

Intergenerational Relations in Newly-Arrived Communities in Victoria: A Pilot Study Report

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD	4
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	5
1.1 Community and Stakeholder Roundtable Discussions	5
1.2 Literature Review Summary.....	7
1.3 Critical Analysis of Key Findings	8
2. INTRODUCTION	9
2.1 The Family: Culture, Identity and Settlement.....	9
3. RESEARCH AIMS	10
4. METHODOLOGY	11
5. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	12
5.1 Cultural Diversity in a Multicultural Society.....	12
5.2 Identity Formation in Newly-arrived Migrant Youth	13
5.3 Acculturation, Enculturation and Cultural Transmission	14
5.4 Intergenerational Conflict and Theory.....	17
5.5 Cross-cultural Parenting.....	18
5.6 Understanding the Parent-adolescent Relationship.....	20
5.7 Conflict Management.....	21
6. DATA ANALYSIS	22
7. DISCUSSION	31
8. CONCLUSION	32
9. BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	33

FOREWORD

The Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation (ADI), Deakin University share a common concern with understanding intergenerational issues among newly arrived communities in Victoria. Intergenerational relationships serve as both a strength and vulnerability during the often harsh process of family migration. These tensions are often not easily understood by research and policy makers, not least because community emotions can fall outside the scope of the policy process. Compounding this is a contemporary policy climate focusing on social cohesion and disengaged youth.

The challenges of youth are often based in tensions and opportunities within the family. Newly arrived families have a dynamic complicated by language and cultural barriers, security and social policies, high unemployment, multiple networked identities and unconscious bias by service providers across sectors. To understand young people's pressures and vulnerabilities it is important to listen to stories that connect parents with children and between extended families overseas and migrant communities in Victoria.

ECCV asked Deakin University to conduct a research project to scope the issue using one of its policy and advocacy tools - the community roundtable. This report - *Intergenerational Relations in Newly-Arrived Communities in Victoria: A Pilot Study* – identified issues within the family which contribute to disengagement with the broader community.

Many policies and studies are still being framed from outside of the cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities that they study. The researchers at Deakin University saw this as an opportunity to merge their discipline with ECCV's trusted networks and consultation methodology to bridge a growing divide between research and lived experience.

Complex relationships between older and younger community members, between parents and their children, are not new. They have always shaped the history of multicultural Victoria. Yet the intercultural and inter-faith differences between the newly arrived, established and broader communities today require ongoing examination. This pilot study suggests that academic research and community consultation must work together to gain the insights necessary to meet the challenges of social cohesion.

It is with pleasure that we commend the insights gained from this pilot study to all three levels of government, researchers and culturally diverse communities in Victoria.



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of exploratory research the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) commissioned the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation (ADI), Deakin University, to undertake. The study examines the nature of relations between parents and adolescents in newly-arrived migrant communities in Victoria as they negotiate the challenges of migration, settlement and integration.

While coming of age is often a difficult period for young people and their families, this research highlights how this is compounded for newly-arrived migrant youth and their parents due to the challenges of the migration experience. The findings raise a number of policy and practice considerations for those working with these families and their communities. In particular, in detailing social, cultural and financial challenges, the findings highlight the importance of integrated policy and service provisions which understand and address the intergenerational strain placed on newly-arrived migrant families within their broader context. It also clearly recommends meaningful family and community involvement in creating and enacting policy and practice solutions.

In addition to the policy and practice implications, this research provides the basis for the development of an Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage grant to undertake a more detailed study of intergenerational issues in newly-arrived communities.

1.1 Community and Stakeholder Roundtable Discussions

During roundtable discussions migrant youth, community leaders and relevant agencies outlined their understanding of the key challenges to the intergenerational relations of newly-arrived migrant families and communities and potential solutions to them. Social and cultural challenges, most discussants argued, were exacerbated by the difficult financial situation many newly-arrived families experience. The project identified several key challenges facing the intergenerational relations of newly-arrived migrant communities, which are outlined below:

Fear of Loss of Culture of Origin:

- Parents have a fear around young people losing their culture, particularly concerning loss of culture through loss of communities' lingua francas.

Impact of Transition:

- A lack of cultural knowledge and understanding exists within the service provision sector. For example, 'academic and office based' rather than 'practical' engagement with South Sudanese communities by service providers leads to a lack of trust and failure to understand community needs.
- Community isolation can lead to youth disengagement and alienation.

Impact of Host Society Culture:

- Often intergenerational tension arises from competing understanding of the rights and responsibilities of young people and the autonomy and freedom they should be entitled to. Concerns were raised by parents about the way their children had been negatively influenced by new friends and teachers in this regard.
- There were strains on young people looking after ageing parents, which contributed to poor educational outcomes, particularly for young women. In addition, language barriers between migrant parents and their children are perceived to increase a communication gap, which often leads to misunderstanding and conflict.
- Emerging cultural differences about what constitutes appropriate types of behaviours and intergenerational relationships exacerbates tensions between adolescents and parents. For example, fear of, or anger at, parental control can lead migrant youth to be unhappy at home, while the fear of loss of parental authority can lead parents to feel under increased pressure, which, in turn, raises the risk of domestic violence.
- There is often a lack of a shared intergenerational cultural understanding of appropriate parenting practices, particularly those related to discipline and punishment of children. In some cases this can lead to the involvement of the police and child protection services, and, at times, the separation of young people from their families and communities. This has consequences for all family members, but particularly for separated young people. For example, South Sudanese young people isolated from their family and community were subsequently at greater risk of homelessness, alcohol and drug abuse and crime; while for Arabic-speaking youth isolation was said to contribute to a greater risk of radicalisation. It was felt that government agencies fail to understand the importance of community support and the risks young people face without it.
- Targeted government surveillance of Arabic-speaking communities, particularly the retention of metadata for new counter-terrorism measures, was raised as an issue by male youth from Arabic-speaking and South Sudanese communities.

These challenges were compounded by the difficult financial situation many newly-arrived migrants face which exacerbates tensions within intergenerational relationships.

Discussants identified a number of sources of financial strain. These included:

- Failure to recognise non-Australian qualifications;
- Affordability of bridging courses to help with professional transitioning; qualification recognition and ensuring migrants meet Australian standards;
- Remittances to family members in the country of origin;
- Racism;

- Language barriers which make it hard to find employment and failure to understand legal documentation; and
- Collective cultural practices toward managing finances.

Potential solutions to the problems outlined above offered by discussants included:

- Culturally-sensitive training of child protection officers;
- Culturally-appropriate home placements for young people who need to be removed from their families;
- Family-centred approaches to child protection;
- Community-led engagement to improve communication between parents and their children;
- Government support for community capacity building;
- Increased support for young people's education and skill development by parents and community members;
- More resources for parenting in a new culture context to minimise conflict within intergenerational relationships;
- Education programmes to improve financial literacy and to understand legal documentation; and
- A number of solutions were proposed for addressing language barriers between young people and their parents and between newly-arrived migrants and their host society.

1.2 Literature Review Summary

Scholarship on migrant youth and intergenerational conflict has a long history in migration research (Choi et al 2008, Chuang et al 2014; Telzer 2010); and has been most recently expanded by in-depth analyses of how social factors shape migrant youth experiences of social inclusion/exclusion, cultural identity and belonging (Portes and Rumbaut 2009). Intergenerational conflict is a significant lens through which to consider issues of migration and the associated barriers and opportunities for full participation in the host society.

