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A journey towards conscientisation: Motives of volunteers who support asylum seekers, refugees and detainees

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A Journey towards Conscientisation: Motives of Volunteers who support Asylum seekers, Refugees

and Detainees

Master of Philosophy by Research

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Abstract

The focus of this case study is an examination of the factors that motivate people to engage in volunteerism working with asylum seekers. In the research project, volunteering is understood as a civic responsibility of an active member of society which involves social interactions that foster social inclusion: active citizenship. The co-researcher agency of this project is the Perth based Centre for Asylum seekers, Refugees and Detainees (CARAD). The project aim is to investigate the values, belief systems, and attitudes of CARAD's volunteers. This informed the decision to employ a social constructionist approach and is intended to enable further understanding of the aspects of a volunteer identity that involve critical self-reflexivity and understanding of the volunteers' position within the issue of asylum seeking. Fourteen volunteers, many of whom assist with student support, detention centre visits and visa application workshops, were interviewed within two focus groups. Past and current political and social discourses will be analysed and unpacked, followed by employing critical theory and with the influence of Nakata's cultural interface theory (CIT) as the theoretical perspectives. Conscientisation, a heightened level of socio-political awareness, and information about the organisation are the two major themes, which are explained within the findings. This study contributes to filling gaps that exist in regards to volunteerism within the forced migration sector. The findings suggest that volunteering within the migration sector can bring about social change and that it has the potential to enhance social and cultural diversity.

Keywords: Asylum Seekers, Australia, Discourse, Volunteering, Human Rights, Active Citizenship

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference in made in text.

Signature: Sarah Koelsch

Date: 17.7.2017

Acknowledgements

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Literature Review

"If you came to help me, you are wasting your time and mine, but if you have come, because your

liberation is bound with mine, let us work together" (Lilla Watson).

Background and Rationale

Asylum seeking represents a global crisis as there are currently 60 million people displaced

worldwide, most of them within their own countries (UNHCR, 2015). Around 33 percent of those

displaced are seeking asylum in neighbouring countries, whilst 14 percent are attempting to make

their way to developed countries (Sam & Berry, 2016). Out of these 840,000 asylum seekers,

Australia granted 13,756 visa claims in 2014-2015, which were lodged on- and offshore (Australian

Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection [DIBP], 2016). In contrast to the low

intake of asylum seekers regulated by strict immigration policies, the topic is broadly discussed in

Australian politics, which serves to function as an electoral strategy (Anderson, Stuart & Rossen,

2015). Australia's immigration policies are historically shaped through the Immigration Restriction

Act from 1901, also known as the 'White Australia' policy, which functioned to exclude immigrants

from Non-European countries and those who had a low level of English language (Pennington-Hill,

2014). Despite the official abolishment of the 'White Australia' policy by the Labor Whitlam

Government in 1973, race and religion continue to be issues related to immigration policies (Kabir,

2006; Mac, 2016; Pennington-Hill, 2014; Stevens, 2014). In fact, since the Howard government

(1996-2007), the dominant political discourse in Australia surrounding asylum seekers has been

hostile and exclusionary, influencing public opinion and attitudes in negative ways (Martin, 2015;

Van Berlo, 2015).

In order to avoid confusion around the current terminology used to describe people seeking

protection in Australia, the various immigration statuses need to be differentiated. The definition of

a 'refugee' determined by the United Nations is "a person who is outside his or her country of

nationality or habitual residence and has well-founded fear of being persecuted" (UNHCR, 2001, p. 3). An 'asylum seeker' is a person who is seeking protection in places other than their home country, but their status as a refugee is not yet confirmed, hence they are also referred to as 'refugee claimants' (Rowe & O'Brien, 2013; Sam & Berry, 2016). People who are currently held in detention centres by the Australian Government are defined as 'detainees' (CARAD, 2017).

Australia is a geographically isolated continent, but is impacted by global events, international politics and economics, and its societal changes need to be addressed within this context. Furthermore, the creation and/or misrepresentation of alleged connections between asylum seekers and terrorism, and its reinforcement of exclusion and racism around the world should be understood as global issues. In 2016 and 2017, attacks in European countries such as France, Belgium and Germany, intensified the fear of Islamic fundamentalism not only throughout Europe, but also the global community (Zunes, 2017). Angela Merkel, Germany's federal chancellor, received harsh criticism for accommodating Syrian asylum seekers, which may result in the end of her chancellorship (Patterson, 2016). Britain decided to leave the European Union (EU), which the media dubbed 'Brexit', which was impelled by the idea to impede the immigration of workers from other countries (Portes, 2016). Economic inequities were at the forefront of the political debate, but negative social attitudes in regards to immigration drove the decision for many British people to vote for an EU exit (Kaufmann, 2016). In January 2017, Donald Trump was inaugurated president of the United States of America, which some describe as "one of the biggest political upsets in recent American history" (Faber et al., 2017, p. 1). Trump is known for his xenophobic and Islamophobic statements and attitudes as well as for his hatred of Jews, Mexicans and Native Americans, positions which are consequently highly upsetting for many Americans (Reno, 2017). In Australia, the 'One Nation' party gained more popularity through its Islamophobic stance on asylum seekers, suggesting the installation of surveillance cameras in Mosques and Islamic schools (Nierhoff, 2016).

By taking these current global changes into account, it cannot be denied that there is a rise in levels of fear of the "other" resulting in xenophobia, Islamophobia and hatred toward people who

have to flee their home countries and seek asylum because of oppressive regimes, which has

resulted in a global humanitarian crisis (Anderson-Nathe & Gharabaghi, 2017). In contrast, the early

sources of the turmoil within the past years, for example the coincident rise of Islamic

Fundamentalism and terrorist attacks alongside the US invasion of Iraq, are broadly ignored in public

debate (Zunes, 2017). By looking at the issue within its international context, asylum seeking is not

only a global humanitarian crisis, but also represents a climax of the fear of the "other". Moral

exclusion of people who do not fit into a Western profile is one of the outcomes of these

international changes, and can also be identified in Australian society, where asylum seekers are

constructed as the 'other' (Dunn et al., 2007; Mc Donald, 2011). Through exclusionary rhetoric two

groups are constructed, a process which reinforces a concept of 'self' versus the 'other', and in turn,

reinforcing an in-group and out-group categorisation (Every & Augoustinos, 2008; Deaux, 1993;

Klocker, 2004). This concept can be further understood through Social Identity Theory, which

explains that human beings define their social identity through group membership, which is

constructed by being contrasted to another, less favoured group (Deaux, 1993). The construction of

the 'evil other' and 'us versus them' dichotomies serve to create a fear of asylum seekers, especially

those of Islamic faith and identifiable minority group members (Sulaiman-Hill, Thompson, Afsar &

Hodliffe, 2011).

However, in opposition to these negative and hostile discourse(s), there are members of

Australian society who resist these and instead promote an inclusionary attitude toward people who

seek asylum. For example, organisations such as CARAD, whose staff and volunteers support these

vulnerable minority groups who flee their home countries for a safer life. Within this research

project I investigate the factors that influence CARAD volunteers in their decisions to support asylum

seekers and refugees. The purpose of the research is to gain a deeper understanding of the

volunteers' values, motives and attitudes and how these inform their perceptions of themselves

within the volunteering context. In case initial perspectives have changed during the volunteers'

social interactions with CARAD clients, I examine how and why that is the case.

Political discourses within historical context

In Discourse theory, language is understood to produce knowledge, rather than simply reflecting what is known (Hall, 2001). Foucault (1980, as cited in Hall, 2001) conceptualised language to be the nexus between power and knowledge. Language enables the labelling of people and therefore socially constructs their perception and position within society (Edley, 2001). The production of knowledge through employing linguistic strategies is therefore understood as 'discourse', which functions to create power as it not only describes an issue, but perpetuates it as a reality (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008; Every & Augoustinos, 2007b; O'Doherty & Lecouteur, 2007). Edley (2001) argues that descriptions are "purpose-built for the contexts" (p. 439) in which they function. Political discourses are created for a specific purpose as they influence society and inform the ways in which people know about issues that arise within the national and international political sphere. Therefore, pro- and anti-asylum discourses, cannot be understood separately to political, historical and social contexts.

The current Australian Prime Minister, Malcom Turnbull, supports the negative and at times confusing rhetoric of Immigration Minister Peter Dutton, who states, for example, that many refugees hosted by Australia "are illiterate in their own language, but will most likely take Australians' jobs" (Keany & Anderson, 2016). Paradoxically, he also claims that these same refugees would remain "unemployed…languish[ing] in unemployment queues and on Medicare, and the rest of it" and therefore become a financial burden on the nation. Despite receiving widespread criticism for these comments, Minister Dutton has persisted in his stance (Binnie, 2016). These recent negative discourses have evolved through more than a decade of hostility towards, and fear of, asylum seekers created within Australian politics, stretching back to the period immediately before the Federal election in 2001 (Martin, 2016; Van Berlo, 2015). The 2001 election, which returned the conservative Howard government, had a significant impact upon the public construction of asylum seekers as a threat to the national security of Australia (Baldino, 2013; McDonald, 2005). The September Eleven attacks in the United States of America and the arrival of the *MV Tampa* in

Australian waters, accompanied by the false 'children overboard' report, were closely followed by an

election campaign in which a drastic negative representation of Islamic refugees as terrorists was

deliberately created by the incumbent Howard government (Dunn, Klocker & Salabay, 2007; McKay,

Thomas & Kneebone, 2012). In late August 2001, the Australian government had decided to deny

the Norwegian freighter *MV Tampa* permission to land at Christmas Island after the at-sea rescue of

hundreds of refugees from a sinking people smuggler boat (Martin, 2015). During this crisis, the

Australian Navy produced photographs purporting to show asylum seekers deliberately throwing

their children overboard in order to receive Australia's protection; the interpretation of these

images was immediately questioned and later determined to be inaccurate (Bleiker, Campbell,

Hutchinson & Nicholson, 2013; Tatzreiter, 2010).

It is through this visual and textual context that the rhetorical connection between terrorism

and asylum seeking was constructed, producing a somewhat unexpected election victory for the

Howard conservative government through a discourse of securitisation (Gale, 2004; Klocker & Dunn,

2003; McKay et al., 2012). The 'Pacific Solution' policy enacted in the same year in response to the

Tampa event, ensured that all asylum seekers who arrive by boat would be processed offshore on

Islands like Nauru and Manus Island (Devetak, 2004). The principle to not allow 'advantage' over

people who come through regular pathways to Australia has been the fundamental idea

underpinning this policy as it was meant to create the four to five years waiting period for asylum

claimed from abroad (Henderson, 2014). In 2007, the Rudd Labor government promised a more

humane treatment of people seeking asylum in Australia and officially abolished the 'Pacific

Solution' resulting in offshore processing centres on Manus and Nauru being closed (Herold, Korrt &

Dollery, 2016). Nonetheless, that government continued to exclude and disadvantage asylum

seekers through the demonisation of people smugglers, further reinforcing securitisation discourses

(Cameron, 2013).

In 2010, the Gillard Labor government introduced offshore processing in Malaysia, labelled

the *Malaysian solution*, which continued to criminalise asylum seekers who travelled by boat and

perpetuated their inhumane treatment by Australian authorities (Glendenning, 2015). Additionally, Gillard re-opened the offshore processing detention centres on Nauru and Manus Island in 2012 (Herald, Korrt & Dollery, 2016). The Abbott conservative Liberal/National Party coalition government came to power in 2013 using the same methods as those of Howard's earlier campaign, positioning asylum seekers as a threat to Australia's security, sovereignty and border integrity, and turning the offshore processing scheme into the military-led 'Operation Sovereign Borders' (Glendening, 2015; Dunn et al., 2007; Van Berlo, 2015). This indicates that the present situation of refugees in Australia needs to be understood within its construction through social and political discourse(s) and legislation. The dominant discourse therefore needs to be examined within an historical context to demonstrate how it has developed into the rhetoric that characterises the current political sphere (Baldino, 2013). However, it is essential to also discuss the resistant discourse so as not to disregard the dissenting and positive attitudes that exist within Australia.

The pro-asylum voice resists the dominant negative discourse by constructing asylum seekers as being beneficial to Australia rather than a threat to its safety and sovereignty (Every & Augoustinos, 2008). This include positive labels such as being 'hard-working' and having made great contributions to Australia, which function as an inclusionary rhetoric (Capdevila & Callaghan, 2008; Every & Augoustinos, 2008). The resistant discourse challenges the dominant ideology of asylum seekers being different to Australians by emphasising the country's multiculturalism and its benefits. This extends to the promotion of Australia as being a generous and tolerant country, which informs an inclusionary national identity (Every & Augoustinos, 2008). The pro-asylum rhetoric aims to promote inclusion through a discourse opposed to the exclusion pursued by the dominant discourse. Within the resistant discourse, security is defined in regards to security for asylum seekers, rather than Australia's national security (McDonald, 2005). Furthermore, the resistance challenges racist policies and promotes the liberation of vulnerable people from continuous oppression. The differing rhetoric and the contexts in which it functions, therefore, can either be inclusionary or exclusionary in regards to people who seek asylum in Australia.

