

**Settlement Strategies for the South Sudanese Community in  
Melbourne: An Analysis of Employment and Sport Participation**

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## Abstract

People from refugee backgrounds face a range of settlement-related issues. These issues include limited language proficiency, unemployment, constrained recreational opportunities, and an overall lack of community connectedness. These issues can not only be troublesome on a day-to-day basis, but also adversely affect the long-term wellbeing of refugees. On the other hand, being employed, and having the opportunity to engage with the broader community can enhance the settlement process by giving refugees the resources to navigate their settlement, as they are often confused by the foreign values, protocols, and social practices in their new countries. This study tested the above proposition by examining the work and leisure practices of a sample of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia. Specifically, the research question was: how has employment and sport participation affected the settlement process of Melbourne's South Sudanese community? The study has three inter-connected strands: first, to identify the scope and scale of these practices; second, to explore the individual and social outcomes that arise from these practices; and, third, to examine the ways in which these practices impact on settlement outcomes.

A mixed methods approach – using questionnaires and interviews – was adopted in order to answer the research question. The questionnaires were used to illuminate the role played by work and sport in the lives of members of Melbourne's South Sudanese community, and to inform the design of in-depth interviews. The interviews were the pivotal conduit for exploring the respondents' journeys, understanding their resettlement challenges, examining their responses to these challenges, and assessing their current levels of community engagement.

The survey and interview questions were framed by a model of capital building and personal power. Based on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and other scholars, five forms of capital were identified as instrumental in shaping the settlement experiences of refugees: economic, cultural, social, psychological, and physical capital. In each instance, they represent a resource, and a source of power that would – in principle, and as theory would predict – enable refugees to more effectively engage in the settlement process. The

questionnaire was completed by 243 respondents, while 20 questionnaire-respondents also participated in the in-depth interviews.

The findings of this study show that participation by refugees in employment and sport assisted them in accumulating capital, which they considered vitally important for addressing settlement challenges. Most of both survey respondents and interviewees reported that being employed, and participating in sport, were important contributors to their effective settlement in Australia. Respondents understood the importance of integrating into the broader community and building their stocks of capital, but they also found that there were many structural and social barriers to overcome. These barriers – which undermined the capacity of refugees to build their stocks of capital and enhance their settlement – included a lack of language and support services, financial difficulties, racism and discrimination, poor connection to mainstream services, and social isolation. Respondents also believed that these barriers could not always be side-lined and removed by employment and sport participation. In the light of these results, it was concluded that structural and social barriers must also be addressed if there is to be any long-term positive impact from employment and sport participation on South Sudanese refugee settlement in Melbourne.

## **Student Declaration**

I, William Bol Deng Abur, declare that the PhD thesis entitled '**Settlement Strategies for the South Sudanese Community in Melbourne: An Analysis of Employment and Sport Participation**' is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

Signatur [REDACTED] Archiv, 2018

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## **Dedication**

It is my pleasure to dedicate this thesis to my lovely family members, my wife Elizabeth Nyandeng Abuo, my children Deng, Abur, Awan, and Abitei, and my uncle Marial Abur for his educational dream for me and his guidance from a distance. Also to my late Aunt Akudum Abur, for her blessing when I left my village while my father was sobbing and my siblings crying. I still remember her words of blessing: “Go and you will come back educated like your Uncle Marial Abur; things may happen around you and you will always survive.” I survived a long civil war and many other hardships including life in refugee camps because of your blessing, aunt. Thank you so much for being a great aunt to me; I will always remember you for encouragement and leadership in our family.

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## **List of Acronyms**

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CMY	Centre for Multicultural Youth
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CE	Common Era
DDOGS	Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
VEOHRC	Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
ESL	English as a Second Language
FECCA	Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IPED	Institute of Professional Editors
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Services
OHP	Offshore Humanitarian Program
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RCA	Refugee Council of Australia
SHP	Special Humanitarian Program
SPLA/M	Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organization