Previous research highlights that an acculturation gap often results from the different capacities for adjusting to life in a new country which can emerge between generations. Newly-arrived migrant youth are able to develop, accumulate and draw upon social and cultural capital quickly through their engagement with the host society, particularly through

formal education; from which they are able to navigate opportunities which may not be available to their parents. In cultural terms, this 'gap' also often refers to the different expectations and desires held by migrant youth and their parents. Often the desire of migrant youth for full societal participation leads to the adoption of practices that align more closely with the host society's culture. This can mean these young people experience feelings of being caught 'in-between' the expectations of their parents and those of the host society (Choi et al 2008; Costigan & Dokis 2006; Hynie et al 2012; Tardif & Geva 2006). For newly-arrived migrant communities, this in combination with additional structural changes within the family and cultural adjustments are often a source of conflict between generations as families try to maintain intergenerational solidarity (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012).

Culture also has an influence over the way in which parenting styles are conceptualised, both by parents and their children. Parents are more likely to seek to maintain the values and norms of their culture of origin, while children are more influenced by and likely to try to adopt the values and norms of the host society (Lim et al 2008, 85). The research suggests then that the influence and enactment of culture is crucial in understanding the relationship between parents and adolescents in newly-arrived migrant families. For migrant parents, the issue of cultural heritage transmission is often crucial to the acculturation process. However, as parents aim to transmit certain cultural heritage elements to young people, tensions and disagreements may occur (Peltola 2009).

1.3 Critical Analysis of Key Findings

There are a number of inter-related issues which create intergenerational tensions for newly-arrived migrant communities. This research suggests the social, cultural and financial challenges of migration settlement for many newly-arrived migrant families fuels intergenerational conflict. The consequences of which often include violence, family breakdown, isolation, homelessness, substance abuse, and underperformance at school. The breadth and connectedness of the aforementioned challenges must be considered by policy-makers and practitioners alike in attempts to both improve and strengthen intergenerational relations.

In particular, it is important to understand the way in which social and cultural pressure for newly-arrived migrant groups is compounded by financial difficulties which place substantial strains on intergenerational family relationships; as well as the way in which these play out in family life. Thus, this report's research confirms and builds upon the findings of the ECCV's *Kaleidoscopic Cultures* report which highlighted the importance of developing family-centred practices and support for families with adolescent children.

While the area of intergenerational relations is an important, if not critical one, for newly-arrived communities, there is insufficient Australian research on the subject and little evidence that service providers are adequately equipped to deal with it. The findings from this exploratory study suggest that there is a need for both more research in the area and an improvement of service provision; particularly an urgent need for child protection services to develop culturally appropriate policies and practices. This exploratory research clearly shows there is a level of consensus amongst newly-arrived migrant families and their

communities that many of the issues related to intergenerational conflict can be mitigated through improved policy and practice by service providers. This demonstrates an existing openness by these communities to engage at this time, and the timeliness of further research and community engagement to enable the development of policy and practice to address the issue.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) commissioned the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation at Deakin University (ADI) to undertake a scoping study to explore the nature of intergenerational relations between parents and adolescents in newly-arrived communities in Victoria. The research identifies key issues for policy and practice development and forms the basis for the development of a more detailed study on intergenerational issues in newly-arrived communities, potentially as an Australian Research Council Linkage grant. This research has been designed to build upon the ECCV's own experience and previous research that intergenerational relations between parents and adolescents in newly-arrived migrant and refugee communities are particularly vulnerable to strain and conflict.

Young people from migrant communities have more intercultural influences on their identity than older generations. They straddle multiple cultures and often confront a tension between two or more seemingly irreconcilable cultures (Anisef et al 2001). This raises tensions between a young person's orientations with their peers and with their parent's expectations in relation to behavior and attitudes (Cornfoot & Francis 2007).

Exploring this issue is particularly relevant in the Victorian context as the state has the third highest proportion of overseas-born young people in Australia. According to the 2006 Census 17% of Victorians aged 12 to 25 years are born overseas and recent trends indicate that young people aged 15-24 make up almost a quarter of newly arrived migrants living in Victoria (Centre for Multicultural Youth 2014).

2.1 The Family: Culture, Identity and Settlement

There are unique needs and pressures on migrant family units as a result of the migration process, primarily the pressures of settlement and integration, coupled with maintaining social and financial relationships with family members dispersed across the globe.

A 2009 report by the ECCV, *Kaleidoscopic Cultures: Exploring the Self-Identity of Young People in a Multicultural and Globalised Society*, cited the following reasons for intergenerational tensions in migrant communities:

- Changes in family structure, dynamics and roles (particularly where young people take on leadership roles in the family as they acculturate faster to the 'host' society);
- Differences in values and expectations (particularly relating to activities outside the home, intimate relationships, independence, responsibilities and academic

- achievement);
- Differences in gender roles and expectations between origin and host cultures;
- Differing degrees of 'Westernisation' between generations and emphases on the maintenance of cultural traditions and values; and
- Language barriers.

In addition, the report recognised strained and conflictual family relationships were a significant barrier to cultural identity exploration, while warm family environments that support individual autonomy and viewpoints were found to be enablers of cultural identity exploration.

From a policy and practice perspective the *Kaleidoscopic Cultures* report noted that:

There is a growing recognition of the importance of working with the family unit to enhance the capacity of families to provide adequate supports for adolescents and to facilitate ongoing positive family connections.

The report further recommended:

Families with older children require specific supports, but there remains a shortage of appropriate programs, particularly for families from ethnic minority groups (O'Sullivan, 2006). Such programs could seek to assist parents in overcoming settlement issues and developing appropriate parenting practices, and to support both parents and their children to develop effective communication, conflict management and mutual understanding.

Through meeting with young people and key community stakeholders, the current research report explores how migrant families can be supported to ensure better intergenerational relationships and highlights recommendations of how new programs should be tailored to assist.

3. RESEARCH AIMS

The settlement period is a stressful time that gives rise to intergenerational stress. This research aims to identify:

- The impact of that stress on the family unit; and
- Its implications on the wellbeing of young people.

Building on the ECCV's *Kaleidoscopic Cultures* report the research aims to explore:

- The importance of family-centred practices; and
- The specific supports needed to help improve intergenerational relations.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Melbourne; scoping key issues with migrant youth, community leaders and relevant agencies from newly-arrived migrant groups. The research was modelled around ECCV's strategy for consulting with newly-arrived and CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) communities, with a high priority being placed on using consultation and research tools which are i) flexible enough to meet different cultural and faith based needs of community members, ii) aimed at maximizing the involvement of community organisations in the decision-making process, and iii) based on rigorous approaches to confidentiality (see specific model below). In particular, it was important for ECCV that recruitment and data collection procedures remained open and transparent to community members in order to increase intimacy and trust between participants, ECCV and research partners.