Moral exclusion

Current negative outcomes of the prevailing anti-asylum discourse - of criminality and

illegality surrounding people who seek asylum - can be observed in acts of moral and social exclusion

through mandatory detention and further limitations to human rights (Silove, Austin & Steel, 2007).

According to Opotow (1990a) the progression of moral exclusion consists of the following five

elements: conflict of interest, group categorisation, moral justification, unjust procedures and

harmful outcomes. By applying Opotow's model to the Australian context, it becomes evident that

the moral exclusion criteria are met. The first criterion, a conflict of interest, can be identified in the

protection of Australia's national identity and security versus the human rights of asylum seekers.

The predominant depiction and labelling of asylum seekers as a homogenous group is a group

categorisation dismissing the individuality of a person. Moral justification is provided through

slogans such as 'Keeping our borders safe' or the claim that the current policies are created to stop

the people smugglers and potential terrorists. Unjust procedures are evident in the inhumane

treatment of asylum seekers, for example, the offshore detention processing of asylum seekers

claims. Harmful outcomes are experienced on psychological, physical, legal and economical levels by

the affected people.

Through repetitive dehumanising language that describes asylum seekers as 'queue jumpers'

and 'illegal refugees', labels become a reality. A reality of asylum seekers being perceived as

unlawful and dangerous, and as a consequence a hostile attitude toward asylum seekers is created

among some members/sections of society (Every & Augoustinos, 2007a; O'Doherty & Lecouter,

2007). It can be argued then, that negative language has the power to position people outside of the

moral boundaries of Australian society (Cameron, 2013; Opotow, 1990b). This can be observed in

the limited rights granted to asylum seekers in regards to the decision about where they live, work

allowances and limited social interactions. These limitations have negative impacts on a person's

self-efficacy, autonomy and self-respect and can end in depression, self-harm and suicide (Newman,

Proctor & Dudley, 2013; Silove et. al, 2007). Despite these publicly known consequences, it can be

argued that by the time of the last Federal election on July 2nd 2016, both major political parties had

opted to compete to launch the harshest asylum seeker policies. If the dominant political discourse

is taken at face value, the question that then arises is why volunteers would want to work with

CARAD, an organisation which supports alleged 'criminals' who supposedly are a threat to Australia's

security? To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the organisation's values, the

volunteers' motives in working within this difficult space and also Australian society and politics in

order understand the context of the issue.

CARAD (Centre for Asylum seekers, Refugees and Detainees)

CARAD is a Perth-based non-government organisation that supports asylum seekers,

refugees and detainees. Their purpose of advocacy and support and their values of respect, social

justice and independence are expressed in their vision statement (CARAD, 2014-15):

The organisations vision is for an inclusive and welcoming Australia in which:

   i.   *Every person seeking asylum in Australia is treated with full respect for their human rights
         and for Australia's international obligations.*
   ii.   *Those who are accepted as refugees become independent citizens and accepted
         community members.*
   iii. *CARAD members and volunteers become advocates in their communities for respectful
         treatment of asylum seekers.*

Since its formation in 2000 by a group of volunteers in response to the temporary protection visa

regulations that were then being put in place, the organisation has supported over 5,000 clients.

Initially, the acronym meant the 'Coalition Assisting Refugees After Detention', but the group's title

was changed in 2015 to the Centre for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees in order to better

reflect the organisation's operations and purposes. Staff and volunteers assist clients in Western

Australia with services such as settlement support, advocacy and referral to other organisations. This

includes visa application workshops for temporary protection visas and detention centre visits to

provide social interaction and support to detained individuals. Figure 1 provides an overview of the

current process in Australia for people seeking asylum that outlines the different visa pathways

depending on the mode and date of arrival:
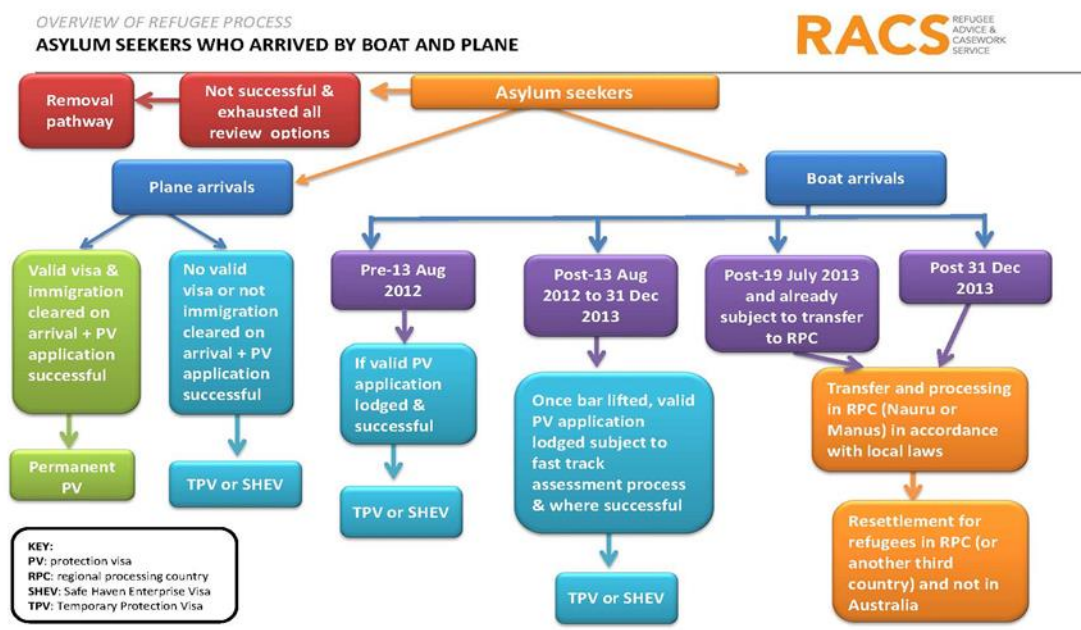
Figure 1, RACS (2015)

By looking at the different pathways and their outcomes, it becomes clear how political

decisions directly determines asylum seekers' future and status. A formal status describing the

individual's relationship to the state, which may vary from being a permanent resident to being

resettled in another country. Therefore, CARAD staff need to meet with community stakeholders

and government agencies on a regular basis to work toward positive social change in regards to

asylum seeker issues. Overall, CARAD facilitates a multi-level approach to create opportunities for

their clients to empower themselves and to promote an environment that meets their clients'

needs. As CARAD is a non-government organisation, funding is limited so the organisation relies

heavily upon its volunteers and the generosity of its donors. In 2015-16 CARAD began offering

regular volunteer information sessions to members of the public who are interested in volunteering

within the migration sector. CARAD reports a significant level of interest from the community and

manages to attract people from various professional backgrounds providing a wide range of skills

through their diversity.

Volunteerism

   A volunteer can be defined as "someone who, in the last twelve months, willingly gave unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group" (ABS, 2010, p.3). Earlier research has shown that volunteers experience various positive outcomes from volunteering, such as mental and physical health benefits (Stukas, Russell, Nicholson, Brown & Aisbett, 2016). Additionally, volunteering can help to improve skills required for the workforce and personal growth. In 2008, the European Commission identified some key competences necessary for the achievement of personal development and active citizenship, and social and professional inclusion in society (Crick, 2008). These include communication skills in the mother tongue, communication skills in foreign languages, learning skills, initiative development and entrepreneurial skills, intercultural skills and social and civic skills (Samoila, 2011). In respect to the current asylum seeker situation, it can be argued that the global community will have to collaborate and enhance the skills listed by the European Commission if genuine multiculturalism is to be achieved. Forced migration is continuing and globalisation promotes the flow of people across borders (Devetak, 2004). Samoila (2011) suggests that, "a shared culture, creation of knowledge and learning through common experiences are achieved through active participation and commitment" (p. 65). Some people achieve this by volunteering with vulnerable minority groups. Additionally, it can be argued that understanding one's own positioning in context with people from different cultural backgrounds is linked to the acceptance of differences and becomes a form of self-knowledge (Koelsch, 2015; Samoila, 2011).

   Therefore, a person's holistic development is enhanced when educating oneself in ways other than simply through theoretical and factual knowledge about contemporary issues. Volunteering within the asylum seeker sector offers the opportunity for social learning and developing interpersonal skills. Conceptualising volunteering in this way, encourages an understanding of both the volunteer and client as both giver and recipient (Kenny, McNevin & Hogan, 2008). Although, volunteering is still sometimes viewed as an 'act of charity', such a perspective clearly ignores the bi-directional benefits of client-volunteer engagement (Endres &

Gould, 2009). Viewing volunteering as a 'charity act' positions volunteer engagement within a form

of benevolence whereby the giver is perceived as superior to the receiver. Thus, despite the 'good'

intentions, such power imbalances hold the potential to reproduce domination toward the client

(Olivius, 2016). This concept of volunteering is potentially detrimental to the volunteer and the client

as it limits the development and improvement of important skills that equip the individual to

operate within a multicultural society. This demonstrates the importance of investigating the values

and belief systems that influence a person's decision to volunteer with vulnerable minority groups.

Volunteer motives within the migration sector

Asylum seekers and refugees are depicted in both the Australian media and politics as being

'the problem' (Banks, 2012; Martin, 2015). Non-government organisations are trying to solve the

issues connected to the situation and to fill the gaps in services that are not covered by the

government or other services (Sawtell, Dickson-Swift & Verrinder, 2010). The negative stereotypes

that are presented through the media as well as through government policy and rhetoric, can lead to

some strong opinions even amongst persons who want to contribute to the solution. These

attitudes might include a 'helper mentality' that perpetuates power imbalances between the

minority groups and volunteers (Endres & Gould, 2009). A volunteer space that can be enacted as a

mindset of 'the volunteer knows best', can lead to an environment in which the client has no space

to empower themselves or to be an active agent within the process (Endres & Gould, 2009; Sawtell

et al., 2010). With this in mind, I examine the volunteers' motives and attitudes in order to

determine the validity of this claim. Specifically, I consider whether the volunteer's mindset is

influenced and/or changed by their interactions at CARAD and work with the clients.

Previous studies have been carried out in regards to volunteering within Australia, but have

mainly focused on the health sector and tourism industry (Mohammad, 2014). These investigated

whether volunteer motivation changed over time, finding that 'values' were the most important

factor in influencing people to volunteer in a specific area (Green & Blackett, 2004). Less visible

within the literature I researched, is how to conceptualise the position of the volunteer within the

context of the relationships with the clients. The act of volunteering can be understood as an act of liberation for the client and the volunteer, which leads to social change. An act of liberation for the volunteer can be seen within the resistance to immoral acts toward vulnerable people(s) by supporting these minority group (Berndsen & Gausel, 2015). From a different point of view it can be an act of benevolence, which potentially causes harm as it reinforces the status quo of oppression (Sawtell et al., 2010). CARAD's training and philosophy of self-reflexivity, combined with its human rights agenda supports its volunteers to act toward liberation, rather than benevolence volunteerism. Volunteering within the asylum seeker sector is less researched by contrast to other sectors yet, but like those other areas, it also addresses specific unfulfilled needs within society, and so demands research in order for its characteristics, potentials and limitations to be understood in all their complexity.

Epistemology and theoretical perspective

The aim of this research project is to investigate the individual perceptions and experiences of CARAD volunteers. The study will therefore be conducted from a social constructionist approach, which recognises the existence of different realities that are constructed by human beings through diverse understandings and subjective meanings (Crotty, 1998; Edley, 2001). Within this context, social constructionism as the epistemological framework will help to demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the different experiences and perspectives. The theoretical frame which informs the understanding of the issue will be comprised of more than one theory (Walter, 2010). Critical theory as the guiding theoretical perspective, and alongside it, Nakata's (2007) Cultural Interface providing an additional conceptual framework, offer the lenses through which the phenomenon will be investigated.

There are three elements to critical theory: self-reflexivity, analysis of power imbalances, and emphasis on language (Crotty, 1998; Wang & Torrissi-Steel, 2015). Critical theory investigates those barriers to people's wellbeing which are historically constituted and can never be accurately viewed when removed from values and social norms (Crotty, 1998). As a result, the core of critical

theory involves the unpacking of power imbalances and contests the status quo implicit in social norms. In this context, critical self-reflexivity and critical analysis of a person's beliefs and values are essential in order to be aware of individual roles within the context of societal issues, such as oppressing people who are different to the dominant group (Suffla, Seedar & Bawa, 2015). Thus, in critical theory, social norms are questioned, challenged, and understood through the introduction of another social reality (Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthom and Siddiquee, 2011). In line with critical theory, I will be looking at the assumptions that influence volunteers in their perceptions of themselves, of CARAD clients, and of their relationships with CARAD clients. Inevitably, this will demand a strong focus on language and how it may reinforce or oppose power differentials. As volunteers also inevitably are part of the dominant group outside of CARAD's environment, this may differ within their relationships and work contexts within the organisation. Thus, the volunteer may find themselves in a position of knowing less than the client due to the limits of their past experiences and language. In contrast, they may have more informed knowledge about the issue than their friends and family. Further, volunteers may question existing social norms and challenge them through their work for CARAD.

