family and community 'belongs' to people, 'In my culture, especially my uncle... we normally call them 'big father', because the responsibility of the family *belongs to him*'.

In his *We Poem* (Chapter 6), Albert described his culture as one based on principles of 'shame and honour'. The phrase *twerō padano* appears to link Albert's understanding of human rights with these fundamental drivers in his culture. *Twerō padano*, or the fulfilment of one's responsibilities to others, is a matter of honour while not meeting these obligations is considered shameful. Albert elaborates with various examples about the meaning of responsibility in his culture, and we see that it is holistic and relational. Regarding school

attendance, he says, 'to go to school is a responsibility of the whole clan and the family. Although school is, education is free, but the family have to do'. This is an inclusive statement, encompassing a variety of roles. The child has a responsibility to attend school, while the parents, relatives, village and central government all have responsibilities to enable this. He explains that relatives might accommodate the child if the parents live too far away, while the government will pay for teachers, but the village might provide the necessary implements, the chalk and blackboard.

In two illuminating examples about *twero padano*, he says, 'you have a land to cultivate, so you have to provide [food] to your family', and 'we have to go and work and clean the [road]way, because the chief was saying it needs to be clean', concluding, 'we do those things by ourselves. The government doesn't offer anything'. Albert's understanding of human rights, relating to food, shelter, education, and public thoroughfares, is of collective responsibility held by the family and community. A third and different example of *twero padano* provided by Albert is where a parent fails to honour their responsibilities to their children: 'no one would leave their family go without food. It is shameful. It means that the person is lazy or an alcoholic, and such people are treated as outcasts. You will be a talk of the day'. He goes on to say that those children will carry the mark of shame and experience rejection from other families at important moments such as when they seek to marry. This suggests that frameworks for human rights must recognise that members of the community are held accountable by others. Albert from South Sudan, like Solomon from Sierra Leone, conveys the social enforcement of codes of behaviour that are taught and internalised, rather than being documented, discussed or otherwise formalised.

In this section, expressions for human rights from diverse languages have been analysed. The statements about human rights recorded in this section are affirmative, certain and immediate. They are characterised by nuance, exploration, explanation and the sharing of wisdom. When asked, ‘do you have a word or words in your language for human rights?’, participants were able to convey a sense of ownership over, and pride in, the knowledge they shared. Some made the striking claim that human rights words do not exist or have meaning in some African contexts, particularly in relation to war and displacement as part of the human experience, whereas responsibilities to others do have meaning. In Chapter 10, Discussion, I reflect upon these themes further and reflect upon contributions made by the study to good practice in the conduct of intercultural human rights dialogue, considering cultural safety and participant power in research.

Human rights meanings were also expressed in English words and phrases. Analysis of a range of English words and phrases for human rights revealed similar emphases and nuances of meaning attached to human rights by several participants, highlighting the importance and ambiguity of language within intercultural discussions about human rights. These are discussed below.

7.5 English words and phrases

The English words and phrases that participants utilised to convey their understanding of human rights in the research included freedom, individual rights, respect, liberty, healthcare, education and right to life. These words tended to emphasise core values and concerns of participant families and communities. In this section I will analyse human rights understandings conveyed via English expressions. Other words and concepts, such as care and boundaries, will be discussed in Chapter 9, Ways of Doing Human Rights.

Freedom was presented in both positive and negative lights by participants in the present study. The first example was provided by Emmanuel when I asked whether he had a word or words in his language for human rights. He responded:

Yeah! It is freedom. You are free to choose what you want to be.

It is a freedom of liberty. Um, human rights really, I think everybody have that feeling that, I've come to this world, I have the right to live, and um there is no way you're going to restrict somebody from their own ideas, from their own beliefs and from what they stand for. (Emmanuel, Sierra Leone)

Emmanuel's statement about human rights being 'freedom' conveys at least three different ideas. Firstly, it emphasises the importance of personal agency and a social environment that supports your ideas, beliefs and what you stand for. Within the context of the research interview, the idea that 'you are free to choose what you want to be' and have a 'right to live' relates to the experiences Emmanuel shared in his introductory statements, such as his struggle to find skilled work when he arrived in Australia, and the steps he took to establish himself here (see Emmanuel's Poem, Chapter 6). Voluntary work, enabled by his educational choices, led to paid employment here. His employers provided encouragement and support which enabled Emmanuel to progress, make choices and experience increased freedom and agency. In this sense, human rights as freedom relates to opportunity in a way that resonates with the metaphor of gold scattered in the sand provided by Albert from South Sudan (as discussed in Chapter 7).

Secondly, human rights encompass freedom to express one's beliefs and what one stands for as illustrated in the above quote. During his interview, Emmanuel recounted stories about his father which emphasised his father's

faithful approach to life and tolerance of other religious convictions in their local community. This man married both Muslim and Christian wives in keeping with their traditional, polygamous norms, and encouraged his children to live a faithful life, allowing them to freely choose their preferred faith community. Indeed, Emmanuel described his father's pragmatic, plural approach to religion, influenced perhaps by schooling and resources present in their community, and underpinned by the religious tolerance that Emmanuel considered commonplace at the time. According to Emmanuel, these behaviours confer and represent freedom and illustrate human rights.

Thirdly, Emmanuel's idea of freedom emphasises simply existing without restriction. In another experiential example, Emmanuel described his ill-treatment at the hands of a foster-brother. Living away from home because of an arrangement made between his father and a respected colleague, the teenage Emmanuel was bullied by a boy of a similar age. He felt the behaviour was condoned and encouraged by his foster-father. The bullying did not cease until he, Emmanuel, took an assertive stance, in the absence of his foster-father.

Contextualising Emmanuel's definition of human rights by reviewing stories he related about experiencing freedom in his life demonstrates his belief that human rights are supportive of, and emanate from, personal agency. These meanings and experiences of freedom resonate with Nyerere's perspectives on political freedoms and human dignity (as discussed in Chapter 2). Similarly to Nyerere, Emmanuel points towards an active, tolerant and practical approach to life, combined with suitable choices and opportunities (Nyerere, 1969, cited by Ibhawoh, 2001, p. 59). Emmanuel's views also resonate with certain elements of human rights discourse as articulated in the UDHR, and the ICCPR, both at

Articles 18 (United Nations, 1948, 1966a), but, rather than being expressed in formal language, are expressed via lived experience.

An alternate view on freedom was provided by Gloria via the vivid metaphor of 'Free Freedom'. She commented:

Eeh! What I have seen, with especially the migrants, and especially the refugees. I can't say all of them because - when they come here there's something called Free Freedom, and there's nothing which is free. (Gloria, Kenya)

She explains that the metaphor of Free Freedom, evoking limitlessness and release from responsibility and care, represents how African families or individuals sometimes feel when they are resettled as refugees in Australia. In this statement, she taps into an important fund of knowledge in the African community. Gloria fleshes out this idea of Free Freedom by outlining how African migrants and refugees experience a loss of connection to and concern for one another when the concept of freedom that is core to human rights (United Nations, 1948, Article 1) gets twisted to facilitate people's agendas in resettlement, indicating poor or superficial cultural adjustment. As evidence, she explains that children laugh at their parents and do what they like because of misapplied human rights protections and freedoms. For example, they threaten their parents with police action to avoid being disciplined, and young girls leave home to live with their boyfriends and have sexual relations outside of their family's cultural and religious mores. In addition, she discussed how men and women demonstrate little responsibility or collaboration, especially regarding financial affairs, which breaks up families. Gloria emphasises that human rights as represented by the metaphor of Free Freedom mean no responsibilities and no consequences to members of the community.

When Gloria says, 'there's nothing which is free', it is a warning, a prediction, and a lament. Gloria suggests that in applying notions of freedom indiscriminately, people's reputations and relationships have been, or will be, adversely affected. In this regard, Gloria is critical of policies and practices that appear to disrupt family dynamics and challenge norms and roles within households. She argues that freedom should not just mean licence and all abdication of responsibility. Later in her interview, Gloria emphasised that economic freedoms must be offered to families together with skill development, relationship building, and recognition of traditional family norms and processes.

Free Freedom was a shared concern for all participants in this study. Four examples are provided to support this assessment. For example, Chanise from Rwanda said, 'Some people say, "Ah, in Australia they give women money, that's why they just separate with us because, you know, they just spoil them, it's very spoiled"'. In a separate interview, Nelson from South Sudan commented, 'When that role reversed, what can you do to actually put it back to where it was, because if it is not, it entraps the whole family – the husbands lose control of their whole house'. Chanise's and Nelson's examples both relate to Free Freedom as it affects marital relationships.

In a third example, Angelina from Liberia criticised the way teachers will encourage parents to allow their teenagers to make independent decisions, even though these decisions might bring shame upon them and their families: 'they will go and lie – they want to get in the streets, and the teacher will never ask the parents', while in a fourth example, Sia from Sierra Leone talked about how children learn to say, 'it's mine' from day care, a sentiment that undermines principles of community and shared ownership of resources. Angelina's and Sia's

examples relate to children's experience of, or demand for, autonomy and independence within their families.

The above examples relate to specific age- and gender-related lived experiences, roles and behaviours. Statements about reputation link to Albert's argument that people honour themselves and their families when they fulfil their responsibilities to others, and Solomon's and Albert's observation that families and individuals are traditionally held accountable by the community regarding their behaviour. These examples allude to potentially adverse effects of human rights provisions such as those aimed at the social and economic advancement of women (Article 3, CEDAW, United Nations, 1979) and the rights of children (United Nations, 1989). These adverse effects are interactive: individuals behave carelessly and with self-interest, while human rights institutions promote values that contradict African norms such as mutuality and reciprocity, hierarchy and gendered roles. In these ways, human rights potentially exacerbate and complicate family vulnerability upon and following resettlement to Australia.

In Emmanuel's usage, the value of freedom meant taking an active, responsible approach to life in the absence of societal restrictions and being provided with choice and opportunity. In the second usage, Free Freedom meant abrogating, and being permitted to abrogate, one's responsibility towards others and the norms upheld by the family and community. Both usages illuminate important ways of knowing human rights grounded in lived experience.

The idea of free freedom echoes Fanon's critique of European portrayals of African culture under colonisation. He argued that Europeans celebrated 'young Africa[s]... naïveté, petulance, freedom, and, indeed, luxuriance. But also irresponsibility' (Fanon, 2004b, p. 151). Fanon explained, 'responsibility for this racialisation of thought... lies with the Europeans who have never stopped

placing white culture in opposition to other noncultures' (Fanon, 2004b, p. 150). It appears that Free Freedom is an enduring and history-laden metaphor, applied by participants in the current context to explain how Australian human rights norms shape anti-communitarian behaviour of members of their families and communities. Given this, Free Freedom could be used to promote intercultural human rights discussion. This metaphor could assist workers to access and promote protective values and norms that are commensurate with human rights frameworks and identify alternate ways of engaging with families based on their funds of knowledge.

A second English phrase utilised to express human rights was 'individual rights'. When asked whether his community had a word for human rights, Nelson from South Sudan replied:

It's not as per se a direct word that you can use as for human rights, but it is a word for individual right. So, each person have their own right. And in my community, it is very important that each and every person is afforded their right. That would depend across communities of Africa but where I come from individual right is very important and that's how people look at it...

Maree: Can you describe where you come from and your culture for me please?... [for detail about Nelson's culture, please see Chapter 6,] So, you mentioned before that in Dinka Bor conceptualisation individual rights are really important. I wonder if you could tell me a bit more about that and what human rights mean to you and your family and your community?

Nelson: So, for example, in Bor community or in the Dinka community, a child is not belonging to the Mum and Dad, a child belongs to the whole community. If a child is doing something wrong here it's not the Mum and Dad that are going to discipline them, it's whoever from the community, even if it means someone that is a stranger would have to discipline that child. Reason being, because if he's not disciplined at that stage it's building a belief system from that child that he or she doesn't have any sort of place in the world. So basically, the focus is on that individual child that wherever you go anyone can discipline you, that child will grow up in the same upbringing. (Nelson, South Sudan)

Nelson's comment about the importance of individual rights initially appeared to be an exception to the emphasis placed on responsibility and communitarian norms by other participants and African and African-American scholars. Yet, when Nelson said, 'where I come from, individual right is very important and that's how people look at it', I remembered that he had not yet introduced himself. As a result, the concept of individual rights was momentarily context-free. Asking, 'can you describe where you come from and your culture for me please?' supported contextualisation of the meaning Nelson attached to individual rights, in keeping with the interpretive phenomenological tradition of the research.

Thus contextualised, Nelson's point about the importance of individual rights confirms and reiterates the emphasis placed on responsibility and communitarian norms by other participants and African and African-American scholars. I might well have misconstrued Nelson's views on individual rights had

I imposed my own cultural frame of reference here, informed by an individualistic paradigm. According to Nelson, in his culture, belonging is essential to experiencing human rights as an individual. This suggests that one's dignity and worth relate to the belief that one has a 'place in the world'. This links with African themes of personhood and human dignity connected with responsibility, rather than freedoms, as researched by numerous African scholars including Fanon (1967), Gyekye (1997), Metz (2012), Obioha (2014) and Thabede (2008) (for further detail, please see Chapter 2, Human Rights, pp. 17-20). This sense of belonging as the right of every person underpinned most statements about family, children and human rights in the present study. The opposite – a singular sense of self and entitlement – attracts censure.

Moreover, Nelson suggests that being disciplined by others in the community – even 'strangers' – reinforces that one has a place in the world – or, rather, not being disciplined builds a belief system 'that he or she doesn't have any sort of place in the world'. This link between discipline and belonging is thought-provoking. It highlights the importance of being able to fulfil one's role and obligation to the community: depending on the context, you are expected to either provide discipline or receive discipline.

In the above quote, Nelson outlines his family and community understanding of individual rights. A few lines later in his interview, he adds,

[when there are disagreements] the first thing that people will consider is, okay, what has happened, what's your side of the story? So, each individual is given their side of story and given their right; when that right is identified it is then gone through the social structure to implement whatever the outcome of that sitting. (Nelson, South Sudan)

Here, Nelson emphasises that the community *gives* people their rights by listening to their stories, but not necessarily by accommodating their wishes. Thus, individual rights are embedded in communitarianism ideals and are underpinned by a social contract. In Nelson's mind, they reinforce an underlying regard for mutuality, trust and respect.

Another example of an English word utilised by a participant to define human rights was 'respect'. In the example below, Angelina from Liberia provides a contemporary example which compares 'back home' with 'here' to illustrate her family and community understandings of human rights:

Sometimes, like here, when we are watching TV, like when they are doing, Julia Gillard and this man, people write whole 'nother thing, say whole 'nother thing about their, their leaders and things. It's not right, it's not human right. Give him that respect, isn't it? Give her that respect... I feel that if you want to criticise your leader, you should talk to him privately if he allows you to. Don't just talk to him publicly. We don't do that. We dare not to do it back home... You can all write, but not in that disgraceful form. You know disgrace? Because if you bring your leader down, you are bringing your country down. (Angelina, Liberia)

In this example, Angelina describes the conduct of public debate as 'disgraceful' and critiques Australian socio-political norms that allow leaders to publicly brawl and undermine one another. Angelina specifically mentions Julia Gillard, who was Prime Minister of Australia from 2010 until June 2013 and was prominently mocked and undermined. In this comment, Angelina illustrates a

dynamic approach to the discussion of human rights by drawing upon current affairs that she believes illustrate Australian human rights norms.

Angelina emphasises the responsibility of individuals to respect and enhance human dignity of those in public life. She appears supportive of active debate and participation in community and national affairs but believes people must express opposition privately and with decorum. Angelina's reasoning is threefold: she provides deontological, consequential and virtue arguments. Firstly, publicly questioning someone's decisions is not done as it creates shame. Secondly, there are consequences for not behaving with respect: 'we dare not do it'. Thirdly, individual and national virtue are connected: 'if you bring your leader down, you are bringing your country down'. Therefore, respectful conduct is a responsibility of each citizen.

Lastly, liberty, healthcare, education and right to life featured in participant definitions of human rights. For example, when asked about his family and community understandings of human rights, Mamoudou from West Africa responded:

I think you have the right to have the roof, to live, have the right to have a good health care, education. I think these are the basic human rights that we're supposed to have, isn't it? But still, some people are not able to have that, some people are not able to have the roof, they are unable to travel, their own house. Education and health care is very important, so not all these people are capable to get this, like um, I mean, this human right, not everyone is able to have it. (Mamoudou, West Africa)

Here, Mamoudou defines human rights as the human needs of shelter, health care, education and freedom of movement. Mamoudou's definition of

human rights resonates with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially Articles 3 and 25 (United Nations, 1948). In the excerpt above, Mamoudou emphasises that these human rights are important, but not universally experienced. Mamoudou's emphasis on socio-economic aspects of rights is consistent with broader African scholarship (see for example, An-Na'im, 1992; Ibhawoh, 2018; Legesse, 1980; Mutua, 2001). These authors argue that socio-economic rights tend to take precedence over civil and political rights for many African peoples because socio-economic situations present pressing challenges and are part of everyday life, as discussed in Chapter 2, Human Rights (p. 22).

Like Mamoudou, most study participants demonstrated a level of engagement, familiarity and conversancy with formal definitions of human rights. However, many preferred symbolic definitions and their understandings were readily contextualised by everyday experience. While all participants expressed interest in further learning and discussion about Australian human rights definitions, priorities and meanings, they emphasised that their own ideas about human rights are contextualised by cultural norms and values, family and community roles and personal experience and that they would feel more respected and understood if service providers engaged with this knowledge.

Participant ways of knowing human rights were nuanced and culturally-informed. They all emphasised the importance of relationship, responsibility and communitarian principles. Conflicting and contradictory evidence was also identified, particularly in relation to ideas about freedom and income management.

Juxtaposed with these similes and metaphors, mother-tongue and English words and phrases for human rights, was participant uncertainty about human

rights. This was expressed through statements such as 'I / We don't know human rights' (Angelina, Liberia; Daniel, South Sudan; Gloria, Kenya; Nelson, South Sudan) and 'we don't have a word for human rights' (Albert, South Sudan; Angelina, Liberia; Patience, Kenya; Sia, Sierra Leone). Data about 'not knowing' human rights will now be explored.

7.6 Not knowing

One example of not-knowing human rights was provided by Daniel from South Sudan. We have already noted that Daniel stated, 'human rights is like a light'. However, when asked to say more about his understandings of human rights, he responded:

Ah I don't know anything about human right. I'm not saying I want to guess – because I can't guess... If I, er, know the human right, or I read or I study, I'm going to be able to understand what's the difference between, ah, how human right, the human right work in our society... What forced me over from my country? I can't come here to study! I can't come here to enjoy the life of this country!... what force down and people away from their country is because there is no human right... (Daniel, South Sudan)

This quote highlights several layers to Daniel's model of 'knowing' human rights. Daniel emphasises that if he had studied human rights he would know 'how human rights work in our society'. This indicates a potential lack of confidence and feeling of limited academic expertise on the topic. Daniel's comments here might indicate he was operating with positivist assumptions about the study or about human rights more generally – noting that there might be right

and wrong ways of describing human rights. This would have been in contrast with my constructivist approach that sought a plurality of views on the topic.

Daniel also says 'what force down and people away from their country is because there is no human rights'. This is an allusion to lived experience that was contrary to human rights before fleeing Africa – 'not-knowing' in that context means 'not experiencing'. By way of explanation, he spoke about war, displacement, unjust imprisonment and other experiences he had prior to leaving Africa as the antithesis of human rights. This supported a reading of the transcript where not-knowing connected with Daniel's memories of everyday contact with corruption, demeaning behaviours, neglect of people's rights and human rights abuses. By saying 'I don't know human rights', Daniel may also have been drawing a boundary about experiences he preferred not to discuss.

Daniel's awkwardness in discussing human rights prompted more reflection upon power differentials in the research and cultural safety in the research. I was committed to creating a culturally safe and responsive interview space. With Daniel, I modified my questioning style and provided a good deal of reassurance as well as some personal information and a little detail about human rights to re-establish rapport. After the interview, I reflected critically on the difficulty and uncertainty we both experienced during the discussion. With the support of my supervisors and the research reference group, I implemented changes to the semi-structured interview guide which focused the interview more effectively on participant expertise. An important change was to ask participants whether they had a word or words for human rights in their language, as described in Chapter 6, Research Design.

Another example of not-knowing human rights was provided by Angelina. Earlier we noted that Angelina felt strongly about the connection between human

rights and respect and was critical of how Australian leaders are treated in public.

During her interview, Angelina commented:

That's why I like here... That's why I like here... That's why we say that we don't know human right. Because, imagine something that you were grown in, and you come to a different culture, now you always feel... cover up, stay with that fear in you... That's what I say I don't know human rights, I really don't know. I must admit that fact (Angelina, Liberia)

Angelina's statement, 'cover up, stay with that fear in you' related to experiences in childhood, when her father went against cultural norms by refusing to allow his children to go through the ritual of the 'sandy bush' (female genital mutilation – further discussed in Chapter 9) and her experiences of fear and vulnerability during wartime and her refugee journey. This fear remains deep inside and, according to Angelina, still influences her behaviour and affects her understanding of human rights.

Angelina places emphasis on this as a shared, not individual, experience: 'we say that we don't know human rights'. Not knowing in this example could also be read as 'knowing differently', in the sense that the experience of refugee trauma heightens one's awareness of the significance of human rights but also creates gaps between people, for example those from a different culture who have not experienced such things.

Earlier in this chapter I presented a quote from Albert which states that the word for human rights does not exist in his culture. Rather, he said, responsibility for people is the best translation of the concept of human rights from his culture to Australian culture. His explanation for why human rights concepts might not exist in his culture support Angelina's and Daniel's claims above.

A different interpretation is afforded by Sia's statement below. When I asked whether she had a word, or words, for human rights in her language, she said:

So, I think with where we are coming from they have rights but there is no word like 'human rights'. Okay? Because it's the community and it sits together; they have their councils. And that council has developed the rights of the individual in that community on the village level and also the town level... So, so, there are rights, there are rights, but it's not spelt out as it is internationally as the human rights is documented. These are rights that through word of mouth is known within the community and is documented in the heads of elders, and so they pass it down for the generation. (Sia, Sierra Leone)

Sia emphasises that human rights are an important part of her community but that the associated words and practices differ from Western-dominated ideas about human rights. A teacher in Sierra Leone, Sia fled the war and stayed in a refugee camp in Guinea for about five years before coming to Australia. Her statement that where she comes from there is no word like human rights emphasised personal and community alienation from this term at a linguistic level. Her following comments indicate a sense of alienation from the processes of human rights, that is, the formalising of human rights in writing form, enabling their enforcement in the international community.

Sia's quote, like Albert's, highlights the influence of time and place on human rights knowledge). In contrast to Albert's statements, Sia argues that human rights do exist in her community but they are created, upheld and transmitted differently than elsewhere. Further, Sia conveys that human rights

are passed down from generation to generation and the elders share responsibility for the creation of rights at a village and town level.

Sia's statements highlight the presence of binary assumptions about her community's ways of constructing and understanding rights, and those of others. This positions her community as unique in the way they think about human rights, and in relation to their needs and approaches to human rights. These comments suggest that human rights can be most relevant if constructed locally, and connected to the conditions and requirements of the community. They also suggest that human rights are more readily accepted when articulated by trusted leaders in the community.

Similarly to Sia, Nelson from South Sudan alluded to binaries in conceptualisations of human rights. Towards the end of his interview, Nelson stated: 'I have given you the raw understanding of human right, if I was to go the academics it's completely something different.' Here, again, we find metaphorical language that asserts cultural difference. Drawing upon relevant definitions of the word *raw* in The English Oxford Living Dictionaries (2018), Nelson's use of this word potentially conveys his efforts to present family and community perspectives on human rights 'in [their] natural state'; 'unprocessed'; 'undisguised', or in a 'frank and realistic' manner. Raw might also be a reference to lived experience. Like other participants, Nelson's statement appears to reflect his needs and desires – for example, to be confident and correct about human rights, and to convey their family and community experiences as people from refugee backgrounds in ways that emphasised their unique understandings and constructions of human rights. Nelson and Sia's statements may also reflect their efforts to navigate this complex and potentially threatening territory in respectful, collaborative and safe ways.

The prominence of 'not-knowing' human rights raises issues about how uncertainty about human rights is responded to by social workers and related professions in their practice. Most participants felt that Australian human rights understandings tend to be imposed on their families and their communities, accompanied by a failure to recognise their existing knowledge and ways of knowing. Participants expressed bewilderment, frustration and distress about this. The final section of this chapter focuses on learning about human rights and developmental and dynamic aspects of African ways of knowing human rights identified in the present study.

7.7 Learning about human rights

All participants saw development of human rights knowledge as an active and continuous endeavour. They shared several examples of human rights learning based on respectful processes, critical reflection and consultation, which had a transformative effect in their families and communities. However, they also emphasised that not effectively engaging with the whole family and community undermines individuals, families and community experiences of human rights.

Participant statements highlight that delivery of Australian human rights knowledge to children and young people in schools without parental involvement is experienced as threatening to family norms and causes or exacerbates conflict within African families from refugee backgrounds. Parents find that their children begin to question their parents and insist on rights that run counter to family norms, roles and structure. The views of Patience from Kenya, Mamoudou from West Africa, Gloria from Kenya and Daniel from Sierra Leone, who all addressed this theme, are presented below. Patience from Kenya described how school-based human rights lessons disrupt family norms and undermine culture:

When a child goes to school and they learn, in the Australian system of learning, and they come home, and so they start conflict...

So, if you come [home] with that thinking – because this is where the children have been raised, here in Australia –

And say Angelina's³ son came to her and said, "no mum I don't agree with you", you know, and she says, "you are disrespecting me", you know, "you just don't come and tell me that"? And she reacts as she would react back home – that now brings in the thing about DOCS⁴. Like in Australia, in that, in the Australian context, that's – she's, she's done something wrong. A child can report her.

But she's wondering, why is my child reporting me – to who? I'm the authority. But now, Australian culture tells this child, and tells her as well – that's human rights, human right, like this child has rights.

So how? How do they reconcile that? "Yes, he's my child, I beat him if he disrespects me, I hit him." That's how we discipline them. But you see, if I, if I do that, it's a reportable offense.

³ Angelina was another of the research participants. She participated in a group interview with Patience. Patience refers to her in this excerpt because she is a respected elder and she has 7 children.

⁴ DOCS is an acronym for the old NSW Department of Family and Community Services, now part of Family and Community Services NSW (FACS).

But then you expect me to raise him! You expect me to have authority, and you expect me to know – and you still, still you undermine me, through the child, how is that? (Patience, Kenya)

Patience speaks with clarity and immediacy, as if she is a parent whose child was raised here and has brought ideas home that are contributing to parent-child conflict, although she has no children herself. We see in Patience's impassioned statement a sense of indignation and blame of Australian culture in teaching children to assert their rights but in the process undermining parental authority. In this excerpt, she highlights her understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by African families from refugee backgrounds with children. She moves fluidly from the first- and third-person perspective and presents both subjective and objective perspectives. In the last part of the excerpt Patience becomes highly animated, addressing policy makers through the interviewer, 'But then you expect me to raise him! You expect me to have authority... and you still, still you undermine me, through the child, how is that?'

Patience is emphatic that school-based learning about human rights experienced by children of African families from refugee backgrounds causes intergenerational conflict. According to Patience, the lessons about human rights taught at school promote behaviour at home which parents perceive to be disrespectful such as children disagreeing with their parents. This behaviour prompts reactions from parents that were learned 'back home' and are considered 'wrong' in the 'Australian context'. Such reactions might include verbal chastisement and physical punishment (Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011).

One of the striking things is that, according to Patience, parents seem to be 'set up to fail' by Australian culture, or in the Australian context. She draws attention to a binary that parents struggle to reconcile. On the one hand, they are

charged by the Australian system with having authority with their children. 'You expect me to have authority, and you expect me to know – '. Patience breaks off at that point for a moment, emphasising her indignation. What do we expect her to know? Perhaps she is referring to the expectation that parents know their children's movements, their needs, their plans, and to the expectation that, knowing such things, they can influence them in positive ways? Well might they know these things, and influence their children, but parents' authority is 'undermined through the child'. To Patience this seems incredibly unfair and appears to be a weighty burden. This experience seems to be antithetical to real rights-based practice that should promote dignity and wellbeing within family systems.

Patience's insights reflect other participant statements that emphasise human responsibilities within a rights framework. Her comments suggest the need for, or expectation of, a social contract, where the policies and practices of the wider society support rather than undermine parents to carry out their important role of child-rearing effectively. The way she communicates in this section, becoming highly animated, and moving from the first- and third-person perspective thereby presenting both subjective and objective perspectives, suggests that she possibly has not had the opportunity to share these perspectives with people in authority before, or that she feels she is speaking on behalf of others with limited authority.

Concerns about the experience of families adversely affected by the way Australian human rights are exercised were expressed by other participants as well. In the excerpt below, Mamoudou speaks from a caseworker perspective. He reflects upon his role as occasional mediator between police and families, advisor and support person during crises that arise in families:

I've heard some other people have been snatched, the children to DOCS, and the family become very traumatised...

There are some things happening which is not similar to the way we used to do back home...

There are some things you really – there is a way you want your children to be, so you're the only one who knows how to educate them to the way you want them to become. So sometimes this is some little conflict about that, especially within the families.

Usually some kids, when they go to school... they teach them if someone smacks you, you call the police. You know? So, when you smack your kid – I know some smacking so hard is not good – but sometimes even cannot talk to your kid properly. When you talk to them, they say "I'm going to call the police", so usually when they call the police, the police trust them without finding what's behind... These people, some of them are too scared to talk to their children because they're always saying, "If you touch me, I'll call the police". (Mamoudou, West Africa)

The language Mamoudou uses to describe the experiences of families stands out in the above quote. The word 'snatched' which he uses to describe the removal of children from families is evocative. It conveys powerlessness, swiftness and perceived ill-intent of the authorities. He underlines his meaning by saying that families become very traumatised. In his choice of words, he conveys that such trauma is fresh, new, and separate to any other trauma the family might have experienced, almost like there was no trauma there before. Further, he

makes it clear that this trauma, experienced by one family, affects and mobilises the whole community.

In this regard, Mamoudou illustrates an important dynamic between families and service providers relating to trust and security. His comments indicate that when African families from refugee backgrounds experience removal of their children the whole community becomes fearful of being accused of neglect or other wrongs and losing their children. Mamoudou's final comment, 'some of them are too scared to talk to their children' suggests an overarching loss of parental power, inhibiting even normal parenting interactions with children. This reverses family power by giving the children the ability to threaten their parents. The child's power seems to function as an extension of the power of the state.

In the above excerpt Mamoudou introduces the notion of the future as a cause of present worry and struggle. His comment, 'there is a way you want your children to be...[a] way you want them to become' conveys the worry of parents within African families from refugee backgrounds about the people their children will become. They need to educate their children in 'the way [they] used to do back home' to ensure good outcomes. Mamoudou voices this in the second person, inviting the listener to see from his community's point of view, almost to internalise the concern. He acknowledges that there are some things you must adapt to or leave behind, but also that some local norms, or ways of doing things here, work against families in raising their children, creating doubt about the future. Mamoudou's comments above also introduce the possibility that there might also be transformative potential in storytelling where future hopes, fears and expectations can be shared and collaboratively 're-storied' in human rights dialogue.

As emphasised by Martin and Mirraoopa (2003), ways of knowing and ways of being in Australian Indigenous cultures interact, with ways of knowing informing ways of being. Findings from the present study suggested that this model is applicable to understandings of human rights held by African families from refugee backgrounds who have resettled in Australia. In this chapter I have discussed participant ways of knowing human rights and begun to reflect upon experiential narratives which influence and inform personal and cultural understandings of human rights. Study participants emphasised that local frameworks for human rights can preserve and be enriched by African values, norms and traditions. It appears that in the absence of cultural humility and culturally inclusive approaches, human rights do not always support the flourishing of African families and communities following refugee resettlement.

7.8 Conclusion

Chapter 7 has presented rich and varied understandings and constructions of human rights from the perspective of participants in the present study. A range of significant similes, metaphors, words and phrases that describe human rights were presented. These enrich and potentially unsettle existing understandings of human rights available for social work practice. The current chapter revealed layers of human rights fluency from 'not-knowing' to understanding human rights well. It was noted that some perspectives resonated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related treaties and conventions, while others were distinctively informed by lived experience. These observations produced insights about family and community norms, and culturally significant ways of communicating, that appear to extend human rights discourse in Australia. In applying a critical cultural lens, this chapter revealed the influence of socio-economic and historic factors such as gender, poverty, upheaval and

corruption that shaped understandings of human rights and provided insights about power, agency, and the hopes and fears of families and communities in resettlement.

Chapter 8 will present human rights ways of being, examining how participants employed storytelling and narrative to illustrate their personal, family and community meanings of human rights. Then, in Chapter 9, data will be presented about ways of doing human rights, informed by the experiences and concerns of African families from refugee backgrounds.

8. Ways of Being Human Rights

8.1 Introduction

Chapter 8 demonstrates how participants employed storytelling and narrative to illustrate personal, family and community processes relating to development of meaning around human rights, illuminating culturally located ways of being that are relevant to this analysis of human rights. Five narratives that describe where and how a selection of participants developed their human rights understandings are presented. The context and quality of lived experience, as revealed in the narratives, is attended to in some detail. This close reading illuminates how human rights are experienced and comprehended, in relatively constructive and destructive contexts. The narratives are arranged in chronological order, dealing with past, present, then future experience. This enables analysis of change processes relating to constructions of human rights. The influence of significant relationships, particularly familial relationships, in initiating, supporting and potentially complicating human rights understandings are also explored.

8.2 Back home and back then

The following two participant stories present experiences of learning about human rights within a family context. Though embedded in the family context, the nature and impact of the narratives contrast starkly. They were told consecutively by Sia and Nola who chose to be interviewed together because they are friends and share similarities. They both grew up in the same region of Sierra Leone. Although from different ethnic groups, their fathers worked in the same mine, and their families knew of one another. Nola's family considered Sia's father a grandfather figure in the community. Sia and Nola are both single mothers who

fled the war with young children in their care. They have raised and protected their children independently and are fiercely protective of them. They are strong advocates for the rights of women here in Australia, back home and in other parts of the world.