The research was conducted in the following stages:

- 1) A review of related research on intergenerational issues for newly-arrived migrant communities was conducted and informed the development of research questions.
- 2) In line with ECCV policy on consulting with CALD and newly-arrived migrant groups, pre-research meetings were conducted between ECCV staff and participating communities to explain the research, obtain input on which research tools and methods would be most culturally sensitive to the needs of the community research, and to recruit participants. During this consultation phase it was determined that two, small roundtables would be conducted, with one roundtable being an 'intergenerational roundtable' including parents, young people and service-providers. In ensuring a space where youth (Age 18-25) were empowered to discuss their needs and challenges without parental oversight, a second 'youth' roundtable was also agreed to. The 'small roundtables' model of consultation and research briefing, though posing challenges to the amount of data collected, has been a key aspect of ECCV's approach to working with CALD and newly-arrived communities in a way that increases social empowerment and engagement when discussing culturally sensitive issues. Some sessions can be organized in an open manner or in the form of community based fora but others can be closed. For this research pilot project closed groups were selected.
- 3) Two roundtable discussions with participants from newly-arrived migrant communities, and relevant agencies were conducted. The first 'intergenerational roundtable' was held in the morning at ECCV's head office in Carlton. The second 'youth' roundtable was held in the afternoon at a Footscray location. This location was chosen for participants who were unable to travel to Carlton. As many participants communicated their desire for anonymity the sessions were not audio-recorded; however two Deakin researchers observed and took extensive notes from the roundtable discussions. The questions guiding the roundtable discussions were based on four core themes determined by the research review, current policy developments, and issues identified through the ECCV's work with ethnic communities. The questions asked were guided by the aims stated above:

- a) What are some cultural challenges facing newly emerging and migrant communities in Australia?
 - b) What are the reasons behind financial stress among newly-arrived communities in Australia?
 - c) Parents raise concerns about the way their children had been influenced by new friends and teachers, even the media. Why?
 - d) How can we best address the issue of the language barriers between young people and their parents in Australia?
 - e) What are some possible solutions to these issues? (this question was asked as a follow up to questions a-d, and has therefore been incorporated at the end of each of these questions in the findings).
- 4) Analysis and reporting was based on notes taken by researchers present at each of the roundtable discussions. This enabled the research team to cross-check notes and address bias.

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

To develop a broader context around this study's central research aims of better understanding sources of strain in the intergenerational relations of newly-arrived migrants and to develop improved policy and practice responses, this research review explores:

- Cultural diversity in a multicultural society;
- Identity formation in newly-arrived migrant youth;
- Acculturation, enculturation and cultural transmission;
- Intergenerational conflict and theory;
- Cross-cultural parenting;
- Understanding the parent-adolescent relationship; and
- Conflict management.

5.1 Cultural Diversity in a Multicultural Society

Australia was one of the first countries to identify itself as a multicultural society, and has a long history of immigration from many countries of origin. However, up until 1973 successive Australian governments operated a national policy of assimilation, the White Australia policy. The dismantling of this policy paved the way for multiculturalism and projects to accommodate cultural diversity.

Multiculturalism has both a 'cultural' component, which focuses on 'the maintenance of heritage cultures and identities', and a 'social' component, which facilitates 'the full and equitable participation of all ethnocultural groups in the life of the larger society' (Berry 2010, 98). Multiculturalism's social project is 'about constructing the new civic and political relations to overcome the deeply entrenched inequalities that have persisted after the abolition of formal discrimination' (Kymlicka, 2010, 101). He situates multiculturalism in its historical context, as part of the wider human rights movement, where differences are not

directly suppressed, but rather are filtered and framed through the language of human rights, civil liberties and democratic accountability (2010). Multiculturalism is often theorised in the context of liberal democracies, as such 'an ethical primacy is given to the individual and individual rights are politically fundamental' (Modood 2013, 6).

Multiculturalism, for this reason, runs the risk of being accused of imposing one culture upon others. Taylor argues for 'cultural survival' in a multicultural society, the propensity for cultural bias must be recognised and acknowledged, and its members must be open to tolerate and accommodate difference (1994).

The tension between the cultural and social components is mirrored in many of the issues this study's research identifies regarding intergenerational relations in newly-arrived migrant communities.

5.2 Identity Formation in Newly-arrived Migrant Youth

Youth integration and adaptation within multicultural societies are complex processes. In particular, 'newly arrived young people experience two key transitions: transition to adulthood and formation of identity, and transition to a new culture, and each is complicated by the other' (Cornfoot and Francis, 2007, 24). To better understand the tensions that exist for newly-arrived migrant youth a consideration of identity formation in relationship to other social groups is explored below. Three approaches are considered social identity theory, self-categorisation theory and the hybridization thesis.

Social identity theory describes the ways in which an individual relates to others, along a spectrum from the completely interpersonal (relating entirely as an individual, with no awareness of social categories) to a total intergroup relationships (entirely as representative of a particular social group). Depending on where individuals locate themselves on this spectrum determines how they see themselves and others (Hornsey 2008). This involves processes of categorisation, labelling and construction. Individuals are seen to identify with groups as they seek to construct a positive view of the self, 'based on advantageous intergroup comparisons' (Griffore & Phenice 2000, 30). This can be particularly problematic '[f]or ethnic minority children, youth, and families, [as] these labels place them at a social disadvantage and can adversely affect their self concepts' (Griffore & Phenice 2000, 3), but it may help in understanding the ways in which migrant youth are often described as having difficulties with their identity formation.

In contrast, self-categorization theory focuses on intragroup relations. According to its proponents, there are three levels of self-categorisation that are relevant to the concept of self. These are 1) human identity ('the superordinate category of the self as human being'); 2) social identity ('the intermediate level of the self as a member of a social ingroup as defined on interpersonal comparisons'); and 3) personal identity ('the subordinate level of personal self-categorization based on interpersonal comparisons') (Hornsey 2008, 208). People within their social group represent themselves and their group in terms of prototypes, which is based on a subjective and fluctuating definition of group attributes and describes what it is to be a group member, including the appropriate attitudes, emotions and behaviours. In this way migrant youth are simultaneously ascribing and being ascribed

to the social group of their ethnicity and the social group of their adolescent peers, among other groups. The 'prototypes' of these social groups may at times be in conflict, creating difficulties in reconciling the associated social identities. However, it has been argued that it may not always be a case of conflict in these scenarios. Ambady et al found that: 'Greater self-complexity – possessing a number of different social identities and roles – is thought to provide a buffer for individuals against stressful events' (1999). Ethnic identity can be positively related to self-esteem, mental wellbeing in general, openness and social cohesion, and negatively related to antisocial and risk-taking behaviour (Hudley and Wakefield, 2007). Thus, the manner in which migrant youth identify themselves and their relations within and between other social groups affects their sense of identity and wellbeing in complex ways.

The third approach to consider is the hybridisation thesis. Phinney describes two underlying dimensions to the construction of cultural identity (1990). The first being an identification with one's own heritage or ethno-cultural group, and the second being an identification with the culture of their society at large. These two are not mutually exclusive, in fact, one can nest within the other. For example, an individual can identify with their heritage culture, while at the same time situating themselves within the wider culture of the dominant society (Phinney 1990). Adolescents are characterized as being in a constant process of constructing and reconstructing their identities based on their age and developmental period, their culture of origin and their desire for participation and integration with the host society, and their ethnicity and religion (Pelota, 2009, 24). They:

are combining multiple sources of information and selectively adopting, moulding and remoulding these pieces when constructing their ethnic identities. Thus, their cultural and ethnic identities represent both change and stability, resistance and adaptation. (Peltola 2009, 24)

As such, migrant adolescents are often found to create hybrid identities, which are 'creative and qualitatively new combinations [in the] absence of clear definitions' (Peltola 2009, 25).

5.3 Acculturation, Enculturation and Cultural Transmission

Acculturation refers 'to the general processes and outcomes (both cultural and psychological) of intercultural contact' (Berry 1997, 7). Berry makes the distinction between 'acculturation' and 'psychological acculturation'. The first being a change in the culture of a group, and the second being a change in the psychology of the individual. The distinction between the two is important because there can be wide variation in the level of acculturation between the two different categories (Berry 1997, 7). For example, a particular cultural group may acculturate to a great extent, while an individual within that group may not.