Cultural Interface Theory (CIT) provides a framework for understanding a person's own role, potential and limitations within the power relationships that comprise the "cultural interface" (Nakata, 2008, p.199). It is important to recognise that Nakata's theory focuses on, and is derived from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts and on the cultural interfaces with Non-Indigenous persons and their knowledge systems. However, the theory can be deployed to other situations in which differing cultures and knowledge production systems meet (McLaughlin, Whatman & Nielson, 2013). Thus, the theory can be employed beyond the domains of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. So while there is an emphasis on what unites people from different cultural backgrounds, this does not negate the value or importance of the differences. Figure 2 helps to visualise the space of the cultural interface that comprise different knowledges.
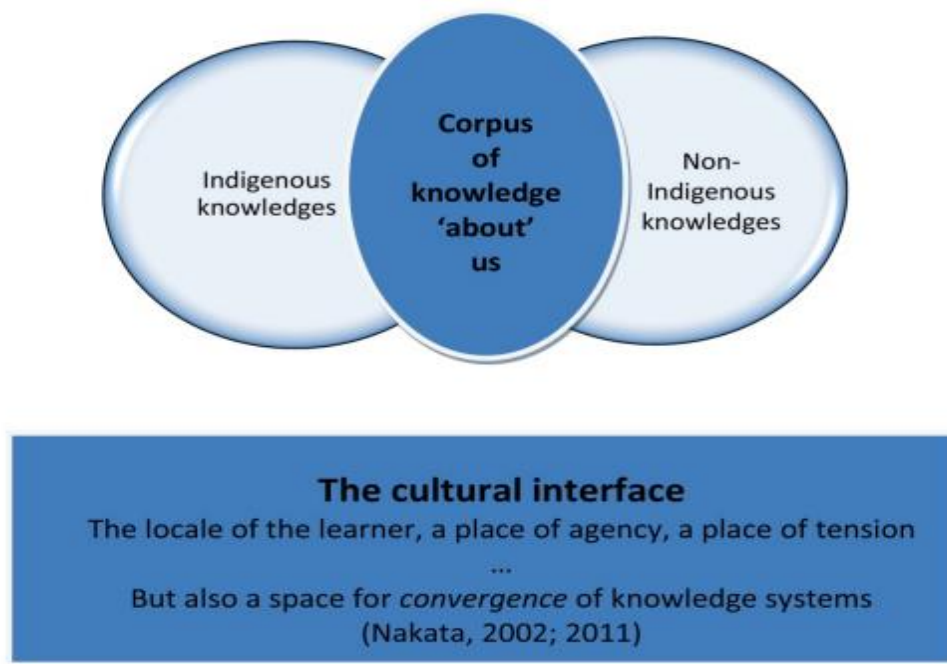
Figure 2. The cultural interface model (McLaughin, Whatman & Nielson, 2013).

In contrast to the common perception and understanding of two separate existing knowledge systems, the Non-Western and the Western, Nakata rejects such a simple dichotomy (Nakata, 2007). Nakata rather reminds us that "in this space are histories, politics, economics, multiple and interconnected discourses, social practices and knowledge technologies which condition how we all come to look at the world, how we come to know and understand our changing realities in the everyday, and how and what knowledge we operationalise in our daily lives" (2007, p. 9). Critical reflection upon the 'self' and on relationships to others is then required to achieve this kind of understanding (McLaughlin et al., 2013). CIT considers social and discursive relations as complex settings that position us in society and offer possibilities for change that arise from understanding this phenomenon (Nakata, 2008).

In regards to this research project, I examine the volunteers' cultural interfaces, which exist on multiple levels with client knowledges and the organisation itself. Further, I analyse whatever new perspectives may emerge out of this third space for the volunteers. Nakata refers to this as a 'corpus of knowledge', that offers new opportunities on how to view these relationships. Through

the interviewing of CARAD volunteers, this project delineates the volunteer perspective of this third

space influenced by the clients and CARAD. The decision to focus on the volunteers and not to

include CARAD clients in this research was informed by the time limitations of my temporary student

visa and by my concern to possibly trigger any emotional stress or trauma within the clients by

asking questions dealing with their understanding of self. This part of the issue could and should be

researched in the future as it may provide a more holistic understanding of the cultural interface,

which could then be used for new training strategies within the volunteer space of supporting

people who seek asylum.

Methods

Research Methodology

Being a Behavioural Science practitioner guided and informed not only the choice of the research topic, but also the selection of methodology and methods. Behavioural Science is a degree that provides the theoretical frameworks to promote social inclusion with a strong focus on the role of language and on shifting prevailing negative discourse(s) to raise awareness and to provoke positive social change. The examination of the contribution of culture, history and politics to social behaviours and attitudes are embedded within the Behavioural Science curriculum; the knowledge and understanding of this potentially leads to a more inclusive community (Darlaston-Jones, 2015). This informed my decision to investigate issues linked to asylum seeking, and volunteering within the migration sector as the research area, to which political discourse(s) and policies are highly influential.

Action, theory and research operate synergistically within critical praxis in Behavioural Science to provide deeper understandings of the experiences of marginalised and oppressed people (Evans, 2015). This aspect of the discipline informed my decision to employ Participatory Action Research within my community as it involves crucial aspects of Behavioural Science praxis, such as constant engagement in the overlapping cycles of research, investigation, reflection and the promotion of positive social change (Austin & Prilleltensky, 2001). The cycle of professional praxis involves challenging dominant discourses and detecting unequal power relationships within society and its communities, essential for my research area (Evans, 2015; Prilleltensky, 2001). The values of CARAD align with those in Behavioural Science as CARAD staff and volunteers work toward social justice and equality through pursuit of equity for their clients. The organisation is part of a broader Perth community, but is also a community in itself, of which I became a part of when completing my internship at the organisation as the milestone unit of my undergraduate degree. CARAD promotes positive social change as their staff and volunteers operate as advocates for marginalised people whose voices are predominantly ignored by the dominant group in Australian society. Thus, CARAD

works toward social inclusion and equality for people who are morally and socially excluded from

Australian society and its resources. In these ways, the contexts of Behavioural Science and CARAD

guided the selection of methods.

Participatory action research (PAR), is a process that combines education, research, and

action through community collaboration in research projects (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). This

research orientation promotes the community's active participation within the processes of

decision making (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thus, research is not conducted 'on' community members,

but rather, 'with them', enabling genuine collaboration and partnerships between the community

that hosts the project and the researcher (Dudgeon, Scrine, Cox & Walker, 2017). By prioritising the

knowledge and experiences of research participants, PAR allows a balance in power differentials

between the researcher and participants, fostering a high level of rapport, both beneficial for

collecting in depth data (Boyes-Watson & Pranis, 2012). Figure 3 provides a model to visualise how

the three major aspects of PAR link together, each aspect informing the two other sections.

Figure 3. Participatory action research model (Learning for Sustainability, 2017).

CARAD, the co-researcher organisation, confirmed its collaboration and facilitated access to its volunteers through a letter of support (Appendix A). Its collaboration also involved accessing CARAD's facilities where the focus groups were conducted. To be able to use the CARAD office was beneficial as it was familiar place to all volunteers and located close to the centre of Perth, making it easy to access by car and public transport. I decided to hold the interviews outside office working hours in order to invite people who work during those times and also to not impede CARAD's everyday business by occupying one of their rooms. To be able to use the office outside their working hours, I was given the code for the alarm system and access to the main building keys without having a CARAD staff member present. This was a considerable demonstration of CARAD's trust in me: it both supported the practicality of the project and also enhanced my confidence in the significance of my work. In addition, the organisation allowed me the freedom of designing the overall research project, and helped to shape it in regard to formalities and planning.

Within the PAR design I used a case study method which, as a study of one or more cases, may involve multiple sources of information (Punch, 2014). It consists of inquiries that are contextually unique, consequently offering in-depth information about a particular issue or domain (Harland, 2014). The case study method ensures that the issue is investigated through a variety of perspectives, which allows a multi-facetted presentation of the phenomenon within its real-life events (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009). The social constructionist philosophy that framed the research supports this methodology because it specifically allows for different experiences of an issue to emerge through the perspective of each participant. In this research project, CARAD representing a specific agency within the domain of refugee support services, is the single case study within which the voices of the volunteers offer a variety of sources of information and experience. This allowed me to collect rich data because different sources offered a range of experiences and understandings about this particular area of volunteering.

Data collection was conducted through the method of focus group interviews. A focus group study can be described as "a carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions

on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment" (Krueger & Casey, 2009,

p. 2, as cited in George, 2013, p. 257). The benefits of focus groups include flexibility in accessing

new knowledge, and meaning-making in ways that reduce the power and influence of the researcher

(Braun & Clarke, 2013). In addition, the dynamic of the group itself creates the possibility of new

perspectives and ideas emerging beyond those of the individual participants. To interview

volunteers at their organisation, but without any staff or clients present, provided an environment

that was memory provoking and close to the issues with which they had been confronted.

The organisation

To ensure that CARAD was, and continued to be aware and participant throughout the

period of the Master's degree, I organised several meetings with the volunteer coordinator to

discuss aspects of the project and to listen to her insights about them. As an example, to discuss

whether it would be appropriate to name the organisation within the thesis. In between these

meetings, I informed the volunteer coordinator about the research progress through emails and

phone calls. An initial meeting with both the University research supervisor and the CARAD

volunteer coordinator helped to provide a mutual understanding of the project and offered an

opportunity to shape the project so it has been aligned with the organisations' values and

expectations. Further, the organisation's volunteer coordinator attended the presentation of my

research proposal, held on campus in Fremantle, again to ensure that CARAD was involved and up to

date.

Prior to the proposal date I emailed the CARAD contact the power point presentation that I

had created both to let the person know what to expect and for them to give me their feedback.

During the period of the study I participated in a detention centre debrief session and attended two

workshops organised by CARAD. This level of engagement with the organisation and the volunteers

helped me to have a position within the CARAD environment that allowed me to have an

insider/outsider perspective, as described in Breen (2007). Additionally, it offered the opportunity

for potential participants to have some familiarity with me before I sent them an invitation to

participate in the project. Since I became known to at least several volunteers, this familiarity

potentially positively influenced individual decisions to participate in the project. This approach,

which respected the volunteers' own rights to have as much understanding of my project as

possible, allowed me to shape and conduct a research project in collaboration with CARAD that

enabled me to locate a perspective and a contextual understanding that extended beyond the

external researcher's lens. The insider/outsider position helped not only to connect my theoretical

knowledge with the real-life experiences of the volunteers, but also ensure that my experience of

PAR was as authentic as possible.

Participants

The informants were fourteen volunteers of CARAD, who were over eighteen years of age.

Table 1 provides and overview of the demographics and experience of the participants, who were

involved in student support, detention centre visits and visa application assistance.

Table 1. Participants' demographics.

Participant	Volunteer time for CARAD Date: February 2017	Area of support at CARAD	Previous volunteering experience
One	Three and a half years	Detention centre visits and Visa application workshop	Yes
Two	Less than a year	Student support	N/A
Three	Two years	Student Support	Yes
Four	Eighteen months	Student support	N/A
Five	One year	Student homework support	Yes
Six	Three and a half years	Homework support	Yes
Seven	Two years	Detention centre visits	No
Eight	Three months	Student homework support	Yes
Nine	Three years	Started with student support and then changed to detention centre visits	Yes
Ten	Eighteen months	Visa application assistance	No
Eleven	Two years	Visa application assistance	Yes
Twelve	Six years	Student support, conversational English and Visa application assistance	Yes
Thirteen	Three years	Detention centre visits and conversational English	Yes
Fourteen	Twenty months	Student support	No

Materials

The participants received an information sheet (Appendix B), explaining the purpose and

aims of this project in plain English to ensure that each person would understand the context in

which they would contribute to the study. A consent form (Appendix C) was given with the

information sheet and both were signed by the participant. The materials were sent via email

directly after volunteers expressed their interest in participating. This was done a few weeks prior

to the interviews, which ensured both that the volunteers had time to read the documents

thoroughly and that they had the opportunity to ask questions. I had worked to articulate the

material as informatively as possible in order to provide transparency and no further questions

arose. In keeping with the qualitative research framework, the interview schedule (Appendix D)

consisted of evaluative and descriptive questions, using open-ended questions that begin with

'how', 'why' and 'what' rather than closed-ended questions. For example, "Why did you chose to

work with CARAD?", "How do you view Australia's current policy on asylum seekers and refugees?"

and, "Do you benefit from the volunteer experience with CARAD?"

