Experiences of Perceived Exclusion by Migrants and Refugees in Australia

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Presentation Overview

- Post-Migration Stress

  ❖ Social Exclusion

- Coping Strategies

- Research Objectives

- Study A – Research Method and Analysis

- Results and Discussion

- Implications of Perceived Exclusion on Community Cohesion

Social Exclusion

"a multidimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individuals from social relations and institutions and preventing them from full participation in the normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live"

(Oxman-Martinez et al., 2101, as cited in

Power & Wilson, 2000).

Research Objectives

Examine the relationship between subjective quality of life, post-migration stress and coping strategies.

Study A - Research Method

- **Qualitative semi-structured interviews** to deeply explore and delve into personal and social experiences (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006).

- Populations of interest are migrants (voluntary and forced) from various ethnic groups, who have been living in Australia for differing lengths of time.

- Participant recruitment – Medical clinic

- 40 interviews in total completed

Study A - Analysis

Thematic Analysis

'… a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, it also goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.'

(Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 79)

Participant Information

- 15 female, 25 male

- Age range – 23 to 61 years

- Length of residency in Australia – 9 months to 32 years

- 30 migrants, 10 refugees

- Home Country –

❖ 14 India

❖ 9 Afghanistan

❖ 6 Pakistan

❖ 3 Cambodia

❖ 2 China

❖ 2 Mauritius

❖ 1 Egypt

❖ 1 Sri Lanka

❖ 1 Zimbabwe

❖ 1 Philippines

Findings

2 Key Themes

1. Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

2. Post-Migration Coping Strategies

Key Theme 1 :
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

'Indirectly There Is A Lot Of Racism'

'…we are three / four immigrants working in my company and we always found that we face different work culture compared to Australians. It's not like harsh racism but it is definitely.' (Raj, 31)

'…the local people … in the workplace they usually talk to themselves, if we don't try to fit it then no one is going to care about that…' (Fang, 45)

Key Theme 1 :
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

'Indirectly There Is A Lot Of Racism'

'…at work … one of the guy['s] he came to me and then he said…"I am going in the morning at 4 o'clock to attend the Shrine of Remembrance on ANZAC day" and I said "ok that's good" … later on I realised that because he is Australian he is reminding us, you are not an Australian and that's the reason you are not going to the Shrine of Remembrance…' (Vishal, 35)

Discussion
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

Perceived Subtle Discrimination

As blatant forms of discrimination and racism become less socially acceptable, subtle forms of everyday discrimination are emerging to become more common (Deitch et al., 2003)

'Clear negative relationships between perceived ethnic discrimination and well-being of immigrants' (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2006, p. 268)

Key Theme 1 :
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

'Media Portrays Really Bad Image…'

'…media is the biggest [sic] of portraying what a refugee is umm sometimes if they try to convey their message in a positive way then obviously people can get [the message] in a positive way but I think majority of times they portraying the image of umm migrants in a negative way umm like they [the public] thinking … why all this illiterate migrants coming to our country and using all our resources … also particularly …media portrays really bad image of Muslim[s] as a whole …that['s] another biggest [sic] especially for me…' (Afsana, 25)

Discussion
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

Media Misrepresentations

The language with which media, in various forms, discusses issues of immigration positions migrants and refugees as an outsider to mainstream society (Gale, 2004; Pickering, 2001; Leudar et al., 2008)

Key Theme 1 :
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

'I Can't Speak English Good'

'…when we first came me and my family had a lot of issue[s] communicating with people outside our home and communicating in society with others and school…so that was the biggest challenges that we had and we still have it like my parent still doesn't [sic] fully speak English…' (Afsana, 25)

'…communication problems is for some of my friend's parents as well as my parents…' (Raj, 31)

'…finding a job is hard because of communication' (Akara, 34)

Discussion
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

Lack of English Language Fluency

The lack of language proficiency is particularly problematic because it prevents integration efforts in many ways and has psychological and emotional consequences (Casimiro et al., 2007)

Linguistic disparities are a significant barrier to employability (Beiser & Hou, 2006)

Key Theme 1 :
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

'Australian Culture I Will Say…'

'…here the people everyone alone, alone. Now in my street when my house [sic]…all the people everyone don't say hello, different in my country…' (Abram, 63)

…it's not like in India you know ahh it's a bit different...in India everyone comes and then talks to whom [ever]…and then get to know each other and then they maintain a good relationship… (Vishal, 35)

'…we people don't enjoy much here you know because we have to follow our culture…like we can't go to clubs, we can't go drink…' (Karim, 25)

Discussion
Experiences of Perceived Exclusion in Australia

Cultural Differences

Immigrants, particularly those who are older , face great

challenges during cultural transition all of which can be isolating

especially if other factors such as language barriers are present

(Pumariega et al., 2005)

Key Theme 2 :
Post-Migration Coping Strategies

'Having These Friends That's a Great Help'

'…I do ask other people "how do you feel?"…I ask a lot of Chinese people, Pilipino, Asian people.   They all feel the same thing, you know at work places they somewhat feel isolated…' (Fang, 45)

'…having this community it's like a family, having these friends that's a great help and…the community we belong to as I said you know we are persecuted in Pakistan, we are called Ahmadiyya Muslims, so I belong to the Ahmadiyya community…and we are very close knit…' (Farid, 42)

Key Theme 2 :
Post-Migration Coping Strategies

'…My Religion…'

'…well I go to the…mosque so it's taking stress off me … when I go to the mosque I can … talk to others[s] and we pray together…ask help from the God so…' (Ahmed, 46)

'…my husband and I go to church very regularly … and after …[church] services they have some snack so we can sit at the table and chit chat and have some snack…' (Li, 38)

Discussion
Post-Migration Coping Strategies

Seeking social support is a major coping strategy which is important for increasing and preserving the well-being of migrants and refugees during resettlement (Miller et al., 2002; Schweitzer et al., 2007; Pittaway et al., 2009; McMichael & Manderson 2004; Sulaiman-Hill & Thompson 2012; Crockett et al., 2007; Correa-Velez et al., 2010; Colic-Piesker & Tilbury 2003; Colic-Piesker 2009; Pumariega et al., 2005; Brough et al., 2003; Hsu et al., 2004; Beiser & Hou 2001)

Having a belief in God provides emotional support by helping to cope with feelings of sadness or loneliness (Schweitzer et al., 2007)

Implications of Perceived Exclusion on Community Cohesion

Social exclusion significantly impacts on subjective well-being (Correa-Valez, 2010)

Experiences of isolation, cultural hostilities or structural or political problems contribute to lower levels of trust and negatively impact on one's sense of belonging (Cheong et al., 2007; Fangen, 2010)