Acculturation is a 'process involving two or more groups, with consequences for both' (Berry 2001, 616). The form that intercultural contact takes varies depending on the situation of cultural contact. The two most significant factors determining the form of intercultural contact are the degree of contact and participation with the other, and the degree of cultural maintenance by each group (Berry 2001). The different combinations of the two

factors of intercultural contact create four types of acculturation strategies for group members. An assimilation strategy is adopted when a group or individual has a high level of contact and participation with the host society and a low level of cultural maintenance of the heritage culture. Integration is when the group or individual has a high level of participation and a high level of cultural maintenance. A separation strategy is in place if the group or individual has a low level of participation and a high level of cultural maintenance. And marginalisation occurs when the group or individual has a low level of participation and a low level of cultural maintenance (Berry 1997, 2001 & 2010).

The strategies adopted are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, individual acculturation strategies can vary depending on the location, such as in the private sphere (the home, extended family or ethnic community) compared to conducting oneself in a public space (the workplace or in politics). In a related manner, individuals, over the course of the acculturation process, may explore a variety of different strategies, eventually choosing one that is most useful and/or appropriate. Other factors that will influence and shape the acculturation process are the individual and group's coping strategies, the level of social support available (both within the sphere of the heritage culture and the host society), and the experiences of prejudice and discrimination (Berry 1997; Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009)

For newly-arrived adolescent migrants, they are often in a process of 'double-transition' (Peltola 2009, 4). In this process, they not only have to transition from one cultural environment to another, but they are also transitioning at a developmental level. Adolescence, in general, is a time of questioning and challenging structures of power and authority, particularly according to gender, generational and authority lines.

It is also a time where young people exhibit the desire to create a space and culture that is independent of their parents. Thus, for those adolescents in a process of acculturating to a new culture, there may also be involved a questioning and reconstructing of their cultural background (Peltola 2009; ECCV 2009; Mansouri 2009). Kwak identifies this latter process as 'enculturation'; 'the influence of culture on the developmental process within a particular cultural context' (2003, 120). Although the term is not synonymous with the adolescent period, some do suggest that enculturation is a more pronounced process during adolescence than early childhood because, during this time, the adolescent's lifestyle broadens beyond the family context (Kwak, 2003). Adolescents' 'double transition', to borrow from Peltola, incorporates a process of acculturation and enculturation:

For immigrant adolescents, once they find themselves in the new society of settlement, the enculturation process is interrupted and takes a different course; it now includes an acculturation process as well. Since the original heritage culture and the new culture may not endorse identical cultural values and may not allow adolescents to pursu[e] the same behavioral patterns, immigrant families experience more active negotiations in order to achieve a more positive intergenerational family socialization than non-immigrant families in the same society (2003, 119).

The simultaneous process of enculturation and acculturation may be problematic for the identity development of migrant adolescents as the 'construction of self is built from one's

enculturation context', resulting in a 'delayed or less consolidated self-concept', and because this process may not be fully supported by parents (Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009, 121).

Furthermore, the conceptual idea of adolescence and accompanying developmental changes are historically and culturally-specific, which can become a further point of conflict for some migrant groups (O'Sullivan 2006). For newly-arrived migrant youth, the process of acculturation is a complex one involving simultaneous developmental and cultural transitions. These are inter-related and the resulting conflict is often compounded within the family unit.

For many migrant parents the issue of cultural heritage transmission is crucial to the acculturation process. Cultural heritage transmission refers to the process of parents selecting particular cultural norms and reinforcing specific cultural constructions to guide the development of their children (Kwak, 2003). Peltola writes that:

As several studies have shown before, a majority of the immigrant parents considered transferring at least certain parts of their cultural heritage, values and habits to their children a matter of great importance. However, instead of simply adopting the cultural repertoires of their parents, children and adolescents engage in a cultural dialogue with the multiplicity of forces that represent different values, norms and ways of living... (2009, 18).

However, challenges often present in this process. The extent to which heritage cultural continuity is maintained varies significantly among family members. Furthermore, there is the significance of the adolescent's self-development and its relation to the sociocultural context, their cultural group's core characteristics and values, as well as the larger society's cultural influence and response (Kwak 2003). Thus, as parents aim to transmit certain heritage cultural elements, tensions and disagreements may occur, which are also influenced by factors emanating from not just within the family unit, but also from the respective cultural community and the wider society. These disagreements may be over which values, norms and practices to adopt, and which to abandon, although there is wide variance in both disagreement and negotiation (Peltola 2009).

What is often talked about in the research, especially in relation to acculturation and the family unit, is an acculturation gap. This term refers to the cultural differences between youth and their parents, which have occurred as a result of migration (Correa-Velez et al 2011; Kwak 2003; McCabe et al 2011; Portes & Rumbaut 2001; Telzer 2010). Initial research showed gaps in acculturation between parents and their children led to increased family conflict and youth maladjustment, but this has not been empirically supported (Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009; Telzer 2010).

Acculturation gaps occur because for each individual the process of acculturation takes differing forms and occurs at varying rates. Much of the earlier research ignored factors and scenarios other than the understanding children will acculturate faster than their parents, resulting in intergenerational and intercultural conflict and increased the likelihood of behavioural problems in children (Telzer, 2010). Some factors which lie outside these

assumptions relate to the direction of acculturation gaps. For example, some parents are more acculturated and/or less orientated towards their heritage culture (Telzer 2010).

Furthermore, there have also been issues related to the methodology and measurement of the research with regards to how acculturation gaps are calculated, perceived and understood (Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009; Telzer 2010). Thus, a rethinking of the acculturation gap model is necessary to address differences in the direction, dimension and domain of culture which understand acculturation as 'a process of change that interacts with development' (Telzer, 2010, 335). In addition, there have increasingly been calls for identifying and addressing the limitations of the conventional models of understanding and representing acculturation processes. For Fisher and Tardif-Williams, the most pressing concern is the way in which culture is conceptualised within the notion of acculturation. They write that:

Culture – and by definition, acculturation – represents embodied interpersonal interactions. It does not exist in any generalized, abstract, or essentialist space but rather, it is a process in which adults and children engage as active agents in the dialogical, co-construction of meaning. However, it is often the case that this level of analysis – on acculturation as embodied interpersonal interaction – is missing in conventional models of acculturation (2009, 153).

For these authors, culture is too often treated as internalised and stable characteristic of a person; thus producing essentialist notions of culture and acculturation. They argue acculturation is a dialogic and dynamic process. The position and role of the culture of origin and the host society culture stand independently, but inform and engage one another to create ever-changing combinations (hybridity) or new ways of being (Mansouri 2009). Furthermore, each person's experience of acculturation is unique, and as such the effect of acculturation is different for each person. This is a continuous process and is not teleological. Acculturation is best understood in terms of moments, processes and production (Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009). This is particularly the case in the context of the family unit, where processes of acculturation are in a constant state of dialogue (between parent and child) and evolution; changing and developing as parents and children inform one another and are informed by external influences. It is the space 'where individuals must continually renegotiate their multiple and often at times conflicting cultural models and identities' (Fisher & Tardif-Williams 2009, 154). In this sense, acculturation is relational, it is predicated on a relationship between individual people or groups of people, and like culture and identity, is relative to the individual and their relationship with external factors and internal perceptions and conceptualisations. Thus, it is about a constant exchange, subject to on-going negotiation and adaptation.

5.4 Intergenerational Conflict and Theory

While the concept of generation has different understandings, for the purposes of this research it is defined 'as a genealogical rung of the ladder within a family lineage' (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012, 41). However, as each 'individual has several generational belongings, being at the same time inscribed in a genealogical ladder and a member of a birth cohort, and taking part in a socio-historical period', the influence of the socio-historical context

cannot be separated (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012, 42). For newly-arrived migrant families the structural changes within the family unit and the cultural changes that often accompany settlement are a significant source of intergenerational conflict (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012). Indeed, as Attias-Donfut and Waite argue:

Consensual and normative solidarity across generations are more difficult to achieve because of the diversity of cultural influence and the process of adopting the values, customs and language of the host society. Thus, the cultural and linguistic orientations of immigrants will take hybridised forms, different than those of both people living in the birth country and those living in the host country (2012, 45).