Procedure

Prior to the data collection I rehearsed the interview with Joanna Josephs and another

CARAD staff member, in order to provide transparency about the composition of the questions and

to receive possible suggestions. Two focus groups were held, both at CARAD's office which provided

a safe and familiar space for the volunteers and therefore encouraged an open dialogue between

the participants. The focus group format facilitated a conversational style of interviewing

recommended for its capacity to garner deep rich information (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Prior to the

focus group commencing, participants were thanked for coming and again informed of their right to

withdraw, and issues of confidentiality were discussed. Consent forms were proffered and signed

and introductions were conducted to ensure that all the participants were relaxed and comfortable,

which then led naturally into the interview questions. The participants were asked a number of

questions about their opinions on Australian refugee policies and their distinctive experiences as

CARAD volunteers without any specific expectations from the researcher. This research design gave

the individual an opportunity to explain in their own words and train of thought, their personal

opinion, experience, and understanding of their role within the context. This provided a level of

freedom within the conversation that helped to facilitate a safe environment, which was conducive

for an individual to express their feelings and thoughts openly, which led in turn to receiving in-

depth information and understandings. I initiated the interviews by asking a broad opening question

"What led you to volunteer with CARAD?" and then strove to ask as few questions as possible in

order to avoid the risk of disrupting the volunteers in their train of thought and potentially

influencing the direction and focus of the conversation. Consequently, I only asked a further direct

question when it seemed that the thread of interaction had stalled or arrived at its natural

conclusion.

Each of the focus groups lasted approximately 90 minutes and were audio recorded. In

addition, I invited an assistant to co-record and to listen to the conversations in order to gain a

second perception of the interview apart from my own. At the first interview my University

supervisor assisted at the interview, which also allowed me to evaluate my interview skills with a

highly experienced researcher. At the second interview an external assistant co-recorded and took

notes, after having signed a confidentiality agreement (Appendix E) before the interview was

conducted. The external assistant's input was beneficial as it provided a perspective absolutely

external to my research. At the end of each focus group participants were thanked for their time

and offered tea and coffee/light refreshments. After the data collection, I transcribed the audio

version into a verbatim written document.

Data analysis

The data were subjected to a thematic analysis, which explored the transcripts for keywords,

main aspects, and common themes, a method that is also described as 'coding' (Braun & Clarke,

2013). The thematic analysis involved several periods of listening and typing, and refining of ideas as

they emerged from the transcripts. During this process of reading and analysing, I maintained a

critical reflexive journal to capture my personal thoughts and feelings in response to the data.

Additionally, I discussed my thought processes as openly as possible with my University supervisor,

who helped to critically reflect on my research. This method helped to identify the reasons 'why' and

'how' people hold certain opinions, values, and belief-systems (Desmond & Emirbayer, 2012). In line

with this, it offered the opportunity to identify personal biases and potentially flawed assumptions

and their examination. Critical analysis of the researcher's beliefs and values are essential in order to

be aware of the individual role within the context of societal issues (Suffla, Seedar & Bawa, 2015).

This reflexive method was used to be aware of personal biases in order not to influence the data

interpretation, a process that promotes transparency and scientific rigour (Braun & Clark, 2006,

2013).

To further ensure the authenticity of the produced material, each participant received a

summary of the findings via email and then had the opportunity to confirm or negate the accuracy

of the analysis, a procedure known as 'member checking' (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This is important

because it ensures participants retain the 'power' and 'voice' over their contribution to the research

project (Tanaka, 2002). The participants responded positively and expressed their interest in reading

the thesis when finished. The organisation's volunteer coordinator received the summary of findings

as well, which were further positively addressed in a follow-up meeting. The positive feedback was

encouraging and allowed me to proceed with my work in articulating and writing up my findings and

interpretations.

Ethical considerations

The Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Notre Dame, Fremantle, granted

Ethics approval for this project. As the topic touched on aspects of the participants' experiences of

their volunteer work which can be personally challenging, there was a minor chance of emotional

discomfort to be experienced by the participant. If the participant felt uncomfortable at any stage of

the project they were welcome to take breaks from the interview and a self-care procedure would

have been made available if needed. In case the informants wished to withdraw from the project,

they were free to do so at any given time of the project. This was clearly communicated in advance through the participant information sheet. As the informants were fellow CARAD volunteers, tension in regards to power relationships and concerns around confidentiality could have arisen, but did not. In order to minimise feelings of not being 'safe', I emphasised clear communication and transparency with each participant. As I had established a relationship with CARAD through my previous work and volunteer experience with the organisation, this insider/outsider position has been intrinsic to the research, which required me to be particularly attentive to the ethical aspects of this relationship (Breen, 2007). In line with this, I followed the Australian Psychological Society's Codes of Ethics (2007) and was conscious about my moral accountability toward the participants and other stakeholders as addressed in O'Neill (1989).

Limitations and future research opportunities

This study was conceived as a preliminary investigation into the motivations and values of the volunteers at a specific agency. Consequently, the findings from this case study cannot be generalised beyond the specific agency and its volunteers. However, the depth of information and the richness of the data gained nonetheless offers insight into the role of the volunteer who engages with asylum seekers and refugees. Additionally, the study provides valuable evidence about how volunteering might be regarded as a form of personal and social advocacy and resistance against hegemonic political and public discourses and their associated exclusionary practices, such as 'offshore processing'. Further investigations might explore a range of agencies as well as the volunteering history of those working in this domain. Such an investigation would require a more extensive methodology and resources, beyond the scope of a Master's thesis.

Findings and Interpretations

This study was designed to examine the reasons CARAD volunteers chose to support asylum seekers and refugees and whether the training provided by CARAD supports the goals of the volunteers and the organisation. The findings show that CARAD volunteers demonstrate a strong commitment to liberation social justice; essentially that they actively support asylum seekers and refugees to resist the inhumane treatment by the Australian government and to distance themselves from the negative attitudes toward the clients from mainstream Australia. The issue of liberation is twofold; first it is about the liberation of asylum seekers from oppressive discourses fuelled by politicisation of a humanitarian crisis, and secondly it is about liberating the volunteers from the constructed identity of an anti-immigration nation. This is linked to the volunteers' personal beliefs and values and their position in relation to politics and human rights.

Conscientisation, a process of heightened level of socio-political awareness, and information regarding the organisation itself were the two major themes that were addressed and explained within the focus groups. Four dominant subthemes in regards to the conscientisation aspect of their volunteer work emerged from the interviews: critical engagement, active citizenship, self-reflexivity and liberation of self and others. Critical engagement with the issue was demonstrated through informed perspectives on the government policies, analysis of media (mis)representation of refugees and asylum seekers, and the questioning of these. The CARAD volunteers opened up the discussion to one another in regards to why and how Australian society has come to its current positions of exclusionary immigration processes and offshore detention. Active citizenship in the form of resistance was mentioned in connection with advocacy and personal values and beliefs, and described as "it is the right thing to do" to support CARAD's clients. Self-reflexivity was explained through sharing personal stories, turning points and understanding one's own role within the context of Australian society and its immigration policies. Further, reflexivity in regards in relation to being a settler continent and the ongoing discrimination of the first people of Australia was expressed within comments on Australian society. The association of asylum seekers with terrorism

was also part of the discussion within the self-reflexivity comments. These demonstrated the influence of the media and negative political discourse in constructing this automatic subconscious association, even in people who oppose this concept.

Additionally, the CARAD volunteers seem to have a beneficial understanding of their skills and their motives regarding their volunteer work. The four dominant subthemes interlink and inform each other which creates a momentum for the volunteers that positively contributes to their development as a volunteer within the asylum seeker sector. Understandings also appeared to exist among the volunteers that their work at CARAD not only helps to liberate oppressed people(s), while it also offers opportunities to liberate oneself as the volunteers experience themselves as being different to the majority of Australians. Their engagement with CARAD clients also functions to resist a national identity that is shaped by racism. In feeling different to the majority of Australians, the volunteers find like-minded people through their engagement with CARAD, which builds a community formed through mutual beliefs and values. The findings also support CARAD in understanding which aspects of its volunteer education are efficient and which parts may offer opportunities for further development. The inclusion of aspects regarding the organisation itself is one of the benefits of the PAR design as the organisation gains authentic constructive feedback from their members (Dudgeon, Scrine, Cox & Walker, 2017).

Expressions of doubt and feelings of helplessness were integral to the discussion, which seem to be an inevitable part of volunteering within the asylum seeker sector. The work with sometimes traumatised people who are oppressed by Australian policies involves challenges on both personal and emotional levels. Throughout the interviews the participants explained these challenges, which are caused by ongoing policy changes and the lack of consistency that accompanies them, and which impede advocacy work. The volunteers often accept these difficulties as part of their active participatory citizenship and understand the significance of their work. These themes, subthemes and issues are presented in Table 2 and further discussed in detail below.

Table 2. Summary of Findings from the focus group interviews

Theme	Subtheme	Issues	Exemplar
Conscientisation	Human rights	Social justice Contesting social systems	*"You know, it's not a crime to seek asylum and once what law are people breaking by seeking asylum?"*
	Active citizenship	Advocacy Values and beliefs Attitudes	*"And why do we do it? Because it is the right thing to do"*
	Self-Reflexivity	Skills and boundaries Self-positioning within context Awareness of privilege Terrorism	*"We are only people who are doing our bit for other people. We can only speak the word as we see it…we got to do our bit of influence."*
	Liberation of self and others	Identity Volunteers' benefits	*"It's embarrassing to be Australian"*
The organisation	Strengths	Website and organisation Care about volunteers	*…it's interesting, unique, it's good to have a good website."*
	Suggestions	Training Follow-up	*…it was an introduction and it was also to try take a bit of, take some of the fantasies of refugees and there also just people.*

Conscientisation

The findings show that the participants developed a heightened socio-political awareness, which can be described as 'conscientisation'**.** Freire (1974) explains that through a critical attitude and historical awareness people practise an action-reflection on the world. This involves, becoming aware of a situation of oppression, understanding the issue, and as a further step taking action to change social injustice to a more positive outcome (Bellett, 1998). In the participants' context, this means that they have become aware of the situation of asylum seekers, educated themselves in order to understand the issue and then transforming this into action that supports the liberation of oppressed people; and by doing so, they liberate themselves from this system. The participants achieve this through their commitment to positive social change, their volunteer work for CARAD and by distancing themselves from a racist Australian identity. Conscientisation is the highest level of critical consciousness that fosters awareness of a social-cultural reality that shapes our lives (Bellett 1998; Freire 1974). Therefore, by becoming aware of the reality of asylum seekers, one may become aware of the oppressive system that regulates their own everyday lives. Through contesting social systems in a collective, the volunteers practise active citizenship, informed and guided by their critical self-reflexivity. Through the volunteers' strong commitment to human rights and social justice, they contest social systems and view the Federal Government, mainstream media and Australian society, through a critical lens.

Human rights

Participants mentioned several times the issue of human rights violations committed by Australia through inhumane treatment of people who seek asylum. This links directly to the United Nations Human Rights Declaration of 1952 and the obligations it places on its signatory states. Further, not only individuals, but also human rights bodies have repeatedly voiced concerns that Australia's offshore processes in Nauru and Manus Island in Papua New Guinea are violations of its non-refoulement obligations under Article 33(1) of the Refugee Convention (Henderson, 2014). Additionally, Article 3 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading

Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture), and Article 7 of the International Covenant

on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) are understood to be violated (Briskman, Fiske & Dimasi, 2012;

Henderson, 2014). However, successive Australian governments continue to ignore the international

commentary in regards to their offshore processing of people who seek asylum (Devetak, 2004).

Within the interviews, volunteers repeatedly referred to the human rights violations:

> *…How low can we sink? From a policy perspective, the cruelty that's been inflicted. The human rights violations against international conventions. You just wonder, surely it must be able to stop at some point, but they just keep going.*

> *…and there is no pathway to ever leave. And those offshore detainees, can't even look forward to anything, to make a plan, no one knows what to do, they're stuck, because politically everyone is stuck into a corner, there is no way out to save face. They are in detention for years, because we don't know our way out and that…if it was a temporary thing or if there was a point to it, even if I wouldn't agree to that point, then maybe I could see why, but none of that existed at all. It's clearly not stopping anyone else. People are stuck.*

Severe deprivation of physical liberty is one of the statues that is argued to be fulfilled by mandatory

detention in oppressive conditions of people who seek asylum (Henderson, 2014). Such oppressive

conditions were discussed by a volunteer in the following way:

> *…because I've been particularly upset about, what seems to me the institutionalisation and depersonalisation of people. Ahm, the stories of people being referred to only by a number, not by their names, upset me. They had their humanity stripped from them.*

> *There is this horrible demonisation of these people for no reason…*

The practices identified by this volunteer, depersonalisation, for example being referred to as a

number instead of a name, clearly can result in dehumanisation (Bleiker, Campbell, Hutchison &

Nicholson, 2013; Esses & Medianu, 2013). Sharples (2006) explains that dehumanising the 'other'

functions along with a process of distancing from one's own emotions. This can result in being

perceived as outside of mainstream's scope of justice and therefore not deserving of a humane

treatment (Clayton & Opotow, 2003). Thus, the dehumanising treatment of asylum seekers by the

government decreases the levels of empathy and compassion of mainstream Australians towards

those who are in need of protection. Dehumanisation is not only the most extreme form of

intolerance toward people who are perceived as different or 'the other', it is also the ultimate denial

of humanness and therefore, exclusion from in-group society (Esses, Medianu &Lawson, 2013). The

dehumanisation of a person can have severe consequences for the individual, which can be

observed in the impact on the person's mental health. Especially issues regarding long-term

detention, were also part of the discussion:

> *They're gonna be so traumatised [in detention], if they weren't already traumatised that that*
> *was enough for them to get on a boat and travel and take the risk, you know. Then being*
> *institutionalised and then somehow being lost in limbo, not knowing what they hell is going*
> *on. That's gonna be even worse and then you think like we just hand them over to a third*
> *country where you've seen, they took those asylum seekers and they try get them to settle in*
> *Vietnam and that went down like a ton of bricks in water. That didn't work. And everybody*
> *was like: "Ah, they are obviously no-hopers". And you're thinking "No, if you took these*
> *people, you brutalise them, you make them slightly insane and then you say "why is there*
> *hostility to other people? Really?"*

These comments on the treatment of people who seek asylum and refugees in Australia reflect the

existing literature, which stresses alarming outcomes such as depression, self-harm and suicide

attempts (Newman et al., 2013; Silove et al., 2007). As Opotow (1996a) describes, harmful outcomes

are the consequence of a moral exclusion process. To be morally excluded means to be outside of

the scope of justice. This process involves a conflict of interest, group homogenisation, unjust

procedures, moral justifications and their consequent in harmful outcomes. As discussed within the

human rights section above, the inhumane treatment and social isolation of people in Australian

offshore detention meet these criteria. This led the volunteers to discuss policies of past and present

Australian government's and their leaders.