To describe how she came to understand human rights, Sia recounted an experience with her father and some other men when she was a teenager:

I think for me, my family – my parents were very liberal. In a sense that I can – we had healthy discussion and arguments. And we were... I remember when, as refugees when we were in Guinea and my father was there, and I was just sitting and having that conversation, talking with my father and all that sort of thing. And there were these Nigerian guys, and they said, “Why are talking to your dad like that?” You know and all that sort of – and my Dad said, “It’s okay; that’s how we talk.” You know, because I was having a discussion as if – I know it’s my Dad but also a friend and that’s or, yes, or a brother or you know that I can have that open... And I wasn’t suppressed to express my opinion, or even my siblings with my parents. (Sia, Sierra Leone)

This story tells how Sia’s father spoke up for her when a group of men from other African nationalities criticised how she communicated with him in public. In the vignette Sia explains that the experience took place while the family were living in a refugee camp in Guinea. The men who questioned Sia remain unnamed strangers, but they were people with whom her family did not share ethnic or kinship ties. Yet they sought to impose their cultural norms upon her, as can be seen above, although they may have been unconscious of doing so. Sia’s father’s response in this situation was to intervene simply and gently to confirm

her right to communicate with him in an open manner. For Sia, this modelled human rights. This is a story of empowerment where her father reinforced her right as a woman, and as a daughter, to speak on equal terms with him.

Several of the central themes that are presented in this chapter are contained in this story. Time and location are important components of the narrative. The setting is far from the here and now of the research interview, located in a refugee camp some 20 years ago. In addition, the gendered nature of the interaction is evident. It was not Sia's father but Sia herself, in his presence, who was reproached. Her father's response, the male authority, appears to have been necessary to normalise their father/daughter interaction.

It seems that this experience could have been instructive for both the men who questioned her behaviour, and for Sia itself. By confirming that her behaviour is acceptable, Sia's father makes Sia feel proud, safe and respected. In addition, these men were being presented with a worldview and a set of norms that challenged their beliefs. It potentially influenced their thinking about their own daughters' rights and the parent-child communication norms within their families. In choosing this story to recount, Sia demonstrated that this incident was influential on her perspectives about human rights. In being re-told in this research, Sia's father's act is imbued with deeper meaning. It is a very intimate story, and one that highlights a theme of gendered rights, women's voice and spaces for change around gender-limiting norms of behaviour.

After hearing Sia recount this story, Nola offered a contrasting childhood experience. As a child, Nola was placed in the care of her auntie who was '20 years without child'. She 'grew up in a polygamy home' where she felt her independence of thought was considered unwelcome. This narrative shows how

young Nola bravely challenged the traditional practices of female initiation.

Describing this experience, she said:

And so, when I was at the age of, I was at the age of 11 – 1977, they took me to my village to initiate me. First, I said to them “I’ve heard that this is what you are going to do to me.”

Then they said, “No, it’s a lie.”

I said, “It’s truth. And to me, I’m not sure, if you’re doing it to me, if I’m going to survive. Because doing that to somebody is like the taking of the life of that person.” I said, “Are you sure when you do it to me, am I going to survive?” They said, “No, that’s not what we are going to do.”

Then I said, “okay.” I said, “then the other thing I want to say”, I say, “why are you people doing that? That’s wickedness. When you cut it, too, where are you going to take it to? What do you have to gain out of that cutting?” You know, I started having that discussion with my auntie.

And my auntie said, “No, the person who told you that thing is a lie. In fact, who told you?”

It was a lady who was renting the back yard in our house, like a granny flat. I said to her, I said, “I have no idea.” I said, “I just overheard from my colleagues.”

So, when they were initiating girls, myself and my cousin we ran and go into that place and pretend as if we are being part of them

until they pick on us. So, I said to them "It's my right to say that I don't want to be part of this practice."

Even though I'm a child I say, "It's my right. I'm not feeling comfortable to be part of this."

Maree: Would you mind saying that in the way - like would you use English or would you use another language?

Nola: In [my mother-tongue].

Interviewer: Can you say that for me?

Nola: In [my mother-tongue] I said, [speaks in mother-tongue], which means "I don't like it. I can say I don't want to be part – I can say to you people that I don't want to be part of it because I don't like it." That's what I said to my Auntie.

Then she said, "Oh when you finish I will dress you, buy you nice clothes, we'll put you..."

I said, "In fact, the lounge where you go and put people, the way you dress them, the makeup, the hair, I hate all those kind of dresses. I'm not going to do it. I don't like it."

My Auntie became very worried and she was moving around trying to find out who told me, because if they find out who told me they will actually fine that person. It's a huge problem in our community.

Then the lady told me “See, I’m disclosing this to you people, you close your mouth.” She said, “They do it to me; I don’t like it. So, if I have my way I will tell young girls not to go there. It hurts; it’s no good. Don’t go there.”

Then I said, “Okay, leave it to me.” Then I started talking to my colleagues...

But the day they took me, they fooled me in a different way that we are going for fishing, and that’s how they grabbed me. So, I said to them “What you have done to me today – see! I grow up as an older woman or elderly woman in the community, I will stand for this, I hate it! I don’t like it. You have cheat me. You cut a part from me and you didn’t tell me what you were going to do with it and you didn’t tell me where you are going to take it to.” I said, “Therefore, I hate it because you never discussed it with me that you are going to do this to me.” I said, “I hate it.” And I cried for one week. Yeah.

And when they wanted to take me outside they begged me, they said, “Will you go outside? Go, don’t talk, don’t explain to anybody.”

Then I told them “I’m going to explain to all my friends so they will not come here.” I said, “I hate it and I’m not going to keep quiet and I’m going to talk about it.” (Nola, Sierra Leone)

These events occurred just over 40 years ago, well before the war in Sierra Leone, and all the injustices and events that resulted in Nola being offered

refugee status in Australia. Moreover, it occurred in the intimate surrounds of her childhood home and village. Nola's attempts to assert her rights and challenge the community practice of female initiation are told in minute detail, as were the methods used by her elders to oppose her stance and uphold custom. When cajoling and threatening Nola didn't work, her Auntie eventually 'fooled' her by pretending they were going on a 'fishing trip' which instead delivered her to the initiation ritual. It may be that this is the way all young girls were, or are, delivered to such rituals, especially without the foreknowledge that Nola had.

Nola's attempts at the age of 11 to resist social norms and advocate for her own rights highlight several key research themes. Firstly, the story illustrates Nola's awareness and commitment to human rights from a young age and with no formal education. It shows how she understood and negotiated rights within the world of her childhood, and advocated for herself independently and actively in the effective absence of protective adult figures. Nola's story highlights the potentially innate nature of awareness about human rights and the drive towards self-protection and integrity. Her experience represents disempowerment and degradation from elders at a pivotal point of 'becoming' – the initiation to adulthood.

Another powerful theme in this narrative is denial of agency. Nola describes how her questions and concerns were ignored, challenged, disrespected and brushed away by the elders in her life, including her auntie and others involved in the female initiation practices of the community. She shows how her resistance, which went against the norms of the family and community, concerned them deeply. An incredibly poignant part of the story is the role played by the lady who rented the granny flat in Nola's family's backyard. This lady warned Nola about the negative aspects of the initiation practice. She gave her

information and encouraged her to resist oppression. She may have hoped this would be enough to safeguard Nola. It appears she was unable to intervene more purposefully or exert authority herself to defend Nola.

This story prompts reflection upon the functions and limitations of information-giving about human rights in situations of threat. It suggests that knowledge on its own is not enough. Being able to exercise human rights involves more than knowing. It is an embodied experience with real physical, emotional and material ramifications. In her adult life, Nola has dedicated herself to talking about genital cutting and developing responses to prevent the practice. Her methods for achieving this are discussed in Chapter 9, *Ways of Doing Human Rights*. In overpowering Nola at the time of initiation, the community galvanised her to future action. Power intersects with gender and age to deepen Nola's vulnerability in this narrative. However, it also creates the potential for future change.

Part-way through her recount of her story, I invited Nola to communicate in the language that she would have utilised at the time the events were taking place. This prompted her to re-enact her experience. Ntseane describes this as a useful technique with African women as it promotes immediacy and alignment between context and events in describing lived experience and facilitates meaning making (Ntseane, 2011). By speaking her words of resistance in her mother-tongue, Nola permitted her 11-year-old assertive self to enter the room. Adult-Nola was invited to be child-Nola's interpreter in this interview, bringing two distinct times and places into relationship. This was supported by her willingness to draw upon her mother-tongue during her interview. My inquiry about whether Nola had words for human rights in her language/s, a technique that was discussed in Chapter 6, *Research Design*, shifted the interview into a potentially

decolonising space and, as demonstrated in the quote above, avoided the concerns about 'not-knowing' rights. It enabled the above interactive discussion about human rights, where Nola's mother-tongue became a resource for the discussion of human rights.

Both Sia's and Nola's narratives about how they learnt about human rights were surprising as a researcher. I anticipated that participants might describe human rights knowledge developing through their refugee journey, closely connected to the experiences that brought them to Australia. These childhood stories of knowledge about and resistance to certain cultural norms and advocacy of respect of human rights in communities were relatively unexpected. Analysing Sia's and Nola's stories and reflecting on the contributions made by time and place to intercultural understandings of human rights connected me more deeply with, and supported recognition of, participant wisdom through time and place. As described in Chapter 5, Research Design, data analysis involved naming and deconstructing assumptions about participant understandings and constructions of human rights are evidence of decolonising practices in the research.

The stories I have presented so far highlight that childhood experiences are rich sources of knowledge about human rights, pre-dating refugee experiences and migration. Because both Sia and Nola claimed awareness of human rights at a young age, and discussed the influence of parents and elders within the community on their human rights understandings, I surmise that others in their families and communities are also potentially enriched or burdened with similar childhood stories. Perhaps our discussions about human rights in the here and now with African families from refugee backgrounds are highly influenced by their earliest stories of resistance and/or oppression. Perhaps they go even

further back in time, layering upon generations of such lived experience – of fear, betrayal, courage, determination and protection.

These two narratives suggest that understandings of human rights form in early childhood and develop over time. Other participants also told stories about experiences in childhood and their youth that they felt were highly influential in shaping their knowledge about human rights, confirming the significance of past narratives in intercultural conversations about human rights.

In addition, most participants in the present study stressed that people in their families and communities are interdependent. They stressed that people exist in relation to each other first and foremost, and that their identity is influenced by family expectations underpinned by cultural norms. Moreover, each person has clearly defined roles and responsibilities within the family and community, and carriage of these roles and responsibilities is considered pivotal to identity and wellbeing.

The experiences recounted by Sia and Nola constituted critical moments or turning points in their human rights ways of knowing and ways of being. In some cases, these critical moments and turning points were constructive, and involved ways of being that defended and enabled their human rights, while in others they were damaging and involved ways of being that restricted or violated their human rights.

Are these human rights ways of knowing and ways of being dynamic, or relatively static over time? Fanon (2004b) suggests that the outsider (coloniser) can reify and exoticise African peoples, thereby imposing an inflexible framework or perspective, and limiting or 'freezing' the potential of intercultural contact. In this study, hermeneutic analysis supported flexible and curious readings of the data. In Sia's case, there appears to be a connection between her 'liberal'

childhood which established her right to speak freely, and her adult willingness to present human rights as different to Australian norms. We can see that she has developed ways of being that are straightforward and articulate. In Nola's case, her traumatising experience as an 11-year-old child informs and motivates her in her current employment as a human rights training and advocate against genital cutting.

To explore how and why changes in perspectives occur I selected an excerpt from Nelson's transcript that demonstrated the iterative influences of time, location, education and personal experience. In response to the question, *can you tell me who or what has been influential in your understanding in being at your current place in your understanding of human rights?* Nelson provided a series of connected stories underpinned by values and shaped by metaphor, which evoked a sense of personal 'becoming' in relation to human rights:

I can tell you at the moment I still don't understand what human rights is... But what I do understand is that I have a human side within me and within my upbringing. I'll tell you a little bit of a story.

I grew up where my initial years, about two or three years old, I grew up with my – three or four years old – with my father. And my father has this kind of easy-going parenting. So, he would tell me, "Okay, you go" – and this was right in the cattle camp, this was right in the village – "you go and play. Make sure you come back having a wrestle down one, or two, three boys, or I'm not going to give you any milk." So, at the play we'll try to do some wrestling and I'll by all means wrestle down two or three boys so I can go and have some drinks.

When I left my Dad, and came to my mother, when they escaped into the refugee camp in Ethiopia, I saw something different. It was more of, no, you're not to be told to stand alone on yourself, but you have to be taught to understand the social relations between you and other children. Reason being, I was enrolled in nursery school, the first day I got myself in a fight. The second day again I got myself in a fight. So, I got kicked out. When I got kicked out Mum said something to me, she says, "Okay, every Friday you are to go to the church, and any report I will have to pick up from relatives' kids who go there! You behave yourself." So, I got enrolled, and every Friday I would have to go to church as well as attend school with boys older than me, in Year 1.

So that then shaped my understanding of, not the human rights, but developing the human side of me, of considering other people next to me, of considering the world around me, and making sure that I co-exist with others and not become the tough one out there... So, that's how I grew; the church developed the soft side of me.

I remember I had grazed myself when I arrived in the refugee camp and because of the trouble in between it had got some infections. And I got to the hospital, and the hospital staff was cleaning it really hard, and I just felt like nothing happened. And then my mother realised, and say, this child need a soft side to it. So that soft side, that's what she worked on over the years... That soft side was drilled into me through work, through church

[and also] through things that my mother would tell me about grandfather and how good he was, how he managed to be the chief and what he has said before he was killed by the government in the North. So those things she drilled them into me and I start to have a conscious thought about what she would say...

...At that earlier stage in Ethiopia I didn't really care about education that much, I still had the life of a village boy or a child that is brought up in between rearing cattle and running after wild animals. But when I came to Kenya I absorbed the new lifestyle and thought to myself, okay, what's the best thing, because in the cattle camp the best thing was to go and wrestle down kids but in the refugee camp it was to become number one in your class and that becomes the priority. So, I started to take interest in education... I tried very hard to beat my brother... who was super smart... he would always come number one, I'd come number two... until one day I beat him... And every time he beats me I would go and cry and my mother would come to me and say, "you're such a silly boy," I said "why?" "He's your brother, if someone else beats you, you can cry, but he's your brother." So, I learnt to tolerate other perspective of being who am I through that...

...when you go deeper into what actually brings these [human rights] issues, it's poverty... and it's not just poverty, in a sense it is the interruption of the production lifestyle. Myself I grew up in

a village and I loved it, I wouldn't trade it for civilisation. It was the place that I felt happy, peaceful, it's green, you know, it's very remote, I am in peace with everything around me, including the trees and animals... (Nelson, South Sudan)

Above, Nelson describes experiences across the three decades of his own life but also draws upon his ancestral knowledge and expectations for the future. In recounting each part of the story, he plays with time and place, comparing and contrasting, varying the amount of detail provided, reiterating overarching themes and pursuing threads of meaning. He makes general statements about his family and community views on human rights and then supports them with stories of lived experience. Nelson's story demonstrates the coalescence of ancestral knowledge, community norms and expectations, individual reflection on lived experience and contextual factors. It illuminates the process of learning about human rights and what contributes to changes in human rights perspectives.

One aspect that stands out in this narrative is the metaphorical juxtaposition of softness/humanness and hardness/toughness. In some ways, Nelson's use of metaphor in his narrative, referring to his 'soft side' and his 'human side', as opposed to 'being the tough one', appears gendered. If I see it as a product of our research relationship – white female social work researcher relating to black African male participant – then it could be understood as a gesture of respect. In this sense, perhaps Nelson emphasised certain aspects of his understanding and development of knowledge about human rights precisely because of who I am and what my research signifies to him.

On the other hand, perhaps Nelson is using these binaries to convey something about his cultural and religious context. Perhaps the contrast of soft and hard sides represents social rules and norms, evidence of a deontological

framework for human rights. Like Sia and Nola, Nelson's earliest lessons about human rights were provided by his parents. As his mentors, they oversaw important experiences and supported him to negotiate everyday responsibilities, helping him to form goals and develop realistic expectations of the world. They provided care and protection for him. Nelson's older brother provided an example of what to aim for in life through his academic recognition, to which Nelson aspired.

Drilling deeper, the story provided by Nelson underlines the importance of current and ancestral relationships to human rights ways of knowing and ways of being in African families from refugee backgrounds. Nelson's mention of his late grandfather appears important. The 'manifestation of one's ancestors' is considered by Bent-Goodley et al. (2017, pp5) to be an essential component of African philosophy related to African personhood. In this case, Nelson's mother told him stories about her own father to support the development of his soft side, perhaps inculcating leadership skills and diplomacy. In this way, she provided him with awareness of who he is and how he should respond in his environment.

Along these lines, the soft, human side could represent his faith community, while the tough side could evoke work, school and achievement-oriented endeavours. Later in his interview Nelson describes his teenage involvement in church dances, the choir, leadership programs and a 'Child Rights Club' in the refugee camp. He joined scouts, and exercised his leadership potential through playwriting, debating and soccer. These activities engaged him 'with different, different groups of young people from different backgrounds where I learnt one or two things from here and there'. He was conscious of being expected to learn from these experiences about co-existence, consideration of

others and the world around him. His mother provided a softening influence and a push towards studiousness and leadership through consensus.

An aspect of experience that this passage illuminates is the influence of place and context. Nelson's story begins in his village with his father and, part-way through, shifts to the refugee camp where he joined his mother and siblings. He shares how his parents had differing approaches to rights, and demonstrates how these were suited to the context. Nelson's formation under his father, in the agrarian context of his childhood, appears harsh. There were straightforward rules of conduct closely related to strength and survival. In contrast, the second context, in the refugee camp with his mother and siblings, developed the human, or soft side of Nelson. Through this example, Nelson also offers a comparison between rural and urban lifestyles and the opportunities available in each environment, such as education, health care and leisure pursuits.

Another underlying factor in Nelson's story is the passage of time. Education connected with the process of maturation are two examples which were clearly important to Nelson as he reflected upon his past and current perspectives on human rights. He conveyed that the passing of time brought opportunities although he did not enjoy immediate results (as when he returned home for milk), and did not always recognise their value immediately. Nelson's personal narrative illuminated his nuanced journey towards 'knowing' and 'understanding' human rights through time and place. His stories from childhood, adolescence, and his young adult years weighed upon conversations about adjusting to life in Australia. Nelson told the story in a spiral, moving between multiple places and times. He added clarifying information and meaning gradually through the interview, respecting the unfolding of the story. Like Nelson, other participants talked about physical and emotional transitions, as well as talking

about the times and places in which they began their existence and how these contributed to their understandings of human rights. Through this I glimpsed the evolution of these understandings and the identities of the storytellers.

Implicit within Nelson's narrative is the experience of loss. Specifically, he conveyed yearning to return to the relationship with place and community that he experienced as a young boy in his village. His reminiscences about his childhood emphasise nature and grieve the loss of peace and connection with everything around him. Read in one way, his account conveys loss of familiarity – the colours, the smells, the feelings that familiar places and contexts engender. Read in another way it conveys the magnitude of the journey from *there* to *here*, and the social, political and economic turmoil that provide the backdrop to the journey. In this regard, Nelson emphasises the material aspects that powerfully shape human rights behaviours and perspectives. He emphasised poverty and the interruption of the production lifestyle. These statements echo the views of African leaders and scholars about the validity of diverse perspectives on human rights as shaped by intersectional factors, cited in Chapter 2 (Fanon, 1967; Legesse, 1980; Ntseane, 2011). This suggests that African families from refugee backgrounds might bring alternate and important perspectives about human rights to their interactions with social workers and the wider community.

Thus far in the chapter the focus has been on participant experiences of human rights that occurred in their birthplaces or in a refugee camp. As discussed in Chapter 3, Lived experience of human rights, families from refugee backgrounds often inhabit liminal spaces in their countries of resettlement (A. Harris & Nyuon, 2010; Lejukole, 2008; Lenette, 2015; Wakholi, 2010). From subtle to overt differences in appearance, language, communication style, customs, norms, values and approaches, individuals and communities negotiate

otherness. In the next section I present and analyse one example of a participant's efforts to construct human rights in the diaspora.

8.3 Here and now

Like the previous example, the next narrative presents understandings and constructions of human rights that are closely connected with ways of being that involve co-existence and consideration of others. Solomon from Sierra Leone shared this story when I asked him how social workers could be helpful in their work with families and communities. In his response, he highlights the challenges he faces in attempting to enact and communicate about human rights across cultures.

There was a time, and as I said, our own culture, human right culture, is you help the elders in along the way. Like footpaths. If I ever see an elderly person putting on a load, I say, "Mummy or daddy, please let me help you." Or, "Can I fetch your tub for you?" That how you do it.

One day, I was at Summer Hill that day, I came down to the road. I crossed the barrier. So, I saw an elderly woman struggling coming down the steps. So, I said "Mum, please can I please help you?" Well she was the only woman that time and I knew by then she really couldn't refuse. Because up to today there is a culture here, that sometimes I go up there and say, "I am Australian! I am okay!" Even if he is dying, he say, "I am okay!" Right I say, "Mum, can I help you?" She say, "Okay."

So, I took her to the traffic light, crossed with her. I say, "Okay mum, I'm going."

Then there was a gentleman at my back coming with us, as usual, wanting to know what I wanted to do with the woman. Maybe. I don't know. But when I cross again with the elderly madam, I say, "Okay mum", a gentleman call my attention, and I say, "How are you sir?"

"Fine," he say, "where are you from?"

I say, "I am from Sierra Leone."

He says, "I really wondered."

I say, "That is part of our culture. We are taught how to help the needy people, then we leave them to it. Yes, but we are here now because of the bad people."

Even if you want to help people, you see them struggling. They say, "I am okay!" Then, it is part of me - Parramatta steps, there was an elderly Dad struggle, struggling on these steps, want to fall. I want to help. They say, "no, I am okay."

I say, "Daddy, you're dying!"

He say, "Okay! –" [shared laughter].

I say, "You are dying!" and he say, "Okay."

"Let me give you help – drop your things." I help him and so he, he did not fall; he was able to climb down these steps.

I say we have problems here, or challenges here because the people want to do something good but that not trust is still here, has created the problems. (Solomon, Sierra Leone)

One of the most noticeable aspects of this story is the model of human rights it implies. It is a very affirming, person-centred and family-oriented model of human rights. Not knowing their real names, Solomon addresses the two elderly people he offers assistance to as 'Mummy' and 'Daddy'. This conveys the very real sense in which he feels obligated to assist them, perhaps as he would his own parents, or all older people in his culture. His duty is to cherish them, nurture them and show them the highest respect. In Chapter 7 I discussed the value placed on responsibility for others in defining human rights as referenced by the Dholuo (dialect of South Sudan) phrase 'twero padano'. In the narrative provided above, Solomon (Sierra Leone) also highlights the importance of responsibility for others in his view of human rights.

Respect and concern for others were fundamental principles expressed by all participants in the present study. These values are detailed in African and African-American research relating to philosophy and worldview (see for example, Fairfax, 2016; Obioha, 2014; Thabede, 2008). The 'third space' that Bhabha theorised as a way of understanding intercultural dynamics offers a theoretical framework for discussing these ambivalent and contradictory experiences of human rights. Through Solomon's sharing of lived experience, the 'cultural sign' of human rights is 'appropriated, translated, historicised, and read anew' (Bhabha, 2006, p208).

Another aspect that is prominent is the element of suspicion which Solomon encounters in the situation. He describes how another man approached him as he was assisting the elderly woman across the road and questioned him

about his actions. Solomon re-enacts his response, demonstrating his educative and patient tone. While there is little commentary about the nature of the interaction, his comment that this occurred 'as usual' indicates that this might be a regular part of Solomon's everyday life here in Australia. In applying his cultural ways of being, Solomon opens himself up to mistrust in the wider community. He is asked to explain himself, suggesting his act is, perhaps unintentionally, confronting or constructed as political. Gender and visible difference potentially explain the suspicion and hesitance of the people involved.

All participants in the research were animated in comparing Australian norms and values with their own norms and values. Some participants presented a positive view of human rights ways of being in Australia and provided examples of consultation, helpful explanations and experiences of inclusion. These examples are supportive of acculturation and community wellbeing and will be discussed in Chapter 9, Exercising human rights. In Solomon's narrative, we see a less positive view of human rights ways of being. This engenders bewilderment, uncertainty and a sense that local norms are inconsistent with human rights. In questioning how human rights principles influence the decisions and choices of everyday people in our community, or of leaders (see Angelina's comments in Chapter 7) participants revealed their struggles to comprehend local norms and pointed out aspects they thought were failures of human rights in Australia. They wondered why their attempts to act in accordance with these values by promoting human dignity and demonstrating responsibility for others were met with resistance and mistrust.

Comparative ways of being are thus highlighted by Solomon in narrating his experience of offering assistance to elderly others. The attitude of resolute independence Solomon encounters from elderly individuals when he offers aid,

as well as the apparent mistrust of third parties of his motivations, bewilders and concerns him. It is unfamiliar and uncomfortable. He explained how his views about human rights are rooted in ideals of behaviour, particularly the respect and care of elders. Like the previous participant Nelson, Solomon's view of human rights was closely connected with ways of being centred around co-existence and consideration of others. He explained how his views about human rights are rooted in ideals of behaviour, particularly the respect and care of elders. One of the experiences he narrated illustrated some of the complexities of being treated as an outsider in the Australian community. He described his experiences of trying to act authentically and engaging in conversation about culture and human rights in everyday interactions.

There was a moment of shared laughter during the research interview which I have highlighted in the excerpt. I wondered whether this laughter signified exasperation or amusement. It may also have been a way of diffusing the situation. The cultural critique offered by Solomon here may have felt challenging and risky. It relates to his core view that family and community contextualise the individual and engender mutual obligations. He may have felt unsure how this message would be received by me as a white Australian researcher. In this situation, our shared laughter potentially promoted safety in the research. Solomon bravely steps into an uncertain and reflexive space in the interview. To understand these processes I again turned to Bhabha's notion of the *third space* in which he draws attention to the 'ambivalent processes' (2006, p. 156) at work in structuring meaning where different cultures intersect. He warns that there are polarising forces that can be destructive in models of cultural assimilation and exhorts cultural theorists to engage with cultural hybridity and 'in-between' spaces, which are full of creative potential (Bhabha, 2006, p. 157). In this case,

Solomon stepped into the Third Space to explain to the intervening passer-by his motives and values, and in recounting the story to me he revisited that incident.

The four narratives presented so far engage with human rights ways of being and becoming. They illustrate power dynamics across time and diverse spaces. Gender, age and ethnic identity are key elements within the narratives. I will now present a final narrative which raises questions about future expectations that potentially affect acculturation and the flourishing of human rights for all.

8.4 A warning

While participants provided many stories about how lived experience promoted increased understanding of human rights, development, adjustment and positive change, some stories highlighted the opposite. The unravelling of cultural identity. The decay of values. The loss of fundamental certainties with implications for individual, family and community wellbeing. These stories, too, had their place. They held important lessons about what human rights are and how they are constructed. An example of this kind of storytelling was provided by Albert from South Sudan. He had told me that the community sang to promote transformation around community human rights issues, and I have discussed this data in Chapter 9. I then asked, 'do you see that use of song here still, in your family and community?' Albert replied:

Actually, community used to dance. Actually, we just had but it died... In the last three years, I haven't seen. They used to dance and sing. When they go and make some entertainment, people do not know what songs they're singing. Because some of the songs are actually war songs that has made them pass through well, in those.

When I mean war songs also, there is a war song which is sung in the front line. This is the song that when it is sung, people think they are protected. There is a spirit that protects them. And when they are being killed, you don't rush to take the wounded. Instead, you continue. You will come for the wounded after the war is, after you are finished.

And for that reason, you'll find in my community, the group that goes to war, normally nobody comes back, or only one person comes back. Yeah, because you are just interested in the war. You are not interested in the wounded. But if you fight well and you defeat the other side, then you come back and get the wounded. Or sometimes as you sing, the song diminishes, because the people are dying. And if you have cowards, maybe they have ran away, and only the few strong people remain. So that is how the song dies. (Albert, South Sudan)

Immediately prior to making this statement, Albert had spoken about the therapeutic nature of composition and performance of traditional songs in his community. Song is an intriguing method of storytelling. Albert said that song facilitates sharing of wisdom, grieving, healing and togetherness and affirmed its connection to individual and community resilience. He suggested that sharing experience in the form of song ensures that people do not feel directly confronted but may gradually recognise their errors or experiences in the music. In addition, in the singing they feel less isolated and alone, they experience compassion, freedom and strength in the common burden of suffering. He then told me the

above story, which conveyed a disconnect between his community and their songs here.

This story appears to transcend the everyday to convey something deeply meaningful and important about cultural adjustment. Albert weaves a narrative about a song that conjures a protective spirit, strengthening comrades in battle. Though they fight well, they may receive wounds, may suffer defeat, and may not have resources to expend on those who fall. One way to read this is that the song has a purpose in Albert's story, and now the song dies because there is no war, so there is no need for the song. However, the context in which Albert tells the story suggests that he may be drawing an analogy to how community is faring following resettlement in Australia, where their lived experience over time diminishes their unique voices, approaches and perspectives, and 'the song dies', leaving silence.

By telling this story, Albert may be highlighting loss of cultural knowledge that can occur when people attempt to rebuild their lives in countries of refugee resettlement. Practises that once transmitted meaning are reduced to mere entertainment. People may stop performing the stories and lose connection with their traditions. In this way, perhaps, the elements of family and community that protect people from harm are eroded. This story can be understood as a warning about the future. It has become clearer throughout this research that family and community expectations and predictions about the future affect the here and now.

This story is not just about the future, but also about the past and present. On one level, it is a story about the way disputes between ethnic groups were settled in Sudan. In this sense, it is a story of endurance, commitment, responsibility for the community and sacrifice. On another level the diminishing song could also be a metaphor about ongoing trauma, loss and dispossession of

culture in the diaspora. There is a sense of people battling against their new environment. There is a sense of otherness and ethnic boundaries. Instead of being physical bodies succumbing, it is the metaphysical and cultural elements that might be thought of as succumbing to the pressures of adjusting to life in Sydney, NSW, today. At all levels, there is a sacredness to the story. It highlights ways of communication that link to other parts of this thesis and hint at ways forward for social workers and their clients and colleagues from African refugee backgrounds. It is at once a metaphor for what rights might achieve, and for how they might function to disempower and [re]colonise new and emerging communities.

The research interviews in this study were shaped by stories, and by participant choices around those stories. What were they prepared to share, and what was I prepared to hear? In this chapter I have outlined how embracing and analysing individual, family and community experiences as shared in narrative form allowed 'passage through a third space' within the research interviews. I was witness to, and collaborator in, the weaving of personal meaning through the research. But stories were rarely woven into a neat, meaningful whole. Some stories were interrupted part-way through by external actors or forces such as the end of a participant's lunchbreak. Some were limited by my listening skills and my cultural understandings. Some were too personal or painful and participants asked me not to probe any further. In all cases, participants wove for me unique gifts of words, perspectives and experiences in the research interview, across multiple times and spaces.

8.5 Conclusion

Chapter 8 provides reflections upon what participant narratives tell us about human rights understandings and constructions, especially how they are

influenced by gender, age and power. Each story presented in this chapter was selected because it extends our knowledge about human rights and African family and community ways of being, both *here* and *there*. Three significant themes were outlined: first, the importance of family relationships in developing as a person, and knowledge about human rights; second, the link between human rights ways of being, and roles and cultural norms in African communities; third, how time and place contribute to human rights understandings and promote change, whether towards growth or increased fragility.

Chapter 9, which follows, outlines risks and barriers to exercising human rights and then presents data about how participants, their families, and their communities, exercise human rights. Chapter 10, Discussion and Conclusion, reflects upon the overarching contributions this data makes to human rights discourse and the implications for social work practice.

9. Ways of Doing Human Rights

9.1 Introduction

This is the third and final results chapter. It builds on previous chapters, presenting further evidence about the influence of relationships on understandings and constructions of human rights in African families from refugee backgrounds. In this chapter, I present data which highlights risks and barriers to doing human rights and then illuminates ways of doing human rights informed by the experiences and concerns of African families from refugee backgrounds. How this data interacts with participant perspectives on their family and community needs, values, roles and norms is elucidated. The chapter examines power as utilised and mediated by participants and their families and communities, as well as wielded by professionals and social institutions. It examines how each of these frame ways of doing human rights.

9.2 Fears about doing human rights

Four risks associated with doing human rights were prominent areas of discussion in the present study. These included prosecution and imprisonment, threats to life and safety, shaming and social isolation, and damage and destruction. Some risks were emphasised more by men or more by women, indicating that gender plays a role in perceptions about ways of doing human rights. This section is arranged to highlight this gendered feature of the data. Each risk is discussed in turn.

9.3 Prosecution and imprisonment

The threat of prosecution and imprisonment for exercising human rights pose serious risks in some communities, and were the main preoccupation of the

male participants in the present study. Many of the men highlighted that people who question the status quo, or challenge injustice, face prosecution and imprisonment. Journalists and others who ask questions, criticise how things are done, or suggest alternative approaches expect to be punished by the authorities.

One male participant, Mamoudou, who sought asylum in Australia nearly twenty years ago, still feels unsafe to return to his homeland. It was Mamoudou who asked for his country of origin to be withheld due to these concerns. As he discussed human rights Mamoudou said:

...even though some people will know something is wrong in Africa – there's a lot of corruption, to be frank – they are living there, so there's no other way to fight because when you fight this thing, could put in prison or be prosecuted, you know? But because of the people who mostly back home who got no education so they think it's normal, so especially the politician when they're doing something, people don't ask questions... and those who are trying to talk the truth to people that this is not the normal thing, what should be done, those are prosecuted and put in jail, especially like a journalist or people. (Mamoudou, West Africa)

Mamoudou says that people 'back home' do not speak out, or hold their leaders to account, because they know that people get punished for doing so. The systems of justice and governance do not function fairly or impartially: 'there's a lot of corruption, to be frank'. People must ignore things they might otherwise consider to be wrong and they learn to avoid advocating for justice as 'they are living there' and must continue to do so as safely as possible. These statements suggest that corruption, and economic and social disadvantage,

affect ways of doing human rights. Mamoudou's comments impress upon us that social norms and hierarchies are reinforced by those who control the access to resources, a key Marxist critique offered by many African scholars (see for example, Fanon, 1967; Mutua, 2001).