However, despite these challenges, studies have shown that cohesion and closeness does occur regularly within family relations post-migration. In fact, cultural conflict and close solidarity are not necessarily incompatible and there is large variability in the ways in which families function (Attias-Donfut, 2012).

Intergenerational theory analyses the dimensions of these relationships and research provides ways of understanding intergenerational conflict in migrant families. For example, intergenerational relations can be conceptualised as a 'generational contract' (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012; Göransson 2013). Indeed, '[i]t is first and foremost a moral contract, a relationship based on rights and duties. Just like the social contract, the intergenerational contract refers to a moral relationship' (Göransson, 2013, 65). The term emphasises the nature of mutual support between parents and children; it indicates that intergenerational support is not unidirectional, but rather flows in both directions. It represents the ongoing process of renegotiation and reinterpretation that intergenerational relations undergo. Furthermore, Göransson argues, the nature of the intergenerational contract depends on the national, cultural and historical context and thus varies between and within nation-states (2013).

Intergenerational theory can also be understood in relation to migrant families by conceptualising it in terms of an interruption of the 'generational chain', where parents and children are raised in different social environments and thus do not share the same life experiences, representing a generational discontinuity across almost all domains of life. In addition, understandings and experiences of citizenship and belonging differ between generations among migrant families, which has an impact on intergenerational relations within the family unit (Attias-Donfut & Waite 2012).

5.5 Cross-cultural Parenting

Research shows that an acculturation gap is often evident in migrant families, who have to reconcile at least two different cultural models within their family unit. Its cause is often attributed to parents holding on to the values and norms of the culture of origin, while their children are more receptive to the values of norms of the receiving society, creating 'a discrepancy in the acculturative rates between the two generations' (Lau et al 2008, 85). While this may be the case for many families, the empirical findings of the effects of this acculturation gap on the functioning of the family and the wellbeing of the adolescents have been mixed (Lau et al 2008). Intergenerational relations between migrant adolescents and

their parents face greater challenges due to their new cultural context and they engage in extensive post-migration negotiations regarding the cultural transmission of ethnic heritage culture (Kwak, 2003). What is evident from the research is that there is still more understanding to be obtained before any steadfast conclusions can be drawn about the effects of an acculturation gap on relations between parents and adolescents.

What is required, according to Fisher and Tardif-Williams, is a different way of thinking about the acculturative process within the family context. Based on Bakhtin's dialogic theory (1986), they argue that cultural meaning, which includes acculturative daily interaction, is a process characterised by negotiation, creation, reproduction, experimentation, disposal and embracement and is part of a reflection of varying discourses and representations.

Fisher and Tardif-Williams further explain that each 'acculturative moment' is symptomatic of the cultural system of which it is part, giving it meaning in a particular time and place. Thus:

In this framework, both immigrant parents and their children are viewed as active agents in the acculturation process; each partner's acculturation experiences can reciprocally influence, in a truly bi-directional fashion, the *other's* attempts to reconstruct a model of culture and acculturation. (2009, 155)

As each family member's acculturation experience can influence other members' experiences, and subsequently their reaction, the acculturative process and experience cannot be sufficiently understood without considering and understanding the other family members' experiences.

Culture also has an influence over the way in which parenting practices are conceptualised by parents and by their children. According to Lau et al, parenting practices in relation to authority and control - and the effects of these - may vary depending on cultural understandings within the family unit. For example, if a parent understands high levels of parental control to be helpful to the young person, and that it contributes to the greater good of the family - and if the child shares this conceptualization - then the likelihood of conflict is reduced. If the child, however, conceptualises high levels of parental authority and control as unwanted domination, then conflict is more likely (Lau et al 2008). They write that:

Within a Western context, excessive parental control over adolescent decision-making can be experienced as infantilization. However, from an Asian cultural perspective, a child who acquiesces to parental wishes may be seen as demonstrating filial piety. Further, low levels of expressed warmth may not be experienced as a lack of love within an Asian context, but this can be discordant for immigrant children within a Western cultural setting (2008, 89).

Similarly, Peltola found that:

Due to differences in cultures of upbringing of children, habits in receiving societies emphasising more liberal parenting styles than has been customary in the countries of origin, the parents often found themselves in a situation where parenting cannot be based on the previous rules. Children's observing their peers and finding out their greater freedom raises claims for equal position, and parents' attempts to hold on to their principles may result in conflicts (2009, 16).

For some authors, certain parenting practices are deemed most appropriate for child development. However, others argue these types of models are based on Western conceptions, which have been privileged in the research over those adopted by immigrants living in Western society. Applying these conceptualisations to non-Western contexts, according to Fisher and Tardif-Williams, is dangerous because it may overlook important cultural differences (2009).

In addition, cultural conceptualisations play an important role in the way parenting is understood and performed. According to Bornstein, cultural values are built into societal institutions and are passed on through socialisation. In this way, culture intrinsically informs parenting and thus different cultural groups are imbued with different understandings of appropriate parenting practices. He writes that:

[C]ulture expresses and perpetuates itself through parenting. Parents bring certain cultural proclivities to interactions with their children, and parents interpret even similar characteristics in children within their culture's frame of reference; parents then encourage or discourage characteristics as appropriate or detrimental to adequate functioning within the group (2012, 213).

Bornstein adds some elements of parenting are universal, but the manner in which these are expressed or the quantitative value given to them may vary. He uses language as an example, arguing that the desire to communicate vocally, to use language, is intrinsic to all. Yet the way that language is acquired and its form varies between cultures (2012). In a similar way, parenting practices evolve continuously as parents adopt and alter their practices as a result of intercultural contact (Guilfoyle et al 2008; Janzen and Ochocka 2008). And so, the varying ways of conceptualising parenting and its practices operates within the highly dynamic and interactive framework of culture. When this framework has to incorporate multiple separate cultures, it produces highly complex and hybridised negotiations and understandings.

5.6 Understanding the Parent-adolescent Relationship

Adolescence is a period of many developments and changes, including in identity formation, cognitive capabilities and peer relationships (Silk & Steinberg 2002), all of which impact the parent-child relationship. Steinberg writes that early adolescence 'is an important period for the negotiation of autonomy-related changes in the parent-child relationship' (2001, 7). During this period, the role of outside influences, such as peers, parents of peers and schools, can begin to have significant impacts on the role and influence of parents in their children's lives (Steinberg 2001). There are several interrelated developments that occur simultaneously around this time that can disturb the equilibrium established within the

family dynamic (Silk & Steinberg 2002). During this time, it is not only the adolescent that undergoes changes and developments, but also the family dynamic and structure, and the relationship between parents and their adolescent children.

However, do these changes necessarily mean a greater likelihood of tension and conflict? Steinberg argues the answer to this question depends on the definition of conflict and the source of the data, because '[p]arents and adolescents have different sets of expectations and ideas about social conventions', they interpret certain matters differently (2001, 6). This is, in many cases, where most of the conflict between parents and adolescents arises. This conflict, according to research by Silk and Steinberg, is in most cases not in the form of intense fighting, but rather involves bickering over mundane issues and the violation of expectations (2002). Others have argued that it is the accumulation of small-scale tensions that creates larger-scale stress and the reduction of feelings of support and attachment (Correa-Velez et al 2011). However, the effect, positive or negative, of conflict within the family depends in large part on the context and nature of the family relationship. For example, conflict between parents and adolescents can be an opportunity for learning and positive reinforcement if handled appropriately. Similarly, conflict can have negative effects if it takes place within a hostile and toxic environment (Silk & Steinberg 2002).