      Social justice. As social justice is a term that encompasses issues of inequality within society

in a broad spectrum, it is necessary to define what the term involves within the context of this study.

A useful definition of social justice explains it as

> *"promoting access and equity to ensure full participation of all people in the life of society,*
> *particularly those who have been systematically excluded on the basis of race or ethnicity,*
> *gender, age, physical or mental disability, education, sexual orientation, socioeconomic*
> *status, or other characteristics of background or group membership" (Lee & Hipolito-*
> *Delgado, 2007, p. xiv).*

 In the CARAD context, volunteers help clients to participate more fully within the community by

supporting them in various specific areas. This is made possible through the services CARAD offers,

including English lessons, intensive employment assistance, material aid and accommodation

assistance. The volunteers I interviewed, expressed a strong commitment to human rights in relation

to inclusion, respect for diversity and the protection of vulnerable people. A critical engagement

with the issue is crucial in order to detect and understand social injustice. Critical engagement is

generated through critical thinking, an essential skill when advocating for social justice, if prevailing

social norms that can be harmful to disadvantaged individuals and/or minority groups are to be

questioned (Steele, 2007).

Contesting social systems. In their responses, the volunteers raised major concerns in

regards to government policies and their public explanation, and about the media depictions of

people who seek asylum. Each of these social systems have led to an anti-asylum seeker attitude in

Australian mainstream society. Through their ability to draw conclusions beneath the surface level

that informed their point of view and therefore their positioning within the context, the volunteers

demonstrated a high level of critical thinking. Through their critical thinking, participants linked

different aspects of the issue to another that are influential in shaping public opinion and attitudes.

These are explained within the following sections concerning government decisions, media

involvement and Australian society. Volunteers critiqued the Federal government's lack of

transparency, its policy decisions on regulation, and addressed the links between formal politics and

the shaping of public opinion. From the participants' perspective, these factors contribute to a level

of mistrust toward the government and political leaders, which one volunteer summarises as a

'culture of lies'. The following quotes explore the beginning of mistrust toward the government after

the *Tampa* event:

> *They don't care. I think the most appalling thing is that what the government has done, is the lack of transparency, for example it's like with the story of the Tampa. Sure it was going on before then, but this culture of lies. That seems to be more and more accepted, the fact that it's okay to tell lies, that they make people believe that. They just do it again and again and again. And it just makes me question everything.*

My belief was lost when we heard the children over board and [? Person] stood up there and said "This is fact." And it turned out to be a lie, straight out lie and I know that came after the Iraqi invasion where that was not true, too, so for me I question anything that doesn't even feel right to me.

The comments highlight the ways in which statements of political leaders directly caused people to question the credibility of their political decisions. Consequently, the questioning of the status quo and of decisions made by people in power becomes integral to the volunteers' active citizenship. Further, government decisions in regards to asylum seeker and changes within policies were linked to the challenges asylum seeker and their advocates face:

I think from a policy perspective as well, since July 2013, things change constantly, and I'm sure the people here who are assisting with the visa applications, it's an, you know, the kind of visas there is, the bridging visa E when it's granted and the ability to have work rights, the ability to have Medicare or not, you know it's changing constantly, and it's really hard to guide or to advocate for people, when you don't know what the current government policy is and of course with the changes in government, there are changes in policy. So depending on when people's arrival date was depends on what their eligibility might be. So it's a very ahm fraud system to be working under. And these are for people who are highly educated, English speaking as their first language. If we can't even navigate the system then how can we possibly expect the asylum seekers and refugees to be navigating through the system? Yah, I think the government is deliberately trying to make it difficult.

This comment addresses the difficult process of visa application and the particular challenges of negotiating it if English is not the applicant's first language. In regards to the fact that the government's policies became increasingly strict, volunteers commented as follows:

They can't do anything but press it harder and harder and harder. And basically there are no other options and the opposition, ahm, campaign reason appeared to turn around …..unfortunately they got into a public position where I think, ahm, for only political reasons developed a policy that then has shaped public opinion and it's got to a point where it's an appalling policy treating human beings as objects and frightening other people from coming here. It's the most horrible thing that you can think of.

I think the policies are also kind of a matter of pride and you also get this stubbornness: this is what we gonna do and they can't back up from it. They keep going. They go with it. That must be so embarrassing for them.

The politicisation of the issue in an electoral sense and the ways in which members of the government responded, were direct factors in individuals making the choice to volunteer within the

asylum seeker sector:

> *I think it's really the outrageous behaviour of the government that drove me to it.*

> *I think it's like Guantanamo Bay. It's there and they don't know what to do with it. I think it's hard one to come by. No one knows what to do. Everybody knows it's there. Everybody knows it's wrong, but ahm unfortunately they now have gone in a corner...and you think, somewhere along the line the political strength to stand on moral grounds rather than whether you are going to win an election or not.*

These perceptions are supported by a number of authors within the literature, who explain how refugee policies are utilised in domestic politics and instrumentalised to win elections (Baldino, 2013; Maley, 2016; McDonald, 2005). For example, in order to achieve political goals the numbers of boat arrivals were represented in disproportionate ways, yet they made up no more than "0.89 persons per thousand of the Australian population of 23,032,700 in 2013" (Maley, 2016, p. 672). These practices of (mis) representation serve to create a hostile attitude toward asylum seekers and produces fear of the 'other', as what one participant refers to as a misrepresentation of truth:

> *I think from a policy perspective and a media communications perspective, the government really, ahm, misrepresents the truth. All the numbers we are talking about here and ahm you know tries to mislead the public around the situation. It's really just a drop in the bucket, but the government has us believe that influx of you know immigrants, thousands, we're not even dealing with tens of thousands, you know it's just such a gross misrepresentation of how bad the situation is.*

It can be argued that because many people do not have access to scholarly articles or alternative sources of information, it may be difficult for them to gain informed knowledge about such situations, events and issues. Pederson, Attwell and Heveli (2005) found that Australians with a right-wing political orientation, lower levels of education and increased age correlated with inaccurate knowledge about asylum seekers, which they acquired through (mis)representations within the media. Yet, alternative and independent media that present the issue in a more critical way than mainstream newspapers and television channels, are both available and accessible. So it can be argued that if mainstream Australians were interested in a more just society, and understood their responsibility to be informed about issues such as asylum seeking, they could have sought

access to such information. One of the volunteers addresses this issue about the difficulties of

mainstream information through a critical lens:

> *The first thing is, I don't know, the details that come out of the box and the conversations,*
> *ahm, I don't know whether policy is supposed to be including all the information or hidden*
> *somewhere in there. The information seems to get scattered around. Everybody talks about.*
> *So, I don't like what I see and hear.*

This participant highlights the lack of comprehensive information through the media, which causes

them to be critical and disapproving of that situation, an attitude which shows their critical

engagement with the issue. Volunteers explain that media representation and government policies

function together and cause the current (mis)representation of asylum seekers and refugees. Some

outcomes of this were also described within the human rights section above and continue within the

comments below:

> *I was getting incredibly angry and upset all the time about what was being said on television,*
> *on social media, and it was starting to absolutely consume me, this anger about our country.*
> *What were we? Why are acting like this?*
>
> *I started throwing things at the television…"Stop lying" shouting at the television, ahm and I,*
> *it's become a real button issue for me, ahm, for what I felt really angry about…*

Esses, Medianu and Lawson (2013) focus on the role of the media in promoting the dehumanisation

of refugees, which is also addressed by the participants as the depersonalisation of people who seek

asylum and their objectified depiction. The visual dehumanisation is further discussed by Bleiker,

Campbell, Hutchinson and Nicholson (2013) who found that in the lead up to the federal elections in

2001 and 2011 in Australia, 66 per cent of all media imagery of two major Australian newspapers

represented asylum seekers in medium to larger groups rather than as individuals. Only two per cent

of the images included clearly identifiable faces. This may be primarily done in order to protect the

privacy of individuals, however, it has the effect of asylum seekers remaining faceless and at a

distance in media representations. The media continue to depict them as a "shadowy stranger…in

spatial proximity and social distance" (Banks, 2012, p. 301). Such portrayals perpetuate the

dehumanisation of people and increase mainstream society's emotional distance, through which

both, mainstream media and political decisions are in turn supported. Consequently, the individual

person who is in need of asylum is often not part of the public perception or discussion. For those

members of the public who disagree with the dominant discourse, however, the media

presentations can have exactly the opposed effect, as described in the following statement:

> *I guess it was just first all over the media, ahm, just hearing a lot about refugees, boat people and debates and stuff and I just felt a lot of empathy for the people, so I've thought, oh what can I do.*

Whilst critiquing government and media, the participants in this study also voice disappointment in

their fellow members of society. In particular, participants critique the individualistic lifestyle of

many Australians, and their ignorance and indifference that match some of the attitudes displayed in

politics.

> *What's really disturbing is the number of Australians who are supporting them [politicians].*

> *I think unfortunately the average Australian is quite materialistic and as long as their income and their bottom line is being looked after they are not going to, I know this sounds very cynical, but they are not gonna stir the boat on anything.*

The critique of society was then directly linked back to the political leaders of Australia who

influence public opinion.

> *…but I find if I talk to my friends in the community, they say "Ah yes, we can't trust this", and it's ingrained and you're quite right, it's coming from the political masters, but there is no conscience in the political system.*

> *What amazes me, they don't seem to care what other nations think about us. And it's been declared, the human rights being abused, they don't seem to care that we're sort of behind with the climate change. That just seem to go straight over their heads for whatever reason. And Turnbull is getting all his boys doing the action for him, Dutton, at the moment, ahm, it's amazing.*

> *But if you listen to the Pauline Hansons…political, very sort of narrow focussed in a lot of the things that they come out with, you are pushing it up-hill to try and have a rational debate. That is not something somebody wants to rationally debate.*

The volunteers' statements were later reflected within the 2017 Western Australian election, in

which the 'Pauline Hanson's One Nation' party achieved 11.58 percent of the votes (Australian

Broadcasting Corporation, 2017). The 'One Nation' Party' is known for its racist, right-wing and

exclusionary orientation, targeting everyone who does not fit into their white cultural and religious

ideology (Sydney Morning Herald, October 18, 2016). To contrast the current positions and actions

of Australian political leaders, a volunteer mentions Malcolm Fraser's humanitarian response when

refugees from Vietnam arrived in Australia in 1975/1976. The Fraser government resettled over

54.000 Vietnamese refugees as a result of the end of the Vietnam War, many of them arriving by

boat (Stevens, 2012). In contrast to the later Howard government, which highly problematised small

numbers of refugees, the Fraser government de-escalated negative responses from Australians

toward people who arrive by boat (Persian & Matthew, 2016):

> *…but basically, I think, we are in need of a real leader. Back in the day when Malcolm Fraser, he didn't ask anyone what to do with the boats. He just did it. He just did it, because it was the right thing that needed to be done. There were lots of economic arguments, apart from the humanitarian ones. They could have taken this line this time, but they didn't want to.*

Further, part of the participants' critique toward Australian society is the use of fear and ignorance

to legitimise anti-asylum seekers sentiments among the wider Australian community. The

participants

> *So there is almost like this fear and with this there comes this argument of self-interest and every time you think "ah look, more boat people, that's more people we have to worry about. They are going to burden the system, right?" and I think it worked, because everybody I talk to, the sense that you get from it is that, when they come to this country, right, or when they are trying to get to this country. They gonna use up all these resources, all these financial systems that should be going to Australians. That's the feeling, that's the background, I don't really, I mean that is the background for terrorism, but there is this big fear that they gonna use up all the money and there is nothing left for everybody else, as I like you know, that is just a couple of thousand people we are talking about here. Australia has a population much larger than the immigrant population.*

> *…we don't understand or see the single policies, because this is a fear campaign.*

The problematic of 'fear politics' is widely discussed within the scholarly literature, where this

tactical approach toward the global issue of forced migration is critically unpacked (Devetak, 2008;

McDonald, 2011). 'Fear politics' function to construct insecurity and create a fear of a societal issues

such as forced migration in order to legitimise other political decisions, for example 'the war on

terror' or strict immigration policies (McDonald, 2005). The comments by participants regarding

these processes demonstrate a considerable level of critical thinking within the interviewed

volunteers: they question prevailing social norms, government decisions and the experienced lack of

transparency, and society's response to these. Within this context then, the participants position

themselves in their active citizenship through being advocates for people in need and as promoters

of social justice.