Along with social commentators including Fanon (2004b), Friere (1970) and others, Mamoudou stresses that barriers created by low levels of education limit ways of doing human rights: 'even though some people will know something is wrong... there is no other way to fight... because people, who mostly back home... got no education'. Lack of education makes it difficult for people to intellectually construct and analyse unjust behaviour of people in power and so they avoid asking questions altogether, thereby limiting individual and community agency. These statements reiterate the insights of Fanon (2004b) and other African scholars, as was discussed in Chapter 2, Human rights.

Mamoudou's comments are made using the present continuous tense. This is interesting as it has the effect of allowing him to speak from all three of the identities listed above: that of an African person, a person from a refugee background, and as a member of a new and emerging community in Australia. It also serves to communicate perceived currency of the risks he describes.

Other male participants referred to similar risks relating to doing human rights. Solomon from Sierra Leone said:

That's typical when you go to the police station he will tell you that, we don't have vehicle. If they don't tell you they don't have vehicle they will tell you, we don't have paper to write your statement down. You know what it means, you have to... We don't have pen. But here because triple zero – boom! – they come. I say that's why. And when they come they don't want to

know who's right, who's wrong. Hey, yes, tomorrow charge into court. That's why its spoiling the community because, in Sierra Leone, in those days, if you take someone to court or to police, be ready. If you are not strong they will leave you die in there because [they] have the financials to bribe. (Solomon, Sierra Leone)

Solomon's statement accords with Mamoudou's comments about corruption, suggesting that financial strength prevails/prevailed in his community, rather than the specifics of the dispute or principles of justice and rule of law. Corruption and economic and social vulnerability interact to influence ways of doing human rights in Solomon's memories of Sierra Leone, echoing concerns about economic and social disadvantage about which African leaders and researchers have written (Ibhawoh, 2001; Mutua, 2001). In this regard, Solomon speaks from an African insider perspective.

Solomon goes on to describe the ramifications of these experiences for adjustment in Australia. He suggests that the socio-economic vulnerability experienced 'in those days' there translates into new risks here. Solomon outlines that the swift responsiveness of the police here is unfamiliar to Solomon's family and community: 'But here because triple zero – boom! – they come.' This creates new dilemmas, and new experiences: 'when they come they don't want to know who's right, who's wrong'. These experiences rework and unsettle ways of doing human rights. In making these claims, Solomon speaks as a frustrated observer of new and emerging African communities in Australia.

Risk of prosecution, imprisonment and trouble with police in exercising human rights *here* were echoed by other male participants. Nelson from South

Sudan raised the issue of racial profiling and authorities wielding their power against those who are visibly different in the Australian community:

What people need to understand, that if something had happened here, if a young man, all of a sudden, has an altercation with someone at a train station, what people would look at is, okay, had a fight, simple, go to jail, one. Two, he would be profiled as an aggressive. So, chances are, he never stand any sort of chance, so [he will] go to jail straightaway. And, also, the fact that those authorities often come and say, or make this assumption, that you don't know the law – we're going to teach you the law! And in fact, I have been in the same situation where I have an altercation with plain clothed police who say they want to lecture me about the law of this society. And funnily enough I was with my brother who is a lawyer, so to me, I just told them, hang on a minute, I didn't come from Africa yesterday. And, in fact, they got schooled and talked to, and they got aggressive and started shoving and we said, look, the whole point we talk to you was not to get into a fight but it was to give you the understanding of your role, and that's what we did. In fact, we're going to go to where you are at the moment, we know that you're from the local police, we're going go into the local police and tell the Commander the experiences. We did that and the Commander was very thankful and appreciative of taking that step. (Nelson, Southern Sudan)

Vulnerability of African families from refugee backgrounds in relationship to the police is a central theme in the above excerpt. Nelson's statement 'he never

stand any sort of a chance' highlights a vast imbalance of power between the young man in the story and the police who approach him. Nelson describes a scenario where a young man is approached by police at a train station, quickly profiled as aggressive, and unable to avoid jail. Reports in the news media over a five-year period support Nelson's account of this young man's potential experience with police, outlining evidence of racial profiling emerging from investigations of complaints about Victoria Police (Famsworth, 2016; Seidel & Hopkins, 2013; Walters, 2011). Nelson speaks as if the young man has little or no opportunity to exercise his human rights in the presence of law enforcement authorities. As Nelson shares his own experience of being approached by police, 'and in fact, I have been in the same situation where I have an altercation with plain clothed police', we realise that he knows the young man's sense of vulnerability intimately. We sense his outrage and his feeling of being misjudged and pushed around.

Importantly, Nelson also conveys his resilience in the situation. His resilience is underpinned by his education and knowledge of local laws, roles and systems which negate the initial power imbalance. It is also bolstered by not being alone when approached by the police. Indeed, Nelson and his brother face this situation together, drawing upon their combined years of study and work in the legal profession *here*. Their resources in the situation facilitate a reversal of power: Nelson and his brother go to the local police station, ask to see the Commander, make a report about their experiences, and are thanked for their efforts by the Commander.

In his vignette, Nelson highlights stupid assumptions made by police about his brother and himself, commenting 'they want to lecture me about the law of this society'. We can see from the above scenario that their approach to

educating Nelson and his brother was condescending and unhelpful, disempowering them and causing them to feel threatened, harassed and racially profiled. According to the *About Us* section of the NSW Police Force website, aspects of their mission relevant to this thesis include: 'work with the community to reduce violence, crime and fear... protect the community and property by preventing, detecting and investigating crime... maintaining social order' (NSW Police NSW Police Force, 2017, p. 1). These roles link closely with individuals and communities exercising human rights.

Many of the women in the study also highlighted risks in exercising human rights but the areas they highlighted were risks relating to physical and mental wellbeing and how, when these come under attack, women risked unsettling or destroying their status in the community. These female perspectives will now be presented.

9.4 Threats to physical and mental wellbeing

Risks people face regarding their physical and mental wellbeing in exercising human rights were the main preoccupation of the female participants in the present study. In Chapter 8 I presented two participant narratives that addressed diverse experiences of genital cutting, and through examining the narratives, discussed how they contributed to our understandings of human rights ways of being. One of these narratives belonged to Angelina, an older woman with children and grandchildren. In the excerpt that appears in Chapter 8, Angelina described her father's refusal to subject his daughters to the female initiation ritual of the 'sandy bush' (Angelina's words for genital cutting, described in Chapter 8. I asked Angelina what this meant. She said:

Yeah, what happen to a family that doesn't do that [genital cutting], like, I – I am saying it to you, in my village, you don't, you

don't utter it. You don't utter it. Anyone. Even if you come here, you don't utter it. It's a very high risk – for your life. Yeah, yeah! A very high risk for your life... You have to leave, to run away. If you don't want it done you have to run away.

They, sometimes they – what we believe in, you sometimes say it is superstition, but I believe it's not superstition – they send you crazy, they send you mad... okay, the Witch Doctors will do something to you; they will ask, yeah, they will be asked to do something to you.

...so, my Dad left the village, and he bought another area, and build his own village... and he is still there today, our village is there.

...so, most of the time when they having [the sandy bush], they hurt us because they don't like us. When they're having their meeting, they can fight us when we are coming around, they steal everything, or sometimes they say they should lock us up, and they will lock us up, we'll not come outside until they are finished with everything and they let us outside. (Angelina, Liberia)

In this excerpt, Angelina describes how dangerous it was to challenge the social norms and custom of genital cutting in her community. Every season the children had to hide and sometimes the family were persecuted – having things stolen or having to fight people who came around while the meetings were on. Angelina's father would lock his children up until everything was finished to avoid trouble. Then, Angelina describes how her father moved the family to another

area and established a new village to protect his daughters from the ritual of the 'sandy bush' and avoid ongoing threats. This is because the family's stance on this human rights issue drew attention in the community and they were under pressure to capitulate.

One of the risks Angelina mentioned is that the witch doctors would be engaged to 'send you crazy... send you mad... they will be asked to do something to you'. The belief that witch doctors can threaten one's life through their powers over the mind and body is an example of the cosmological framework underpinning African worldviews which is described by Thabede (2008). In Angelina's example above, the power of the cosmological worldview endures and influences her present time and place, as it did her past time and place. She speaks emphatically: 'In my village, you don't, you don't utter it. You don't utter it. Anyone. Even if you come *here*, you don't utter it.'

9.5 Shaming and social isolation

Another risk to doing human rights was described by Gloria from Kenya. Gloria differed from Angelina by country of origin, age range, ethnic group, level of education, employment status and language background, but her comments echoed Angelina's perspectives regarding how doing human rights can isolate people in her community, as outlined below:

Once you start exercising that human right, they say that, now – even my own family here – they think I'm big-headed. And, you see, I still exercise my human rights there, but people thought I was crazy. Because for me, I knew it was right, but I still stuck on it, which didn't go well with many people. Even women themselves. Oh yes! It's very – they don't want you to be heard – I can't say it! They say you are big-headed, they say nothing

good. If it's something, I say how I see it, and many people don't want to hear that... I always say I'll be left alone, but standing for the truth. (Gloria, Kenya)

In the above statement, Gloria emphasises that people who exercise human rights 'there' risk being rejected and isolated by their families and communities. Speaking about things that families and communities 'don't want to hear' might leave you 'alone, but standing for the truth'. Further, maintaining your stance does not bode well: 'I still stuck on it, which didn't go well with many people'. We are to understand that people who try to exercise their human rights can be threatened, shamed and rejected by their families, and by other women whom you might hope will share your views: 'they say you are big-headed, they say nothing good'.

Gloria's lived experience of human rights as an African person, and as someone who fled her country as a refugee, suggests that family and community expectations and pressures can run counter to her own intuitions about safety, wellbeing and happiness, because exercising human rights can result in one being treated as an outcast. These comments bring into relief the importance participants placed on good standing in the community. In exercising human rights women risk being labelled as crazy, which is dishonourable, a public shaming process.

Gloria's experiences resonate with other data in the present study which assists us to comprehend deeper implications of being labelled big-headed and thought crazy. Albert from South Sudan described his culture as a 'shame and honour culture' (see Chapter 6) and spoke about 'twero padano', responsibility for others (see Chapter 7). When the community labels people as incapable or unable to meet 'twero padano' (their responsibilities to others), he says:

Such people will be treated as outcasts. You will be the talk of the day. And if your children grow up, no one would even like to marry your daughter or your son, because they will always be talking: "you go to that family, they're not responsible". So, no one would like to associate themselves with shameful things. Always, they want to appear like they are responsible people.

(Albert, South Sudan)

Albert describes how social shame and stigma endures: not only will you be 'the talk of the day', but 'if your children grow up, no one would even like to marry your daughter or your son'. Through this representation of culture, we perceive that a label such as 'big headed... crazy' can powerfully shape not only an individual's reputation, but that of their whole family. Those who are thus stigmatised, and their families, experience shame and may completely lose their status in the community.

If we combine Albert's insights with Angelina and Gloria's comments, we apprehend potential negative flow-on effects for individuals and families in exercising human rights. While Australian social workers are trained in the importance of self-determination and individual agency, participants emphasised that their families and communities exert significant influence over their ways of being and doing. This is an important finding about whether, and how, people might exercise their human rights, both *here* and *there*. The risks highlighted by participants have not been well-documented to date and require future exploration and consideration.

9.6 Falling in the fire and driving a train

A fourth risk of doing human rights emphasised by participants in the current study was negative impacts on the social fabric. In Chapter 7, I presented the metaphor of Free Freedom, discussed by Gloria from Kenya, which warned against embracing freedom without responsibility as it has been observed to be damaging to individuals, families and communities. Below, Daniel from South Sudan employs two metaphors to express similar concerns. In this quote, Daniel characterises risks he associates with exercising human rights *here*, via two evocative metaphors – falling in the fire and driving a train. Daniel said:

I think the human right apply to respect: respect yourself, respect society, respect your cultural background, and then respect even the government rule, regulation, so that you cannot fall on the fire. Some people, they misunderstood [human rights] and they jump on it and then try to go that way. Later on, become what? A disaster! And they call it what? History! So that's what I'm saying. Sometime the human rights work good, sometime the human rights bad. Human right is not, er, steering, I cannot just take it as a steering... I'm the one driving it. [laughs] Yes, I can just jump on it and then drive it, er, like a train. (Daniel, South Sudan)

Fire is an intriguing metaphor for Daniel to have chosen. For the vast majority of rural households in South Sudan – Daniel's country of origin – and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, fire remains an important resource because access to electricity lags well behind global averages (Bos, Chaplin, & Mamun, 2018). In most these households, fire provides light and warmth and enables food preparation. Yet fires also cause injuries, and at higher rates in low- and middle-income countries than elsewhere, as attested by a recent review of fire and burn

deaths conducted by South African researchers Titi, van Niekerk and Ahmed (2017). One statistic reported in the study by Titi et al. is that rates of paediatric burn mortality are highest in sub-Saharan Africa and concentrated in 'impoverished settings' (2017, p. 494). When he says, 'human rights apply to respect... so that you cannot fall on the fire' Daniel conveys that human rights, like fire, represent both sustenance and risk. This metaphor appears to emerge out of Daniel's identity and experience both as an African man and a person from a refugee background.

Like Nelson, Daniel draws upon deontological reasoning and consequentialism in representing human rights as a fire that must be respected. The fire metaphor represents individual judgement, informed by culture and self-knowledge, and social rules and regulations. But it also represents adverse and unpredictable outcomes. Daniel's point is that human rights require balance and boundaries that are encompassed by three things: one's own moral compass ('respect yourself'), cultural norms and customs ('respect your cultural background'), and local norms and customs ('respect society, respect government rules and regulations').

Daniel's second human rights metaphor extends upon the deontological and consequential ideas that 'falling on the fire' initiates. The metaphor of driving a train evokes movement and grapples even more deeply with ideas of external force and internal agency. A train as an object is much larger and heavier than a person. Yet, trains are controlled from the driver's seat. The overwhelming object can thus be directed, controlled, but only from this seat. By linking his understandings of human rights to the train metaphor Daniel conveys the importance of being in control, making conscious choices and experiencing a level of autonomy. He warns that human rights should not be taken for granted

and emphasises that his family and community cannot be passive in relation to human rights. This could mean *being driven by* human rights, represented as a powerful and potentially overwhelming force. Instead, you must be active in relation to human rights, exerting your will: 'I cannot just take it as a steering... I can just jump on it, and then drive it'.

This metaphor allows Daniel to convey the importance of individual agency in relation to human rights. Daniel's metaphor is consistent with the first Article of the UDHR, which states, 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood' (1948). Yet, Daniel's views are ambivalent: he suggests that human rights improve people's situations and provide significant relief to desperate people but also emphasises that communities, families and individuals must actively negotiate their human rights, not assume that the train is being 'steered' in the right direction. Daniel's laughter in the above quote could suggest a level of playfulness regarding human rights, or a breakthrough in the human rights dialogue, or perhaps even a level of unease. One of the important topics Daniel raised in his interview was corruption and neglect of human rights that he had observed and experienced prior to leaving Africa, but another was misapplication of, or misunderstandings about, human rights he has observed here, particularly amongst other families and communities settling as refugees in Sydney. In both situations, the 'train' that represents human rights ideals is misdirected, not being steered, or gravely in need of a qualified driver.

Once again, metaphorical expression facilitates depth and richness in the research. The metaphor of the train allows Daniel to speak from experience both as an African man and a person from a refugee background. In addition, he steps into a third space, offering a productive metaphor with which to discuss power,

agency, force, roles and human rights across cultures. This metaphor represents a hybrid approach to human rights exploration across cultures that resonates with Bhabha's (2006) theoretical framework.

In this research, participants provided advice on a range of ways of doing human rights that might resonate with their families and communities. These included both passive and active strategies to minimise risk, preserve relationships where possible, and maintain dignity at individual, familial and community levels. Given the nature of the risks discussed above, it was important to reflect upon these strategies and consider how social workers might benefit from knowledge about these ways of doing human rights. Findings about this are presented below.

9.7 Ways of doing human rights

Study data highlighted that meaningful intercultural collaboration promotes a vibrant, inclusive, transformative human rights culture. These features included *good words pull kola nar mot* (Solomon, Sierra Leone), and *kon madang* (Nelson, South Sudan), phrases in participant languages that are explained at section 9.8 and 9.9 respectively. Guidance provided by participants about each of these aspects is outlined below. Participants emphasised the positive impacts of having their insights about human rights understood and acknowledged and they offered a range of strategies to support increased understanding of their families and communities.

9.8 Good words pull kola nar mot

Participants emphasised that well-chosen words underpin dialogue and create possibilities for shared human rights understandings and collaborative decision-making to unfold. An example of this is Solomon's statement below:

On any issue that we are trying to solve, the way we approach it, the use of tongue. We have what we call in our language, kola, that is kola nut, will give somebody good words, that is to say, when you chew kola nut in the right way – er, let me have some, but if you chew and nobody backs you, you are not good. That is, good word, or polite word will make someone spit the kola nut from the mouth. Because people like to chew kola nut. So, when you go there, you see he or she chewing his kola nut. He talking to you, he no listen to you because he chew, chew, chew. But when you bring peaceful approach with respect, [he] stop chewing – here – let me put my kola nut here, see... They will listen to you. But if you come with, no this is it! You should do this, you should do this, you should do that; you're supposed to be doing this, this, this, this, they will continue, continue to chew!

(Solomon, Sierra Leone)

Above, Solomon offers us a useful phrase in his mother-tongue, Krio: 'good words pull kola nar mot'. He translates the phrase as 'good words pull the kola nut out of the mouth'. As he explains the meaning of this phrase, Solomon emphasises that 'good word, or polite word' are very important to his family and community, and that bringing 'peaceful approaches with respect' supports engagement with African families from refugee backgrounds. This is important for 'any issue we are trying to solve'.

In this story, Solomon outlines what happens when members of his family and community perceive an interaction as aggressive or insensitive – they withdraw. While the person or family might remain physically present, they will withdraw from the situation, shifting their attention inwards to a private and

unreachable place. 'If you come with, no this is it! You should do this... you should do that; you're supposed to be doing this, this, this, this, they will continue, continue to chew!' Behaviours such as lecturing, coercion or imposing values on African families from refugee backgrounds result in the continued chewing of the kola nut. Thus, the kola nut is a metaphor of shutting down, or disengagement.

Looked at in another way, chewing the kola nut is an act of resistance. We can see 'he talking to you, he no listen to you because he chew, chew, chew' as an act of power in the face of confrontation. Chewing the kola nut in this anecdote resists othering and is a response to unilateral and insensitive application of power. Via the metaphor of chewing the kola nut, Solomon conveys how families and communities might establish control over the human rights dialogue and the processes of decision-making.

This excerpt suggests that workers need to come from a humble place and give priority to the quality of the dialogue in working with African families from refugee backgrounds. 'Good words pull kola nar mot' provides insight about building and preserving relationship with African families from refugee backgrounds. It supports goals of eliciting participant expertise, creating a safe dialogical space, and enhancing participant power.

Both males and females in the study were emphatic about the need for peaceful and respectful approaches, and critical of outsiders telling their communities what to do. This highlights that social work practice with African families from refugee backgrounds rests on the creation of a collaborative dialogical space. Yet data from my study indicates that participant experiences and the experiences of people in their communities diverges from the ideal when they interact with systems of support here. This was documented in Chapters 7

and 8. Reasons for this, and implications for practice, will be discussed in Chapter 10.

9.9 Kon madang – Just wait

The above excerpts are about initial engagement and principles for initiating conversation about human rights with African families from refugee communities. The next quote is about taking time to reflect collaboratively upon an issue, event, experience or perception before responding. When I asked Nelson how his family and community understandings and constructions of human rights could be useful for social workers, he replied:

...for us, if someone aspire to do something, you know, wrong, or instigate a fight, there is always a word that is called 'wait'. And from our language, or for Bor, it's called "kon madang"... So, it's 'just wait'. That element of 'just wait' is used for people to reflect on their individual reaction. It is used to avoid looking silly when you later on coming and saying, 'well I reacted too harsh'. How "kon madang" came in place was because someone got angry and killed someone without having that second thought but later on they realised he made a mistake because the person he killed was not the actual culprit. So, it was looking at a different person. So, they initiated that statement "kon madang" to give you a pause, stop for a while and think, 'Is that the right thing that you're doing, are you going to regret it later for doing that thing?' So that is very important. (Nelson, South Sudan)

Kon madang is a Dinka-Bor phrase. Nelson from South Sudan translates *kon madang* as *just wait* and explains the meaning this phrase has for him and

his family in relation to exercising human rights. The core insight is that waiting, pausing and reflecting are key ways for his family and community to *do* human rights. This involves avoiding being driven by fear, anger and other emotions to undertake impulsive acts that may be unjust. Analysing the contextual elements of *kon madang* as presented by Nelson in this study highlights that the virtue can be theorised variously from a deontological perspective (Kant, 2002), a virtue ethics perspective (Nussbaum, 2002; Sen, 2005), a consequential perspective (Bentham, 2002 c.1789; de Lazari-Radek & Singer, 2017; Mill, 1879) and an African cosmological perspective (Fu-Kiau, 2008; Mbiti, 2015). Each of these will be outlined and discussed below, followed by commentary on the wider implications of these theorisations.

The deontological perspective is a rules-based system of thought that centres on duty, and is generally attributed to Immanuel Kant. Deontology is embedded in Nelson's story, which represents a 'worst case scenario' that warns people to stop and reflect before acting. For Nelson, this story serves as a reminder about obligations within the family and community: 'just wait' is a motto for doing human rights that encourages people to step back and take time between thought and action, supporting de-escalation and exhorting people to cultivate right judgement. In Nelson's example of *kon madang*, waiting is described as a key duty in times of crisis. *Kon madang* creates space for checking details, discerning the truth of a situation and considering the consequences of one's reactions and responses. Nelson suggests that individuals within his community are told this story at certain times to encourage them to exercise self-restraint in the face of grievous injury, such as the loss of a brother to murder presented above. This implies the presence of a moral obligation to cultivate clear thinking, and to ascertain the facts, rather than exacting revenge without restraint.

It is curious that deontology is scarcely mentioned in Western-centric human rights texts, while duty and responsibility are regularly emphasised by African writers. This will be analysed further in Chapter 10, Discussion.

Kon madang also appears to be an example of virtue ethics, in that the philosophy of 'just wait' is represented by Nelson as a trait which causes its possessor to be considered a good person within the community. My research following Nelson's interview supports this perspective, as a 2013 South Sudanese news source describes *kon madang* as 'an all-encompassing human virtue of self-restraint' (Ngong et al., 2012). Virtue ethics models reflect upon behaviours according to whether they can be categorised as intrinsically good, and seek courses of action which cannot make a situation ethically worse. Nelson suggests that the act of 'just waiting' demonstrates good will in his community and is thought to be intrinsically good. Exercising self-restraint sublimates the desires of the individual to the good of the community, and appears to be a behaviour that engenders pride for Nelson and his community.

Consequentialism provides an alternate theoretical perspective to frame *kon madang* as represented by Nelson in this study. Consequentialism is an outcomes-based perspective. Nelson emphasises that 'just wait' can prevent senseless and unjust reprisal in the face of catastrophe. Waiting is more likely to result in a good outcome, or to have more desirable consequences. In the context of Nelson's story, *kon madang* endorses community consultation and consideration of more than one explanation. It challenges certainty. Nelson suggests that the consequence of *kon madang* is a more just and peaceful outcome for everybody. In this regard, *kon madang* strengthens the community and locates everyone within the collective, especially in times of tragedy.

In African culture, ancestors remain part of the family and are 'looked upon as the source from which help and guidance can be derived' (Thabede, 2008, p. 239). Thabede argues that African cosmological perspectives prioritise ancestral knowledge and accommodate their intervention in the 'here and now'. If we analyse Nelson's explanation of the origins of *kon madang*, we see the concept embedded subtly in an African cosmological perspective. Nelson suggests that the story originates in an earlier time, handed down by the ancestors. In this way it has the quality of a legend, one which advocates mastery of the emotions and cautions the community and the individual against mindless retaliation. The consequences of acting contrary to *kon madang* are serious: culpability for the life of an innocent person. It is a story that might well be shared in times of heightened emotion to influence and educate. This reading of Nelson's motto is important as it demonstrates continuity between the past and the present, reinforces connections between family and community members, both those who are no longer alive but present in spirit, as well those who are living and breathing.

The discussion above suggests that *kon madang* was a rich source of information about how African families from refugee backgrounds 'do' human rights. Approaches that recognise and promote collaborative reflection upon experience might enhance human rights discussions and support decision-making between social workers and African families from refugee backgrounds.

So far, I have discussed two ways of 'doing' human rights. The first was approaches with clients and families which convey respect and facilitate relationship building: 'good words pull kola nar mot'. The second was the conscious choice to reflect before acting: *kon madang*, which in English means *just wait*. The next insight about exercising human rights that I will discuss is transforming people and practices through consultation.

9.10 Transforming people and practices through consultation

In Chapter 8 I shared Nola's narrative of her traumatic and unwelcome initiation experience involving genital cutting and stated that her terrible experience created the potential for future change. Now her paid work allows her to draw upon her cultural knowledge as well as her life experiences and her studies prior to and since arriving in Australia. Nola is familiar with models of community development and works to empower women in vulnerable situations in Australia and the Pacific region. She was highly critical of the approach taken by many cross-cultural workers who enter foreign communities without applying suitable knowledge, skills and values to engage effectively with cultural practices, traditions and taboos. She highlighted that they fail to tackle the hard issues in communities. She then shared advice about working for change in practices of initiation of young girls, a topic about which she feels strongly:

When people are seen doing harmful traditional practice in the human rights they are setting it as a cultural practice and none of them in the UN want to talk about it; they said, "it is their people's traditional practice" ... This problem has been going on in our community, where people don't know how to really tackle the situation. Instead of trying to understand why women are continuously doing the practice [Female Genital Mutilation, FGM], they just walked to the women and said, "What you are doing is wrong! It's a human rights abuse, so we want to abolish this practice. You have to stop doing the practice."... Because this is something our community take it as a secret society; nobody's allowed to discuss it openly... But when I returned to Sierra Leone... I'd get the men involved by asking permission

from the men that I want to have a consultation with the women... I said, "It's about FGM. And I would like to return back to this country, if I have the opportunity, and the funding, to work with the women, including you, the men, because we cannot work with the women and leave you behind."... So, having that consultation... I was able to talk to the women to ask them, 'How do we transform the practice?' rather than telling them to abolish the practice. (Nola, Sierra Leone)

In this excerpt, Nola expresses frustration and disgust with human rights-based interventions that are imposed on communities rather than approached consultatively and do little to empower vulnerable girls because they avoid challenging cultural norms and do not drive transformation in the community. Her feelings are deepened by her personal experience of violation. She emphasises that, in the absence of respectful approaches, individuals and families will exercise their rights by resistance and non-engagement with authority. On the other hand, outsiders fail to tackle the situation: 'it is their people's traditional practice'. This is perhaps an example of employing a cultural relativism of the worst kind. Note that we can draw parallels to our own culture in the past in relation to the treatment and control of women.

Nola's question, 'how do we transform the practice?', stood out to me in our research interview and still even more later when I analysed this passage. Transformative practice is an idea that I expect will be familiar to social work practitioners, educators and others working in human services. For social workers, it relates to changing behaviour through increased awareness. It involves critical reflection from a variety of perspectives to arrive at new understandings of the self and others. Nola used the term in a very similar way.

In her example, she describes culturally tailored consultation with communities about genital cutting and other initiation practices. According to Nola, oppressive social and economic structures can only be transformed by collaboratively engaging those in positions of power. She first approached the male elders of the communities and explained her concerns, her process and her purpose. She sought explicit permission to meet with the women and promised to keep the men involved. This approach was deeply and continuously inclusive. She established that she was trustworthy, which confirmed the integrity of the project.

Nola's approach to transforming the practice of genital cutting is underpinned by research and reflection upon the underlying social and economic structures that reinforce and facilitate the ongoing practice of genital cutting as part of the initiation of girls in Sierra Leone. These include community norms and preferences associated with womanhood and marriageability, as well as livelihood structures, where the knowledge and skills regarding genital cutting and initiation are handed down from generation to generation and constitute an important source of income for the practitioners of the tradition. Nola's strategy addresses the powerful needs which continue to drive the practices, particularly livelihoods of the women who conduct genital cutting. She recognises that these women hold specialised knowledge that is handed down from mother to daughter and require assistance to identify creative alternatives and possibilities if they are to transform current practices. This approach is hopeful and culturally informed.

Years after fleeing from her homeland, Nola's trajectory exemplifies transformational learning at individual and community levels. As an individual, Nola has completed a tertiary education, worked consultatively in Asia and the Pacific and begun a research degree. She returns to her country of origin not quite as bound by the same norms and expectations, yet cognisant of them. She

blends multiple ways of knowing, being and doing, demonstrating the dynamic nature of African worldviews. Above, Nola stresses that consensus-building amongst and between men and women is fundamental to change-oriented practice regarding the rights and responsibilities of members of African families from refugee backgrounds. She emphasises both the transformative potential, and the essential nature of, relationship building and inclusive dialogue across cultures in these vexed areas.

Like Solomon, Nola brings a 'peaceful approach with respect' (see Chapter 9), thereby encouraging her country-people into a space of potential, the intercultural 'third space' which Bhabha (2006) describes. This space is inhabited and purposefully employed by Nola, offering opportunities to tackle genital cutting practices via wide and purposeful consultation. Empowered by new and old ways of knowing and being, Nola is no longer ignored when she says, 'It's my right to say that I don't want to be part of this practice' (Nola, see Chapter 8).

In this chapter I am describing ways of doing human rights, drawn from the data in this study illustrating how African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights. So far, I have provided access to intriguing metaphors and narratives such as the chewing of the kola nut which reminds us about collaboration, the legend of *kon madang* which endorses critical reflection and transformative practice through widespread consultation. The next two examples provide insight into African ways of doing human rights that recognise and accommodate African ways of knowing and being regarding personal boundary-setting, safety, emotional intelligence and grappling with negative aspects of lived experience.

9.11 One day, you wake up and you don't see me

This interesting insight about exercising human rights was provided by Gloria from Kenya. While discussing how social workers could utilise her family and community insights about human rights, Gloria said:

Like for me, I have my own sets of limits. Like, if I'm not happy with something, I leave it. If I'm not happy with somebody, I'll try to mend ways. But if these people are pulling me down I'll cut them completely from my life. If it is my family, you can't cut your family, I distance myself. I put up protection. I don't know if it's the right thing or the wrong thing, but I have to protect myself. But I don't have evil. I'm not angry with you, and I'm not thinking even if you have any problems I won't help you, but I don't want you to come near me. That's how I protect myself... I will try and I will try to see you... And mostly it's the people around your circles. So, I'll try, if I think it's not happening and you are doing it to me two, three, four times, I withdraw. You don't even know. I withdraw slowly, that one day you wake up and you don't see me.

(Gloria, Kenya)

In this excerpt, Gloria discusses how she protects herself and sets limits where she feels restricted by her family and/or community in exercising her human rights. Her comments extend upon the earlier excerpt where she says, 'I always say I'll be left alone, but standing for the truth'. This method of setting boundaries and exercising human rights is reminiscent of Angelina's narrative about her family's migration to a newly-established village. Gloria's approach here avoids direct confrontation, potentially preserving her status and avoiding

being labelled 'crazy'. She quietly withdraws, minimising contact and thereby managing the intensity of the relationship.

Read together, Gloria's comments about risks associated with doing human rights and her comments above, 'one day you wake up and don't see me' highlight that risks and barriers to exercising human rights cannot be separated from aspects of African worldviews highlighted by African and African-American scholars (Obioha, 2014; Thabede, 2008). These include the importance of dignity, responsibility to others, and behaving in accordance with prevailing family and community norms. Gloria spoke eloquently in the quote above about giving people chances while also creating opportunities to draw boundaries, asserting her rights but managing the visibility of her stance. This is a way of negotiating human rights within her social and cultural context and indicates the importance of culturally safe ways of doing human rights.

9.12 I have expressed it in song, and people have danced it

In the next example, community singing and dancing are presented as ways of sharing and processing lived experiences relating to human rights issues. In this example, Albert from South Sudan explains how lived experience can be transformed through community traditions of singing and dancing. He argues that expression of lived experience in song and dance supports meaning-making and can rework suffering. In Chapter 8, Albert contributed an important insight about these traditions: 'sometimes as you sing, the song diminishes, because the people are dying' (p. 23). Here, he speaks about the therapeutic nature of traditional songs in his community:

There are songs that could be considered private, but that can also come up. Like a woman experiencing domestic violence, the songs might remain private to her, but at one time it could come

out... Generally, if it goes to the community, the community will sing about it, and that will become a pride to that particular woman – that, “I have experienced this, I have expressed it in song, and people have danced it”. And if the husband later would come to his sense that this song is sung about him, he would make some adjustment. [And others] will say yes, the song has been sung. It’s not only you. It’s not for your family only. All of us are affected. (Albert, South Sudan)

The phrase, ‘I have experienced this, I have expressed it in song, and people have danced it’, stands out to me as a powerful and intriguing way of sharing and processing one’s lived experience with families and communities. Albert describes how singing and dancing create shared spaces whereby individual stories can be shared safely and honoured by others in their families and communities. To illustrate his meaning, Albert gives the example of a woman experiencing domestic violence. Her story ‘might come out’ in the community, and when this happens, they will sing about it. This suggests that singing and dancing are active, embodied experiences that can meaningfully contribute to human rights discussions and human rights practices. Could singing and dancing lived experience have more of a role in supporting individual and family mourning, reframing, constructive challenging and drawing boundaries?

Notable scholars of African music and its therapeutic potential include Aluede and Ibekwe (2006; 2011), Pavlicevic, Dos Santos and Oosthuizen (2010) and Chakravati (2014). Aluede and Ibekwe, and Pavlicevic et al., write about the origins and contemporary relevance of African music therapy and healing processes, in the contexts of Nigeria and South Africa respectively. Yet, there is a paucity of social work literature that addresses the importance of singing and

dancing in African diasporic communities, especially connected with understanding and constructing human rights. The future applications of this knowledge, and the implications of our gaps in understanding, will be discussed in Chapter 10.