Particularly pertinent to the time of adolescence is the interplay of an adolescent's individual autonomy and their embeddedness within their family unit. The cultural context plays a vital role in this interplay (Kwak 2003); an interplay which is not dichotomous, but interrelated (Kagitçibasi 2003). The 'autonomous-related self' is a combination of both autonomy and embeddedness. This understanding helps to conceptualise 'the apparently conflicted immigration context better', allowing for an explanation of the perceived tensions in the relationship between migrant parent and their adolescent child (Kagitçibasi 2003, 146; Correa-Velez et al 2011).

The concepts of embeddedness and autonomy translate to the societal level. If a family unit is allowed to exercise autonomy while at the same time feeling a sense of embeddedness within both their ethnic and wider community, they are more likely to create a functioning family unit (Brough et al 2003; Kwak 2003; Mansouri 2009; Olliff 2008). Indeed:

Broadly speaking, we can say that the cultural distance between cultures of origin and the new society can threaten the harmony of immigrant family relations, but when the core cultural values of family embeddedness are supported by their own culture as well as their own ethnocultural social network, immigrant families seem to maintain healthy intergenerational relations (Kwak, 2003, 131).

So in this way, the broader socio-cultural environment plays a significant role in facilitating positive intergenerational relationships for newly arrived migrants.

5.7 Conflict Management

How intergenerational conflict is managed within newly-arrived migrant families is informed by members' cultural affiliations and interpretations. For example, in applying the most widely used family management model, Rahim's meta model, Chuang et al found culture

played an important role in determining behavior (2014). According to Rahim, conflict management styles are determined by two underlying dimensions; a degree of concern for self and for others. He argues, the combination of these dictates which approach to conflict management a person will take; integrating (high concern for self, high concern for others), obliging (low self, high other), dominating (high self, low other), avoiding (low self, low other), or compromising (moderate self, moderate other) (Rahim 1983; Chuang et al 2014). When examined in a cultural context, adolescent and parent conflict management styles were informed by heritage and host culture. A study of immigrant Arab families with late adolescents in Canada found late adolescents preferred to use the 'oblige' style, because of cultural factors (Chuang et al 2014). The more oriented to Arab culture the adolescents perceived their mothers to be, the less likely they were to use the dominant style of conflict management. They believed this behavior was consistent with cultural notions of obedience and submission as important in Arab parent-child relationships (Chuang et al 2014).

6. DATA ANALYSIS

Roundtable discussions were held at two ECCV community locations in Melbourne to facilitate the participation of different communities. The first roundtable discussion included nine participants (five men and four women) and included representatives from newly-arrived South-Sudanese and Ethiopian migrant communities, the ECCV, Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre and the Centre for Multicultural Youth. A range of age groups were represented; including the 18-25 age group. The second roundtable discussion included five participants (four men and one woman), and included youth representatives from the South-Sudanese community and a peak Islamic organisation (18-25 age group), as well as a community leader from the Burmese community and representation from Victoria University.

The roundtable discussions were based on four core questions which were determined by examining previous research, current policy developments and issues that were identified as a result of the ECCVs work with ethnic communities. Below responses and related discussions are considered. For the most part, there were clear and corresponding similarities in the challenges identified and potential solutions offered for intergenerational relationships resulting from the settlement and integration processes of newly-arrived migrant communities.

Although the findings will be brought together in the analysis, where applicable we will highlight where, and for which representatives, differences emerged across the two samples and between the youth and adult age cohorts.

Question 1: What are some cultural challenges facing newly emerging and migrant communities in Australia?

Challenges identified:

a) Young people feel the strain of looking after aged parents.

Although this concern was voiced primarily by older participants and service providers, based on anecdotal evidence from their interaction with migrant youth, there was general agreement that looking after ageing parents was a strain for young people. The issue of home duties was particularly raised as an issue of concern for young girls in the South Sudanese community who, owing to traditional gender roles, experienced competing responsibilities between school and home. This, it was argued, contributed to poor educational outcomes for young women and bullying on the basis that their responsibilities meant they couldn't participate in the extra-curricular activities pursued by their peers, and subsequently intergenerational conflict.

'Our parents don't understand what we go through. We get bullied at school. Girls don't 'go out' unless chaperoned. But their peers do, so they get bullied. This can lead to intergenerational conflict as girls who leave home to go out against their parents' wishes 'want to be a 'normal Australian girl'. Having to help at home can also impact on responsibilities at school.'

b) Intergenerational differences towards parenting practices

Different attitudes by parents and children to parenting practices emerged as a source of concern and conflict, particularly for members of the South Sudanese community, as it was felt that young people acculturated more quickly to the 'host' culture than their parents. This, it was argued, led migrant young people to challenge traditional roles within the family unit, most significantly parental authority and control. This led to conflict within the family unit and, in some instances, led to family violence. For example, a South Sudanese community leader expressed a belief that young people and their parents shared a common desire to thrive in the new society, but had different approaches for reaching this goal. Young people often sought to ascertain greater freedom and personal autonomy, while their parents wanted to maintain traditional family roles and cultural values.

Different cultural and religious ideas around discipline were raised as points of intergenerational conflict among all older community stakeholders. A participant from the Burmese community identified that intergenerational contests emerged around issues of faith, discipline and parental control:

'Faith tradition is where disciplining children is different. Parental control of children in this culture is an issue.'

For some communities the lines seemed very blurred when it came to differentiating domestic abuse and disciplining of children. All participants understood that police and child protection officers would be involved in cases of domestic violence, but the line differentiating traditional forms of parental discipline from physical harm and abuse, in particular the consequences of the involvement of police and child protection services was questioned. For example, one participant described how the involvement of child protection services in particular can lead to the separation of a young person from their family unit. While this is intended to protect the child, the resulting disconnection from their family and community, it was argued, leads to less of, or even an absence of, support, and increases the risk of homelessness, drug abuse and crime.

Culturally-insensitive interventions by service providers, particularly police and child protection services, were said to exacerbate the problem of maintaining parental authority in a new cultural context. The view was expressed that child protection officers often do not listen to families or try to work with them; that they didn't have time to sit down with families to try to get to know them. When government workers only engage with young people it was argued it could drive a wedge between them and their parents. There was no blame as such, just an acknowledgment that because the service system in its entirety was under strain it meant that the most important resources – time and listening – were absent.

It was stressed that community is the most important resource for young people who get into trouble, because they give the most important thing, time, or as two older participants from the South Sudanese community, a female and a male, claimed:

'Community gives time... service providers don't have the time.'

In particular, another participant stressed that service providers, because they don't take the time to understand communities, are not connected to them. Therefore more practical solutions for working with members of newly-arrived migrant communities are required to understand community needs.

c) The need for 'practical' forms of engagement between community and service providers

It was suggested that organisations working with newly-arrived migrant communities do not understand cultures which are communal, 'practical', 'hands on' and face-to-face. Only by understanding how newly-arrived communities were affected by government policies and practices could real community engagement take place.

'Service providers don't have a strong connection to communities, they are overwhelmed by bureaucracy and paperwork. Communities need practical engagement. Consultation is not sincere, and is not enduring.'

'Organisations working with community don't understand the culture. Culture is communal and practical hands on, face to face. The culture is to go and speak to people and work it out, not writing it down. Majority of organisations work from their office and don't engage practically.'