Active citizenship

 Active citizenship is described as the mobilisation and self-empowerment of citizens, a skill that can

be learned and must be practised within communities in order to make meaningful decisions and to

create positive social change (Crick & Lokyer, 2010). Active participation in public life fosters social

and cultural diversity (Samoila, 2011). The participants demonstrate resistance to Australia's

increasingly punitive asylum policies by expressing their critiques, disappointment and anger about

how Australia as a nation deals with the current situation. Souter (2016) explains that as a good

international citizen, a country has responsibilities for people outside their geographical borders and

if a country contributes to a process of forced migration there is a responsibility to care for the

victims of this process. So the volunteers are practising 'good citizenship', which is what they expect

their Government to include into their policies. Hence, the participants chose to support CARAD in

order to take action by advocating for asylum seekers and refugees, and by articulating and

expressing the conflicts. Through their involvement and decisions to be part of the solution, they

progressed from being critically engaged to be active citizens. Crick and Lokyer (2010) argue that

"active citizenship embodies the reciprocity and responsibility which any civilised society needs for

its survival" (p. 27), which highlights the significance of the volunteer's contribution to society.

Through their work with CARAD clients, the volunteers have the opportunity to practise some of

their civic rights and responsibilities. This then, enables them to live an active participatory

citizenship. An important part of this is their advocacy practice.

Advocacy. To advocate for CARAD clients and asylum seekers in general is one of the areas

in which volunteers can be actively involved. Advocacy is an important part of CARAD's work as gives

voice to asylum seekers' issues in Australia that tend to be unheard and often ignored.

> *I think I always had a strong social justice, human rights side to my life and I've done a lot of volunteering…Ahm, but I do work with victims of crime as the other main advocacy thing I do, do advocacy and human rights is the area I'd like to be involved in.*

> *We are only people who are doing our bit for other people. We can only speak the word as we see it…we got to do our bit of influence.*

To publicly support the cause is significant in being a volunteer working with asylum seekers and

refugees, not least because, the issue often arises as conversations in private social settings. It is

essential that CARAD volunteers keep themselves up to date and prepared for discussion, whether in

public or private.

> *[Volunteer holds up a printed document from the Refugee Council of Australia]: so if you're not sure exactly what's going on that's quite a good document to read. 'Cause I thought, people were saying things to me and I didn't have a lot of nitty gritty answers to give them.*

In order to encourage and support informed volunteers, CARAD circulates monthly newsletters and

uses posts on social media that not only include events and internal news, but also changes in

relevant political news. Beyond such external information, the volunteers' advocacy is further driven

by their values and beliefs.

Values and beliefs. Some of the volunteers replied to my introductory question as to why

they had chosen to work with CARAD with an answer that included their upbringing and values, such

as inclusion and tolerance, as important in leading them to become a volunteer in this sector.

> *I come from a family who is very community minded. There was nothing that wasn't, my mother, I used to call it 'picking up the strays', because we would end up with people in our house, who were total strangers, you've been toughed out of your bed and sleep on a*

mattress on the floor and such and such will have this. So when you are brought up in that sort of environment then you're form a part of the community.

…but you'll never going to find out unless you go and talk to these people. And that's the thing with everything, you won't ever understand it until you step into their shoes or to see, to get a view point from them. And for me that was really important.

A few of the participants mentioned their affiliation to churches and that this had influenced them in

their decision to volunteer:

I grew up with the church and the principles, no matter what colour they are, no matter where they came from or what accent they have, their accent disappears. People become friends. This is why I'm here.

I am Christian and I believe that what's God wants me to be and I'm pretty keen on justice and helping other people, you know.

Along with not-for-profit organisations, church organisations are strongly involved in the support of

people who seek asylum (Gosden, 2006). This is due to the significance churches place on values

such as compassion and hospitality, and therefore of the promotion of just and humane treatment

of people who seek asylum (National Council of Australia, 2016). The Uniting Church (2017), for

example, on its website states its explicit opposition to privatised detention centres, to the

detention of children and mandatory detention, and demands permanent protection visas for those

in detention. Conclusively, the upbringing, values and beliefs of some participants informed their

inclusionary attitudes and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Attitudes*.* Along with their values and beliefs, volunteers described their positive attitudes

toward people who come to Australia to seek asylum and to migrants in general. Travels to foreign

countries including the Middle East were mentioned to explain positive experiences with people

from other cultural backgrounds and ethnicities. It is then, not only simple contact with people who

are different in some ways, but also the quality of these experiences.

*As a personality, I found people from somewhere else as quite fascinating, because they knew something I didn't know***…**

You learn a lot, but what brought us here in the first place, the strong feeling to want to help people who have been abused by our government. The thing is, you know, when I was young I was travelling, and I was in the Middle East ahm, people just treated me so kindly and so that is what set my attitude and now seeing what's happening to these countries now.

The attitudes described above are further informed by the heightened level of self-reflexivity on the part of participants.

Self-reflexivity

As explored earlier, critical reflexivity goes beyond the simple reflection of issues on a surface level through its processes of identifying the reasons 'why' and 'how' people hold certain opinions, values and belief-systems (Desmond & Emirbayer, 2012). This enables personal biases and flawed assumptions to be identified and amended. Critical reflexivity and critical analysis of a person's beliefs and values are essential in order to be aware of the individual role within the context of societal issues such as the oppression of people(s) who do not conform to prevailing social norms (Martin-Baro, 1996; Suffla, Seedar & Bawa, 2015). Being aware of these possibilities provides a productive starting point when dealing with vulnerable minority groups. As explained earlier, self-reflexivity is a crucial aspect of a conscientisation process that helps to position oneself within the social issue of oppression (Freire, 1974). On an organisational and practical level, self-reflexivity also helps to create a beneficial person-environment fit for the clients and the volunteers as positions can be allocated according to the skills and boundaries of the individual.

Skills and boundaries. The participants described a beneficial understanding of the skill set they can offer CARAD and some also addressed their own understanding that limitations and boundaries nonetheless exist within those. They explained their skills mainly as language teaching skills.

> *And I looked up what sort of volunteering I could do and the tutoring, I had some experience in.*
>
> *But, basically, because I had a background in teaching and I've already done volunteering teaching people English.*
>
> *This would fit really well I guess, given the skills set that I have [Advocacy].*
>
> *I speak Middle Eastern languages, so it is silly not to do something to help these people...*

Awareness of boundaries and limitations were reflected in the following comments of some volunteers:

> *I knew that's what I could do [English teaching] and I was very torn about the idea of going and actually seeing people in detention. And I decided I'm not trained to do that. And I don't think I will cope with it.*

Setting of boundaries within a volunteering context are important in order to avoid burn out or secondary trauma. Urdang (2010) emphasises that in prevention of burnout, awareness of self helps as a critical tool. Further, improvement of agency structure and clear communication of job requirements within a supportive environment also help to avoid burnout (Soderfeldt, Soderfeldt & Warg, 1995). Therefore, self-awareness that includes awareness of limitations is beneficial to a volunteer experience. Limitations were not only discussed in terms of personal skill sets, but also in context of situations that challenge the volunteer spirit and hope for change:

> *I just heard this week's podcast where that doctor released all these documents from Nauru…And he was saying that how much these people were emphasising you must not be given any hope. How awful. Isn't this my job?*

> *And it's one of these scenes, I think they put one person on a Jumbo Jet, who is surrounded by four people, but he had a really fast lawyer who managed to get him out , he is now claimed a refugee. He is still in Christmas Island, because he fails the character test, because he does have a record and he's charged with different things. He's not an angel. And I think he is a nice bloke, he's a friend. But the training has taken off that shine. Stop thinking everyone is cute, warm and cuddly. There is an important part of it is self-management. Is about maintaining so much hope, not that someone is going to change, but somewhere in that happy medium, just being there for somebody that's all you can do.*

The participant seems to have a realistic view on this particular difficult situation and an understanding of limitations of what can be achieved and what not. Self-management and the responsibility to maintain a positive attitude is mentioned as part of a volunteer's experience. Some participants discussed the ways that CARAD encourages the setting of boundaries and the need to be aware of one's own biases, processes which then enhances self-reflexivity. To be able to understand and assess this, volunteers have to reflect on themselves and realise not only their potential, but also their limitations. Further, they have to be mindful in their behaviour when entering the volunteer space.

> *But I think what they did touch on at the workshop when I was around, ahm, not how to protect yourself, but how to set your own boundaries, so whatever you're doing you can make your own decision, like "Oh, I might be helping too much". Like a volunteer fatigue…*

> *Mine [referring to training at CARAD] was quite general and it was all about understanding the issues, really. And ah where do you fit in, checking your own biases.*

The practice of mindfulness and self-reflexivity helps to position the self within the context of social (in)-justice issues as it helps to enhance conscientisation.

Self-positioning within context. Understanding one's own role within the issue is essential in order to become an agent of change who is part of the solution of social injustice (Desmond & Emirbayer, 2012; Smith, 2015). The CARAD volunteers explain their understandings of themselves within a social and historical context, which is described by personal turning points and also by reference to the impacts of colonisation in Australia and how this positions them within the issue.

> *My turning point was when I was walking the dog and had a chat to strangers and was just standing around at the beach. And a man comes up and he starts the conversation with "Did you hear that bloody London kept fellow, bloody Musy mayor" or something and I just thought "That's it" I can't even walk the dog now without hearing this stuff all the time and so I have to do something positive for myself.*

> *I am a son of a refugee. My father came here in the early nineties. We come from the Middle East originally. Ahm and it was just that thing of: I've seen one too many, excuse… 'fuck off, we're full' -stickers"*

The issue of positioning within a country that was colonised by Western immigrants was mentioned several times and links were made by the participants to the current migration situation in Australia. Acknowledgment of and respect for the first people of Australia was reflected throughout the interviews.

> *Fifty thousand [referring to the years of ownership of the first people of Australia] the only ones who have the right to say, you know, "we own this land". All of us, we are all immigrants and so were our parents. From generation to generation, people forget that.*

> *We are all descendants of migrants!*

One participant explicitly expressed the personal conflict of being part of the dominant system and the experience of living by its rules.

> *How I feel about all this like. I tell you, I feel, you know, very conflicted about this all, because on the one hand, while we're playing along with this. We just, you know, we just part of this system. We do what we need to do…*

This volunteer articulates an acute awareness of a position of privilege through being a member of the dominant group. Deutsch (2006, p. 23) states that" awareness of injustice is a precondition for overcoming it" and is therefore the first step in becoming an agent of change. Critical self-assessment is crucial in the development of agency for positive social change as it helps to understand where one perpetuates negative social norms and prejudice (Desmond & Emirbayer, 2012).

Awareness of privilege. Some participants explained their understanding of (white) privilege within the context of colonisation and immigration. Amico (2016) defines white privilege as "a concept of racial domination that enables us to see this relationship from the perspective of those who benefit from such domination" (p. 2). A social privilege that has become a norm through processes of domination and the control of institutions (Kobayashi & Peake, 2000). The participants possess a particular awareness of their privilege and describe wanting to use it in a beneficial way through becoming an agent for positive social change.

> *…cause it was kinda like my life is very privileged, I need to kinda do something, do I want to do something for the environment or this or that, so it wasn't immediately I want to work with refugees.*

The participant's awareness of privilege is linked directly with a wish to utilise a privileged position within society to support a cause that addresses social issues. Smith (2015) describes this type of understanding as a transformation of a white identity from an agent of oppression to an agent of change.

> *And my partner is black and the casual racism that he experiences every single day. Some I notice, most of it I don't, because I am white and we're blind to it. And I just think, he's Australian and ahm the amount of racism he has to contend with, let alone people with an accent and are new to this country.*

> *I worked in the military most of my life in Australia when I lived here, you get the same kind of very anti-refugee,…you know, white attitude…It's one of the things I just got sick and tired with it, you know I'd like to help somebody.*

Volunteers here specifically address white privilege and note an intermittent awareness of its everyday realities, which one volunteer reflectively explains as 'being blind to some racism due to whiteness'. Radermacher (2006) explains this process as understanding racism through the lens of whiteness; a standpoint of unearned privilege. The findings show that the volunteers' level of reflexivity is informed by awareness of skills and boundaries, individual positioning within the context, and privilege. They have reflected on their individual white identities and on unearned privileges that come with it, and have managed to find a vantage point that enables them to use their position to promote equity and equality within their community.