South African scholar Chakravati's book, *Sing the rage. Listening to Anger After Mass Violence* analyses the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She explores the relationship between anger and justice by considering testimonies given to the Commission between 1996-1998 about the atrocities of Apartheid. Her book title is ripe with meaning for the current study. A review of Chakravati's work suggests that her study 'provides valuable insight into smaller-scale conflict resolution that aims to restore victims to full membership in their community' (Toborg, 2015, p. 1). Toborg's commentary resonates with Albert's comments in the quote above: 'that will become a pride to that particular woman'. As her story is sung and danced, the woman whose experience is sung is transformed, and the experience becomes one of pride. The song and dance brings to the fore one's inner strength and truth. As well, the song initiates reflection for the perpetrator of the abuse, in this case the woman's husband: 'if the husband later would come to his sense that this song is sung about him, he would make some adjustment'. This speaks to the ways families and communities might challenge injustice while preserving dignity in community. It is an important insight as we consider ways of doing human rights that are familiar to African families from refugee backgrounds.

9.13 They didn't want to accept, until when [s]he speaks the language

In the next example of ways of doing human rights, Solomon from Sierra Leone raises the important issue of how human rights messages translate and might be accepted across cultures. Solomon speaks about a play he watched on

television on the ABC, Australia's free-to-air national broadcasting network, which was meaningful in our discussion about ways of knowing, being and doing human rights:

I was watching a play yesterday, even up to this morning, of the Asian countries on TV – that is Channel 24, ABC. A lady was teaching her colleagues this parachute. So, you see, once you're doing, those – sorry to say – those, predominantly Muslim, they don't allow a woman to do those things – I will come to that. Even culturally to us, for there are limits.

So, she was teaching.

When she used this parachute, she came down. The general thing was, so when she was talking, they thought she is a foreigner, so they didn't want to accept, until when [s]he speaks the language.

[That] time they started coming to h[er] 'amazing!', because it's foreign, something strange. They don't believe that one of their kind, or son, or child would do things like that... So, when you came down parachute it, like that, but when you spoke their language, they come. (Solomon, Sierra Leone)

Set in an unspecified Asian country and involving a woman from a Muslim community parachuting into a crowd of her own country-people, this televised play, or documentary, highlights how norms initially determined by the community to be foreign and unacceptable might be transformed by juxtaposing the foreign with the familiar, leading to acceptance and excitement. Solomon links this to the

activity of examining human rights perspectives and considers it a lesson in cultural exchange.

The educator in the play behaves in ways that women from her community are not generally expected or permitted to behave. As such, the bystanders, perhaps inadvertently, become participants in an experiential learning process. They initially assume they are observing a foreigner's behaviour. Because they label her as 'other', they withhold welcome and reject her capacity to teach them. In this moment, there are relatively rigid boundaries between the 'lady' and the community, underpinned by cultural and religious norms and informed by limiting assumptions. Yet, these boundaries dissolve when she speaks their language and, in that moment, she is recognised as kin; rejection is replaced by trust and acceptance.

Solomon's story offers important insights about ways of doing, and ways of learning about, human rights across cultures. There is energy and dynamism in the story, as foreignness transforms into recognition. As highlighted in Chapter 3, *Intercultural Social Work – Practice concepts and approaches*, Berry (2001) developed a model for understanding acculturation strategies adopted by individuals and by host societies as they come into contact with cultures other than their own. Solomon's story hints at this model and suggests possibilities for intercultural practice relating to unsettling cultural assumptions and softening prevailing certainties about human rights via modelling. He suggests there might be potential spaces of openness and flexibility towards perspectives on human rights initially considered confronting, unrecognisable, foreign and strange.

A link can be made here to Solomon's emphasis on gentle, peaceful approaches earlier in this chapter when he provided the phrase, 'good words pull cola nar mot'. Gentleness, humility and respect appear to facilitate trust-building

and increased openness to difference in Solomon's recount of the televised encounter, transforming the gathered onlookers. The televised play cited by Solomon challenges the status quo on many levels. It offers a path towards lowering resistance to culturally diverse human rights understandings and facilitating social development characterised by mutual growth and change.

The last example demonstrates insights about transformative practice here. They harness African ways of knowing, being and doing, to support relationship-building and facilitate broader community consultation, contributing to our understandings of how foreignness can transform into recognition.

9.14 It's so easy to do whatever you are doing, once you put a face to a name

Social events are further examples of human rights education underpinned by relationship-building and consultation shared by participants in this study. In the example below, Gloria describes her work establishing a forum for a new Commander of Police to meet and interact with service providers and communities:

Now I'm organising a morning tea. It's, um, to introduce our new Commander. We are inviting the service providers and the communities, yup. 'Cause it's a very good networking. They come and talk to the police, come to know the people we work with so that, you know, when you know somebody – it's so easy to do whatever you are doing, once you put a face to a name. Like, um, the police don't even understand why do I want to do a morning tea, but I sit down and tell them, "there's nothing as good as knowing people and people knowing you" – with that you have done half of your job. Because if there's anything happening, that

person who came to work to meet you will stop his group acting like that, saying, “no, no, no, no, no, the police are good people,” ‘cause they know you. But when you’re in jobs and nobody knows you, they just hold the perspective the police to do nothing, or they just, er, come to arrest people... Many people don’t know the work done behind the scenes. (Gloria, Kenya)

In the excerpt above, Gloria expresses her insight that social events such as morning tea gatherings between the police, service providers and members of the community are pivotal to getting things done in the cross-cultural space. Her certainty comes from years of experience which confirms that strong relationships, mutual understanding and friendly dialogue promotes trust and confidence and serves to shift assumptions on all sides. The combination of food and togetherness reduce the risk and create spaces of openness that facilitates reciprocal educational opportunities. Families and communities may simultaneously educate local authorities about their culture and norms, and learn about local norms and systems in a non-threatening way.

In attending the morning tea, the police relinquish some of their power and demonstrate willingness to engage in a more equal relationship, even for just a few hours. Participating in the morning tea stimulates knowledge development and critique of assumptions, leading to better outcomes in critical situations. Gloria admits to experiencing resistance from the local police who do not understand why the morning tea is so important. Yet she is undaunted and presses on, drawing upon her cultural and social wisdom: ‘there’s nothing as good as knowing people and people knowing you’.

Gloria shared one more example of doing human rights that emphasises the interconnections between knowing, being and doing human rights and the dynamic potential of intercultural learning.

9.15 Circles of Peace

In the example below, Gloria describes a training course she attended in Sydney that transformed her relationships with those least powerful in her household, her children and grandchildren, and was meaningful to her in the context of our human rights discussion. She said:

I think everyone wants the human rights. I used to fight with my children a lot. But one day, I did this program, it's called Circles of Peace. It's a program and initiative of change – just go and Google Initiative of Change, it's an international organisation. You do Circles of Peace in different homes and with different people. It's a women thing, you make sure you have a mix up of cultures, mix up of religions, 'cause it's sharing. Listening, peace and forgiveness. It's a six-week program, once a week and every evening we share stories. Different stories, you can tell your story, what changed you, they are very powerful stories. And then you go and practice what we have learned. Whenever you are in your house, at the office, in the road, when you are travelling. I started practicing, and I still remember – I started listening to my children. I never used to listen to them. I never! At that time, my grandson, I think, was one or two years, but I started seeing my grandson when he was six months and – you cannot believe – my grandson has never thrown a tantrum again! From that time, up to today. (Gloria, Kenya)

In a sense the above example is a definition of human rights – we can see that for Gloria human rights comprise listening, peace and forgiveness. At another level, she is speaking about a way of being, for example, she emphasises relating in a peaceful way with a mix of cultures and religions and the overlap between sharing narratives and identifying as a person guided by human rights. For our purposes here, though, Gloria’s vignette about the Circle of Peace training she undertook illustrates transformative processes in human rights education. It highlights and extends many of the themes that have come to the fore in this chapter.

One of the things that stands out in this excerpt is the nature of the learning experience. The women come together and share stories that create opportunities for self-reflection and recognition of unhelpful reactions and patterns of behaviour in their lives. This sharing is characterised by permission to reveal things that have happened to you and changed you without fear of shame. Perhaps it is the mix of cultures and religions, creating a degree of interpersonal distance, that supports this shame-free process, but it appears also be a fundamental norm within the course. Similarly, the Circles of Peace is underpinned by freedom, choice and mutuality. Finally, the sharing is characterised by companionship: a support network is created of like-minded people with individual goals aiming towards a similar ideal.

A prominent aspect of this story is Gloria’s transformation from someone who ‘never listened’ to her children, to someone who committed to listening to them and immediately saw the benefits. Gloria’s listening created a more equal meeting of minds less laden by norms of role and status. It also reduced conflict in her home. The key message here is that Gloria chose to implement this change. She was not forced but invited to develop new awareness and her

successes encouraged her to trust the 'future story' she began to author. This new behaviour, which initially felt foreign to Gloria, becomes a new exemplar of doing human rights.

9.16 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined risks emphasised by participants that were associated with doing human rights. These included potential prosecution and imprisonment, threats to physical and mental wellbeing, shaming and social isolation, 'falling in the fire' and consequences of not 'steering the train'. I have also outlined numerous approaches that support the doing of human rights. They include approaches that support relationship, approaches that facilitate reflection, consultative approaches, approaches that transform foreignness and reframe change as opportunity. These elements highlighted aspects that undermine human rights as well as openness to human rights dialogue. They allude to the transformative potential of human rights understandings that frame community norms and expectations.

The final chapter, Chapter 10, Discussion and Conclusion, identifies the potential contributions of the study for educators, law enforcers, social commentators, human service professionals, researchers and policy developers.

10. Discussion and Conclusion

10.1 Introduction

This chapter presents contributions to knowledge, practice and research made by the present study, which asked: *how do African families from refugee backgrounds understand human rights, and what does this mean for social work practice?* The first section in the chapter focuses on ontologies of human rights identified in the study, including human rights from below, African ways of knowing, being and doing human rights, and meanings regarding not knowing human rights. It then explores the implications of these ontologies of human rights for acculturation and lived experience of human rights, highlighting the relevance of Bhabha's third space and cultural collaboration to human rights practice. The second section focuses on new insights and contributions to practice, including use of imagery and metaphor; acknowledgement of values and norms; engagement with ways of knowing, being and doing; re-centring African worldviews; and family-inclusive human rights education. This section allows readers to engage with the guidance provided by participants about implementing these elements in intercultural practice. The final section of Chapter 10 outlines new insights and contributions to research made by the dialogical tools of storytelling and metaphor, application of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the approach to expertise in the research, and vouching as a demonstration of respect for relationship. Through this analysis, Chapter 10 demonstrates the importance of this hermeneutic, phenomenological and critical intercultural exploration of human rights.

10.2 Pluralism in human rights discourse and human rights from below

There has been an increased focus on pluralism within human rights discourse, which reflects a broader trend in intercultural research to engage more with lived experience and examine the personal impacts of, and remedies for, structural oppression (Bauman, 1993; Ife, 2016). As a result, research into human rights is expanding beyond universal principles and norms, to exploring local and contextual understandings about, and ways of applying, human rights.

The theory of human rights from below suggests the creative emancipatory potential of human rights can be unlocked by extending the opportunity to participate in meaning-making and co-construction of human rights to those who are least powerful in society (Ife, 2016). This study's focus on perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds was important because there is evidence that families and communities are impacted by multiple and intersecting risk factors which threaten dignity, agency and wellbeing well after they have resettled in Australia. As fundamental values of the social work profession, human rights are expected to underpin practice responses and fundamentally drive research and policy development to remedy these risks and threats (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010; International Federation of Social Workers, 2018).

To date, African families from refugee backgrounds in Australia have had limited opportunities to share their lived experience of human rights. The current study addressed this gap by purposefully recruiting participants to engage in semi-structured conversations in which their understandings and constructions of human rights could be shared. This elicited ways of knowing, being and doing human rights that were illuminated by lived experience and understood via the overarching knowledge of African worldviews, supported by Martin and

Mirraboopa's (2003) framework for Indigenist research, Berry's (2001) acculturation framework, and Bhabha's (2006) third space concept. These connections are discussed in the coming section.

10.3 Integrated model: Knowing, being and doing human rights

This thesis has demonstrated that participant knowledge of human rights diverged in important ways from the Western-centric human rights framings that inform social work practice in Australia. In contrast to definitions of human rights that focus on needs, formal treaties and protocols, and relatively individualistic understandings of human rights, participant data identified rich and culturally informed definitions of human rights and illuminated the significance of metaphor, imagery and storytelling in describing human rights (*knowing*). Second, data revealed insights about *dasein* ('the human way of being in the world' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 33)) including participant emphasis on belonging to community, their responsibilities, duties, roles, and relationships with others, and on community norms (*being*). These two aspects influenced, interacted with and explained how families and communities exercise human rights in ways that brought collaboration and relationship to the fore of human rights-based action (*doing*).

This coalescence of knowing, being and doing human rights is described in Martin and Mirraboopa's theoretical framework and method for Indigenous and Indigenist research, which comprises integrated ways of knowing, being and doing (2003), as outlined in Chapter 4. Three features of the data collected in the present study resonated with the theoretical framework of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing provided by Martin and Mirraboopa. These are discussed below.

First, Martin and Mirraboopa emphasise the importance of relationship in their knowing, being and doing framework. The present study has shown the

emphasis participants placed on the importance of relationship to understandings of human rights. When participants linked their understandings of human rights with their roles and responsibilities, and with their community norms, they gave us insight into processes used to transmit knowledge, reinforce virtuous behaviour and resolve conflict. Examples included *tweru padano*, discussed by Albert (Chapter 7), Solomon helping the elderly gentleman on the steps (Chapter 8), and 'free freedom', discussed by Gloria (Chapter 7). The emphasis placed on reputation and honour in describing human rights reinforced the importance of relationship to conceptualising and experiencing human rights.

Second, similarly to Martin and Mirraboopa's framework, emphasis was placed on holism in family and community approaches to human rights. For example, participants highlighted temporal elements of past, present and future, and spatial elements of *there* (Africa) and *here* (Australia) in describing lived experiences of human rights. In addition, participants emphasised social, political and economic aspects of human rights that were important to families and communities, including lived experience of war, poverty, global dislocation and structural racism. The interconnectedness of ways of knowing, being and doing is emphasised by Martin and Mirraboopa in their seminal article (2003), with the present study demonstrating similar interconnections between family and community ways of knowing, being and doing human rights.

Lastly, in keeping with Martin and Mirraboopa's power-based analysis, participants elucidated that willingness and capacity to exercise human rights is influenced by economic and social conditions, both past and present, and that culture, gender, control of resources and community norms all affect enthusiasm to embrace local human rights norms and frameworks. The significant impact of unfamiliar, and potentially coercive, human rights frameworks on everyday lived

experiences of human rights was observed to shape family and community expectations of themselves and others, and to create fears about the future. Participants were emphatic that professionals needed to cultivate more extensive understandings of African knowledge and empathy for their worldviews. Just as African families from refugee backgrounds can develop knowledge about human rights which empowers all members of their families and communities, so too can workers pay more attention to how African knowledge might be harnessed in flexible human rights frameworks that enhance wellbeing in resettlement.

While the analysis above resonates with the corpus of African scholarship on human rights (Ibhawoh, 2018; Legesse, 1980; Murithi, 2007; Ntseane, 2011), the value of Martin and Mirraboopa's framework for Indigenous and Indigenist research is that it offers a common sense way of writing about epistemologies, ontologies, axiologies and methodologies. As demonstrated above, this common-sense way of writing mirrored the way participants responded to the overarching questions in this study about how African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights, and what this means for social work. My utilisation of Martin and Mirraboopa's framework to understand participant perspectives on human rights therefore highlighted a link between African worldviews and the theoretical framework of knowing, being and doing human rights, offering a way of conceptualising and engaging in human rights dialogue with African families from refugee backgrounds resettled in Australia that, to my knowledge, has not been accomplished before.

Flowing from this, my analysis identified African values and forms of reasoning about human rights that had much in common with social work forms of reasoning and can potentially inform and extend intercultural practice. Participant stories, metaphors and other statements about the meaning of human

rights elucidated at least four kinds of reasoning that underpinned ways of knowing, being and doing human rights in the present study: deontological reasoning, virtue ethics, consequentialism and African cosmological perspectives, as articulated in Chapter 7 and 9 and in a recent publication (Higgins, 2017). These forms of reasoning underpinned many of the stories, sayings, legends and metaphors shared by participants.

Analysis also elicited prominent values including equality, duty, responsibility, freedom and communitarianism. These findings resonated with scholarship on African worldviews, extending human rights theory further into the areas of virtue ethics and African cosmological perspectives (Bent-Goodley et al., 2017; Fairfax, 2016; Ibhawoh, 2001; Thabede, 2008).

These findings suggest there may be opportunities to engage in critical reflection on human rights that creatively synthesises African and Australian worldviews, developing new solutions to human rights issues such as family violence, discipline practices, and initiation practices. Rather than simply translating Western-centric concepts into African languages, perhaps we can engage on a deeper level with forms of reasoning and values, utilising metaphor, storytelling, and reciprocal recognition of values and norms. Indeed, the same exploratory approach could also promote deeper engagement in social work practice with other culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and around a range of important topics such as grief, trust, wellness and social inclusion. This finding questions current human rights assumptions and warrants future attention.

Meanwhile, some of the human rights definitions provided by participants resonated with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and related instruments, emphasising freedom from discrimination; right to life; right to health;

right to education; protection of the family and vulnerable groups; right of all peoples to equality and rights (United Nations, 1948). Several participants defined human rights as freedom from racism and discrimination, and emphasised the importance of equal treatment regardless of race, which resonated with the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (United Nations, 1965). Both men and women desired freedom of opinion and expression (Article 19, UDHR, United Nations, 1948), but highlighted negative impacts of ‘free freedom’ including freedoms that negate roles and responsibilities of women and children in their communities.

It is worth noting that the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) sets forth human rights in ways that more closely matched some of the understandings and constructions of human rights presented by participants. Examples include the right to a general satisfactory environment and duties of individuals with respect to their families, parents and national community (Organisation of African Unity, 1981). The ACHPR contextualised the way participants defined human rights and mirrored some participant language in this study. However, no participants referred to this charter during our discussion.

10.4 Not knowing human rights

Along with emphasising that family and community views on human rights differed from academic and non-African perspectives on human rights, and highlighting African ways of knowing, being, and doing human rights, most participants claimed to ‘not know’ human rights at points in their interview. Chapter 7 examined this standpoint in detail.

It is important to accentuate that higher levels of formal education appeared to influence how confidently participants communicated their knowledge. However, levels of education did not impede rich and original

expression of *dasein*, comprised of practical familiarity with human rights, sociocultural knowledge, and expectations of/about human rights in this study (Heidegger, 1962). I confirmed this by tabulating demographic data and reflecting upon the data in relation to education, among other factors (see Table 9, provided at Appendix 15).

From my reading of the data, 'I don't know human rights' sometimes meant 'I have not learnt about human rights' or 'my language does not contain words for human rights', but I noticed it could mean something deeper, 'I have not experienced human rights' – that is, 'my rights have been violated and neglected'. Again, it could also have meant 'I don't trust you yet' or 'I am not sure I want to engage with this' or 'I am afraid this will take me into dark territory'.

One way of understanding statements relating to 'not knowing' human rights is that the study provided opportunities for new and old knowledge to synthesise. Chapter 7 documented unresolved tensions between knowledge that was represented by participants as African cultural understandings of human rights, in comparison to codified, formalised, 'universal' understandings of human rights. In addition, Chapter 8 theorised changing understandings and constructions of human rights throughout participant lives, where knowledge was highly influenced by lived experience. This could have led participants to take a position of cultural humility, or ambivalence about their expertise. Alternatively, participants may not have valued their available wisdom as highly as they did codified knowledge. Certainly, formal human rights concepts appeared to hold a level of power, with expert knowledge at times being deferred to during participant interviews.

Secondly, participants may have experienced the discussion about human rights as risky or uncomfortable, thereby affecting their ability to confidently

represent their knowledge. As the We Poems in Chapter 6 show, many participants spoke about their experiences of past trauma as they introduced themselves and their cultures. In addition, some participants described experiences of being silenced, dismissed, threatened, abused, or even sanctioned in Australia regarding their understandings and constructions of human rights, as presented in Chapters 7 and 9. Most practice frameworks for working with refugee populations highlight the potential influence of trauma on memory, concentration and everyday wellbeing (Lynch, 2011).

A third reading of the dispersion of participant statements along a continuum from not-knowing to knowing is that 'not-knowing' resonated with J. Laird's idea of 'informed not-knowing' (2000, p. 102). 'Not-knowing' was used by J. Laird to mean 'that we are never "expert", "right", or in full possession of "the truth"' (J. Laird, 2000, p. 102). In support of this claim, I noted that some of the participants with more grounding in formal, codified, human rights knowledge consciously avoided academic perspectives in favour of culturally located views. For example, Nelson's commented that he provided me with 'the raw understanding of human right' as discussed in Chapter 7. Where this occurred, participants explained that they were taking care to provide definitions that appropriately reflected their family and community views on human rights.

Part of attending to African understandings and constructions of human rights, allowing the production of collaborative and responsive solutions to pressing issues, is surely for social workers and human service practitioners to adopt a dynamic and trauma-informed theorisation of human rights knowledge. There could be freedom and creative impetus gained by recognising human rights knowledge as existing on a continuum from not-knowing to knowing, and eliciting the funds of knowledge available to clients, families and communities,

which hold great power and are evidence of culturally-located expertise. These findings are supported by Berry's acculturation framework, as will now be demonstrated.

10.5 Acculturation and lived experience of human rights

Analysis of data in this study provided insights about quality and intensity of lived experience of human rights. The study identified some negative views of human rights including that they can undermine relationships between spouses, or between parents and their children. Other negative views included potential loss of control and fears for the future. Many participants described experiences of institutions and workers silencing, delegitimising and censoring their views and approaches to human rights, consistent with other accounts of cultural hegemony in the human rights literature (S. E. Laird, 2016; Lenette, 2015; Mutua, 2001). Most participants felt that their roles, responsibilities, norms and expectations need to be better understood and acknowledged by practitioners.

On the other hand, human rights were also perceived by most participants as liberating, with power to improve peoples' lives. Examples include metaphorical expressions such as 'human rights are like a light' and that human rights are equally available to all in Australia 'like gold scattered in the sand'. Some cultural traditions and norms were criticised as part of the creative *third space* exploration of human rights, and desire for change was evident. Examples were female genital cutting and initiation practices, which were criticised by each woman in the study. Indeed, one of the participants had employment focused on raising awareness about this human rights issue and transforming practices in Africa and across the Australasian region. In this respect, participant views resonated with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) relating to the

rights of children to care and protection, and responsibilities, rights and duties of parents (United Nations, 1989, Articles 2, 3 and 5).

The experiential data of human rights presented in this study linked to the acculturation framework propounded by Berry and the third space theory propounded by Bhabha. As outlined in Chapter 3, Berry developed a systemic model of psychological adjustment following migration and refugee resettlement, highlighting personal and societal experiences and behaviours (2001).

Affirmative participant descriptions of human rights, where definitions resonate with formal definitions and human rights instruments, appear to match Berry's construct of integration. Multicultural policies of education might in these cases enable families and communities to set aside 'the raw understandings of rights'. Similarly, some metaphors and stories provided by participants demonstrated more unyielding understandings and constructions of human rights in families and communities, along the lines of assimilation, separation or marginalisation as conceived by Berry. The metaphor of the parallel lines meeting in the distance could be an example of this: while parallel lines meeting in the distance could represent the building of 'mutual agreement, or mutual understanding' about human rights, it also represents two separate, potentially incompatible models of human rights. In addition, there is no clear path to convergence, but rather the suggestion of a distant possibility, possibly a mirage. Other metaphors such as 'free freedom', 'falling in the fire' and 'driving the train' potentially express assimilation, separation or marginalisation frames of reference relating to gender norms, family roles and intergenerational relationship dynamics.

Berry's purpose in publishing his conceptual framework was to:

link behaviour to the broader setting in which it develops and occurs, understand the reciprocal nature of attitudes and behaviours that characterize immigrant and receiving societies, and increase our awareness of the limits to generalisability that constrain the policy implications of our work. (Berry, 2001, p. 629)

The present study has similar goals, with much of the data suggesting that human rights could be developmental, and communities, or at least individual participants, are largely focused on integration. Almost all participants had developed new vocabulary and knowledge about human rights over time and space, naming and exercising their rights differently here and now than they had done back home. This perhaps demonstrates that understandings and constructions of human rights can be mapped according to recognisable categories or stages in the lives of African families from refugee backgrounds, where rights might be violated, at another stage recognised, and at another stage claimed. In such a model, knowledge appears to change or transform with, and because of, steps taken by individuals, families, and communities to remedy or change their situations.

A concern I have is that the developmental nature of human rights knowledge theorised in this thesis could be taken to imply a hierarchy where knowledge becomes more clear or fulsome over time. Most definitions of the word 'developmental' have colonising implications. For example, developmental is defined by Cambridge University Press as, 'relating to the process of growing or changing into a more advanced, larger, or stronger form' (2017), and by Macmillan Publishers Ltd. as, 'relating to the gradual change and improvement in something over a period of time' (2017). Oxford University Press provides a definition with more promising potential: development is 'an event constituting a

new stage in a changing situation' (2018). According to Morrice, adaptation and adjustment can be experienced as *deconstructive* by people from refugee backgrounds in resettlement where they infer from the messages they receive in the wider community that their own knowledge and wisdom 'counts for very little' (Morrice, 2013, p. 267). In this same vein, Ntseane endorses a culturally sensitive transformational learning theory that 'embraces formal, non-formal, and informal learning processes in all areas of people's lives', and argues, 'more research is needed on how culture shapes the process of transformative learning in diverse African and other contexts (Ntseane, 2011, p. 320; 321)

This thesis contributes constructions of transformational or developmental learning regarding human rights that are informed by Morrice, Ntseane, Berry and Bhabha's cultural analyses. It encourages workers, researchers and policy makers into a collaborative space, 'across disciplinary borders and into unknown territories' (Berry, 2001, p. 629). This complex developmental view on human rights resonates with key socio-cultural theories propounded by Bauman (1993), Bhabha (2006) and others.

10.6 The third space and cultural collaboration around human rights

Participants in this study underscored the importance of meaningful collaboration to address human rights matters arising for their families and communities in resettlement. Existing scholarship in the area of refugee resettlement documents inadequacies of mainstream services to comprehensively and inclusively respond to the needs of African families from refugee backgrounds in Australia and indicates that helping professionals operate in contexts where legislation, policy frameworks and organisational imperatives may not fully support practice quality (Bates et al., 2005; Bromfield & Holzer, 2008; Bromfield et al., 2010; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007;

Kerkyasharian, 2006; McArthur et al., 2010; Pine & Drachman, 2005; Sawrikar, 2009).

Participant data revealed the importance of relationship by stressing interpersonal behaviours that trigger resistance and distancing. These included lecturing families or individuals, or conversely ignoring behaviours that should be challenged. Participants suggested these interpersonal aspects may alienate families, leading to withdrawal and disengagement from services, or from the worker in the moment, impacting on the worker-client relationship and undermining the important work that needs to be done.

Chapters 7 and 9 introduced several new human rights metaphors to the social work practice landscape. These metaphors offer a variety of insights relevant to conducting and interpreting intercultural human rights dialogue. One metaphor, of human rights being 'like gold scattered in the sand' (Albert, Chapter 7), was particularly comprehensive as an image of the 'third space'. For Albert, the metaphor of gold scattered in the sand represented the combination of opportunity and virtue: he claimed that opportunities are equally available to all in the Australian community so long as you possess dedication and commitment. For me, the metaphor has come to represent consultative, collaborative human rights dialogue. It represents dedication, commitment, and patience regarding the acts of locating the precious discovery, the gold in the sand.

Searching for gold scattered in the sand implies sitting with uncertainty, being methodical, paying attention to difference, sifting through the material provided, and choosing what to hold on to and what to leave behind. It evokes depth, complexity and co-discovery. On the horizontal it can accommodate past, present and future, as spaces or territories where insights may be scattered. On the vertical it can accommodate knowing, being and doing, where knowing is the

sky, being is the earth, and doing is the act of searching for gold. The metaphor of gold scattered in the sand can evoke partnership, shared labour for insights or discoveries relevant to the human rights dialogue. In Chapter 7 I intuited that the metaphor of gold in the sand is symbolic of social order and good governance; building on this insight, the metaphor represents cultural safety in reflexive dialogue.

Earlier in this chapter I suggested that while parallel lines meeting in the distance could represent the building of 'mutual agreement, or mutual understanding' about human rights, it also represents two separate, potentially incompatible models of human rights. The key idea of this study is that participants and their families and communities are capable human rights actors who can produce reliable accounts about their experience and engage in creative co-construction of human rights. In this regard, I find myself moved by Frantz Fanon's statement:

It is not enough to reunite with the people in a past where they no longer exist. We must rather reunite with them in their recent counter move which will suddenly call everything into question; we must focus on that zone of hidden fluctuation where the people can be found, for let there be no mistake, it is here that their souls are crystallised and their perception and respiration transfigured. (Fanon, 2004a, p. 163)

This study highlighted that human rights are discursive, that is, capable of developing through critically reflective dialogue. If human rights systems and structures continue to focus on individuation, protection and prevention of abuse, rather than engage in creative, reciprocal, personal and social transformation, there is every likelihood that African families from refugee backgrounds' important

insights will continue to be silenced and delegitimised, blocking their creative and thoughtful contributions to human rights culture, protocol and meaning in Australia.

If I claim that human rights are understood in an overlapping way, and differently, by families of refugee backgrounds to Australian social work and community conceptualisations of human rights, how can we best access this knowledge? Chapters 8 and 9 of this thesis documented narratives and songs provided by participants about human rights as they are known in their communities, and provided participant- and community-generated metaphors and sayings that highlight heretofore untapped 'funds of knowledge'. This term, introduced by Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg in 1992, refers to the strategic and cultural resources to which families have access. In this case, the funds of knowledge about human rights revealed in this study include family and community forms of expression and African values.

This study demonstrated that these funds of knowledge can be valuable to counsellors, policy makers and researchers who wish to engage African families from refugee backgrounds in critical conversations about human rights within a framework of conscientisation (Friere, 1985), both in form and content. However, there is surprisingly limited literature dedicated to facilitating construction of human rights with African families and communities in intercultural practice. In the next section, I discuss how participant understandings and constructions of human rights offer key insights to underpin and advance professional responses to African families from refugee backgrounds.

10.7 New insights and contributions to intercultural social work practice

Data from the current study offers practice insights for counselling, casework, family work and community work. Firstly, participants confirmed that

while they consider local human rights norms to be important and necessary to understand, they yearn for a two-way exchange of information about human rights, as well as gentleness and well-chosen words in this exchange. As such, respectful, inclusive dialogue that accommodates sharing of diverse perspectives is a fundamental strategy for intervening in situations that are being framed as human rights issues, especially where significant behavioural change is necessary. While this study has explored the interplay between the cultures, origins, norms and values of African refugee and host communities, these perspectives now need to be transferred into policy, research, practice and theoretical arenas.

As discussed in Chapter 4, cultural responsiveness tools recommend that professionals address cultural values and perspectives during assessment and intervention processes (Andary et al., 2003; Collins et al., 2010; Congress & Kung, 2013; Seah et al., 2002). The present study has demonstrated that strengthening, and allowing time for, these processes with African families from refugee backgrounds is essential. Importantly, these discussions may flourish if seen as opportunities for reciprocal exchange, where families have opportunities to educate local service providers about their perceptions on important aspects of their culture, norms and traditions.

Drilling down, study data highlighted several important features of a vibrant, inclusive, transformative human rights culture: employing imagery and metaphor; acknowledgement of values and norms; meaningful collaboration; seeking commonalities in ways of knowing, being and doing; family-inclusive human rights education; and storytelling. These features, and guidance provided by participants about each of them, are outlined below.

10.8 Employing imagery and metaphor

In this thesis, metaphors break open to reveal stories of agency, shame, hope or fear which influence the whole community. They express past and present realities and possible futures for individuals, families and communities now living in Australia. In doing so, they align with, and extend, the scholarship of key African authors including Asante and Abarry (1996), Mutua (2001), and Ntseane (2011). Participant choices to utilise imagery and metaphor to both affirm and critique dominant human rights frameworks are consistent with human rights scholarship reviewed in Chapter 3, including that provided by Gregg (2016), Hughes (2014), Kleinig and Evans (2013), Lenette et al. (2015); Mutua (2001), Perelman and Young (2010), and Tascon (2012).

This suggests that as a community of scholars, practitioners and policy makers, we require a deeper understanding of how community-generated metaphors might contribute to shared conversations about human rights, to collaborative decision-making around human rights concerns and to human rights legacies of which we might be prouder in the years to come. One starting point could be that social workers and human service practitioners employ the metaphors generated in this study to enhance and particularise human rights approaches for African families from refugee backgrounds. A second step, that of engaging in further research about human rights metaphors underpinned by African worldviews and refugee perspectives is discussed later in this chapter.

Similarly to Perelman and Young's example of human rights practice in Ghana, the present study shows that metaphor can support 'memory and agency' within communities, acknowledge 'local, national, transnational and international dimensions of practice', 'expand thought', and 'make new groups of people visible' (Perelman & Young, 2010, p. 31; 37). Furthermore, metaphors in

the present study offer idiomatic perspectives on human rights and challenge our contemporary reliance on words and written text to convey human rights meanings. This extends upon the findings of Perelman and Young that there is an 'expressive... symbolic' function fulfilled by metaphor in human rights dialogue.

Despite the contributions metaphor can make to human rights dialogue, there is surprisingly limited information available about how metaphor is utilised by African families from refugee backgrounds to convey human rights understandings in resettlement contexts. Perhaps they have just not been regarded as an important focus for research. Or, could it be that metaphor and imagery challenge power relations in uncomfortable ways? Again I am propelled by Perelman and Young's reflections that human rights metaphors might unsettle the status quo, stoke fears of being inefficient, too individualistic, or risk perpetuating 'ill-fitting remedies for distinctive problems' (2010, p. 57).