Not having culturally-competent workers was an issue of concern particularly when those adversely affected by intergenerational issues amongst newly-arrived migrant communities seek out government services. Service providers were generally found to be disconnected from the broader context in which newly-arrived communities migrant communities exist.

d) Loss of parental control puts youth at risk

A number of participants highlighted that the thinking on rights and responsibilities versus autonomy and freedom was divergent between parents and their children. Adult participants believed this divergence was often stoked by service providers who told young people about their rights, which was then used by their children (often deceptively) to

challenge parental and community authority, resulting in the loss of families being able to guide their children. A participant stated:

'We come from a very collective community background. What good I have is good for all, if a bad thing happens to me it happens to all. We want that to be accommodated into the family structure. But kids here have encounters with other family structures and a more open culture. Because of this the community connection is lost and the capacity of the community in 'sharing grief and sharing wealth'. In South Sudan respect of authority is associated with positive child development, but services and authorities here don't see it that way.'

Perhaps surprisingly, these views were supported by a female youth participant in the first roundtable discussion whose views had been shaped by her family's involvement with the police and the criminal justice system. She recalled when her brother developed friendships with young people from a different cultural background, at which point she said her family 'lost him'. Her brother resisted family efforts to discipline him, left the family home and developed problems with alcohol and drug dependency. This led him to be charged and sentenced to a prison term. The participant explained:

'We (South Sudanese communities and families) are connected and deal with issues closely. It is hard when government and police intervene in connected lives'.

In response, representatives from child protection services taking part in the roundtable discussions argued officers faced difficult and often complex decisions navigating cultural needs and children's rights in relation to child safety. They said the recent case of the death of a young person being investigated by child protection services highlighted the risk of not intervening. However, the participant did acknowledge that more culturally-sensitive training was needed, and this was being addressed by the sector through programs such as the Centre for Multicultural Youth's *Reconnect* program.

e) Financial stress and community isolation

Several participants in both roundtable discussions argued that culture was not the only source of intergenerational conflict. Rather community isolation and financial pressures (see question 2 below) were also found to affect communities, the South Sudanese and Middle Eastern communities in particular, albeit in different ways. For one participant, community isolation and financial problems were more prevalent factors which led to intergenerational conflict, rather than notions of cultural differences. However, a number of participants argued that these were not sufficiently addressed by service providers:

'The issue isn't just cultural. Community isolation means that young people are disengaged.'

'People talk about culture but I don't think it's all about culture, it's about supporting better engagement between mainstream services/community and communities that are isolated.'

For example, it was argued community isolation of South Sudanese youth has led to high risk of drug and alcohol abuse, family breakdown and homelessness, while for Middle Eastern youth it was said to contribute to a greater risk of radicalisation.

f) Counter-terrorism measures leading to marginalisation and family pressures

Participants from South Sudanese and Middle Eastern backgrounds raised concerns about targeted government surveillance of some communities, particularly the retention of metadata as part of new counter-terrorism measures. This is understood to increase the pressure placed on individuals, families and communities, compounding existing social and economic strains.

One participant claimed that for Arabic-speaking youth these laws contribute to a broader sense of indignation that they are being asked to shed their religion and cultural heritage to fall in line with a government policy that unfairly targets Muslim communities. He said:

'In a multicultural society different customs should be recognised. Asserting assimilative policies has been sensitive for Muslim communities, across generations. Requests for young people to assimilate can cause backlash and contribute to factors leading to radicalisation. The feelings of being under siege is among 70% of the community, about 1% act upon it.'

Another youth participant commented:

'I feel so nervous, like I'm under threat and tomorrow it might be my turn.'

This perceived pressure was also felt amongst South Sudanese youth participants, who had themselves been subjected to government surveillance due to heightened concerns about South Sudanese gangs:

'New laws retaining metadata affects young people in a bad way. When you crack a joke people might misconstrue it. A sense of being watched by the government causes stress for young people in Muslim communities but also other migrant communities. Surveillance cameras can cause stress for example. Who decides who is a threat?'

Solutions offered:

The solutions offered by roundtable participants can be grouped under three broad headings; 'cultural competence in child protection', 'family and community centred' and 'capacity building' solutions.

Cultural Competence in Child Protection Solutions:

- Culturally-sensitive training of child protection service officers was recommended to ensure the service sector is staffed with culturally competent officers.
- Child protection service officers and others involved need to become more engaged with communities on an ongoing basis so they 'know' the community context. 'Practical' engagement in community consultation is required. At the moment it is too 'in and out', but what is required is for officers to spend time with communities to get to 'know' community members and how policies impact them. The following

two observations by participants were indicative of comments made at the roundtables:

'One need of the community is to socialise and talk, sharing their feelings as a community. We need more practical engagement, a practical one. So much research has been done on the community, all these issues are on record, but nothing has changed.'

- Culturally appropriate home placements were recommended for young people who needed to be removed from their families.

Family and Community Centred Solutions:

- Police and child protection services removing at-risk children from their family homes should facilitate the reconnection of young people with their families after the intervention order has ended. It was emphasised that a family-centred approach is needed.
- Community led engagement is required to improve communication between parents and young people as traditional discipline is 'not working'.
- Marriage and family counselling for families to provide support. A representative from a peak Islamic organisation suggested marriage counselling should be regarded as a preventive measure to ensure that social and economic stressors do not descend to domestic violence. It was suggested that a role could be played by faith communities, with Imams, for example, having a role to play as well as civil authorities.

Capacity Building Solutions:

- Government should support community capacity building. It was noted that the new leadership structure of the South Sudanese community in Victoria, which has youth representatives and senior leaders, needs to be supported by government as they attempt to solve issues facing their community. A participant noted:

'The community is coming together now and created a newly formed community. Church and businesses are there, but the leadership needs to be supported.'

- Increased support is needed for the education of newly-arrived young people. It was argued that they will then have the skills to build capacity in their own communities. In particular, the schooling of young women 'needs to be valued'. As one of the young participants put it:

'When a newly arrived migrant comes, my Grandmother would direct them to social support services. But I think that rather than first getting support, we need to get an education to equip ourselves. You aren't told to go to school, get a job, instead you are told to go to the Salvation Army. Self-determination is key.'

Question 2: What are the reasons behind financial stress among newly-arrived communities in Australia?

Whilst specific financial challenges were outlined by different community members, the impact of these challenges were felt equally across the participant groups. A number of participants stressed these pressures contributed to family violence.

'A Centrelink payment might not even buy you clothes, a suit... then there is paying bills, rent, food, transport or savings... they can't meet it. This has impacts on the mother and father thinking about the good of the family.'

'Slips coming from parents often come from economic and social stress. A lot of first generation migrant parents are anxious, so they can lash out and misjudge. This can lead to domestic violence issues.'

Challenges identified:

a) Financial responsibilities to 'back home' add to the pressures that lead to family conflict

An often unrecognised dimension of intergenerational conflict between newly-arrived migrant young people and their parents is their economic responsibilities to extended family members. This emerged as a cause of concern in both roundtable discussions among community and youth participants and service providers. For the South Sudanese and Burmese community members in particular, the obligation to send remittances to family members in the country of origin placed significant pressures on the family budget. Community elders described this as a source of tension as their children didn't understand why the money was not being spent on them and their educational and extracurricular aspirations.

'Issues around finance are different to Western customs. Finances are handled collectively. If you don't help one another you get shamed. Sending money back home is a part of the culture [...] Sending remittances overseas limits spending on children, extracurricular activities, like sport. This causes conflict between parents and children. Children have growing awareness that their needs may not be met.'