Terrorism. Through their knowledge and reflexivity, interviewees were able to discuss the issue of terrorism within the context of people from the Middle East seeking asylum and to reposition these in a different perspective.

> *I think it was an unfortunate piece of history that John Howard was in New York at 9/11, because his personal attitudes and shock and those sort of things…*

This participant understands and follows Australian politics within a global context of events and can interpret how the presence of John Howard and his personal experience overseas afterwards informed Australian immigration policies. More recent attacks from 2016 were mentioned in connection with terrorism and people of Islamic faith, which demonstrate in a differently nuanced perspective:

> *I don't know all the policies and all the details, but I feel like we can't just take everyone in without any control. So I am for the protection, ahm it doesn't mean that I am against refugees, I am a compassionate person. Ahm, but I 'm French and it's actually an issue quite close to our heart ahm seeing all those terrorist attacks, just cannot not make that connection, but it's true that some from when they pass as refugees there is no control, they just came into the country to do the attacks on France and in the other countries.*

Some important points emerged through this comment, for example that a person can be

supportive of the protection of vulnerable people, while at the same time being non-supportive of

open borders; a common misperception about refugee advocates voiced by refugee opponents.

Further, the fact that even a volunteer who supports protection and is a compassionate person

cannot help but draw a connection between asylum seekers and terrorism, demonstrates the

pervasive influence of media and politics in the (mis)representation of people who seek asylum. The

constant association of asylum seekers with terrorism is a method employed by Australian

governments and mainstream media that functions to denounce them as 'social deviants' and

'illegals', and consequently as a threat to Australian security ad society (Devetak, 2004; Rowe &

O'Brien, 2013). However, to the alleged issue of terrorists being disguised as asylum seekers other

volunteers offer an oppositional stance in the following statements:

> *All these facts aside ahm my understanding point, looking at refugees and asylum seekers and connecting them with the label of terrorism, I don't a hundred percent see the connection, because a lot of terrorism is home grown. Something that happens within people. And I think that happens within people who feel disconnected and not part of the community. It's happening here in Australia for people who haven't even been to the Middle East or any Islamic country. And you know, and are from Christian backgrounds as well. So it's really really interesting, I think you're point is valid, but ahm I think it's interesting, there's no connection to me.*
>
> *So I see it as from the point, "okay there are obviously certain people who are terrorists, but are they the majority or are they the minority? I think they are the minority and so the majority is suffering, because we try to stop the minority coming in and this is the problem.*

The discussion entailed important contextual aspects of different facets of the issue. On the one

hand, there is the knowledge of the role of mainstream media and politics in creating fear and

constructing the asylum seekers' identity as a hegemony of terrorists. On the other hand, there

exists a demonstrable threat from Islamic extremists toward people from host countries, a threat

that can become reality, for example, through the attacks in Europe in the past years. However,

people who flee from terrorism in their own country and seek asylum elsewhere are unlikely to be

terrorists. They are leaving their homes because of terrorism. This is a distinction, which often fails

to be acknowledged by mainstream Australians that participants highlighted through their

discussions. One participant explains this by quoting an American late night television show dealing

with the issue of asylum seekers being alleged terrorists:

> *…it's an American kind of late night show and even I who thinks about these things a lot and even as someone who is educated, I had a second I haven't thought about it that way before. All the idea of terrorism and asylum seekers and so on. And she was saying: "You know if you were a terrorist in a Syrian refugee camp. First of all you need to be selected ad once you get selected you get removed. And then you're just going to end up in Finland, I was just about to swear, ah shit, and then if you got to America, you still got to go through all these checks. So if you were a terrorist and wanted to go to America or probably Australia, you wouldn't go through that system.*

The volunteers' levels of comprehensive knowledge, critical engagement, and critical self-reflexivity

result in liberation from fear and insecurity producing politics and hostility toward people who are in

some ways different to mainstream Australians.

Liberation of self and others

We are not their saviours [regarding CARAD clients].

As noted above, the issue of liberation involves two aspects. Within the context of this thesis

it is first understood as the liberation of asylum seekers from oppressive discourses and treatment

that are fuelled by politicisation of the current humanitarian crisis. Secondly, it is about the self-

liberation of volunteers from the constructed identity of an anti-immigration nation and its

exclusionary attitude toward people who seek asylum. Volunteers achieve this through their active

participation in a public life that includes advocacy for and support of CARAD clients. Through their

active citizenship, they have opportunities to liberate themselves, therefore, they are not

volunteering primarily out of benevolence, but from an understanding that the liberation of all

people is inextricably connected. Further, their active citizenship operates as part of their social

identity, which drives the volunteers to understand themselves as different to mainstream

Australians who are not active in positive social change issues related to forced migration.

Identity. Participants are fundamentally disapproving of mainstream attitudes toward

people who seek asylum. Therefore, due to its links to racist attitudes and behaviours, participants

voiced dissonance with mainstream Australian identity, and rejected a sense of it being a component

of their own identity. McAllister (2016) describes such inclusionary civic identity in contrast to an

ethno-national identity, which is more racially exclusionary orientated. The following comments

describe the exclusionary ethno-national identity, which the participants disapprove.

> *I think we are rednecks, I think we have the most terrible society, but I realise that I am actually in the minority in saying what I'm saying, because the scare mongering that has been going on over the years have tainted reasonable people's views.*
>
> *I am disgusted that we as a country take advantage or think we have privilege of, because it is surrounded by an ocean that somehow we're not responsible, ahm, for the world's desperate people from other land or countries and I think that is a problem as well.*
>
> *The refugee situation in our country is an embarrassment to call ourselves Australian and that's not the only thing, the climate change is the other big embarrassment.*

This shows that society and policies can affect the individual's social identity resulting in the

rejection of a mainstream national identity. A feeling of being 'different' to the dominant societal

group in Australia is causing conflicts between some of the participants' social and personal

identities. Social identity theory argues that people understand themselves and others in context of

intergroup relations (Deaux, 1993). Opposing a negative mainstream Australian identity, therefore,

functions to distance oneself from mainstream anti-refugee attitudes, an internal conflict, which is

reflected in the following comment:

> *Also saying, it is not true that all Australians are like this. I'm Australian, I don't think like this, but stepping up actually, holding up, ahm Tampa, surely the overboard (?)Thinking, I am actually ashamed to call myself Australian about this. Ahm, getting actively involved actually. Actually trying to do something. Showing "This is us, this is us, this is Australian".*

The question then arises as to what behaviour is Australian and who is and is not Australian in that

sense. The participants understand themselves to be Australian and at the same time voice the

perception of being 'different' to the majority of Australians outside CARAD who oppose asylum

seekers' human rights. Some think that the difference might be their more accurate and deep

knowledge about events and political processes as opposed to people who lack such knowledge and

obtain their information mainly from media reports (McKay, Thomas & Kneebone, 2012).

> *What makes us do that and other people not necessarily do that? What's the difference?*

> *I don't think there is one sense of national identity. I think that what makes ahm, a lot of Western countries in general good places, because we all come from different parts and we all have different stories. We're able to cooperate with each other and live in this beautiful place. I think that is a part of identity and I think at times that is threatened.*

Yet, despite all the challenges discussed above, the participants experience benefits that are an

important part of working with CARAD clients. These benefits contribute to a meaningful volunteer

experience in which they not only give their support, but they also experience positives in return.

Volunteers' benefits. The focus group participants described a range of benefits including

friendship, personal growth and health benefits as results of their volunteer work. Additionally, they

also addressed the occasional phases of desperation.

> *Ah, just that, I would never have any chance to meet them. You know, these people and what they've been going through, you know, just to talk to them, to hear their stories, and also to get to know them over a period of time. I feel like they are friends, they are really…I get heaps out of it, at least as much as they get out of it.*

> *But you're right, the mornings, it's the friendship and the mutual appreciation walking together through things. Sharing different cultural things, sharing our food and their food.*

> *I see the family for like a year, nearly two, and I keep going back there, because I get so much out of it, like ahm for me what's being great is to getting to know people that I just would not meet, from a different culture, from a different religion, and so it has open my eyes and my mind a lot, ahm, yeh, just making a connection and relationship with the whole family.*

> *[After retirement]I was gonna be under-socialised (mutual laughter). So I knew, I already had in mind to volunteer with CARAD, so I've done the Building Bridging Course.*

> *For me, we are helping. This is not us giving, we are receiving as well.*

These examples highlight the positives that the volunteer work contributes to their lives. Some

participants also suggest that their client contact helps them to better advocate for them, which in

turn enhances their feelings of being efficient in their support of the clients and therefore, in

practising active citizenship.

> *It's totally changed my attitude, you know it confirmed where I was sitting before, but I think what it's done for me from an engagement point of view and an advocacy point of view has been that my exposure to detainees has given me the ambition to speak with people, to go and talk to people with direct examples that are personal.*

> *…so the benefit for me has been the one on one engagement and be able to use that then as a spring board to a more effective tool for an advocate.*

However, to ensure a holistic presentation of volunteering within this at times challenging sector, it is essential to include the doubts and hopelessness that can arise when supporting vulnerable people. What follows are comments that address the inhumane treatment of people in detention and describes the impacts on both the client and the volunteer.

> *She's been in detention, the family has been in detention for three years, et cetera, and I said "How are you coping?" Now, these people came from Afghanistan and they were Hazaras, so not Pashtu, they were always sort of they were persecuted forever, because they had an Asiatic look and she said: "Nobody wants us. We are not wanted where we came from and we're not wanted here either". I cried, because I thought "That is exactly how Australia has become"*

> *And he [detainee of Yongah Hill] had a kidney infection and he hadn't seen a specialist in nine months and every time he went to the toilet, peeing he was urinating blood. And the only thing these fuckers in the thing gave him was Panadol. The worst thing you can give someone with a kidney infection, right?! Okay, and this guy, you know, and my heart was breaking every time he gives that look to me and he goes through that door. And I think I leave this guy again and he is sick.*

> *There are times in detention centre and you hear some of these cases and you just go "Man that was a bad day. Get me out of this place."*

> *But you just have to have this mentality, "Yes, there is this whole system, that you're never gonna change. It doesn't matter how frustrated you get and you have days when you just turn around: "Look this is just, I need a break". Ahm, and you can get really upset and worked up about it and angry. And then you know, let it pass. And you realise that I am actually pretty useless.*

These comments show that the migration sector can be a personally challenging space in which to volunteer, but while able to express negative feelings and frustrations, these volunteers highlight the importance of such volunteerism. It is important to note that such feelings were not only alluded in connection to detention centre visits. One participant, for example, described the inconsistencies that can arise within the visa application workshops. Due to the critical situation of some clients,

inconsistency in attendance and documentation can occur that in turn decelerates the work of

CARAD volunteers.

> *I definitely do benefit, but I focus more on something that is a bit different. Sometimes, just how things are organised or helping them in the whole process, so sometimes I turn up and there is no client or it's cancelled. So sometimes I feel like I am making an effort to come here and it's good and then I see as a volunteer what I'm doing is, I am available to keep this program going, but it's "oh what did I really do today?"*

These comments show that volunteering with asylum seekers and refugees can be a difficult space in

which to operate. However, this should not be misinterpreted as the clients being 'the problem': the

volunteers do not describe the clients as the challenging factor of their work. Rather, it is the policies

and regulations that make this volunteer sector a rough space in which to be, because it is here that

the consequences of an anti-asylum government are demonstrated at first hand. Despite the

difficulties presented within this special sector of volunteering, the participants understand

themselves as people who stand up for what is right. Further, they are aware that in not doing so,

they would be complicit, because ignorance of human rights violations is harmful as it supports the

oppressor (Freire, 1970). The participants' resistance and determination to continue supporting

asylum seekers, refugees and detainees, demonstrates their strong commitment to be part of the

solution and to bring about positive social change for Australia. They are able to achieve this goal as

individuals through their collective action in being part of CARAD.

The organisation

　　　　CARAD itself was also part of the discussion as it functions as a facilitator of the volunteers'

active citizenship. The volunteers commented on particular aspects in regards to the organisation

highlighting specific strengths and also provided suggestions for development.

Strengths

This subtheme refers to the aspects of CARAD that the participants identified as efficient to, and

beneficial for, the individual volunteer experience.

　　　　Website and organisation. When asked why they chose to be part of CARAD, participants

mentioned as one of the reasons that the interesting and informative website appealed to them.

Additionally, the efficient structure of the organisation was mentioned.

> *…so I also googled to sort of see who was doing anything around Perth and after checking out a few areas I came to CARAD. And I think at that time your website was the most best…it's interesting, unique, it's good to have a good website. It was explaining what you were doing et cetera…*

> *…and then CARAD came up in the google search, pretty good website…*

> *I knew from the management board perspective, I knew CARAD was well run and had the governing structure that was going to be appropriate for me.*

From my experience as an intern at CARAD I can support these statements, especially regarding their

professional structure. The 'building bridges' course and the efficient organisation of tasks allow a

healthy person-environment fit, which helps to retain committed volunteers.