10.9 Acknowledgement of values and norms

For the participants in this study, values such as respect, responsibility, self-restraint and communitarianism were considered fundamental to human rights. These values resonate with the literature addressing African worldviews which highlight pluralism, collectivism, communalism, cooperation and extended family systems as significant in African cultures (Asante, 1998; Fanon, 1967; Mbazima & Sekudu, 2017; Thabede, 2008).

Consultation and inclusion of African families and communities from refugee backgrounds and explicitly discussing and negotiating family roles and norms when promoting rights appears to be very important. Relational components of rights including responsibility to family, community and nation, and how competing rights are negotiated within their social and cultural context,

are crucial to decision-making and wellbeing in families and communities. Participants emphasised that it is vital to create opportunities for reciprocal engagement with human rights, where local service providers learn about African cultures and norms, and underpinning worldviews that correspond with values and theories of virtue as well as cosmological (ancestor-based), consequential and deontological models of reasoning.

The research documented openness and resilience around norms and expectations that can be strengthened and enhanced. Education is an important strategy for increased knowledge about rights, increased wellbeing and more positive community relationships. Participants emphasised the positive impacts of having their insights about human rights understood and acknowledged. In doing so, they contributed to alternative human rights discourses that encourage greater attention to the holistic, relational and contextual nature of human rights knowledge in African families and communities, assert the importance of collaborative and inclusive dialogue to resolve human rights issues experienced by families, and highlight the impacts of systems and social structures on their constructions of human rights. In these ways, the data expands our knowledge beyond available human rights understandings and provides impetus for the pursuit of broader cultural explanations of human rights. These findings add weight to the calls for a more culturally responsive theory of human rights considered in Chapter 2. The embedded nature of human rights understandings in community arrangements, and the disconnects brought about by war, poverty, global dislocation and structural racism, support arguments for closer attention to culturally diverse understandings of human rights in the literature.

Importantly, though, participants felt these imperatives had not been harnessed and might not be well understood by service providers or within the

wider community. My research of relevant literature confirmed that these modes of reasoning are under-acknowledged and bear expanding upon in future studies.

One such example involves the South Sudanese virtue of *kon madang* - *just wait*. This virtue, and the reasoning that lay behind this phrase, was discussed in Chapter 9. Nelson spoke about this Dinka-Bor virtue as an example of human rights in action, and located *kon madang* for us within a story to explain its origin and meaning within his community. Recently, reading Wainer's doctoral thesis from the University of Technology Sydney (2010), I came across an account by John Kani, South African activist, playwright and actor, of his first meeting with Nelson Mandela following Mandela's release from jail:

In South Africa at that time we had forgotten Ubuntu. A massive education was required to learn that right is not the opposite of wrong. Right has no relationship to wrong. Before Mandiba [sic] was released the elders didn't say "Stop the killing". They sent out the word to Wait. Wait for Nelson. Wait for Nelson Mandela' (Kani as cited in Wainer, 2010, p. xii).

This idea of 'just wait' seems important, and not just to the Dinka-Bor. The food-bowl metaphor provided by Sierra Leonean participant Solomon, discussed in Chapter 8, appears to similarly represent self-restraint. Here we may have culturally embedded imagery upon which to draw when decisions need to be made, and when discussions about anger, disappointment, loss and misunderstanding need to occur.

The analysis presented in the results chapters have demonstrated how deontological, virtue ethics, African cosmology and consequential perspectives constitute African values such as equality, duty, responsibility, freedom and Ubuntu. These values, by comparison with wider human rights concepts and

framings, illuminate African worldviews that are embedded in stories, metaphors and definitions of human rights. My analysis and theoretical discussions in the thesis shows that these values resonate with social work theories.

This data confirms that human rights can be promoted by creating safe, objective, dialogical spaces for individuals, families, and communities. In this space, African families from refugee backgrounds can become situated, and begin to reflect consciously on, and make meaning of, experiences of crisis, violation or injustice. By eliciting and then drawing upon principles such as *kon madang* in their work with families, social workers can potentially enhance the existing resources of thoughtfulness, patience and humanity within communities. Being explicit about 'waiting' seems likely to enhance the likelihood of fair and considered outcomes and to support due process in working to support families and communities in crisis.

Underlying worldviews were represented by participants as distinctive and at times ignored, overlooked or misunderstood by professional workers. Australian practitioners would do well to prioritise knowledge and skill development relating to African virtues, such as those relating to 'just wait', boundaries, responsibilities and freedoms which could facilitate collaborative reflection and create meaningful opportunities for change.

The significant human rights violations that occur in the lives of families and communities from refugee backgrounds and the ways these experiences shape their perception of risk in resettlement is well documented (see for example, Pattison, 1999; Pittaway, 2005; Zannettino et al., 2013). In this study, participant perceptions of human rights were closely associated with experiences of vulnerability, including experiences of prosecution and imprisonment, rape, sexual violence and other threats to life and safety, rampant corruption, shaming

and social isolation where the locus of control lay outside of them. Understanding this is vital, as many participants expressed ongoing vulnerabilities of family and community because of the demise of their cultural traditions, growth of individualism, experience of unfettered freedom and sense of powerlessness in the diaspora.

According to participants, understanding of values and norms enhances collective human rights and is demonstrated by:

- respectful, inclusive dialogue;
- strengthening, and allowing time for, culturally responsive processes;
- acknowledging and explicitly engaging with modes of reasoning;
- acknowledging vulnerabilities relating to refugee status.

Seminal studies in this area have confirmed the key role of cultivating understanding between service providers and their clients from refugee backgrounds (Lewig et al., 2010; McArthur et al., 2010; Pine & Drachman, 2005).

10.10 Meaningful collaboration

Collaboration, participants emphasised, supports development of flexible understandings, dynamic constructions of, and discovery about, human rights. Participants provided important guidance about how to strengthen collaboration with their families and communities.

One recommendation from participants to enable collaboration with African families from refugee backgrounds is to ascertain and follow, where possible, family and community protocols. These include approaching male community leaders and heads of households initially, and utilising intermediaries to approach sensitive topics, to address human rights issues within families and communities. Alongside the commitment to ensure the dignity of every refugee

person, this research emphasises the need for more careful attention to family and community protocols.

Another way to support collaboration with African families from refugee backgrounds is to recognise and engage with community processes. Two participants emphasised that human rights form through 'the community sit[ting] together' (Sia, Sierra Leone). The powerful motif of the community gathering is not only relevant to decision-making and norm-setting, but it also provides a setting for people to be rebuked if they are behaving in ways that are not consistent with standards of behaviour, such as not adequately caring for one's family, or in situations of domestic violence. Though these and similar issues are, according to most participants, taboo, their statements suggest that expressing experience in group contexts, such as through song, can be both healing for the victim and a powerful and acceptable way to challenge the other party.

There is a growing body of African scholarship to prompt further exploration of the contributions music and song could make to human rights dialogue. One instructive author is Chakravati, a South African scholar, who analyses the testimonies given by victims in front of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In her book, *Sing the rage*, Chakravati utilises song as a metaphor for the national process of expressing and listening to anger (Chakravarti, 2014). Another intriguing comment made by Pavlicevic et al. (2010) is about music therapy in the South African context:

South Africa has a vibrant stream of music that pours out of taxis, cars and shops, that enlivens her towns, mielie fields, school playgrounds and urban koppies on Sunday afternoons. Unlike the country's rivers, this stream knows no drought; it is in continuous flow and renewal. Moreover, it flows through our

veins. Music quickens our bodies, lifts our moods, calms and annoys us. Whether or not we're aware of it, we live musical lives – individually and collectively. We could argue that, given this preponderance of music in South Africa, such a book – that insists on music's powers – is irrelevant. After all, South Africans hardly need a lecture on what music is and does. This book offers an additional angle, however; advocating for music to be taken seriously by educators, health workers, policy makers, public sector funders and especially by musicians, because of its capacity to heal, to enliven, to reconstitute public spaces and to transform social relationships. (Pavlicevic et al., 2010, p. 1)

This could be a rich line of inquiry for future research on human rights from below, particularly with African families and communities in the diaspora. The present study did not have the scope to fully explore this question, but the evidence suggests that serious consideration of music and song by social workers, health workers, educators, policy makers and other public service professionals could support human rights practice with African people from refugee backgrounds, and potentially others from culturally diverse populations.

Finally, intersectionality is significant within social work and human rights practice (Dominelli, 2017). This study's findings expanded on this theme, with participants providing important insights about acknowledging and transforming social and economic drivers of human rights violations such as genital cutting. According to many of the participants in this study, collaboration is meaningless if it does not recognise and address adverse consequences of change.

Nola's example in the present study highlighted that shifts in law and practice regarding initiation of young women by female genital mutilation (FGM)

would adversely impact the women whose livelihoods, roles, daily purpose, and status are linked to the practice. Nola suggests that ignoring these consequences and the power bases seriously undermines human rights goals, creating vulnerabilities for practitioners, triggering resistance and pushing the practice underground. Nola's comments are bolstered by a recent report into FGM in Sierra Leone (Devi, 2018). Though banned in Sierra Leone, Devi notes that the practice has returned. She quotes Gitonga, a member of the End Harmful Practices team at Equality Now as saying:

Soweis [FGM practitioners] are seen as very powerful and as guardians of traditional culture and we don't want to castigate them because they help to provide a safe space for girls and women. We just don't want them to perform FGM. (Devi, 2018)

Collaboration, therefore, must facilitate conscientisation, where families and communities engage in critically reflexive dialogue together with social workers and other professionals, researchers and policy makers, thereby informing meaningful and sustainable change. This pluralism supports the translation of lived experience into empirical evidence meaning that family and community human rights priorities can help us to further develop our understandings and service responses. Participants stressed that collaboration involves:

- ascertaining and following community protocols, where possible;
- recognising and engaging with community processes;
- naming and attending to intersectional aspects of human rights transformations.

The findings stress that where policy, practice, research and theory do not position collaboration as central, they undermine individual wellbeing, family dynamics and community resources. The literature on practice quality encourages careful attention to collaboration with clients, in particular with families and communities from refugee backgrounds, to enhance their human rights (Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010, 2013; Lewig et al., 2010). By recognising the agency of African families from refugee backgrounds in exercising human rights, and by focusing on the systems and social structures which influence their human rights experiences, the findings of this study have implications for both research and practice with African families from refugee backgrounds in Sydney, Australia, and potentially elsewhere.

10.11 Engagement with ways of knowing, being and doing

Many of the participants in this study emphasised that human rights issues are more readily explored with, and transformed by, African professionals, who are considered to share more in common with families and communities than do professionals from other backgrounds. There appeared to be support for the idea that human rights knowledge and understanding is mediated by the refugee experience. The impact of refugee trauma was highlighted as a factor for social work practitioners to bear in mind in supporting families and communities. In addition, a tendency of families and communities not to trust others, and their desire to protect themselves from foreign influences, were noted as barriers to help-seeking and trust-building across cultures.

According to participants, professional workers can build trust with attention to African ways of knowing, being and doing. As discussed earlier in this chapter, ways of knowing, being and doing are embedded in important cultural practices such as showing respect to elders, explaining concepts in culturally

meaningful ways, and attentive listening. Participants considered it essential for families and communities to be able to access professionals with shared ways of knowing, being and doing human rights, especially in sectors holding a human rights mandate, such as law enforcement, child and family services, and schools. These perspectives resonate with African anti-colonial and anti-oppressive literature (Fanon, 2004b; Mbazima & Sekudu, 2017), and offer constructive strategies for social work and human service professionals. In addition, participants highlighted the importance of workers providing practical and measurable assistance as part of trust building in the helping relationship, a finding that resonates with other studies of practice with children and families (see for example, McArthur et al., 2010).

Participants confirmed some ways non-African workers can build shared ways of knowing, being and doing with African people from refugee backgrounds, including being prepared to reveal private aspects of oneself such as one's fears and failings, offering childcare and other practical assistance, complimenting people on their achievements and/or visible elements of their culture such as clothing or headdress, demonstrating humility, and demonstrating a helpful orientation in a casework or therapeutic setting. These strategies support the development of shared narratives and potentially promote intercultural recognition where the 'other' transforms into 'one of us'.

10.12 Re-centring African worldviews

Participants emphasised that greater curiosity about, and accommodation of, African worldviews, and those of African diasporas, within the field of human rights could enhance professional practice and promote respectful, hopeful, resilience-building cross-cultural encounters. This decolonising approach to theory, practice and research about human rights is of importance beyond social

work, implicating key services, service providers and structures, most notably police, schools and the media, which often draw upon normative and potentially exclusionary and oppressive frames of reference. Recognition of these diverse perspectives as dynamic, profound and evolving ultimately benefits African families from refugee backgrounds, for whom a raft of human rights abuses and remedies are central to their lived experience.

10.13 Family-inclusive human rights education

According to study participants, human rights education can both support and undermine individuals, families and communities' attempts to exercise human rights. A key example emphasised by several participants was that of African children from refugee families being taught understandings and constructions of human rights at school, without the school reaching out to parents to provide the same understandings and constructions. Participants perceived this as undermining the authority of parents by delivering education selectively to some members of the family and ignoring other members. Participants stressed that this reverses family power by giving children leverage, or the ability to threaten their parents, without consequences. Participants viewed this as power given to children by the State, which functions as an extension of the power of the State itself. This important finding highlighted the need for, or expectation of, a social contract, whereby the policies and practices of the wider society support rather than undermine parents in carrying out their important child-rearing role. Further study is required to determine how human rights education functions to support or undermine family and community understandings and constructions of human rights.

Participants were highly critical of human rights education for threatening family norms and causing or exacerbating conflict within African families from

refugee backgrounds. Participants stressed that removal of children belonging to African families from refugee backgrounds is experienced collectively. Thus, when a child is removed, the whole community becomes fearful. Human rights might create both constructive and destructive legacies in the lives of these families. Bewilderment, frustration and distress, about past, present and future experiences of human rights related to imposition of understandings and constructions of human rights on families and communities through their children, were evident.

Examples of human rights education that participants thought transformational for individuals, families and communities were typically inclusive of all members of the family, and cognisant of family responsibilities. Participants emphasised the importance of education about human rights which preserves and is enriched by African values, norms and traditions. These aspects, amongst others, were emphasised as constructive of a 'general satisfactory environment favourable to [participant's] development' (Article 24, African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Organisation of African Unity, 1981). The evidence provided by the men and women who participated in the study showed that these fundamental concepts are often perceived as sorely missing both here and in their home countries, to the peril of their families and communities.

10.14 New insights and contributions to research

The present study, with transformative, hermeneutic and phenomenological underpinnings, was carefully designed to elicit participant expertise and facilitate genuine and active participation of African families from refugee backgrounds. The research design facilitated collaborative and participatory meaning-making and offers an exemplar for human rights dialogue. Chapter 5 of this thesis, Research Design, outlined the ontology, epistemology,

axiology and methodology of this study. In the present chapter, new insights and contributions to research design are outlined, including the efficacy of the dialogical tools of storytelling and metaphor, the contributions of IPA, management of expertise in the research and vouching as a demonstration of respect for relationship.

10.15 Dialogical tools: storytelling and metaphor

Storytelling and metaphor in the current study were apt vehicles for participants to explore new, and reiterate existing, human rights values, traditions, norms and roles, and convey what it is to be a good person in their community. The evidence relating to storytelling confirmed the assertion outlined in Chapter 3 that African storytelling embeds and reiterates beliefs and worldviews within communities from generation to generation (Asante & Abarry, 1996; Bacon, 2016; Thabede, 2008). It also resonated with wider sociological literature that declares storytelling an important vehicle for conveying lived experience and culturally located understandings and perspectives, well suited to working with people from refugee backgrounds (Bek-Pedersen & Montgomery, 2006; Hughes, 2014; J. Laird, 2000; Lenette, 2014; Ncube, 2006; Ochala & Mungai, 2016; Polkinghorne, 1995; Sandelowski, 1991).

Similarly to the thesis articulated by the African author Thabede (2008), the narratives of participants in the present study highlighted the importance of memory and ancestral wisdom. These narratives exerted influence on current understandings and constructions on human rights, and included knowledge passed from previous generations, childhood memories, past experiences, and turning points or crises. In addition, the narratives of African families from refugee backgrounds convey both constructive and destructive experiences, providing

detail about cultural safety and resilience and drawing attention to some of the risks and barriers to fully exercising human rights.

Metaphor also served a constitutive function in the present intercultural human rights dialogue. The present study extended on previous scholarship by providing access to a range of new human rights metaphors, as discussed earlier in this chapter. I do not know whether the metaphors provided by participants were generated by them during our research interviews, or whether they were drawn from wider family and community funds of knowledge. In either case, they are not documented elsewhere in English and thus constitute a significant contribution to knowledge. Future practice research and collaboration with families and communities is required to expand the range of metaphors available to practitioners and deepen their understanding of the meaning of these metaphors to families and communities.

The affective and dynamic aspects of African families from refugee backgrounds' understandings and constructions of human rights as expressed via narrative and metaphor has been understudied. Instead, there has been emphasis on changing views perceived as rigid and inflexible, to the detriment of culturally inclusive dialogue and practices of co-construction of human rights in Australia. The study clearly demonstrated that a narrative research method, open to diverse ways of communicating concepts, was ideal to explore the larger questions that arose in the study, such as universalist and culturally relative models of human rights. Human rights words may not exist in participant languages or their communal psyche, or they might very well be conceptualised differently to Australian and international standards – that is, as duties and responsibilities located within gendered and otherwise stratified roles. Nevertheless, this study demonstrated that these funds of knowledge can be

valuable to counsellors, policy makers and researchers who wish to engage with African families from refugee backgrounds in critical conversations about human rights within a framework of conscientisation (Friere, 1985), both in form and content.

Fanon describes what happens when African storytellers begin to reclaim, revive and rework cultural knowledge:

...the method of allusion is increasingly used [as storytelling is revived]. Instead of “a long time ago”, [we] substitute the more ambiguous expression, “what I am going to tell you happened somewhere else, but it could happen here today or perhaps tomorrow”... [storytelling] arouses forgotten muscular tensions and develops the imagination... the storyteller once again gives free rein to his imagination, innovates, and turns creator.’ (Fanon, 2004a, p. 174).

Above, Fanon speaks vividly about the enlivening impact of narrating a story, and reaffirms the methodological importance of storytelling to the project of decolonising human rights. An important emphasis by one participant in the present study was that storytelling *gives* people their rights, although their desired outcome may not result from the opportunity to tell their story (see Nelson, South Sudan, Chapter 7). In addition, storytelling in the research was revealed as an active, reciprocal process, promoting deeper, more dynamic and flexible intercultural understandings of human rights. These characteristics are not well established in the literature and require further analysis.

Further, the importance of future stories in participant narratives indicates that researchers, policy makers and practitioners need to pay more careful attention to potentially hidden fears and expectations in the diaspora. Why is it

that African families and communities find their stories and views about human rights are often ignored in resettlement contexts, affecting their present and raising fears about the future? Potential answers to this question include that African families from refugee backgrounds need an audience that will appreciate their stories as a message; audiences that might 'focus [more] on the zone of hidden fluctuation where the people can be found' (Fanon, 2004a, p. 163).

Greater attention to expectations about the future, that may emerge in listening to family and community narratives, might allow families and communities to express, and play a more active role in addressing, present concerns. By actively engaging with storytelling in human rights research and practice we can re-story family and community concerns and move into a space of deeper connection with, and recognition of, their wisdom in the present time and place. More focus on this at a policy and practice level is required.

10.16 Approach to expertise in the research

This study affirmed that participants and their families and communities are capable human rights actors who can produce reliable accounts about their experience and engage in creative co-construction of human rights. One way in which this was facilitated was by forming a research reference group. The group's contributions affirmed the importance of the study for families and communities and immeasurably strengthened the present study.

Members of the research reference group undertook numerous roles including vouching for the study to the ACU Ethics Committee; providing a letter promising to support participants in situations where the participant may become distressed; reviewing key documents including the research flier, consent form and interview guide; providing advice about enabling participation; raising awareness about the research and vouching for the study with participants;

reviewing data summaries and supporting meaning-making regarding emergent themes; consulting with elders and/or communities throughout the study; providing theoretical and conceptual guidance throughout the research about trust building, reciprocity, cultural safety, how to promote dialogue and manage risks in the research. I was able to reciprocate by being with families in times of distress, constructively sharing my own lived experiences of family norms and human rights, connecting group members with colleagues to support their career and livelihoods, and providing information that was useful for families, such as processes for applying to university. More information about these reciprocal interactions is provided at Appendix 15.

Separately, participant statements about not knowing human rights could have positioned me as the locus of expert knowledge in this study of human rights. I therefore paid close attention to the latent complexities related to power, certainty, and expertise, and examined multiple possible meanings of not knowing. At the International Federation of Social Workers Conference in 2014, I spoke about human rights knowledge as a golden thread, weaving around the participants and myself, encouraging us to negotiate expertise together, talk about feelings of inadequacy in terms of knowledge or skill and negotiate safety. This presentation, and the peer-reviewed conference paper (Higgins, 2017), as well as Chapter 5, Research Design, outlined strategies that were implemented in the research to facilitate productive and safe dialogue.

Since 2014 I have noted several authors utilising this imagery of a golden thread. One blogger, ACADEMIA_MAMA, utilises the golden thread metaphor to describe argument that runs through the centre of a doctoral thesis and binds it together (2015).

Another group of scholars cited former Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-Moon, noting:

The UN's former Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon described [the] crucial role of energy, when he stated that "Energy is the 'Golden Thread' that connects economic growth, social equity and environmental sustainability. (Brand-Correa, Martin-Ortega, & Steinberger, 2018, p. 178).

In this context, the golden thread enriches an academic discussion of human well-being and energy use, while the reference to Ban Ki-Moon lends additional weight to their analysis.

Finally, in a context that mirrors my usage, Lenette et al. employ a similar metaphor, 'threads of life', in their article about digital storytelling with refugee women (2018, p. 5). For Lenette et al., this metaphor represents the agency experienced by one of the participants in their research, who asserts herself as she selects which parts of her narrative to share, weaving them together in 'telling her "preferred story"' (Lenette et al., 2018, p. 6).

In the present study, the metaphor of a golden thread represented participant expertise, and the actions I took to support participants to articulate their family and community knowledge about human rights.

10.17 Interpretive phenomenological analysis

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) made significant theoretical and methodological contributions in this study. It supported identification of rich, idiographic understandings of human rights, delivering them to human rights discourse and building on existing theoretical knowledge. Rigorous analysis using IPA confirmed the close link between African worldviews and the ways of

knowing, being, and doing human rights that emerged in interviews. It also provided a rationale and method for attending to affective as well as cognitive elements of the data, showing that African families from refugee backgrounds and their communities often do not get the support they require both *there* and *here*, with some core human rights appearing to be neglected and worldviews remaining unacknowledged.

Listening to, and analysing, participant experiences in narrative and metaphor form identified potentially oppressive and transformational forces. This encouraged the building of critical self-awareness as well as critical contextual awareness, identifying and reinforcing areas where change might be possible. Hermeneutic phenomenology sensitised me to the context within which my participants formed their understandings and perspectives on human rights. The study, in engaging with social constructions of human rights, promotes human rights 'from below' (Ife, 2010a) and facilitated the timely grassroots engagement of African families from refugee backgrounds about human rights-based social work practice in Sydney, NSW.

10.18 Conclusion

This study makes an important and timely contribution to the field of human rights. It was inspired by authors who claim that African conceptualisations of human rights need to be incorporated more positively into human rights discourse, and by those who argue that human rights hold creative emancipatory potential. I hoped that my study would facilitate intercultural meaning-making, celebrate the worldviews of African families from refugee backgrounds and bring new understandings about their perspectives on the wellbeing of their families and communities.

By participating in the study, African families from refugee backgrounds had the unique opportunity to provide their rich and varied perspectives on human rights, clarifying, critiquing and extending dominant perspectives in this field.

Data from the study extends theoretical frameworks of human rights and offers innovative ideas for intercultural practice and research. The evidence revealed layers of human rights fluency from conversant to 'not-knowing' human rights. Importantly, structural factors such as gender, poverty, upheaval and corruption appeared to shape understandings of human rights and affect power and agency of individuals, families and communities. Exploration of lived experience facilitated the emergence of ways of knowing, being and doing human rights, extending knowledge about African worldviews. Analysis located these contributions within acculturation frameworks and collaborative models of practice.

The study identified structures and assumptions that other, reify and/or denigrate the perspectives of African families from refugee backgrounds, perpetuating colonial histories and minimising power and agency in relation to human rights. Conversely it has highlighted desire for consultative, collaborative, responsive and inclusive engagement with human rights issues amongst African families from refugee backgrounds resettled to NSW, Australia. The study also provides guidance on how family and community values, needs, roles and norms can and should be incorporated into frameworks for social work practice. These contributions are important to African communities from refugee backgrounds, social work and human service professionals, and human rights discourse.

11. References

- Abu-Duhou, I. (2006). *Engagement of the African Community in the Northern Territory: Their Settlement, Education, Workforce and Community Participation*. Retrieved from Darwin:
- ACADEMIA_MAMA. (2015). Spinning the 'golden thread' that can sew your PHD together. Retrieved from <https://phdinahundredsteps.com/2015/05/26/spinning-the-golden-thread-that-can-sew-your-phd-together/>
- Addo, M. (2010). Practice of United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies in the Reconciliation of Cultural Diversity with Universal Respect for Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 32(3), 601-664.
doi:10.1353/hrq.2010.0012
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, (2017a).
- African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. (2017b). Main Features of the African Charter. Retrieved from <http://www.achpr.org/instruments/achpr/main-features/>
- African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. (2018). About ACHPR. Retrieved from <http://www.achpr.org/about/>
- African Court. (2018). Homepage: African Court. Retrieved from <http://www.african-court.org/en/>
- Allan, J., Briskman, L., & Pease, B. (Eds.). (2009). *Critical social work: Theories and practices for a socially just world*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

- Allen-Meares, P. (2007). Cultural Competence: An Ethical Requirement. *Journal of Ethnic And Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 16(3-4), 83-92.
doi:10.1300/J051v16n03_06
- Alston, M., McCurdy, S., & McKinnon, J. (2018). *Social Work Fields of Practice*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.
- Aluede, C. O. (2006). Music Therapy in Traditional African Societies: Origin, Basis and Application in Nigeria. *Journal of human Ecology*, 20(1), 31-35. doi:10.1080/09709274.2006.11905898
- Aluede, C. O., & Ibekwe, E. U. (2011). (Re)Investigating Man, Drum and Music in Healing. *Studies on Ethno-Medicine*, 5(2), 125-131.
doi:10.1080/09735070.2011.11886399
- Alvesson, M., & Skoldberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- An-Na'im, A. A. (1992). *Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Quest for Consensus*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Andary, L., Stolk, Y., & Klimidis, S. (2003). *Assessing Mental Health Across Cultures*. Bowen Hills, QLD: Australian Academic Press.
- Armstrong, S. (2013). Good practices with culturally diverse families in family dispute resolution. *Family Matters*, 92, 48-60.
- Arndt, S. (2002). Perspectives on African Feminism: Defining and Classifying African-Feminist Literatures. *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, 17(54), 31-44. doi:10.1080/10130950.2002.9676176

- Aroche, J., & Coello, M. (2002). Towards a systematic approach for the treatment rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors. Retrieved from www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au/areaser/startts/publications/article_1.asp
- Asante, M. K. (1988). *Afrocentricity*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Asante, M. K. (1998). *The Afrocentric Idea*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Asante, M. K. (2006). A Discourse on Black Studies: Liberating the Study of African People in the Western Academy. *Journal of Black Studies*, 36(5), 646-662. doi:10.1177/0021934705285937
- Asante, M. K., & Abarry, A. S. (1996). *African Cultural Heritage: A Book of Sources*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Asian Human Rights Commission, & Asian Legal Resource Centre. (1998). Asian Human Rights Charter. <http://www.refworld.org/>: Regional Treaties, Agreements, Declarations and Related.
- Australian Association of Social Workers. (1999). *Code of Ethics*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Association of Social Workers.
- Australian Association of Social Workers. (2003). *Practice Standards for Social Workers: Achieving Outcomes*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Association of Social Workers.
- Australian Association of Social Workers. (2010). *AASW Code of Ethics*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Association of Social Workers.
- Australian Association of Social Workers. (2012). Australian Social Work Education and Accreditation Standards (ASWEAS) *Guideline 1.1:*

Guidance on essential core curriculum content (pp. 1024). Canberra, Australia: Australian Association of Social Workers.

Australian Association of Social Workers. (2013). *Practice Standards* Canberra, Australia: Australian Association of Social Workers.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Labour Outcomes of Migrants. *Australian Labour Market Statistics*, (Jan, 2006). Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/7d12b0f6763c78caca257061001cc588/d59069792539ca0bca2570ee0017b812!OpenDocument>

Racial Discrimination Act 1975, (2015).

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986, (2018a).

Disability Discrimination Act 1992, (2018b).

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2010). *In our own words. African Australians: A review of human rights and social inclusion issues*. Retrieved from Sydney, Australia: www.humanrights.gov.au/africanaus/review/index.html

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018a). About the Commission. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/about-commission-0>

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018b). Australia and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018c). Education_Human Rights Explained. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/education/human-rights-explained-index>

- Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018d). Human Rights Explained: Fact sheet 7: Australia and Human Rights Treaties. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/about/contact-us>
- Bacon, E. (2016). Narrative and Narrative Strategies to Explore Trauma: 'Up Close from Afar' – An African Migrant's Story. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 37(2), 129-146. doi:10.22160/22035184/aras-2016-37-2/129-146
- Bajraktarevic-Hayward, J. (2009). Participation of refugee communities in STARTTS' service planning, implementation and evaluation. Retrieved from
- Banks, S. (2012). *Ethics and Values in Social Work* (Fourth Edition ed.). Houndmills, Basingstoke, England: Basingstoke : Palgrave MacMillan
- Bardwell, A. (2017, 4/6/2017). Australia's Aboriginal children 'essentially being punished for being poor' – UN rights expert. *UN NEWS*. Retrieved from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/04/554682-australias-aboriginal-children-essentially-being-punished-being-poor-un-rights>
- Barlow, C. A. (2007). In the Third Space: A case study of Canadian students in a social work practicum in India. *International Social Work*, 50(2), 243-254. doi:10.1177/0020872807073990
- Bartolomei, L. A. (2009). *Struggling against the silences: exploring rights based responses to the rape and sexual abuse of refugee women and girls*. University of New South Wales, Sydney.
- Bates, L., Baird, D., Johnson, D. J., Lee, R. E., Luster, T., & Rehagan, C. (2005). Sudanese Refugee Youth in Foster Care: The "Lost Boys" in America. *Child Welfare*, 84(5), 631-648.

- Bauman, Z. (1993). *Postmodern Ethics*. Oxford UK & Cambridge USA: Blackwell.
- BBC News Services. (2017a). Rwanda Country Profile. *Country Profiles*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093238>
- BBC News Services. (2017b). Sierra Leone country profile. *Country profiles: Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094194>
- BBC News Services. (2018a). Kenya country profile. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13681341>
- BBC News Services. (2018b). Liberia Country Profile. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13729504>
- BBC News Services. (2018c). South Sudan country profile. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14069082>
- BBC News Services. (2018d). Sudan country profile. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14094995>
- Bek-Pedersen, K., & Montgomery, E. (2006). Narratives of the Past and Present: Young Refugees' Construction of a Family Identity in Exile. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 19(1), 94-112. doi:10.1093/jrs/fej003
- Bellamy, K., Ostini, R., Martini, N., & Kairuz, T. (2016). Seeking to understand: using generic qualitative research to explore access to medicines and pharmacy services among resettled refugees. *International Journal of Clinical Pharmacology*, 38, 671-675. doi:10.1007/s11096-016-0261-1
- Benedict, R. (1971). *Patterns of Culture*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bennett, B. (2013). The importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history for social work students and graduates. In B. Bennett, S. Green,

- S. Gilbert, & D. Bessarab (Eds.), *Our Voices: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Work* (pp. 1-25). South Yarra: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bennett, B., Green, S., Gilbert, S., & Bessarab, D. (2013). *Our Voices: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Work*. South Yarra: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bent-Goodley, T., Fairfax, C. N., & Carlton-LaNey, I. (2017). The significance of African-centred social work for social work practice. *Journal of Human Behaviour in the Social Environment*, 27(1-2), 1-6.
doi:10.1080/10911359.2016.1273682
- Bentham, J. (2002 c.1789). An Introduction into the Principles of Morals and Legislation. In J. Bowring (Ed.), *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Berry, J. W. (2001). A Psychology of Immigration. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(2), 615-631. doi:10.1111/0022-4537.00231
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2004). Foreword: Framing Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Bhabha, H. K. (2006). Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences. In B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, & H. Tiffin (Eds.), *Post-colonial Studies Reader* (pp. 155-157). London and New York: Routledge.
- Bø, B. P. (2015). Social work in a multicultural society: New challenges and needs for competence. *International Social Work*, 58(4), 562-574.
doi:10.1177/0020872814550114

- Bos, K., Chaplin, D., & Mamun, A. (2018). Benefits and challenges of expanding grid electricity in Africa: A review of rigorous evidence on household impacts in developing countries. *Energy for Sustainable Development*, 44, 64-77. doi:10.1016/j.esd.2018.02.007
- Bottomore, T. B., & Rubel, M. (Eds.). (1961). *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy* (2 ed.). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Brand-Correa, L. I., Martin-Ortega, J., & Steinberger, J. K. (2018). Human Scale Energy Services: Untangling a 'golden thread'. *Energy Research and Social Science*, 38(April), 178-187. doi:Human Scale Energy Services: Untangling a 'golden thread'
- Bricker-Jenkins, M., Barbera, R. A., Beemer, M., & Young, C. (2012). Poverty through the lens of economic human rights. In D. Saleeby (Ed.), *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* (6 ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Bridges, D. (2001). The Ethics of Outsider Research. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35(3), 371-386. doi:10.1111/1467-9752.00233
- Briskman, L. (2014). *Social Work With Indigenous Communities: A Human Rights Approach* (2 ed.). Leichhardt, NSW: Federation Press.
- Briskman, L., & Cemlyn, S. (2005). Reclaiming humanity for asylum-seekers. *International Social Work*, 48(6), 714-724.
doi:0.1177/0020872805056989
- Bromfield, L., & Holzer, P. (2008). *Protecting Australian children. Analysis of challenges and strategic directions: CDSMC National Approach for Child Protection Project*. Canberra: Australian Government: Australian Institute

of Family Studies Retrieved from

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/protecting-australian-children>.