'Financial support for family puts pressure on family budget, can cause depression, stress. Many migrant communities share this problem. We have a similar problem with remittances overseas and young people feeling left out.'

b) Language barriers

Language barriers for newly-arrived communities create a range of problems. This was a factor for the Burmese community in particular. Newly-arrived members attend AMES language classes as a part of their settlement process. However, the courses were seen by participants as being too short to develop sufficient English language proficiency to gain employment.

c) Failure to recognise qualifications from overseas

Failure to recognise overseas qualifications was an issue raised by adolescents and adults from all participating communities, but particularly by Arabic-speaking communities. Males and females with degrees from overseas institutions found this most to be the case. The lack of affordability of bridging courses to update qualifications was then raised as a compounding issue. This, in turn, creates barriers to economic and social participation, impacting families' financial security and intergenerational conflict. For example, a youth representative from a peak Islamic Organisation stated:

'Doctors from Iraq are currently driving taxis. Saddam Hussein was a dictator and it was good he was removed, but he did something good and educated everyone. So coming out of Iraq people are well qualified and 20 years of practice is overlooked. There needs to be a program to introduce people back into their profession. We facilitate doctors coming from overseas, but we can get those who are already here to fill these positions if they are able to reskill.'

d) Family financial management

The challenges of managing difficult family finances was highlighted in the discussions. In the cultures of many of the newly-arrived communities financial matters were managed communally.

'Household budgeting is stress. Kids and conflict over money just builds the pressure [...] understanding this culture of money and budgeting is required. We came from a culture where money was dealt with communally.'

e) Increased financial pressure for families sponsoring children on a 115 visa

A participant from the Centre for Multicultural Youth advised that for families and children being sponsored on 115 visas, the financial impacts were severe:

'Those who come on a 115 visa (without parents) raises guardianship issues for those sponsoring children. This has economic impacts on those doing the sponsoring. This also places pressure on those young people who are obliged to send money home.'

f) Youth financial stress: racism and unemployment

Whilst financial responsibility and stress in family relationships often rests on the parents, youth participants noted that they often share the financial burden (and subsequent stress) of household budgeting. They highlighted the personal and familial impact of racism on their employment opportunities.

Aside from creating barriers to well-being through negative impacts on self-esteem and decreasing social and economic participation, if young people are not able to find employment they are unable to help support their families financially. It was highlighted that many migrant young people are changing their names on their CVs in order to get job interviews.

'If I write "Sonja" on my resume I might get a call. My birth-name I might not get a call.'

g) Youth financial stress: fines

Transportation fines add to financial stress; burdening and alienating migrant youth. Fines often result from language barriers as newly-arrived communities do not understand legal communications. For families in difficult financial situations the payment of transportation and other infringement fines is very problematic.

'The laws are applied the same to everyone but the burden is greater for migrant families. Young people have limited money, stretching Centrelink to support self, family. Fines produce feelings that the society is hard.'

'You look at police and feel like 'another fine is coming'. The government doesn't know how to forgive people.'

This experience contributes to feelings of abandonment by the government and the broader community for newly-arrived migrant youth.

Solutions offered:

Solutions to financial stress offered by participants included:

- Financial counselling and education programs to help improve family budgeting;
- Courses that increase newly-arrived migrants understanding of their financial responsibilities in Australia;
- Improved literacy on fines and infringement notices and acknowledgement of these issues through discretion/leniency in regards to issuing and payment of fines;
- Programs that increase communication between parents and children about budgets and family responsibilities; and
- Enabling young people to work part-time to improve financial wellbeing and to create a diversion from antisocial behaviour.

Question 3: How can we best address the issue of the language barriers between young people and their parents in Australia?

Challenges identified:

Due to time limitations the following questions were only briefly addressed in the second roundtable discussion, but the following provides an insight into the challenge of language barriers. Participants identified:

- Concern about the loss of language heritage and the associated intergenerational barriers this creates; making it more difficult for young people and their parents to communicate.

'Parents often don't know how to talk to young people. A program focused on communication works more so than traditional disciplinary approaches.'

Solutions offered:

- Post AMES English language classes for young people;
- English language teachers who are fluent in the languages of the newly-arrived migrants; and
- Improving efforts to preserve language heritage. *'Language preservation is a part of cultural preservation.'*

Summary of the roundtable discussions' findings

It is clear that the challenges faced by newly-arrived migrant communities to their intergenerational relations are both complex and complicated. The interconnectedness of the issues asks for a response from both policy-makers and practitioners that takes into account the social, cultural and financial context in which intergenerational conflicts are set. There was significant consensus on the issues young people, their families and communities face by the participants in this this research. They offered specific policy and practice solutions they believe would help to address the challenges which exacerbate intergenerational conflict within newly-arrived migrant families and communities.

7. DISCUSSION

The review of previous research and roundtable discussions undertaken as part of this exploratory project indicate that there are significant and interconnected issues creating intergenerational tensions for newly-arrived migrant communities.

The research review established that like many parents and young people, migrant communities confront intergenerational issues, particularly in the adolescent stage. However, for migrant communities, these are compounded by the challenges of acculturation as well as social and financial difficulties. Participants particularly highlighted the impact of financial difficulties. While not specific to newly-arrived communities, the issue is intensified by the costs of settlement, employment barriers such as racism and language problems, and the need to send remittances overseas. The stress these challenges collectively place on newly-arrived migrant families is substantial, and, as a number of participants pointed out, can facilitate family violence.

While broad intergenerational challenges impacting these communities were established by the roundtables, most concern related to the role of child protection services in separating young people from their families and communities. It was recognised that service providers were well intentioned in terms of protecting children from domestic abuse, but their short-term interventions often led to long-term problems, such as substance abuse and homelessness. These, they believe, were caused by not only the disconnection of a young person from their family, but also the isolation from their community. A community-centred approach to child protection was thus strongly recommended.

Participants clearly identified what they saw as the main challenges for the intergenerational relations for newly-arrived migrants in Victoria. In developing responses to address intergenerational challenges, participants placed a strong emphasis on family and community-based solutions; in particular engagement with and from community groups and religious leaders. In the roundtable discussions they identified potential solutions to the problems, including:

- *Improved engagement of service providers with communities* (a community approach rather than just working with a given family or specific member of the family);
- *Access to programs to improve communication between parents and their children* (in this way improving understanding of their respective values and competing needs);
- *Development of training programs* (financial planning to literacy); and
- *General capacity building for newly-arrived communities* (to help empower them to better deal with intergenerational conflicts).

In addition, participants' responses clearly communicated an openness to engage and work closely with government and service providers to address the issues newly arrived migrants face.

8. CONCLUSION

Intergenerational conflicts in newly-arrived migrant families in Victoria are fuelled by the social, cultural and financial challenges they and their communities face. The pressure many of these families are under, alongside some traditional practices, can lead to family violence and family breakdown, from which a host of problems have been associated. These have significant consequences for the newly-arrived young people, their families, communities and the broader host society.

In attempting to address intergenerational conflicts it is important for policymakers and practitioners to understand both the nature and the interconnectedness of the challenges which place pressure on familial relationships for migrants, from acculturation to family finances. This research confirms the findings of the ECCV's *Kaleidoscopic Cultures* report of the importance of family-centred practices and the need for support for families with adolescent children. And builds upon these recommendations by adding the importance of community involvement.

While the area of intergenerational relations is an urgent one for newly-arrived communities, it is important to note that intergenerational harmony is not impossible. A combination of specific programs, cultural training for service providers and a whole of community approach, can help achieve this outcome for newly-arrived families and communities in Victoria and beyond.

Ultimately, the research confirms that a different way of thinking is required about the

acculturative process within the family context, and the need to support newly arrived young people and their families and communities. There is an important, and community-acknowledged, role for government and service providers to play, alongside families and communities, to develop impactful policy and practice initiatives.

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