> **Care for volunteers.** Another positive aspect was CARAD's care for the volunteers.

> *I think what I got out of it, the first training was CARAD was saying, you don't have to do what you're not comfortable with, that training you like to, you can choose. Coming round and you can come and do that. And you don't have to feel bad about when you do this bit and not that bit, because different people are okay with this. I liked that bit. So you do what you are happy with, but later on you could.*

> *And I think also to emphasise that you could go to CARAD and talk to them and that's obviously good. That's fantastic, that I can always talk to them.*

Comprehensive education and the encouragement to set boundaries seem to be key to successful

advocacy as they help to decrease or even prevent compassion fatigue. Pardess, Mikulincer, Dekel

and Shaver (2014) explain compassion fatigue as a potential negative consequence when working

with traumatised individuals. This shows in burnout, lack of satisfaction when helping and

experiences of secondary trauma. In order to limit these negative consequences, CARAD helps to set

boundaries, which benefits everyone involved.

Suggestions

> **Training.** There were some differing comments in regards to the 'Building bridges' training in

which all new volunteers have to participate. After some clarification questions from me, it became

clear to everyone that this was due to the different times when training was completed, because

facilitators have changed throughout the years. Some volunteers found generality within the training

helpful, others would have appreciated more detail. However, in saying that it needs to be stressed

that it is difficult if not impossible to give an example of every possible situation within this volunteer

space and to prepare volunteers accordingly. The 'learning by doing' aspect is a further challenge of

working within the refugee sector, which can be both rewarding and interesting. Different

interpretations of the training are captured within the following quotes:

> *[Person's name] was in charge at the time [in which this volunteer participated the 'Building bridges' course] and I found it very difficult to know how I can help. I just couldn't get in at that time. "This is what you do", it was all a bit general. You know, that all changed a bit. This is why I didn't do anything first.*
>
> *You know at the same time, I thought it was really, really good. It was the generality. And you know that setting boundaries. Also, how far you could go.*
>
> *Yeh, I think the 'Building bridges' course has changed quite a lot in the last few years. So, I think there used to be a lot of generalities. And there has become a lot more rigour around the definition of the actual roles.*

Follow-up. As critically engaged volunteers, participants also pointed out opportunities for

further development of the triangulated contacts between clients, CARAD and the volunteers.

> *I think if I was to suggest anything to CARAD for the volunteers et cetera, it would be, I would make a prior connection with the family as the organisation with some sort of explanation or something and then say "here, we are introducing this person to you to help". Rather than, ah, you are being allocated to this person, you go and you meet a child for the first time and then start going to their home and there is no connection between CARAD and anything.*
>
> *…they don't seem to do to put an end dates on this. Making the family judge, whether is this the best use of me as a resource? They are just saying, "I'm sure you're doing a good job, continue and somehow people continue and of course this is not something I'm going to chase, but it's not exactly keeping the magnitude of what some people are facing. Maybe, you know, there should be some evaluations of how to use the time.*
>
> *But if there were and it was a general problem, then you tend to focus on doing better, and maybe then you even recruit people to just to help that focus.*

To clarify possible misconceptions of the organisation's work, there are some internal processes that

may need to be explained to the volunteers in order to avoid potential misinterpretations of

relationships and situations. However, not every internal decision making process can be explained

to all the volunteers due to limit of time, staffing and potential limitation of topic specific knowledge

in volunteers. This study was not constructed to investigate this specific aspect of CARAD in depth

and could be followed up by the organisation itself.

Conclusion

The findings illustrate that the participants commenced volunteering within the asylum

seeker/refugee sector not primarily out of benevolence, but from a liberatory action position within

which the volunteer also liberates themselves by resisting negative discourse(s) and attitudes. This

can be described as liberation social justice, which highlights that social justice is intrinsically linked

to the liberation of oneself. It can be argued though that a person can only distinguish between

benevolence and liberatory social justice when being aware of the importance of reflexivity and

positioning of self and, when critical thinking is applied to the context of the issue. By acting with a

benevolent mindset, damage can be done to the individuals and their relationships as it constructs

the client as inferior to the superior 'good' person who is helping them. In contrast, living the

volunteer position as a form of liberation of oneself by helping the other, offers a more balanced

and holistic foundation to the volunteer work. The comment of one of the participants, after having

read the summary of findings, describes the liberation aspect of this research well:

> *I had never thought of volunteering before as a way to liberate myself from the constructed*
>
> *identity of an anti-immigration nation, but now I realise that's exactly what we're doing.*

The study has found that one of the reasons for the volunteers' engagement with CARAD is

their conscientisation, informed by a strong commitment to human rights, and values of tolerance,

empathy and compassion. The contribution of this study is to begin to fill the gap in research that

exists in regards to volunteering within the forced migration sector. This case study also has showed

how the work of CARAD volunteers can be understood as active citizenship, because it enacts civic

responsibility. The findings suggest that volunteering within the migration sector can bring about

social change and that it has the potential to enhance social and cultural diversity. Further, the

support of asylum seekers, refugees and detainees represents the promotion of human rights, which

Australia is found to be violating. The volunteers understand that if human rights are demanded for oneself, they need to be provided for others, too. CARAD volunteers are practising what the Federal government is expected to practise in their policy making, if wanting to be a 'good international citizen'.

In conclusion, awareness of the importance of engaging with 'the other' rather than excluding them, in order to foster a more cohesive society, is likely to benefit everyone involved, new immigrants and also those Australians, who are descendants of immigrants. The cultural interface within the CARAD context, new ways of knowing are produced, which are informed by different knowledges. It involves a culture of values that is not limited by nationalities, religions and ethnicities. A culture that promotes education, truth and commitment to human rights. The study supports the idea that knowing about events does not mean a person is going to change their behaviour and attitude. The active involvement with the issue, for example, supporting impacted people, emerging oneself into the cultural interface motivates people to be part of the solution.

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Appendix A

May 6th 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter is to confirm CARAD's support of the Master's Research project of Sarah Kölsch which will investigate the motives of CARAD's volunteers and how these may shift throughout the process of regular interactions with CARAD's clients. We understand that as part of this research interviews will be undertaken with volunteers in order to have an understanding of their experience. As such, CARAD has agreed to facilitate access to volunteers for this research project. We understand that this will likely involve the distribution of an information letter and a request for participants to CARAD volunteers that invites them to contact the researcher about the project for possible participation in interviews. These documents will also be made available as hard copies at the organisation's office to make volunteers who do not use email communication aware of this project.

I, Joanna Josephs, am the CARAD staff member who will be supporting this research project in my capacity as the Volunteer Coordinator. I have met with the student and her Notre Dame Supervisor, Associate Professor Dawn Darlaston-Jones and understand that I can communicate any issue that may arise to her or the student Sarah throughout this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information.

We look forward to working with Sarah and Notre Dame University.

Sincerely,

Joanna Josephs
Volunteer Coordinator

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Factors influencing volunteers to work with CARAD in supporting asylum seekers

Dear CARAD volunteer,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?

The focus of this research project is the examination of the factors that motivate people to engage in volunteerism working with asylum seekers. The aim is to get a deeper understanding of the factors that influence the volunteer's decision, such as personal values, belief systems and attitudes. This is intended to further understand the aspects of a volunteer identity within the CARAD environment that may involve critical self-reflexivity and understanding their position within the issue of asylum seeking.

Additionally, it will support CARAD to understand which aspects of their volunteer education is efficient and which parts may offer opportunities for further development.

Who is undertaking the project?

This project is being conducted by Sarah Koelsch and will form the basis for the degree of a Masters of Philosophy (by Research) at The University of Notre Dame Australia, in partnership with Joanna Josephs from CARAD and under the supervision of Associate Professor Dawn Darlaston-Jones.

What will I be asked to do?

If you consent to take part in this research study, it is important that you understand the purpose of the study and the procedures you will be asked to undergo. Please make sure that you ask any questions you may have, and that all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction before you agree to participate.

The project:

Your participation will involve a group interview with other CARAD volunteers. This will be a relaxed conversational style which will last for approximately 90 minutes. The types of questions will be open-ended in order to provide the opportunity for you to give as much information as you like in regards to the topic. In addition, some volunteers may be invited to participate in a further individual interview to gain a deeper understanding of that person's volunteer experience. These individual interviews will

last approximately 60 minutes and will be held at a later date to the group interview. Both the group and individual interviews will take place at a mutually convenient location and will be audio recorded.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

It is possible that you may experience some level of discomfort during the session as a result of reflecting on your volunteer experience. In the unlikely case that this will happen, you are free to take a break or to withdraw at any time during the session. Whilst I am asking for information in regards to personal and perhaps cultural issues, this will be conducted in a low risk context and is therefore not expected to cause feelings on discomfort.

What are the benefits of the research project?

The benefits of this project are that you have the opportunity to contribute to give insight into an under researched area. Furthermore, you have the chance to voice your opinion and explain your personal experiences within volunteering with asylum seekers.

Additionally, CARAD and their clients may benefit as the findings may offer the potential of examining their volunteer training and may help identify opportunities for development.

What if I change my mind?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without discrimination or prejudice. If you withdraw, all information you have provided will be erased.

Withdrawal will not affect your relationship with CARAD and your volunteer engagement.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

Information gathered about you will be held in strict confidence. This confidence will only be broken if required by law.

I am the only person who will have access to your individual data. All identifying information will be removed by me during the transcription of the recordings and I will use pseudonyms for all participants. Electronic data will be stored on my University hard drive and will be backed up by my personal hard drive, both are password protected.

Once the study is completed, the de-identified electronic data will be stored securely on a password protected hard drive by my supervisor Dawn Darlaston-Jones in the School of Arts and Sciences at The University of Notre Dame Australia for at least a period of five years. The data may be used in future research but you will not be able to be identified. No hard copies of any data will be retained and all hard copy information will be shredded at the completion of the study. The results of the study will be published as a thesis, potentially in a peer reviewed article, and potentially at a conference.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

Yes, the report will be made available to participants who like to read it, therefore there will be a copy of my thesis at the CARAD office. To ensure the privacy of your information, any identification will be removed from the thesis and any other publication.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either myself via 20132879@my.nd.edu.au or my supervisor, Dawn Darlaston-Jones via dawn.darlaston-jones@nd.edu.au My supervisor and I are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have about this study.

What if I have a concern or complaint?

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Notre Dame Australia (approval number 016161F). If you have any complaint regarding the manner in which a research project is conducted, it should be directed to the Executive Officer of the Human Research Ethics Committee, Research Office, The University of Notre Dame Australia, PO Box 1225 Fremantle WA 6959, phone (08) 9433 0943, research@nd.edu.au. Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

How do I sign up to participate?

If you are keen to participate, please sign both copies of the consent form. You will keep one for yourself and please bring the other signed copy to the interview.

Thank you for your time. Please keep this copy of the project information.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Koelsch

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM

Factors influencing volunteers to work with CARAD in supporting asylum seekers

- I agree to take part in this research project.

- I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, the procedures involved and of what is expected of me.

- I understand that I will be asked to meet with Sarah Koelsch to participate in an interview in regards to the topic. The interview will be audio –recorded and will take approximately 60 minutes.

- The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained possible problems that may arise as a result of my participation in this study.

- I understand that I may withdraw from participating in the project at any time without prejudice.

- I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

- I agree that any research data gathered for the study may be published provided my name or other identifying information is not disclosed.

- I understand that research data gathered may be used for future research but my name and other identifying information will be removed.

Name of participant			
Signature of participant		Date	

- I confirm that I have provided the Information Sheet concerning this research project to the above participant, explained what participating involves and have answered all questions asked of me.

Signature of Researcher		Date	

Appendix D

Interview schedule

Semi –structured interview questions

1.   What led you to volunteer with CARAD?

2.   How do you view Australia's current policy on asylum seekers and refugees?

3.   Have your views changed since you started to volunteer for CARAD?

4.   Did the training you have received from CARAD, prepare you for the experience?

5.   Do you benefit from the volunteer experience with CARAD?

Follow up prompts:

1.   How do you feel when you spend time with the clients?

2.   What do you enjoy most as being part of the organisation?

Appendix E

Confidentiality Agreement

Project title: "A study of factors that influence volunteers to work with CARAD in supporting asylum seekers"

Dear xxxx,

Please read the following statement.

As a research assistant during the focus groups for this research, you must maintain the confidentiality of all information gained in the course of your employment. It is a term and condition of your involvement that you:

1.   Keep the information confidential and will not disclose or permit disclosure of the information to any person; and that you

2.   will not use or permit the use of the information for any purpose whatsoever other than that for which it is intended.

These obligations apply to all information to which you are privy for the period of your involvement in the research and continue without limitation of time after the date of termination of your involvement.

I _____ (insert your name) agree to assist with note-taking during interviews facilitated by Sarah Koelsch related to the CARAD research project.

I understand the information stated in this document and I agree to abide by the conditions stated herein.

_____/___/____

Your Signature and date

_____/___/____

Investigator and date