Bromfield, L., Lamont, A., Parker, R., & Horsfall, B. (2010). Issues for the safety and wellbeing of children in families with multiple and complex problems: The co-occurrence of domestic violence, parental substance misuse, and mental health problems. *NCPC Issues*, 33, 24.

Bullivant, B. M. (1986). *Getting a fair go: Case studies of occupational, socialization and perceptions of discrimination in a sample of seven Melbourne High Schools (Occasional Paper No. 13)* (A. G. P. Service Ed.). Canberra: Human Rights Commission.

Burns, A. (2009). Refugees in Australian society. In J. Bowes & R. Grace (Eds.), *Children, families and communities : contexts and consequences* (3 ed., pp. 148-162). South Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press.

Cambridge University Press. (2017). Cambridge Dictionary. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/developmental>.

Caritas. (2018). Caritas is Marking a Decade of Work in Sudan. Retrieved from <https://www.caritas.org/what-we-do/conflicts-and-disasters/darfur/>

Cemlyn, S., & Briskman, L. (2003). Asylum, children's rights and social work. *Child & Family Social Work*, 8(3), 163-178. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2206.2003.00281.x

Chakravarti, S. (2014). *Sing the Rage: Listening to Anger After Mass Violence*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Chenoweth, L., & McAuliffe, D. (2017). *The Road to Social Work and Human Service Practice* (5 ed.). South Melbourne: VIC: Cengage Learning Australia.
- Colic-Peisker, V., & Tilbury, F. (2007). *Refugees and Employment: The effect of visible difference on discrimination. Final Report*. Retrieved from Perth: [http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/8111/1/Refugees and employment.pdf](http://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/8111/1/Refugees%20and%20employment.pdf)
- Collins, S., Arthur, N., & Wong-Wylie, G. (2010). Enhancing Reflective Practice in Multicultural Counseling Through Cultural Auditing. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 88(3), 340-348. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2010.tb00031.x
- Comas-Díaz, L. (2011). Multicultural approaches to psychotherapy. In J. C. Norcross, G. R. VandenBos, & D. K. Freedheim (Eds.), *History of psychotherapy: Continuity and change* (2nd Ed): American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/12353-008
- Congress, E., & Kung, W. (2013). Using the culturagram to assess and empower culturally diverse families. In E. Congress & M. Gonzalez (Eds.), *Multicultural Perspectives in Social Work Practice with Families* (3 ed., pp. 2-21). New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Connolly, M. (2018). The Art and Science of Social Work. In M. Connolly, L. Harms, & J. Maidment (Eds.), *Social work: Contexts and Practice* (4 ed., pp. 3-18). South Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press.
- Connolly, M., & Healy, K. (2018). Social Work Practice Theories and Frameworks. In M. Connolly, L. Harms, & J. Maidment (Eds.), *Social*

work: Contexts and Practice (4 ed., pp. 19-33). South Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press.

Court, D., & Abbas, R. (2016). Whose Interview Is It, Anyway? Methodological and Ethical Challenges of Insider–Outsider Research, Multiple Languages, and Dual-Researcher Cooperation. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 19(6), 480 - 488. doi:10.1177/1077800413482102

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Danchin, P. (2018). *Projects_UDHR*. Columbia University. New York City: New York. Retrieved from http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/udhr/preamble_section_7/concept_history.html

De Feyter, K. (2011). Sites of Rights Resistance. In K. De Feyter, S. Parmentier, C. Timmerman, & G. Ulrich (Eds.), *The Local Relevance of Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

de Lazari-Radek, K., & Singer, P. (2017). *Utilitarianism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Deacon, Z., & Sullivan, C. (2009). Responding to the Complex and Gendered Needs of Refugee Women. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 24(3), 272-284. doi:10.1177/0886109909337401

Dean, R. (2001). The Myth of Cross-Cultural Competence. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services*, 82(6), 623-630.

doi:10.1606/1044-3894.151

Denborough, D. (2014). *The Tree of Life narrative approach*. Paper presented at the Kongress fremdgehen Germany.

http://www.oeas.at/fileadmin/root_oeas/Kongress_fremdgehen_2014/Praesentationen/Denborough_Tree_of_life.pdf

Deng, S. A., & Pienaar, F. (2011). Positive Parenting: Integrating Sudanese traditions and New Zealand styles of parenting. An evaluation of Strategies with Kids - Information for Parents (SKIP). *The Australasian Review of African Studies*, 32(2), 160-179.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2018). Official Advice: Rwanda.

Smart Traveller. Retrieved from

<http://smartraveller.gov.au/Countries/africa/east/Pages/rwanda.aspx>

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Human Rights Branch. (2017).

Australia and Human Rights: An Overview (4th Edition) Retrieved from

<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/human-rights-manual-fourth-edition.pdf>

Department of Home Affairs. (2018). Life in Australia: Multicultural affairs.

Department of Social Services. (2017, 8 September 2016 - 4:00pm). Programs

& Policy: A Multicultural Australia. Retrieved from

<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia>

Devi, S. (2018). FGM in Sierra Leone. *The Lancet*, 391(10119), 415.

doi:10.1016/s0140-6736(18)30189-2

- Dhanji, S. (2010). Social or Unsocial: The Linkage Between Accommodation, Health and Well-being Among Former Horn of Africa and Sudanese Refugees Living in Australia. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 31(1), 106-136.
- DIAC. (2009a). LSIA2 - Participation Rates - Principal Applicants from Fact Sheet 14 - Migrant Labour Outcomes. Canberra: Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
- DIAC. (2009b). LSIA2 - Unemployment Rates - Principal Visa Applicants from Fact Sheet 14 - Migrant Labour Market Outcomes. Canberra: Department of Immigration and Citizenship.
- Dominelli, L. (2009). Anti-oppressive practice: the challenges of the twenty-first century. In R. Adams, L. Dominelli, & M. Payne (Eds.), *Social work: themes, issues and critical debates* (3 ed., pp. 49–64). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dominelli, L. (2017). *Anti-Racist Social Work* (4 ed.): Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Donnelly, J. (2003). *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (2 ed.). New York: Cornell University Press.
- Donnelly, J. (2007). The Relative Universality of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29(2), 281-306. doi:10.1353/hrq.2007.0016
- Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2000). Aversive racism and selection decisions: 1989 and 1999. *Psychological Science*, 11, 315-319. doi:10.1111/1467-9280.00262

- Drummond, P. D., Mizan, A., Brocx, K., & Wright, B. (2011). Barriers to Accessing Health Care Services for West African Refugee Women Living in Western Australia. *Health Care for Women International*, 32(3), 206-224. doi:10.1080/07399332.2010.529216
- Dryzek, J. (1995). Critical theory as a research program. In S. White (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Economist Intelligence Unit. (2018). Democracy Index. Retrieved from http://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/Democracy_Index_2017.pdf
- Edhlund, B. M., & McDougall, A. G. (2016). *NVivo for Mac Essentials: Your Guide to the Leading Qualitative Analysis Software* (2 ed.). Stallarholmen, Sweden: Form & Kunscap AB.
- Edwards, R., & Weller, S. (2012). Shifting analytic ontology: using I-poems in qualitative longitudinal research. *Qualitative Research*, 12(2), 202-217. doi:10.1177/1468794111422040
- English Oxford Living Dictionaries. (2018). Definition of raw in English. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/raw>
- Engstrom, P. (2010). Human Rights: Effectiveness of International and Regional Mechanisms *International Studies, Oxford Research Encyclopedias*. Retrieved from Oxford Research Encyclopedias website: doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.013.214
- Fairfax, C. (2016). The significance of African-centered social work for social work practice. *Journal of Human Behaviour in the Social Environment*, 27(1-2), 7-14. doi:10.1080/10911359.2016.1252599

- Famsworth, S. (2016). *Young South Sudanese 'constantly stopped' by police, as community grapples with Apex stigma*. Retrieved from n.d.: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-12-04/young-south-sudanese-constantly-stopped-by-police/8078642>
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays* (H. Chevalier, Trans. English Translation ed.). New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Fanon, F. (2004a). On National Culture (R. Philcox, Trans.) *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fanon, F. (2004b). *The Wretched of the Earth* (R. Philcox, Trans. English Translation ed.). New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Fields, A. B. (2003). A Holistic Approach to Human Rights. In A. B. Fields (Ed.), *Rethinking Human Rights for the New Millenium* (pp. 73-99). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fiske, L. (2006). Politics of Exclusion, Practice of Inclusion: Australia's Response to Refugees and the Case for Community Based Human Rights Work. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 10(3), 219-229. doi:10.1080/13642980600828537
- Flatau, P., Colic-Peisker, V., Bauskis, A., Maginn, P., & Buergelt, P. (2014). *Refugees, housing and Neighbourhoods in Australia* (224). Retrieved from Melbourne: <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/224>
- Flatau, P., Colic-Peisker, V., Bauskis, A., Maginn, P., & Buergelt, P. (2014). *Refugees, housing, and neighbourhoods in Australia*. Retrieved from Melbourne: <http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/projects/p82015>

- Flynn, D. (2005). What's wrong with rights? Rethinking human rights and responsibilities. *Australian Social Work*, 58(3), 244-256.
doi:10.1111/j.1447-0748.2005.00218.x
- Fook, J. (1993). *Radical Casework: A Theory of Practice*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Fozdar, F., & Hartley, L. (2013). Refugee resettlement in Australia: What we know and need to know. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 32(3), 23-51.
doi:10.1093/rsq/hdt009
- Friere, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (M. Ramos, Trans.). New York: The Continuum Publishing Company.
- Friere, P. (1985). *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power and Liberation* (D. Macedo, Trans.). London: MacMillan.
- Fu-Kiau, K. K. B. (2008). *African Cosmology of the Bântu-Kôngo: Tying the Spiritual Knot : Principles of Life & Living*. New York, NY: Athelia Henrietta Press, publishing in the name of Orunmila.
- Gair, S. (2012). Feeling Their Stories : Contemplating Empathy, Insider/Outsider Positionings, and Enriching Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22(1), 134-143.
doi:10.1177/1049732311420580
- Garkawe, S. B., Kelly, L., & Fisher, W. (2001). *Indigenous Human Rights* (S. Garkawe, L. Kelly, & W. Fisher Eds.). Sydney, Australia: Institute of Criminology, Sydney University Law School.

- Garran, A. M., & Werkmeister Rozas, L. (2013). Cultural Competence Revisited. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 22*(2), 97-111.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2013.785337>
- Geertz, C. (2002). Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. In L. Spillman (Ed.), *Cultural Sociology* (pp. 63-68). Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.
- George, E. (2008). Virginity Testing and South Africa's HIV/AIDS Crisis: Beyond Rights Universalism and Cultural Relativism toward Health Capabilities. *California Law Review, 96*(6), 1447-.
- Germaine, C., & Gitterman, A. (1995). Ecological Perspective. In R. L. Edwards (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (19 ed., Vol. 1). Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.
- Gerrand, P., & Nathane-Taulela, M. (2015). Developing a culturally relevant adoption model in South Africa: The way forward. *International Social Work, 58*(1), 55-62. doi:10.1177/0020872812461043
- Gilligan, C. (2015). Introduction: The Listening Guide Method of Psychological Inquiry. *Qualitative Psychology, 2*(1), 69-77. doi:10.1037/qup0000023
- Gilligan, C., Spencer, R., Weinberg, M. K., & Bertsch, T. (2006). On the listening guide: A voice-centered relational method. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Emergent Methods in Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Glendenning, P. (2015). Asylum seekers, refugees and human dignity. *Social Alternatives, 34*(1), 27-33.

- Gómez Isa, F. (2011). Freedom from want revisited from a local perspective: evolution and challenges ahead. In K. De Feyter, S. Parmentier, C. Timmerman, & G. Ulrich (Eds.), *The Local Relevance of Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Greenwood, D. J., & Levin, M. (2006). The Friendly Outsider: From AR as a Research Strategy to the Skills Needed to Become an Action Researcher *Introduction to Action Research* (2 ed., pp. 93-108). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Gregg, B. (2016). Human Rights as Metaphor for Political Community beyond the Nation State. *Critical Sociology*, 42(6), 897-917.
doi:10.1177/0896920515582092
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences, Revisited. In Norman K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4 ed., pp. 97-128). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gyekye, K. (1997). Person and Community: In Defense of Moderate Communitarianism In K. Gyekye (Ed.), *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haffejee, B., & East, J. (2015). African Women Refugee Resettlement: A Womanist Analysis. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 31(2), 232-242. doi:10.1177/0886109915595840
- Halcon, L., Robertson, C., Savik, K., Johnson, D., Spring, M., Butcher, J., . . . Jaranson, J. (2004). Trauma and Coping in Somali and Oromo Refugee

Youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 35(1), 17-25. doi:10.1016/s1054-139x(03)00328-8

- Harms, L. (2010). *Understanding human development: A multidimensional approach*. South Melbourne, VIC: Oxford University Press.
- Harris, A., & Nyuon, N. (2010). Working it Both Ways: Intercultural Collaboration and the Performativity of Identity. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 31(1), 62-81.
- Harris, A. J. (2017). *A phenomenological study into African refugee men's wellness seeking behaviours, inclusive of community, spirit and ancestral connections*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of Melbourne, Melbourne. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/11343/172308>
- Harris, V., & Marlowe, J. M. (2011). Hard Yards, High Hopes: The Educational Challenges of African Refugee Students. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 23(2), 186-196.
- Hatoss, A. (2012). 'Where are you from?' Identity Construction and Experiences of 'Othering' in the Narratives of Sudanese Refugee-backgrounds Australians. *Discourse and Society*, 23(1). doi:10.1177/0957926511419925
- Hatoss, A., & Huijser, H. (2010). Gendered Barriers to Educational Opportunities: Resettlement of Sudanese Refugees in Australia. *Gender and Education*, 22(2), 156. doi:10.1080/09540250903560497
- Healy, L. M. (2008). Exploring the history of social work as a human rights profession. *International Social Work*, 51(6), 735-748. doi:10.1177/0020872808095247

- Healy, L. M., & Link, R. K. (2012). *Handbook of International Social Work: Human Rights, Development and the Social Work Profession* (L. M. Healy & R. K. Link Eds.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hebbani, A., Obijiofor, L., & Bristed, H. (2010). Intercultural Communication Challenges Confronting Female Sudanese Former Refugees in Australia. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 31(1), 37-61.
- Heidegger, M. (1949). Hölderlin and the essence of poetry. In W. Brock (Ed.), *Existence and Being*. Chicago: Regnery.
- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time* (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans. Modern Thought ed.). New York: Harper Perennial.
- Heiss, A., & Gibson, M.-J. (2013). Aboriginal people and place. Retrieved from <http://www.sydneybarani.com.au/sites/aboriginal-people-and-place/>
- Herring, S., Spangaro, J., Lauw, M., & McNamara, L. (2012). The Intersection of Trauma, Racism, and Cultural Competence in Effective Work with Aboriginal People: Waiting for Trust. *Australian Social Work*, 66(1), 104-117. doi:10.1080/0312407X.2012.697566
- Herscovitch, B. (2013). *Fair Go - Fact or Fiction?* St Leonards: NSW: The Centre for Independent Studies.
- Hessle, S. (2014). *Human Rights and Social Equality: Challenges for Social Work*. London: Routledge.
- Higgins, M. (2017). *Examination of an African virtue to enhance and stimulate Australian understandings of human rights* Paper presented at the AFSAAP: Researching Africa in Australasia – The Way Forward!, Adelaide.

His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd).

(2017). *Letters Patent for the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry*. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia Retrieved from <https://financialservices.royalcommission.gov.au/Documents/Signed-Letters-Patent-Financial-Services-Royal-Commission.pdf>.

Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (2003). *Inside Interviewing: New Lenses, New Concerns*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hood, R. (2015). Combining phenomenological and critical methodologies in qualitative research. *Qualitative Social Work, 15*(2), 160-174.
doi:10.1177/1473325015586248

Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Owen, J., Worthington, E. L., & Utsey, S. O. (2013). Cultural humility: measuring openness to culturally diverse clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(3), 353-366.
doi:10.1037/a0032595

Horsford, R., Rumbold, J., Varney, H., Morris, D., Dungan, L., & Lith, T. V. (2014). Creating community: An arts-based enquiry. *Journal of Applied Arts and Health, 5*(1), 17. doi:https://doi.org/10.1386/jaah.5.1.65_1

Horyniak, D., Lim, M. S., & Higgs, P. (2016). News Media Reporting on Substance Use Among People of African Ethnicity in Three Australian States, 2003-2013. *Australasian Review of African Studies, 37*(2), 56-79.

Houston, S., & Mullan-Jensen, C. (2011). Towards depth and width in qualitative social work: Aligning interpretative phenomenological analysis with the theory of social domains. *Qualitative Social Work, 11*(3), 266-281. doi:10.1177/1473325011400484

- Howard-Hassmann, R. E. (2010). Mugabe's Zimbabwe, 2000–2009: Massive Human Rights Violations and the Failure to Protect. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 32, 898-920. doi:10.1353/hrq.2010.0030
- Hughes, G. (2014). Finding a voice through 'The Tree of Life': A strength-based approach to mental health for refugee children and families in schools. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 19(1), 139-153. doi:10.1177/1359104513476719
- Hugman, R. (2010). Social Work with International Issues *Understanding International Social Work: A critical analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hugman, R. (2012). *Culture, values and ethics in social work : embracing diversity*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hugman, R. (2015). *Social Development in Social Work: Practices and Principles*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hugman, R., Pittaway, E., & Bartolomei, L. (2011). When "Do No Harm" Is Not Enough: The Ethics of Research with Refugees and Other Vulnerable Groups. *British Journal of Social Work*, 41(7), 1271-1287. doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcr013
- Human Rights Watch. (2018a). Kenya country profile. *Country Profiles: Africa*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/africa/kenya>
- Human Rights Watch. (2018b). Rwanda country profile. *Country Profiles: Africa*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/africa/rwanda>
- Human Rights Watch. (2018c). South Sudan country profile. *Country Profiles: Africa*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/africa/south-sudan>

- Human Rights Watch. (2018d). Sudan country profile. *Country Profiles: Africa*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/africa/sudan>
- Hurly, J. (2018). 'I feel something is still missing': leisure meanings of African refugee women in Canada. *Leisure Studies*, 1-14. doi:10.1080/02614367.2018.1515241
- Hutchinson, M., & Dorsett, P. (2012). What does the literature say about resilience in refugee people? Implications for practice. *Journal of Social Inclusion*, 3(2).
- Hutnyk, J. (2006). Culture. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23(2-3), 351-358. doi:10.1177/0263276406062700
- Ibhawoh, B. (2001). Cultural Relativism and Human Rights: Reconsidering the Africanist Discourse. *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*, 19(1), 43-62. doi:10.1177/092405190101900104
- Ibhawoh, B. (2018). *Human rights in Africa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Ife, J. (2008). *Human Rights and Social Work: Towards Rights-Based Practice* (2 ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ife, J. (2009). *Human Rights from Below: Achieving Rights through Community Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ife, J. (2010a). *Human Rights from Below: Achieving Rights through Community Development*. Melbourne, Australia: Cambridge University Press.
- Ife, J. (2010b). *Human Rights from Below. Achieving rights through community development*. Port Melbourne, VIC: Cambridge University Press.

- Ife, J. (2012). *Human Rights and Social Work: Towards Rights-Based Practice* (3 ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ife, J. (2016). *Community Development in an Uncertain World: Vision, Analysis and Practice* (2 ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- International Federation of Social Workers. (1988). *Human Rights*. Retrieved from Geneva:
- International Federation of Social Workers. (2018). Global Definition of Social Work. Retrieved from <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/global-definition-of-social-work/>
- Isaacson, M. (2014). Clarifying Concepts: Cultural Humility or Competency. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 30*(3), 251-258.
doi:10.1016/j.profnurs.2013.09.011
- Jenks, C. (2004). *Culture* (2 ed.). London: Routledge.
- Johnson, R., & Waterfield, J. (2004). Making Words Count: The Value of Qualitative Research. *Physiotherapy Research International, 9*(3), 121-131. doi:10.1002/pri.312
- Jones, L. V. (2014). Black Feminisms: Renewing Sacred Healing Spaces. *Journal of Women and Social Work, 30*(2), 246-252.
doi:10.1177/0886109914551356
- Kabagarama, D. (1997). *Breaking the ice: A guide to understanding people from other cultures*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Kant, I. (2002). *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals: Rethinking the Western Tradition* (A. W. Wood, Trans.). New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

- Kayser, K., Watson, L. E., & Andrade, J. T. (2007). Cancer as a “We-Disease”:
Examining the Process of Coping From a Relational Perspective.
American Psychological Association, 25(4), 404-418. doi:10.1037/1091-
7527.25.4.404
- Kerkyasharian, S. (2006). *Investigation into African humanitarian settlement in
NSW: Report of the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural
NSW* (pp. 28-42). Retrieved from
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/version/46027164>
- Kleinig, J., & Evans, N. G. (2013). Human flourishing, human dignity and human
rights. *Law and Philosophy*, 32(5), 539-564. doi:10.1007/s10982-012-
9153-2
- Križ, K., & Skivenes, M. (2015). Challenges for marginalized minority parents in
different welfare systems: Child welfare workers' perspectives.
International Social Work, 58(1), 75-87. doi: 10.1177/0020872812456052
- Kruger, M., Ndebele, P., & Horn, L. (2014). *Research Ethics in Africa: A
Resource for Research Ethics committees*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press.
- Laird, J. (2000). Theorizing Culture: Narrative Ideas and Practice Principles.
Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 11(4), 99-114.
doi:10.1300/J086v11n04_08
- Laird, S. E. (2016). 'If parents are punished for asking their children to feed
goats': Supervisory neglect in sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal of Social
Work*, 16(3), 303-321. doi:10.1177/1468017315572037
- Legesse, A. (1980). Human Rights in African Political Culture. In K. w.
Thompson (Ed.), *The Moral Imperatives of Human Rights: A World
Survey* (pp. 123-124). Washington, DC: University Press of America.

- Lejukole, J. W.-K. L. (2008). *"We Will Do It our Own Ways": A Perspective of Southern Sudanese Refugees Resettlement Experiences in Australian Society*. (Doctor of Philosophy), The University of Adelaide, Adelaide. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2440/57097> Available from Council of Australian Universities Library Australian Digital Thesis Program database.
- Lenette, C. (2014). 'I am a Widow, Mother and Refugee': Narratives of Two Refugee Widows Resettled to Australia. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 27(3), 403-421. doi:10.1093/jrs/fet045
- Lenette, C. (2015). Mistrust and refugee women who are lone parents in resettlement contexts. *Qualitative Social Work*, 14(1), 119-134. doi:10.1177/1473325013517924
- Lenette, C., Brough, M., & Cox, L. (2012). Everyday resilience: Narratives of single refugee women with children. *Qualitative Social Work*, 12(5), 637-653. doi:10.1177/1473325012449684
- Lenette, C., Brough, M., Schweitzer, R. D., Correa-Velez, I., & Murray, K. E. (2018). 'Better than a pill': Digital story telling as a narrative process for refugee women. (In Press). *Media Practice and Education*, 19(1), 1-20. doi:10.1080/25741136.2018.1464740
- Leonard, P. (1975). Towards a paradigm for radical practice. In R. Bailey & M. Brake (Eds.), *Radical Social Work*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Lewig, K., Arney, F., Salveron, M., & Barredo, M. (2010). Parenting in a new culture: working with refugee families. In F. Arney & D. Scott (Eds.), *Working with Vulnerable Families: A partnership approach*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

- Li, X. (2006). *Ethics, Human Rights and Culture: Beyond Relativism and Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Liamputtong, P. (2007). *Researching the Vulnerable*. London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Liamputtong, P. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods* (4 ed.). South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press.
- Lim, S.-L. (2009). "Loss of Connections Is Death" Transnational Family Ties Among Sudanese Refugee Families Resettling in the United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40(6), 1028-1040.
doi:10.1177/0022022109346955
- Losoncz, I. (2011). Blocked opportunity and threatened identity: Understanding experiences of disrespect in South Sudanese Australians. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 32(2), 118-142.
- Lundy, C. (2011). *Social Work, Social Justice, and Human Rights: A Structural Approach to Practice* (2 ed.). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Lynch, D. (2011). Cultural Diversity in Practice: Working with Migrants and Refugees. In A. O'Hara & R. Pockett (Eds.), *Skills for Human Service Practice, Working with Individuals, Groups and Communities* (2nd ed., pp. 71-84). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Macmillan Publishers Limited. (2017). Developmental definition Macmillan Dictionary. London, UK: Macmillan Publishers Limited. Retrieved from <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/developmental>.
- Maidment, J., & Egan, R. (Eds.). (2015). *Practice Skills in Social Work and Welfare* (3 ed.). East Melbourne, Victoria: Allen & Unwin Academic.

- Marlowe, J. M. (2009). Conceptualising Refugee Resettlement in Contested Landscapes. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 30(2), 128-151.
- Marlowe, J. M. (2011). Sudanese Settlement: Employing Strategies of Intercultural Contact and Cultural Maintenance. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 32(2), 101-117.
- Marr, D., & Wilkinson, M. (2004). *Dark Victory* (2 ed.). Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.
- Martin, K. L., & Mirraboopa, B. (2003). Ways of knowing, being and doing: A theoretical framework and methods for indigenous and indigenist research. *Journal of Australian Studies*, 27(76), 203-214.
doi:10.1080/14443050309387838
- Matereke, K. (2009). 'Embracing the Aussie Identity': Theoretical Reflections on Challenges and Prospects for African-Australian Youths. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 30(9), 129-143.
- Mbazima, S. M., & Sekudu, J. (2017). A contrapuntal epistemology for social work: An Afrocentric perspective. *International Social Work*, 61(6), 1-15.
doi:10.1177/0020872817702704
- Mbiti, J. S. (2015). *Introduction to African Religion* (2 ed.). Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press.
- McArthur, M., Thompson, L., Winkworth, G., & Butler, K. (2010). *FaCHSIA Occasional Paper Number 30: Families' experiences of services*. Canberra Australian Government Retrieved from <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/op30.pdf>.

- McLaren, P. (1997). Paulo Friere's Legacy of Hope and Struggle. *Theory Culture and Society*, 14(4), 147-153. doi:0.1177/026327697014004007
- Mekgwe, P. (2008). Theorizing African feminism(s). The 'Colonial' Question. *Matatu*, 11. doi:10.1163/9789401205641_011
- Mercy Law Resource Centre. (2018). *Second Right to Housing Report: The Right to Housing in Comparative Perspective*. Retrieved from Dublin, Ireland:
https://law.yale.edu/system/files/area/center/schell/mlrc_housing_report-_2018.pdf
- Merry, S. E. (2005). *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into Local Justice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Metz, T. (2012). African Conceptions of Human Dignity. *Human Rights Review*, 13(1), 19-37. doi:10.1007/s12142-011-0200-4
- Micklewright, J. (2002). *Social Exclusion and Children: A European View for US Debate*. Retrieved from London:
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/6430/1/Social_Exclusion_and_Children_A_Europe_an_view_for_a_US_debate.pdf
- Mikell, G. (1995). African feminism: Toward a new politics of representation. *Feminist Studies*, 21(2), 405-424. doi:10.2307/3178274
- Mill, J. S. (1879). *Utilitarianism* (7 ed.). London: Longmans, Green, and Co.
- Miller, N. (2017, 29 November 2017). Australia's counter-terror measures 'fuelling racism': UN committee. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved

from <https://www.smh.com.au/world/australias-counterterror-measures-fuelling-racism-un-committee-20171129-gzur1b.html>

- Milos, D. (2011). South Sudanese communities and Australian family law: A clash of systems. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 32(2), 143-159.
- Ministers, I. C. o. F. (1990). *Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam*, 5 August 1990. Retrieved from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3822c.html>.
- Mitschke, D. B., Praetorius, R. T., Kelly, D. R., Small, E., & Kim, Y. K. (2016). Listening to refugees: How traditional mental health interventions may miss the mark. *International Social Work*, 60(3), 588-600.
doi:10.1177/0020872816648256
- Molyneux, S., & Geissler, W. P. (2008). Ethics and the ethnography of medical research in Africa. *Social Science and Medicine*, 67(5), 685-695.
doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2008.02.023
- Morley, C., McFarlane, S., & Ablett, P. (2014). *Engaging with Social Work: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Morrice, L. (2013). Learning and Refugees: Recognising the Darker Side of Transformative Learning *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(3), 251-271.
doi:10.1177/0741713612465467
- Muchoki, S. (2013). '[In Australia] what comes first are the women, then children, cats, dogs, followed by men': Exploring accounts of gender relations by men from the Horn of Africa. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 34(2), 78-98.

- Murithi, T. (2007). A local response to the global human rights standard: the ubuntu perspective on human dignity. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 5(3), 277-286. doi:10.1080/14767720701661966
- Mutua, M. W. (2001). Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights. *Harvard International Law Journal*, 42(1), 201-246.
- Nadan, Y. (2017). Rethinking 'cultural competence' in international social work. *International Social Work*, 60(1), 74-83. doi:10.1177/0020872814539986
- Nadan, Y., Weinberg-Kurnik, G., & Ben-Ari, A. (2015). The political dimension of multicultural social work education. *Journal of Social Work*, 16(3), 362-379. doi:10.1177/1468017315579152
- Nasu, H., & Saul, B. (2011). *Human Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region*. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2007). *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government.
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2018). *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (E72 ed.). Canberra, ACT: Australian Government.
- Ncube, N. (2006). The Tree of Life Project: Using narrative ideas in work with vulnerable children in Southern Africa. *International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 2006(1), 3-16.
- Ndengeyungoma, A., de Montigny, F., & Miron, J.-M. (2014). Development of personal identity among refugee adolescents: Facilitating elements and

obstacles. *Journal of Child Health Care*, 18(4), 369-377.

doi:10.1177/1367493513496670

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2015). Decoloniality in Africa: A Continuing Search for a New World Order. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 36(2), 22-50.

New, R., Guilfoyle, A., & Harman, B. (2015). Children's school readiness: The experiences of African refugee women in a supported playgroup.

Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 40(1), 55-62.

Ngong, A. A., Agok, A. D., Ajang, G. P., Agok, A. M., Deng, A. L., Diing, A. M., . . . Acuoth, D. D. (2012, 21/12/2012). Greater Bor Community in North America presses South Sudan's President to effect reform now or face mass protest and diplomatic war. *The New Sudan Vision*. Retrieved from http://www.newsudanvision.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2668:greater-bor-community-in-north-america-presses-south-sudan-president-to-effect-reform-now-or-face-mass-protest-and-diplomatic-war&Itemid=6

Nicol, E. (2017). Acknowledging Country: a modern history [Press release].

Retrieved from

<https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2017/05/31/acknowledging-country-modern-history>

Nipperess, S. (2014). *Human rights: a challenge to critical social work practice and education*. (Doctor of Philosophy), Curtin University, Perth, WA.

Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11937/479>

Nipperess, S., & Briskman, L. (2009). Promoting a human rights perspective on critical social work. In J. Allan, L. Briskman, & B. Pease (Eds.), *Critical*

Social Work: Theories and practices for a socially just world. Crows Nest
NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Noble-Carr, D. (2017). *"I just keep my tears all inside": Experiences of loss from children whose families face complex challenges and change.* (Doctor of Philosophy), Australian Catholic University, Fitzroy, Vic. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a9db9d53361a>

NSW Police Force. (2017). About Us. Retrieved from http://www.police.nsw.gov.au/about_us

Ntseane, P. G. (2011). Culturally sensitive transformational learning: Incorporating the Afrocentric paradigm and African feminism. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 61(4), 307-323. doi:10.1177/0741713610389781

Nussbaum, M. (2002). Capabilities and Human Rights. In P. De Greiff & C. Cronin (Eds.), *Global Justice and Transnational Politics: Essays on the Moral and Political Challenges of Globalization.* Cambridge, MA: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Nyerere, J. (1969). Stability and Change in Africa. *Africa Contemporary Record*, 2.

Obioha, U. P. (2014). Radical communitarian idea of the human person in African philosophical thought: A critique. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 38(1), 1-23.

Ochala, Y., & Mungai, N. w. (2016). The Challenges Facing Single Female Parents of African Background in Regional Australia. *Australian Social Work*, 69(3), 311-322. doi:10.1080/0312407x.2014.993671

- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2018). *The Beirut Declaration and its 18 commitments on Faith for Rights: Report and outlook*. Retrieved from Geneva, Switzerland:
<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/Faith4Rights.pdf>
- Olliff, L. (2010a). *Finding the right time and place: Exploring post-compulsory education and training pathways for young people from refugee backgrounds in NSW*. Retrieved from Sydney:
https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/reports/Finding_the_Right_Time_and_Place.pdf
- Olliff, L. (2010b). *What Works: Employment Strategies for Refugee and Humanitarian Entrants*. Retrieved from Sydney:
http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/reports/What_Works.pdf
- Onsando, G., & Billett, S. (2009). African students from refugee backgrounds in Australian TAFE institutes: A case for transformative learning goals and processes. *International Journal of Training Research*, 7(2), 80-94.
doi:10.5172/ijtr.7.2.80
- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Banjul Charter), (1981).
- Ortega, R., & Faller, K. (2011). Training child welfare workers from an intersectional cultural humility perspective: a paradigm shift. *Child Welfare*, 90(5), 27-49.
- Outhred, R. (2010). Human Rights Activism and the Silencing of Women. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 31(2), 79-93.
- Oxford University Press. (2018). Oxford Dictionary. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

- Oyebade, B. (1990). African Studies and the Afrocentric Paradigm: A Critique. *Journal of Black Studies*, 21(2), 233-238.
doi:10.1177/002193479002100208
- Pattison, R. (1999). *Ethics, human rights, killing, refugees and war : a transdisciplinary inquiry into the morality and human cost of contemporary warfare, with particular emphasis on prevention*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury. Retrieved from <https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:736>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pavlicevic, M., Dos Santos, A., & Oosthuizen, H. (2010). *Taking Music Seriously: Stories from South African Music Therapy*. Cape Town, South Africa: Music Therapy Community Clinic.
- Payne, M. (2014). *Modern Social Work Theory* (4 ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan
- Perelman, J., & Young, K. G. (2010). Rights as Footprints: A New Metaphor for Contemporary Human Rights Practice. *Northwestern Journal of International Human Rights*, 9(1), 27-58.
- Pham, B. H. (2016). *A phenomenological study of East African refugee mothers' experiences of trauma and how it affects parenting*. (Doctor of Philosophy in Marriage and Family Therapy), Antioch University, New England. Retrieved from <https://aura.antioch.edu/etds/264>
- Pinderhughes, E. (1997). Developing Diversity Competence in Child Welfare and Permanency Planning. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work*, 5(1-2), 19-38. doi:10.1300/j285v05n01_03

- Pine, B. A., & Drachman, D. (2005). Effective child welfare practice with immigrant and refugee children and their families. *Child Welfare, 84*(5), 537-562.
- Pittaway, E. (2005). The Ultimate Betrayal: An examination of the experience of domestic and family violence in refugee communities. Retrieved from https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/the_ultimate_betrayal_an_occasional_paper_sept_2005.pdf
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 8*(1), 5-23.
doi:10.1080/0951839950080103
- Quinn, C. R., & Grumbach, G. (2015). Critical Race Theory and the Limits of Relational Theory in Social Work with Women. *Journal of Ethnic And Cultural Diversity in Social Work, 24*(3), 202-218.
doi:10.1080/15313204.2015.1062673
- Razack, N. (2009). Decolonising the pedagogy and practice of international social work *International Social Work, 52*(1), 9-21.
doi:10.1177/0020872808097748
- Rees, S. (2001). *In Limbo in the Lucky Country - The experiences of East Timorese Women Asylum Seekers in Australia from 1009-2000*. (Doctor of Philosophy), James Cook University, Cairns.
- Refugee Council of Australia. (2010). *Economic, civic and social contributions of refugees and humanitarian entrants: A literature review*. Retrieved from Canberra:
http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/docs/resources/Contributions_of_refugees.pdf

- Refugee Council of Australia. (2011). Australia's Refugee Program: Services for Refugees. Retrieved from <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/arp/ihss.html>
- Reichert, E. (2011). *Social Work and Human Rights: A Foundation for Policy and Practice* (2 ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Renzaho, A. M. N., & Vignjevic, S. (2011). The impact of a parenting intervention in Australia among refugees and migrants from Sierra Leone, Congo, and Burundi: Results from the African Migrant Parenting Program. *Journal of Family Studies*, 17(1), 71-79.
doi:10.5172/jfs.2011.17.1.71
- Ritchie, J., Zwi, A. B., Blignault, I., Bunde-Birouste, A., & Silove, D. (2009). Insider–outsider positions in health-development research: reflections for practice. *Development in Practice*, 19(1), 106-112.
doi:10.1080/09614520802576526
- Rosbrook, B., & Schweitzer, R. D. (2010). The meaning of home for Karen and Chin refugees from Burma: An interpretative phenomenological approach. *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*, 12(2), 159-172. doi:10.1080/13642537.2010.488876
- Ross, E. (2008). The intersection of cultural practices and ethics in a rights-based society: Implications for South African social workers. *International Social Work*, 51(3), 384-395. doi:10.1177/00208728070888084
- Rowe, S., Baldry, E., & Earles, W. (2015). Decolonising Social Work Research: Learning from Critical Indigenous Approaches. *Australian Social Work*, 68(3), 296-308. doi:10.1080/0312407x.2015.1024264

- Rural and Regional Health and Aged Care Services, Victorian Government, & Health, D. o. (2009). *Cultural responsiveness framework: Guidelines for Victorian health services*. Melbourne, Victoria: Victorian Government.
- Ruzzene, N. (1998). Language experience: The forgotten dimension in cross-cultural social work? *Australian Social Work*, 51(2), 17-23.
doi:10.1080/03124079808411214
- Saleebey, D. (2013). *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* (6 ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Sandelowski, M. (1991). Telling Stories: Narrative Approaches in Qualitative Research. *Image: the Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 23(3), 161-166.
doi:10.1111/j.1547-5069.1991.tb00662.x
- Sarantakos, S. (2013). *Social Research* (4 ed.). Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Saunders, V., Roche, S., McArthur, M., Arney, F., & Ziaian, T. (2015). *Refugee Communities Intercultural Dialogue: Building Relationships, Building Communities*. Retrieved from Canberra: https://www.acu.edu.au/-/media/feature/pagecontent/richtext/about-acu/icps/files/refugee_communities_intercultural_dialogues_building_relationships_building_communities_report.pdf?la=en&hash=C3E40B978A23187BAA20F27976197412
- Sawrikar, P. (2009). *Culturally appropriate service provision for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children and families in the New South Wales child protection system (CPS). Report for the NSW Department of Community Services*. Retrieved from Sydney:

https://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/media/SPRCFile/20_Report_Cald_Families_LitRvw.pdf

- Schreiber, L. (2000). Overcoming methodological elitism: Afrocentrism as a prototypical paradigm for intercultural research. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24(5), 651-671. doi:10.1016/s0147-1767(00)00021-3
- Schriefer, P. (2016). What's the difference between multicultural, intercultural, and cross-cultural communication? Retrieved from <https://springinstitute.org/whats-difference-multicultural-intercultural-cross-cultural-communication/>
- Schweitzer, R. D., Greenslade, J., & Kagee, A. (2007). Coping and resilience in refugees from the Sudan: A narrative account. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 41(3), 282-288. doi:10.1080/00048670601172780
- Seah, E., Tilbury, F., B., W., R., R., & P., J. (2002). *Cultural Awareness Tool: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Mental Health*. Parramatta, NSW: Multicultural Mental Health Australia.
- Seidel, P., & Hopkins, T. (2013). No one should be stopped by police just because they're black: The brave legal fight of six young African Australians can bring positive change to our basic rights to freedom. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/no-one-should-be-stopped-by-police-just-because-theyre-black-20130218-2end5.html>
- Sen, A. (2005). Human Rights and Capabilities. *Journal of Human Development*, 6(2). doi:10.1080/14649880500120491

- Shakespeare-Finch, J., & Wikham, K. (2009). Adaption of Sudanese Refugees in an Australian Context: Investigating Helps and Hindrances. *International Migration*, 48(1), 23-46. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2009.00561.x
- Shivji, I. G. (1989). *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa*. London: African Books Collective.
- Sienkiewicz, H. C., Mauceri, K. G., Howell, E. C., & Bibeau, D. L. (2013). Untapped resources: Refugee employment experiences in Central North Carolina. *Work*, 45(1), 17-24. doi:10.3233/WOR-131599
- Silverman, D. (2018). *Doing Qualitative Research* (5 ed.). London, UK: Sage Publications.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press.
- Social Policy Research Centre. (2010). *Culturally appropriate service provision for children and families in the NSW child protection system*. Retrieved from Sydney:
https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/321621/research_cald_families_summary.pdf
- Social Policy Research Centre, & Community Services. (2010). *Culturally appropriate service provision for children and families in the NSW child protection system*. Sydney: NSW Government Retrieved from
https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/321621/research_cald_families_summary.pdf.

- Sosulski, M. (2009). Developing a Standpoint Practice Method With Cases: Authority, Subjectivity, Reflection. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 24(226-243). doi:10.1177/0886109909337375
- South African San Institute. (2017). San Code of Research Ethics. Kimberley, South Africa: South African San Institute.
- Stevenson, M. (2010). Flexible and Responsive Research: Developing Rights-Based Emancipatory Disability Research Methodology in Collaboration with Young Adults with Down Syndrome. *Australian Social Work*, 63(1), 35-50. doi:10.1080/03124070903471041
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (2014). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Tascon, S. (2012). Considering Human Rights Films, Representation and Ethics: Whose Face? *Human Rights Quarterly*, 34(3), 864-883. doi:10.1353/hrq.2012.0057
- Thabede, D. (2008). The African worldview as the basis of practice in the helping professions. *Social Work*, 44(3), 233-245. doi:10.15270/44-3-237
- The Hon. Justice Peter McClellan AM, The Hon. Justice Jennifer Coate, Commissioner Bob Aitkinson AO APM, Commissioner Robert Fitzgerald AM, Commissioner Helen Milroy, Commissioner Andrew Murray, & Ms Gail Furness SC. (2017). *Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia Retrieved from <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/final-report>.

- Titi, N., van Niekerk, A., & Ahmed, R. (2017). Child understandings of the causation of childhood burn injuries: Child activity, parental domestic demands, and impoverished settings. *Child Care Health Development*. 2018, 44(3), 494–500. doi:10.1111/cch.12484
- Toborg, G. (2015). #Review: Sing the Rage. Listening to Anger After Mass Violence. *Allegra Lab: Anthropology, Law, Art & World*(June 25, 2015), 1-2.
- Trevithick, P. (2012). *Social Work Skills and Knowledge: A practice handbook* (3 ed.). Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.
- UN Peacekeeping. (2018). UNMISS: United Nations Mission in South Sudan. Retrieved from <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/>
- UNHCR. (2009). 2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/4a375c426.html>
- UNHCR. (2016). Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/576408cd7.pdf>
- UNHCR. (2018a). Information on refugees in Rwanda. *Rwanda*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/rw/refugees>
- UNHCR. (2018b). Kenya: About Us. *Kenya*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/ke/about-us>
- UNHCR. (2018c). United Nations in Sudan. Retrieved from <http://sd.one.un.org/>
- UNHCR. (2018d). West Africa: Liberia. *Global Focus: UNHCR Operations Worldwide*. Retrieved from <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2548>

UNHCR Regional Representation in Canberra. (2017). Australia should not coerce vulnerable people to return to harm: Statement by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regional Representation in Canberra [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/news/press/2017/8/59a558104/australia-coerce-vulnerable-people-return-harm.html>

United Nations. (1948). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

United Nations. (1965). International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. *2106 (XX)*. Retrieved from <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cerd.pdf>

United Nations. (1966a). International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. *2200A (XXI)*. Retrieved from <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf>

United Nations. (1966b). International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx>

United Nations. (1979). Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. *34/180*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

United Nations. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child *44/25*. Retrieved from <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>

United Nations. (2006). Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

United Nations. (2012). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Illustrated.

Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/index.shtml>

United Nations. (2015). Millenium Development Goals and Beyond 2015.

Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/global.shtml>

United Nations. (2016). Human Rights up Front: A summary for staff [Press release]. Retrieved from

<http://www.un.org/News/dh/pdf/english/2016/Human-Rights-up-Front.pdf>

United Nations. (2018a). Sustainable Development Goals, Communications

Material. Retrieved from <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

United Nations. (2018b). United Nations in Sudan. Retrieved from

<http://sd.one.un.org/>

Vélez-Ibáñez, C. G., & Greenberg, J. B. (1992). Formation and Transformation of Funds of Knowledge among U.S.-Mexican Households. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 23(4), 313-335.

doi:0.1525/aeq.1992.23.4.05x1582v

Wahlquist, C. (2018, 03/01/2018). Is Melbourne in the grip of African crime gangs? The facts behind the lurid headlines. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/jan/03/is-melbourne-in-the-grip-of-african-gangs-the-facts-behind-the-lurid-headlines>

Wainer, D. (2010). *Beyond the Wire : Levinas vis-a-vis villawood. A study of Emmanuel Levinas's philosophy as an ethical foundation for asylum-seeker policy*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of Technology, Sydney.

Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10453/20325>

- Wakholi, P. M. (2010). African Cultural Education and Schooling: Towards Bicultural Competence of African Australian Youth. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 31(1), 82-100.
- Walters, J. (2011). *Documents appear to show race profiling by police*. Retrieved from Sydney, NSW: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-05-04/documents-appear-to-show-race-profiling-by-police/2703010>
- Weaver, H. (1999). Indigenous People and the Social Work Profession: Defining Culturally Competent Services. *Social Work*, 44(3), 217-225. doi:10.1093/sw/44.3.217
- Weaver, H. (2008). The Elements of Cultural Competence. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 13(1), 19-35. doi:10.1300/J051v13n01_02
- Weine, S., Knafl, K., Feetham, S., Kulauzovic, Y., Klebic, A., Sclove, S., . . . Spahovic, D. (2005). A Mixed Methods Study of Refugee Families Engaging in Multiple-Family Groups. *Family Relations*, 54 (October), 558-568.
- Westoby, P., & Ingamells, A. (2010). A Critically Informed Perspective of Working with Resettling Refugee Groups in Australia. *British Journal of Social Work*, 40(1), 1759-1776. doi:10.1093/bjsw/bcp084
- Wille, J. (2011). Agency and Belonging: Southern Sudanese Former Refugees' Reflections on Life in Australia. *Australasian Review of African Studies*, 32(2), 80-100.
- Williams, N. (2008). Refugee Participation in South Australian Child Protection Research: Power, Voice, and Representation. *Family and Consumer*

Sciences Research Journal, 37(2), 191-209.

doi:10.1177/1077727x08327258

Wojnar, D., M., & Swanson, K., M. (2007). Phenomenology: An Exploration.

Journal of Holistic Nursing, 25(3), 172-180.

doi:10.1177/0898010106295172

Wronka, J. (1998). *Human Rights and Social Policy in the 21st Century: A history of the Idea of Human Rights and Comparison of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights with United States Federal and State Constitutions* (Revised ed.). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Wronka, J. (2017). *Human Rights and Social Justice : Social Action and Service for the Helping and Health Professions* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.

Zannettino, L., Pittaway, E., Eckert, R., Bartolomei, L., Ostapiej-Piatkowski, B., Allimant, A., & Parris, J. (2013). *Improving responses to refugees with backgrounds of multiple trauma: Pointers for practitioners in domestic and family violence, sexual assault and settlement services - A Monograph*. UNSW, Sydney: Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse.

Zimmerman, D. D. (2015). Young Arab Muslim Women's Agency Challenging Western Feminism. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 30(2), 145-157. doi:10.1177/0886109914546126

Zou, M., & Zwart, T. (2011). Rethinking human rights in China: towards a receptor framework. In H. Nasu & B. Saul (Eds.), *Human Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region* (pp. 244-264). London and New York: Routledge.

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix 1 Summary of human rights documents to which Australia is a signatory, as provided in the AASW Code of Ethics (2010)

12.1.1 Human rights treaties

Please see the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australian Treaties Database for a full and current listing of treaties to which Australia is a signatory.

www.dfat.gov.au/treaties/index.html

- Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III) [2010]
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [2009]
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women of 18 December 1979 [2009]
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [2008]
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography [2007]
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict [2006]
- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime [2005]
- Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty [1991]
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment [1989]
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women [1983]

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [1980]
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [1976]
- Convention on the Political Rights of Women [1975]
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination [1975]
- Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees [1973]
- Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery incorporated in the Final Act of the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries [1958]
- Final Act and Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees [1954]
- Protocol amending the Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926 [1953]
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide [1951]
- International Agreement for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic, as amended by the Protocol signed at Lake Success, New York, 4 May 1949 [1949]
- Protocol amending the International Agreement for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic, signed at Paris on 18 May 1904, and the International Convention for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic, signed at Paris on 4 May 1910 [1949]
- Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War [1931]
- Slavery Convention [1927]
- Convention revising the General Act of Berlin of 26 February 1885 and the General Act and Declaration of Brussels of 2 July 1890 [1920]

12.1.2 Relevant human right declarations

- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP) [2007]
- Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief [1981]
- Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons [1975]
- Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons [1971]

- Declaration of the Rights of the Child [1959]

12.1.3 National legislation

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) (formerly called the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986)
- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Race Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

(Australian Association of Social Workers, 2010, pp. 49-50)

12.2 Appendix 2 Scoping of types of human rights in organisational websites

Australian human service agency	Web link	Does the website refer to human rights?	What human rights issues does this website refer to?
Department of Human Services (DHS)	https://www.humanservices.gov.au/search/human%20rights	Yes	Fraud Leaving School Court Orders Compensation Child Support Relationship status Newstart Medicare Orphan pension Rent Assistance Household Allowance ABSTUDY Payments following a death Disaster Health Care Carer Payments
Family and Community Services (FACS)	https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/search?q=human+rights	Yes	(1150 results) Upholding the Rights of People with Disability - Action plan; training package Charter of Rights for Children and Young People in Out-of-Home Care
NSW Health	http://nswmoh-search.clients.funnelback.com/s/search.html?collection=nsw_health_meta&query=rights+responsibilities	Yes	Right to information access Human research ethics committee Rights of every child in healthcare Patient privacy

			Health Care Rights and Responsibilities Right to appropriate treatment
NSW Department of Education	https://www.education.gov.au/search/site/right%20and%20responsibilities	Yes	Rights of People with Disability Professional conduct Excellence in School Customer Service Improving social and economic wellbeing Exchanging information with other organisations concerning the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people Anti-racism
NSW Police	https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/search?cx=007204248513795735356%3Abfbkhxvph4&cof=FORID%3A9&ie=UTF-8&q=rights+and+responsibilities	Yes	A life free of violence Multiculturalism and human rights Disability discrimination Prejudice related crime
RMS	http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/search-results.html?q=rights+and+responsibilities#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=rights%20and%20responsibilities&gsc.page=1	Yes	Workforce diversity Oral history documents Accessible Transport Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
STARTTS	http://www.startts.org.au/search/human+rights	Yes	Humanitarian Awards Supporting Human Rights Foundations/Organisations History of Human rights Children and Young People
TMCH	http://www.dhi.health.nsw.gov.au/search.aspx?ModuleID=13&keywords=human%20rights&multiSite=False	Yes	Resources Info sheets Bulletins General search word
City of Parramatta Council	https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/search?keywords=human+rights&submit=Search	Yes	Environmental Upgrade Social Security GLBTI issues Social Impact – personal and property rights, social and town planning, asbestos Law enforcement, judicial processes and natural justice Infrastructure Precinct development Staff/Councillor rights

Amnesty International	https://www.amnesty.org.au/?s=human+rights+Australia	Yes	Arms Sales Election to HR Council Indigenous Rights Asylum Seeker Detention Regional issues Female Human Rights Champions
Human Rights Watch	https://www.hrw.org/asia/australia	Yes	Indigenous Rights Offshore processing of Asylum Seekers Criminal Justice Anti-Terrorism Initiatives
Anglicare	https://www.anglicare.org.au/search-results/?term=rights&tags=&category=	Partial	Privacy Retirement Living
Catholic Care	https://www.catholiccare.org/search/?csrfmiddlewaretoken=XcEnXqFs11o2ClrhG5eO9xldi0m9xmoHZxGtZkAHOrtssa4N5JZ941Z3cvyF7c2w&query=human+rights	No	
St Vincent de Paul Society	https://www.vinnies.org.au/?action=search&query=human+rights	Yes	Poverty Housing Northern Territory Intervention Legal and Constitutional Affairs Migration (Regional Processing) People seeking asylum
SSI	https://www.ssi.org.au/search?q=human+rights	Yes	Collaboration for refugee inclusion (Business Awards) Racism Global Refugee Crisis Refugee Week Speakers' Series Justice for victims of mass atrocities Young refugees Cultural diversity and leadership Scholarships Women's Day People with Disabilities Children and families Aboriginal Youth Justice Art and refugees

			Freedom of Expression Cultural Appropriation Housing Rights at work
--	--	--	--

Table 6: Scoping of types of Human rights in organisational websites

12.3 Appendix 3 Historical review of selected countries in annual list of top 20 refugee source nations

Country	Number of times featured in annual list of top 20 refugee source nations	Years when featured in annual list of top 20 refugee source nations	Number of people of concern to UNHCR to end 2015
Ivory Coast	3	2011 - 2013	1,023,579
Kenya	0	n/a	615,112
Liberia	17	1990-2006	38,058
Rwanda	22	1980-1996; 2009-2011; 2013; 2015	151,173
Sierra Leone	12	1990-2002	777
South Sudan	3	2013-2015	2,054,441
Sudan	33	1983 - 2015	3,735,966
Country name withheld	2	n.d.	77,891

Table 7: Refugee Source Countries

These nations are featured here because they are the countries from which participants in this study originated. I have provided data relevant to this study from a UNHCR data source, Historical review of the 51 major source countries of refugees, (UNHCR, 2016)

12.4 Appendix 4 Ethics approval letter



Human Research Ethics Committee
Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: A/Prof Joanna Zubrzycki

Co-Investigators: Dr Jean Burke

Student Researcher: Maree Higgins (Doctoral)

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:

Human Rights as Constructed and Understood by African Families from Refugee Backgrounds

for the period: 30/06/2017

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: 2012 313N

This is to certify that the above application has been reviewed by the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (ACU HREC). The application has been approved for the period given above.

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that all conditions of approval are adhered to, that they seek prior approval for any modifications and that they notify the HREC of any incidents or unexpected issues impacting on participants that arise in the course of their research. Researchers are also responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and the *University's Code of Conduct*.

Any queries relating to this application should be directed to the Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity (reethics.manager@acu.edu.au).

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Burke', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity

Date 28/05/2018

Research Ethics | Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

Australian Catholic University

T: +61 2 9739 2646

E: Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au

W: [ACU Research Ethics](#)

**ARE YOU A MEMBER OF AN AFRICAN
FAMILY FROM A REFUGEE
BACKGROUND, IN AUSTRALIA
BETWEEN 1 AND 10 YEARS AND OVER
THE AGE OF 18?**

Hello, I am a social work researcher from the Australian Catholic University currently researching how African families from refugee backgrounds understand human rights and how social work practice could be more sensitive to their family and community perspectives.

(Ethics Register Number 2012 313 N)

I would like to warmly invite you and members of your family over the age of 18 to participate in this interesting study.

There is a nominal fee payable to each person who participates to cover travel expenses.

**To participate in this research,
please contact Maree Higgins on 02 9385 1963
or S00107949@myacu.edu.au**

12.6 Appendix 6A Semi-structured interview guide 2015

Interview guide: How do African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights?

Start with thanking the person for participating

Present the paperwork, consent and info letter – describe and explain as necessary, double check interpreter requirements

Who am I, why am I conducting this research? Why is it important? Being guided by a reference group for cultural reasons

Name or identifier? I will send a copy of transcript back to them

Ask the person to introduce themselves:

- Cultural background
- Countries that they have lived in
- Family background and situation
- Roles and relationship with community
- Educational and work background and current situation
- Year of arrival in Australia
- Age group 18-24 | 25-29 | 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 | 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60-64 | 65-69 | 70-74 | 75-79 | 80+

Exploration of Human Rights

Do you have a word or words for human rights in your language? What do these words mean to you?

I am interested in what human rights mean to your family and community?

I am interested in how you have come to understand human rights?

In what ways have human rights been important in your family and community?

I wonder if you have stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences that illustrate your family and community views about human rights?

Given what you have told me about what human rights means to you and your family and community, what do people such as social workers need to understand about human rights? What do you think encourages and/or discourages people from seeking help when they have personal or family difficulties?

What helps and/or hinders trust building with people from African backgrounds and what do you think about their relationship with helping professionals?

What prompted you to participate in this research?

Reiterate what happens next – transcription, the participant's choice to withdraw from research at any time, and ask whether I can contact them again to clarify or continue the discussion.

12.7 Appendix 6B Semi-structured interview guide 2013

Semi-Structured Interview: How do African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights?

Start with thanking the person for participating

Present the paperwork, consent and info letter – describe and explain as necessary, double check interpreter requirements

Who am I, why am I conducting this research? Why is it important? Being guided by a reference group for cultural reason?

Name or identifier? You will send a copy of transcript back to them

Ask the person to introduce themselves:

- Cultural background
- Countries that they have lived in
- Family background and situation
- Relationships with community
- Educational and work background and current situation
- How many years in Australia?

Exploration of Human Rights

I am interested in how you understand human rights?

What do human rights mean to your family and community?

How have human rights been important in your family and community? In what ways?

What stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences illustrate your family and community views about human rights?

Social work and human rights

Given what you have told me about what human rights means to you and your family and community, what do people such as social workers need to understand about human rights?

Maree Higgins S00107949@myacu.edu.au T: 9385 1963

Final questions

What age group are you in?

18-24|25-29|30-34|35-39|40- 44|45-49|50-54|55-59|60-64|65-69|70-74|75-79|80

Reiterate what happens next – transcription, the participant’s choice to withdraw from research at any time, and ask whether I can contact them again to clarify or continue the discussion.

Maree Higgins S00107949@myacu.edu.au T: 9385 1963

12.8 Appendix 6C Pilot interview guide 2013

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule: How do African families from refugee backgrounds understand and construct human rights?

1. What name or identifier would you like to be known as in this study to protect your identity? _____
2. What is your gender: M or F
3. What is your country of origin?
4. Do you need an interpreter? Y or N
 - a. If Yes, what language?
 - b. What special considerations should I be aware of in booking an interpreter?
5. What age group are you in? 18-24|25-29|30-34|35-39|40- 44|45-49|50-54|55-59|60-64|65-69|70-74|75-79|80+
6. How many years have you been in Australia?
7. What is your visa category?
8. What is your highest level of education?
9. Please describe your current occupation.
10. Please describe your cultural background.
11. Please tell me a little bit about your family and community.
12. What do human rights mean to your family and community?
13. How have human rights been important in your family and community? In what ways?
14. What stories, songs, poems, pictures or experiences illustrate your family and community views about human rights?
15. How would you like people in the helping professions to understand your perspective on human rights?
16. May I contact you again to clarify or have further discussions with you about this topic?
I _____ confirm that I received \$10 on _____ from Maree Higgins to cover travel costs associated with my participation in this research.

Maree Higgins S00107949@myacu.edu.au T: 9385 1963

12.9 Appendix 7 Service information and referral pack



Counsellors and Doctors

Please call someone on this list if you feel you need to talk to someone about your situation after our research meeting.

George Okwera, Social Worker

Specialist Mental Health Services for Older People (SMHSOP),

(02) 9682 3133

Marc Chaussivert, Clinical Psychologist (English/French speaking)

STARTTS

(02) 9794 1900

James Malith, Sudanese Project Worker,

STARTTS,

(02) 9794 1900

Dr Mitchell Smith, Medical Practitioner

NSW Refugee Health Service

(02) 8778 0770



Cheryl Webster, Programme Manager (Migrant and Refugee Service),

Community Care, ANGLICARE Diocese of Sydney,

(02) 9895 8064

Ross Predic, Family and Relationships Service

Migrant and Refugee Team,

Anglicare, (02) 9728 0211

**Information about organisations that provide support services for
settlement and beyond**

Counselling

**Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma
Survivors in NSW <http://www.startts.org.au/>**

Location 1: 152–168 The Horsley Drive, Carramar, NSW 2163.

T: (02) 9794 1900 F: (02) 9794 1910

Location 2: 1st floor, 44–50 Auburn Rd, Auburn NSW 2144

T: (02) 9646 6666 F: (02) 9646 6610

E: startts@swsahs.nsw.gov.au

W: www.startts.org

Opening Hours: 8.30–5 Mon to Fri



Anglicare Sydney

www.anglicare.org.au

Location: 16 Parkes Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

T (02) 9895 8000, F (02) 9633 4620

Information and Support

Sydney Multicultural Services International <http://www.sydwestmsi.org.au/>

(This Project provides direct settlement services such as casework, information sessions, community education and referrals to mainstream services.)

Location 1: Level 2, 125 Main Street, Blacktown NSW 2148

Location 2: Shop 9, 6-10 Mount St (enter via Ralph Place), Mt Druitt 2770

T: (02) 9621 6633, F: (02) 9831 5625, E: info@sydwestmsi.org.au

The Sisters of Mercy <http://mercyworks.org.au/>

(This service has volunteers to support families in their appointments with Department of Housing, Doctors, Centrelink, other mainstream services, and social groups.)

Location: 1 Thomas Street, Lewisham NSW 2049 T: 9564 1911 F: 9550 9683,
E: mrsproject@mercy.org.au , Opening Hours: 9–5 Mon to Fri

Macarthur Diversity Services Initiative: <http://www.mdsi.org.au/what-we-do/additional-services>

(This service has volunteers who assist families to connect with the community, tutor young people and teach English. The service can also provide small no interest loans and do tax returns for free for eligible families.)

Location: Level 3, Suite 2, Campbelltown City Centre
171-179 Queen Street, Campbelltown

T: 4627 1188, F: 4628 6068, E: info@mdsi.org.au



House of Welcome www.houseofwelcome.com.au

(This service provides a place of welcome, trust and friendship for asylum seekers and refugees and supports people to engage confidently with the various aspects of life in Australia.)

Location: 140 Wattle Avenue, Carramar NSW 2163, T: 9727 9290

Illawarra Multicultural Services: <http://www.ims.org.au/whatwedo.html>

(This service provides information, advice, referral, excursions and case work for people in the Shoalhaven, Shellharbour and Wingecarribee, Nowra and Wollongong areas. They can help with housing, education, health and community involvement.)

Location 1: 17 Auburn Street, Wollongong NSW 2500, T: 4229 6855

Location 2: Cottage 2, 80 Park Road, East Nowra NSW 2541, T: 4422 5933

Health

NSW Refugee Health Service <http://www.swslhd.nsw.gov.au/refugee/>

(This service provides clinical assessments, advice and referrals, health information, projects that aim to improve health of refugee communities. The service is not able to fund medications, expensive tests, or provide equipment such as wheelchairs.)

Office Location: Suite 1, Level 3, 157-161 George St, Liverpool, NSW 2170

T: 61 2 8778 0770 E: refugeehealth@swsahs.nsw.gov.au Business Hours: 8.30 - 5.00 Mon - Fri



Employment and Finance

Horn of Africa Relief and Development Agency: www.harda.org.au

(This service supports and acts as an advocate for the successful settlement and integration in Australia of refugees and humanitarian entrants from the Horn of Africa countries. It also develops and seeks funding for model sustainable development projects in Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda and Djibouti.)

Location: 15 Henley Rd, Homebush West, NSW, 2140,

T: 8762 4223,

F: 8762 4220

Jesuit Refugee Services <http://www.jrs.org.au/projects/overview>

This service assists with accommodation, financial assistance, English classes, finding employment and personal support and accompaniment.

Location: 24 Roslyn Street Kings Cross, NSW, Australia, 2011,

T: 9356 3888,

F: 9356 3021

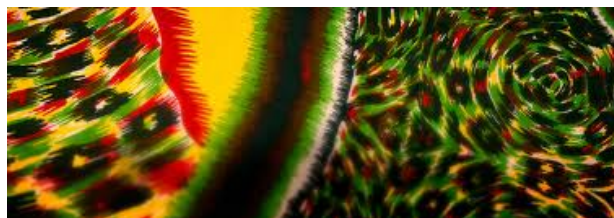
Mercy Mamre Project <http://mercyworks.org.au/what-we-do/australia/>

This service works with refugee women and their families in the outer Western Sydney and Blacktown areas to develop their capability to grow fresh food, improve language skills and enhance their employability.

Mercy Works Ltd., 1 Thomas Street Lewisham NSW 2049,

T: 9564 1911, F: 9550 9683

E: mercyworks@mercy.org.au



Study Support

Mercy Connect Sydney Project <http://mercyworks.org.au/what-we-do/refugee-support/>

(This service provides volunteers to mentor students in literacy, course subjects, and assignment/assessment tasks.)

Mercy Works Ltd., 1 Thomas Street Lewisham NSW 2049,

T: 9564 1911,

F: 9550 9683

E: mercyworks@mercy.org.au

St Vincent de Paul Society <http://vinnies.org.au/spark/programs>

(This service provides volunteers to work at a homework and activities club providing homework tutoring and English support for Kindy to Year 6 Students and a Family Group program for parents and guardians to meet, practice English, gain support and establish relationships with teachers and other parents and community members.)

Email: spark@vinnies.org.au,

T: 9568 0280,

F: 8622 0323



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LETTER

PROJECT TITLE: Human Rights as understood by African families from refugee backgrounds

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Joanna Zubrzycki

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Maree Higgins

STUDENT'S DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

This project is about how African families and communities from refugee backgrounds think about the concept of human rights. Western ideas about rights focus on legal frameworks but you might focus on other aspects of human rights and responsibilities. I am interested to see how you would like your concept of human rights to inform culturally sensitive practices of service providers working with your family and community.

Who is undertaking the project?

My name is Maree Higgins. I am undertaking this project as part of my work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Associate Professor Joanna Zubrzycki and Dr Jean Burke.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

There may be some risks to participating in this project. You may not speak English very well and that might make it hard for us to talk freely and for you to fully understand what is being asked of you. If you need me to I will arrange for an accredited interpreter to be available for our interviews. The interpreter will be accredited by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) and will abide by the ethical codes of confidentiality, privacy, impartiality and respect.

Also, you or a member of your family may become upset during the discussion because you might discuss things with me that you have never told anyone before. You might feel embarrassed or afraid about what might happen afterwards. If these things happen I will support you. I will give you contact information for workers and organisations that offer support to families from refugee backgrounds. I will keep in contact with you to see how you are going and make sure you get the help you need.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to contact me to express your interest in participating in this research project. Due to the importance of family and kinship ties among African families from refugee backgrounds the first phase of the research involves family group interviews where possible. Therefore I will ask you if you have family members who are over the age of 18 who may like to participate in a family interview to discuss ideas about human rights. This may include your husband or wife, mother and father, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters and others. It will not include any participants you and your family do not consider to be part of your family. A suitable time and place for your interview will be arranged, and I will ask you if you require an interpreter to be present during your interview.

Your interview will be face-to-face with me and will last about 1 hour. At the beginning of the interview I will explain the project, with the help of an interpreter if needed. You will be asked to complete a consent form indicating you agree to participate in the project. I will ask you if it is ok to audiotape the interview to listen to afterwards and I will make notes about what is being said. I will have questions about the concept of human rights. Afterwards your interview will be transcribed.

You may request a copy of the transcript for review and feedback and it will be sent to you when ready, translated in your language if needed. I will return to you to discuss the interview transcript if needed. You are encouraged to read the transcript and to contact me with your alterations as needed. A transcript will be sent to all participants in the interview who request it. I will remove any information that might identify you in the transcripts before I send them to anyone.

In the next step, you may be approached to participate in an individual interview in order to further explore issues discussed in your first interview. I will ask you at the beginning of this interview if it is ok to audio-record the interview. A transcription will be sent to you after the interview and I will return to you to discuss the interview transcript if needed. Again, you are encouraged to read the transcript and to contact me with your alterations as needed.

After that I will review and analyse the project data. A few months later I may invite you and your family members to participate in a focus group with other families so that we can talk more about the data I have collected. Should you decide to participate in the focus group, other participants who you may not have met before will come to know you. You can talk about general family and community understandings about human rights and will not have to talk about anything that is too personal unless you feel comfortable to do so. These focus group discussions will be transcribed and sent to you if you wish. Again I will remove any information that might identify you in the transcripts before I send them to anyone. If you do not feel comfortable with this you should not participate in a focus group.

Your interview/s and the focus group will take place at a mutually convenient location. I will provide food and drinks and a nominal fee of \$10 to cover your travel costs in getting to the location.

How much time will the project take?

This project will take 1 hour for the first interview. I may invite you to participate in another 1-hour interview to explore what you are saying in more depth. Again I may invite you to participate in a 2-hour focus group a few months after your interview.

What are the benefits of the research project?

Through your involvement in this study, I hope that a more diverse perspective on human rights can be promoted. I hope to gain new understandings about human rights that I will share with other social workers so we come to know more about the needs and issues of African families from refugee backgrounds and how to support people from diverse backgrounds more sensitively.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

Each participant in a family or focus group interview may receive a transcript of the discussion, translated if necessary. This means your results may be reported to other participants involved in your family or focus group interview. The transcripts will not identify you in any way. If you are not comfortable with this you should not participate in a group interview.

The results of this study will be written up and submitted for my Doctoral Thesis. Results from this study will also be prepared for submission to peer-reviewed journals and books.

During the research project data from the interviews and focus groups will be stored in paper copy and as electronic data files. This includes consent forms, notes made during group and individual interviews, transcripts of group and individual interviews, audio files of group and individual interviews, and data analysis notes. Paper copies of data will be locked in my office at the University and electronic data will be backed up to an online drop box that is password protected and encrypted. No data will be stored on USB, audiotape or videotape.

Your data will be non-identifiable to other people because your own name will not be written on any of the paper documents or in any of the electronic files and I will remove any

identifying data. If I discuss your stories in my thesis or publications I will use a code instead of your real name. I will not ask about your personal stories in the focus groups, only general family and community issues to avoid people knowing too much about you.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

At the end of the project, I will send interested families a summary of my findings. If you would like a copy of this summary, please check the box on the attached consent form.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have questions about this project please contact me on the following details:

Maree Higgins

PhD Candidate, School of Social Work,
Australian Catholic University

Locked Bag 2002

Strathfield NSW 2135

02 9385 1963

S00107949@myacu.edu.au

or

Associate Professor Joanna Zubrzycki

School of Social Work

Australian Catholic University

223 Antill St

Watson ACT 2602

02 6209 1159

Joanna.zubrzycki@acu.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (approval # 2012 313 N). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Chair, HREC

c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)

Australian Catholic University

Melbourne Campus

Locked Bag 4115

FITZROY, VIC, 3065

Ph: 03 9953 3150

Fax: 03 9953 3315

Email: res.ethics@acu.edu.au

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

I want to participate! How do I sign up?

If you are willing to be involved in the research, please complete the attached expression of interest form and send it to me. I will contact you to arrange a time and place to meet. I will provide an interpreter if you need one. I will ask you to sign the consent form when we meet.

Yours sincerely, Maree Higgins

12.11 Appendix 9 Consent forms

CONSENT FORM

Copy for Researcher

TITLE OF PROJECT: Human Rights as understood by African families from refugee backgrounds.

ETHICS REGISTER NUMBER: 2012 313 N

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Joanna Zubrzycki

NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: Maree Higgins, BSW, MAASW

I (*the participant*) have read, or, where appropriate, have had read to me, and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this one-hour family group interview/one-hour individual interview/two-hour focus group (PLEASE CIRCLE). I am over the age of 18 and no family members under the age of 18 are participating in this interview to my knowledge. I understand that if I participate in a group interview other members will be able to identify my views and me. I am aware I am encouraged to participate in all interviews in a way that I feel comfortable with and to ask questions at any time.

I understand that these sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. I have been informed that if I want to I can receive transcriptions of all interviews I participate in, translated if necessary. I am aware that other participants in my group interviews will receive transcriptions of the interview if they want to, de-identified to protect our identities and ensure confidentiality.

I realise that I can withdraw my consent at any time without adverse consequences.

I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way. I am interested in receiving summaries of published results, translated if necessary. Yes No

My preferred language for transcriptions and summaries is:

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

SIGNATUREDATE

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR:DATE:.....

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:.....DATE:.....

CONSENT FORM
Copy for Participant to Keep

TITLE OF PROJECT: Human Rights as understood by African families from refugee backgrounds.

ETHICS REGISTER NUMBER: 2012 313 N

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Associate Professor Joanna Zubrzycki

NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: Maree Higgins, BSW, MAASW

I (*the participant*) have read, or, where appropriate, have had read to me, and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this one-hour family group interview/one-hour individual interview/two-hour focus group (PLEASE CIRCLE). I am over the age of 18 and no family members under the age of 18 are participating in this interview to my knowledge. I understand that if I participate in a group interview other members will be able to identify my views and me. I am aware I am encouraged to participate in all interviews in a way that I feel comfortable with and to ask questions at any time.

I understand that these sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. I have been informed that if I want to I can receive transcriptions of all interviews I participate in, translated if necessary. I am aware that other participants in my group interviews will receive transcriptions of the discussion if they want to, de-identified to protect our identities and ensure confidentiality.

I realise that I can withdraw my consent at any time without adverse consequences.

I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way. I am interested in receiving summaries of published results, translated if necessary. Yes No

My preferred language for transcriptions and summaries is:

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:

SIGNATUREDATE

SIGNATURE OF SUPERVISOR:DATE:.....

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:.....DATE:.....

12.12 Appendix 10 Initial noting conducted for one transcript

Transcript	Descriptive comments	Linguistic Comments	Conceptual Comments	Emerging Themes
<p>N: Yep. So in, so for example, in Bor community or in the Dinka community a child is not belonging to the Mum and Dad, a child belongs to the whole community. If a child is doing something wrong here it's not the Mum and Dad that are going to discipline them it's whoever from the community even if it means someone that is a stranger would have to discipline that child. Reason being because if he's not disciplined at that stage it's building a belief system from that child that he or she doesn't have any sort of place in the world so basically the focus is on that individual child that wherever you go anyone can discipline you, that child will grow up in the same upbringing, one. Two, in the context of domestic violence say for example, if husband and wife fought the intervention comes from the others of the community and they will come and sit down and listen to both sides. If one of these people is found to have no, or is the culprit he</p>	<p>Nelson says that children do not belong to the parents but to the whole community.</p> <p>Nelson then says anyone from the community can discipline the child.</p> <p>He says that if discipline is neglected, the child builds 'a belief system that he or she doesn't have a place in the world'.</p> <p>Nelson is talking about how the community have ways of resolving marital conflict – they 'will come and</p>	<p>'<u>reason being</u>' explaining, educating, animated</p> <p>'<u>that individual child</u>' Emphasis on the word individual</p> <p>'...one. Two ...' heightened emotion, emphatic, signals next example</p>	<p>Nelson is explaining what he meant when he said there is not a word for human rights but a word for individual right</p> <p>Although talking about individual rights, Nelson's explanation shows that he means that the key idea of individual rights – human rights - means belonging, being part of community. It seems he is trying to both link to local norms and also demonstrate how his community has</p>	<p>Belonging is a human right of every individual</p> <p>Ways of doing – taking time, sitting, listening to each side</p>

<p>will be talked to strongly, with regards to the men they will emphasise and even at one stage if that man continued to do that the cousins and brothers will intervene to stop doing it and ensure the welfare of the woman. And so in each stage it is important that each case is heard, the first thing that people will consider is, okay, what has happened, what's your side of the story. So each individual is given their side of story and given their right, when that right is identified it is then gone through the social structure to implement whatever the outcome of that sitting. In other words as well in the community for us if someone aspire to do something, you know, wrong or instigate a fight there is always a word that is called wait and from our language or for Bor it's called <i>kon madang</i></p> <p>R: Conmada?</p> <p>N: <i>Kon madang</i></p> <p>R: <i>Kon madang</i>?</p> <p>N: Yes. So it's <i>just wait</i>. That element of just wait is used for people to reflect on their individual reaction. It is used to avoid looking silly when you later on</p>	<p>sit down and listen to both sides' and the culprit 'will be talked to strongly' and if it continues people will 'intervene to stop doing it'</p> <p>Nelson says, 'it is important that each case is heard', and when each individual is given the chance to tell their story they are 'given their right'.</p> <p>Nelson then says 'there is a word that is called wait, <i>kon madang</i>.'</p> <p>Nelson explains that <i>kon madang</i> is a phrase that encourages</p>	<p>'<u>each individual is given their side of story</u>' Repetition of the word individual – emphasising cultural understanding</p> <p>'<u>there is <i>always</i> a word that is called wait</u>' Always - conveys continuity, <i>kon madang</i> is timeless and important</p> <p>Slows down, says carefully so I can hear it</p> <p>'<u>to reflect on their individual reaction</u>' Repetition of the</p>	<p>unique perspectives</p> <p>Now that we have introduced ourselves, Nelson has quickly focused on two contentious issues – child discipline and DV</p> <p>He provides quite a lot of detail about community Interventions that are inclusive and support / reinforce / restore belonging</p> <p>Virtue ethics – a good person will reflect on their</p>	<p>Ways of doing – storytelling 'gives people their rights'</p> <p>Ways of being – <i>kon madang</i> encourages the virtue of self-restraint</p>
--	---	---	--	--

<p>coming and saying well I reacted too harsh. How <i>kon madang</i> came in place was because someone got angry and killed someone without having that second thought but later on they realised he made a mistake because the person he killed was not the actual culprit so it was looking at a different person. So they initiated that statement <i>kon madang</i> to give you a pause, stop for a while and think is that the right thing that you're doing, are you going to regret it later for doing that thing, so that is very important.</p> <p>Also in the community, it is important to understand that if a marriage breakdown and their daughter or their son have to separate it is done through rigorous process where the consultations have been what are the concerns of each individual, what are the concerns of the husband, what are the concerns of the wife and once they are identified that's when the separations can happen. What is happening in this country now is that as soon as something happens it's like, okay, separate, separate and the right is given to one particular person say, for example, the husband is given the right without having to listen to what the</p>	<p>reflection 'to avoid looking silly' and to prevent you 'acting too harsh'. Nelson says <i>kon madang</i> is attached to a story where someone made a mistake, blamed the wrong person, and exacted revenge.</p> <p>Nelson highlights that mediation between husband and wife is rigorous and consultative. All concerns are listened to before any decision is made.</p> <p>Nelson says in Australia it is a contrast, people are encouraged to separate This behaviour unbalances things,</p>	<p>word individual – emphasising cultural understanding</p> <p>Storytelling, a past story, a legend</p> <p>Explaining so that I understand the impact of the idea</p> <p>Pride in cultural processes Othering – binaries</p> <p><i>'What is happening now'</i> – immediacy, the present Nelson repeats himself, speaks animatedly, hurries his words</p>	<p>actions</p> <p>Consequential reasoning – avoid a looking silly or killing the wrong person</p> <p>Deontological reasoning – rule based – ensures widespread commitment to the ideal</p> <p>Cosmological reasoning – 'they initiated', the ancestors?</p> <p>A case for understanding cultural norms and processes</p>	<p>Ways of knowing, being and doing</p> <p>Link between discussing human rights meanings and storytelling</p> <p>Application of kinds of reasoning</p> <p>Need to understand culture</p> <p>Harmful processes</p>
--	---	--	--	---

<p>mother has said or the mother is given the right without having to give a look into what the husband has to say. And in every society people have disagreements, disputes, but I believe the Dinka Bor people are never meant to beat their wife, it's never in their conception and if it happens there's always that intervention and that intervention is from immediate family members that you should not do that and if you ever do that again the whole community will then come for you. So those are some of the small examples I can give you as to how an individual is very important how they are put into the structures and the systems of the society.</p> <p>What is relative in the context of Australia is that these things have been displaced where if an issue happens in-between the two, let's say for example, members of a community or members of the family or husband and wife in particular, what people will focus so much is on the legality of the issues within that relationship, okay, the kids belong to their mother or the kids</p>	<p>gives the right to one party, takes away the other party's voice.</p> <p>Nelson believes that violence against women is considered wrong in Dinka culture, and is addressed by the community.</p> <p>These cultural reactions to prevent violence confirm the importance of the individual and their right to safety.</p> <p>Focus on an abstract legal principle, not on responsibility to one another or the investment made in the marriage - No room for thoughtful reflection</p>	<p><i>'Never... always'</i> – speaks in absolutes – emphatic, this means a lot, he wants me to listen</p> <p><i>Here/there</i> – binaries Place/ location</p> <p>Educational tone</p>	<p>Violence shames the community</p> <p>The value of a person as embedded into social structures and systems</p> <p>Threat to culture</p>	<p>African ways of doing</p> <p>African ways of being</p> <p>Harmful processes</p> <p>Social Work skills – encouraging reflection, being thoughtful</p>
--	---	---	---	---

12.13 Appendix 11 Emergent and superordinate themes

Research questions	Superordinate Themes	Emergent Themes
What human rights are	Links between people	<p>Considering other people and the world around me</p> <p>Making sure that I co-exist with others</p> <p>Not becoming the tough one out there</p> <p>The soft side that make me form the opinions that a human being is a human being full stop</p> <p>A human side</p>
	Embedded in cultural norms	<p>The importance of discipline</p> <p>Culture, a belief system</p> <p>Belonging to community provides people with a place in the world</p> <p>An individual is important - this is shown by how they are put into the structures and the systems of the society</p> <p>Cultural norms that attend to the welfare of women</p> <p>Kon madang (just wait) - self-restraint - avoids terrible consequences.</p> <p>Self-acceptance</p> <p>Following our cultural norms leads to leadership and service</p> <p>Importance of reputation in community</p>
How human rights are constructed	Human rights as damaging	<p>Traditionally the husband is the head of the family</p> <p>The way social services are done says that the husband is not the head, that the husband and wife are equal.</p> <p>Feeling that the new-found family structure confuses wives and causes the husband to dissipate</p> <p>Misplaced conception of human rights</p> <p>Leads children to believe they have freedom to do as much as they can do, risking them throwing away their lives</p>
	Human rights as undermining	<p>I still don't understand what human rights is and what they are</p> <p>Feeling displaced - alternating between here and there</p> <p>Community belief that human rights are ungodly and have infiltrated the line of thinking of all people</p> <p>Our community has got a structure of looking at things and of solving things</p> <p>Here police intervention leads to separating family members</p> <p>There the community warns the person - If you ever do that again the community will come for you</p> <p>Violence shames the community</p> <p>Feeling that human rights undermine men's authority</p>

		Feeling that human rights undermine respect for self and respect for family
	Human rights views as influenced by refugee trauma	Peaceful past where clan fights were formally arranged, for example, to resolve cattle conflicts Traumatic present, where disagreements are responded to with shocking, inexplicable violence Experience confirms that any authority you come into contact with is potentially damaging to your family Taught to believe others were enemies during the war Interruption of the production lifestyle leads to poverty Poverty fuels war
	Human rights as dynamic/developmental	Learning occurs through engaging with different groups of young people from different backgrounds Learned that others are just like me
What social workers can do	Demonstrate respect for culture	Let the elders talk things through Look at the real issues, not just the behaviours Show compassion Don't make assumptions Listen

Table 8: Emergent and superordinate themes

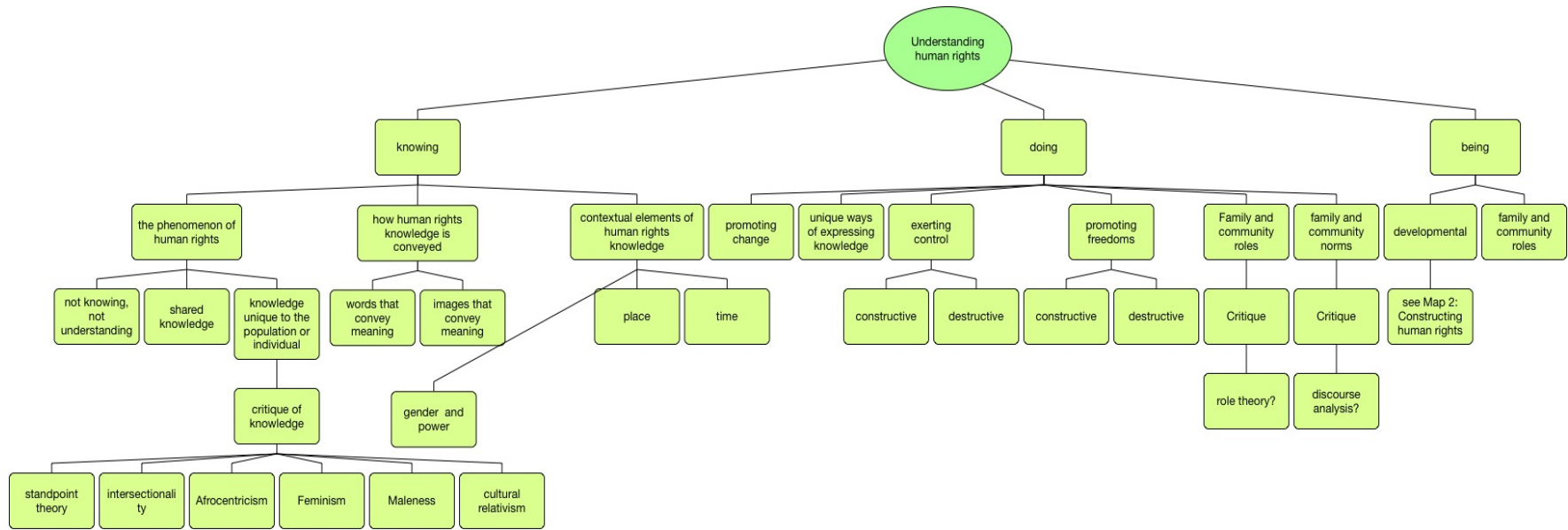


Figure 2: Understanding human rights

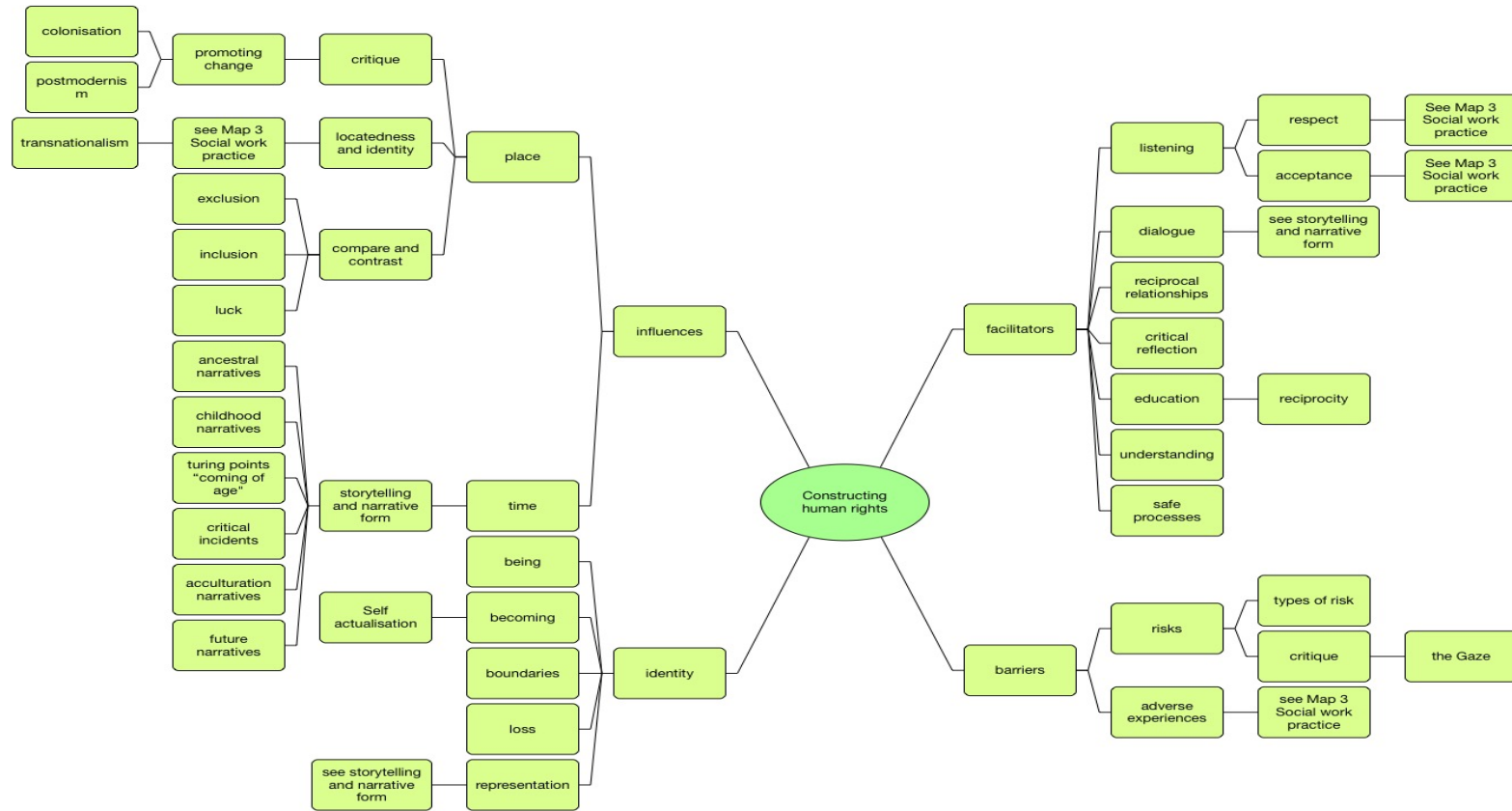


Figure 3: Constructing human rights

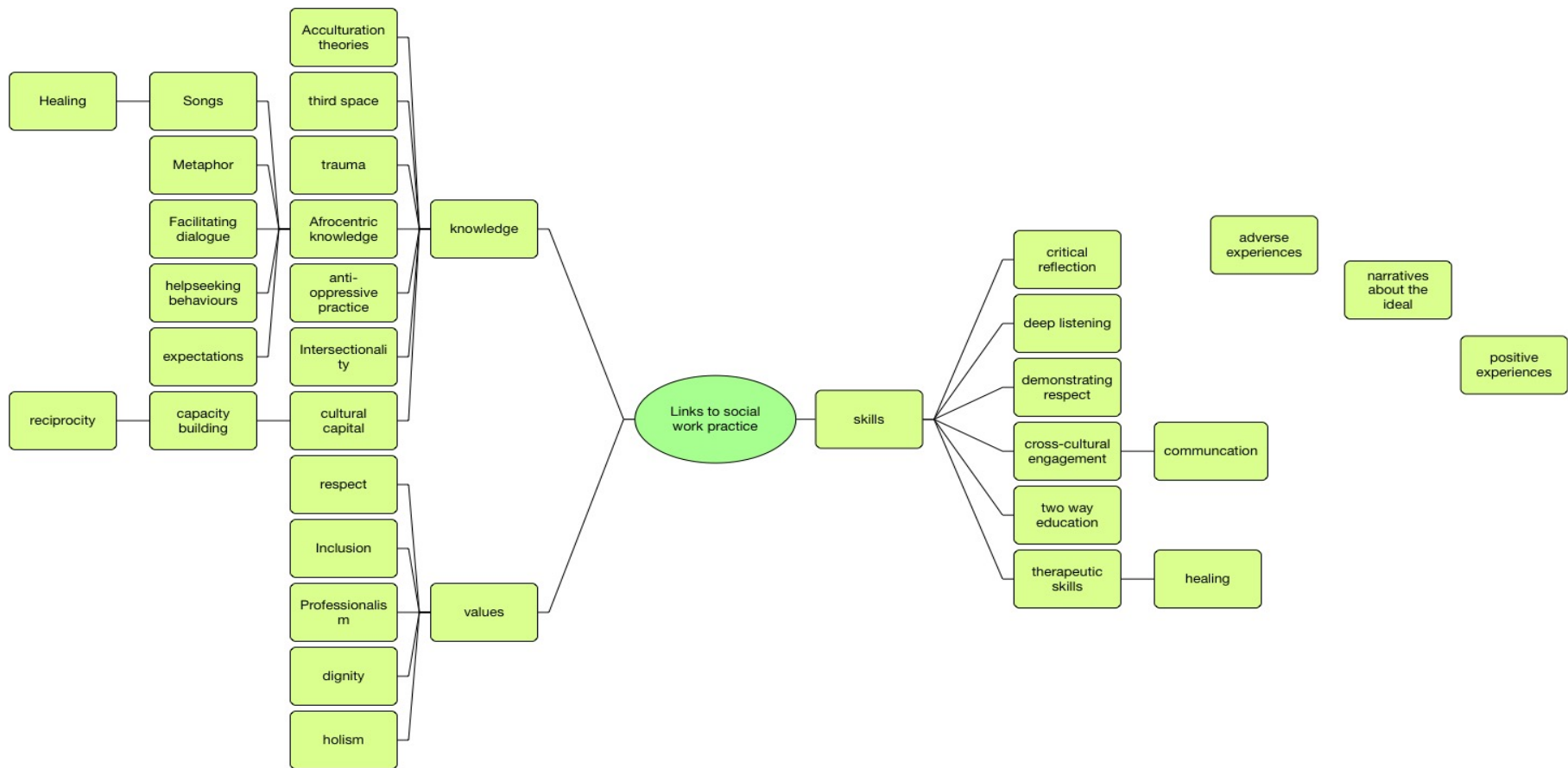


Figure 4: Links to social work practice

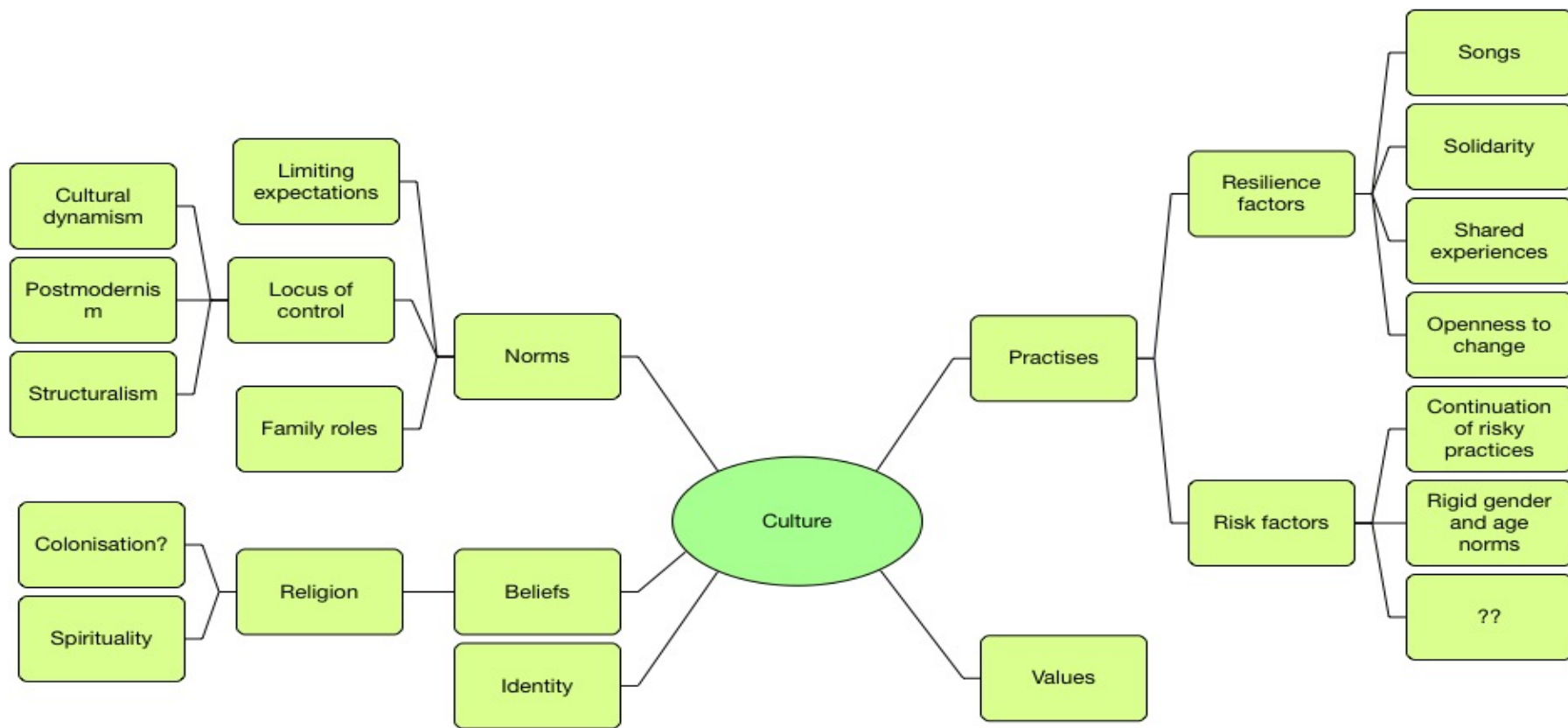


Figure 5: Culture

12.16 Appendix 14 NVivo supported analysis – word clouds

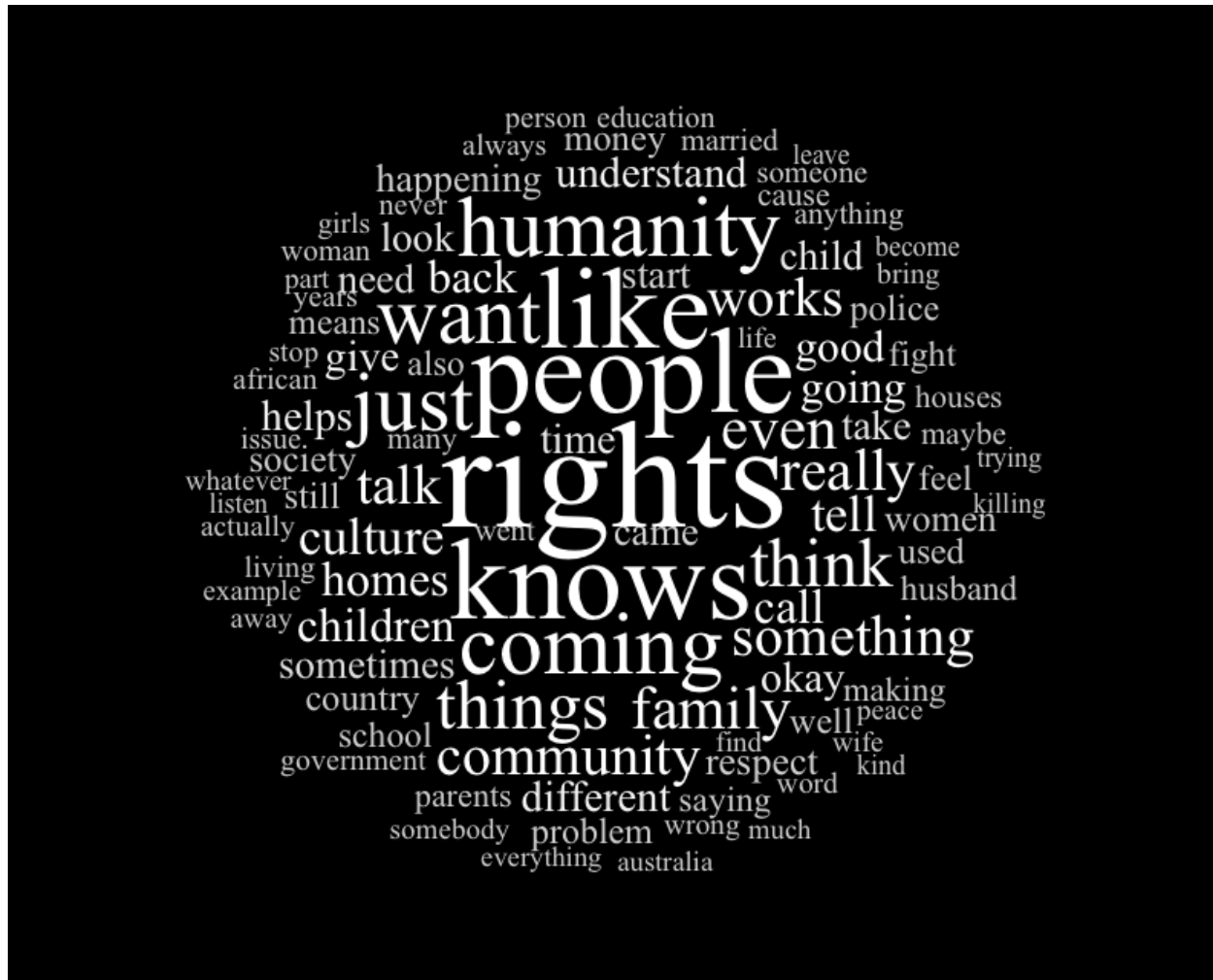


Figure 6: Participant transcripts



Figure 7: Researcher memos

12.17 Appendix 15 Examples of contributions made by reference group members in the research, and ways the researcher reciprocated

	Examples of contribution by role	
Type of contribution to study	Reference Group Members	Researcher
Vouching	Connecting researcher with potential participants	Connecting a group member with an academic colleague for professional and research development relating to their mutual expertise in mental health
Self-disclosure	Sharing own wisdom and expertise to deepen the research	Sharing family and community experiences of rights especially in relation to generational responses to grief and loss
Information giving	Sharing knowledge to enhance cultural safety in the research	Sharing professional knowledge about university courses, eligibility, costs and application processes
Affirmation	Reviewing and affirming the research findings	Encouraging members and their families in their study and career aspirations - sending them information about interesting career openings and supporting their aspirations

Table 9: Examples of contributions made by reference group members in the research, and ways the researcher reciprocated