## Terminology and definitions

1. **Refugee** is a person who has been forced to leave his/her country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster threat to life.
2. **Resettlement** is the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement.
3. **Refugee theory** is a concept and debate about the movement of refugees, including resettlement and settlement issues
4. **Refugee settlement** is the act of adjusting or placing on permanent arrangement after a refugee person is granted resettlement to a third country.
5. **Social capital** is the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively (Bourdieu 1991, 1986, Putnam 1995, 2001, Shilling 1991, 2003).
6. **Cultural capital** refers to non-financial social assets that promote social mobility beyond economic means (Bourdieu 1991, 1986).
7. **Psychological capital** is the positive and developmental state of an individual as characterised by high self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience.
8. **Physical capital** refers to the development of bodies in ways that are recognised as possessing value in social fields, such as sport.
9. **Assimilation of refugee** is a process of time when a refugee adopts his/ her new culture fully, without consideration of his/her birth country's culture of practice. Therefore, assimilation takes place when individuals adopt the cultural norms of a dominant or host culture over their original culture
10. **Integration of refugee** is when a refugee group adapts to the ethnic group of the country where they reside. **Integration** takes place when individuals adapt to the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture while preserving an aspect of their original culture (Ager & Strang 2008, Dimitriadou 2006, McDonald et al. 2008)
11. **Reliability** is the quality of being trustworthy or of performing consistently well in statistics.
12. **Validity** is the quality of being logically or factually sound; or the extent to which a concept, conclusion or measurement is accurately well-founded in statistics.

## **Chapter 1 : Setting the Scene**

This chapter highlights settlement experiences of refugees, the problem and aims of this PhD study in context of refugee settlement. It also introduces the gap and significance of this PhD research in the notion of refugee settlement and the use of employment and sport as settlement strategies to build more effective refugee settlement policies for the future.

### **1.1 The refugee experiences**

People from the South Sudanese community in Melbourne have arrived as refugees in Australia for resettlement, often after spending some years in refugee camps. The notion of a ‘refugee’ was formally recognised in the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention (United Nations General Assembly 1951). The Convention states that a refugee is a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion, is either unable or unwilling – owing to such fear – to avail themselves of the protection of that country (Barutciski 1996; Tipping 2011; Whitaker 2002). Resettlement in a new country is a dream for many refugees worldwide as a durable solution, including people from South Sudan who have been forced to leave their country because of war. Leaving a country during the war can be traumatic, since people often leave in challenging circumstances and travel to societies that are very different from the ones in which they grew up. In addition, refugees are often unable to return to their home countries because the causes of their departure continue to apply in their country of origin.

Further, the resettlement process itself can involve challenges, such as the need to learn a new language, negotiate different cultural and societal values, and address emotional trauma (Bunde-Birouste 2012). The settlement experiences of South Sudanese community members in Australia can be viewed as being particularly challenging due to critical social issues of young people, which mainstream Medias labelled as Sudanese young people as “Gang” in Melbourne (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Marjoribanks, et al 2010). For instance, in 2007, the South Sudanese community in Melbourne was criticised by the former Immigration Minister, Kevin Andrews, over what he termed a “failure” to

integrate or assimilate into the Australian way of life. Refugee groups “don’t seem to be settling and adjusting into the Australian way of life as quickly as we would hope,” he argued (Henry-Waring 2008, p. 3; Marlowe 2010, p. 2).

It is important to highlight the global situation of refugees seeking resettlement due to forced displacement. The current scale of forced migration is unprecedented in the post-World War II period. In 2015, nearly 60 million people were displaced as refugees, asylum seekers, or internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide (Graham 2015).

These people were forced to flee their homes due to conflict or natural disasters in many parts of the world. According to the UNHCR (2015), among the displaced population, almost 960,000 people were in need of resettlement in other countries. Table 1.1 lists the projected global resettlement numbers for 2015.

**Table 1.1: UNHCR projected global resettlement for refugees in 2015**

Region of asylum	Total projected resettlement needs		Total UNHCR submissions planned for 2015 (target) *		UNHCR core staff capacity in 2015	
	Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons	Cases	Persons
Africa	71,979	278,756	12,826	45,287	5,278	19,848
Asia	67,805	198,465	10,989	23,882	6,286	14,098
Europe	52,717	149,699	10,945	26,025	7,952	18,850
Middle East and North Africa	97,901	316,039	8,131	30,070	5,117	16,737
The Americas	4,853	15,470	478	1,413	206	579
<b>Total</b>	<b>295,255</b>	<b>958,429</b>	<b>43,369</b>	<b>126,677</b>	<b>24,839</b>	<b>70,112</b>

Note: \*Based upon UNHCR total capacity (core staff + affiliate workforce) and including regional support in 2015. Modified from UNHCR 2015, p. 9.

This PhD study examines one particular community group, the South Sudanese, which has sought asylum in a number of countries before resettling in Australia, facilitated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Yet the experiences of this community speak to a much broader, global issue, which can be summarised as unprecedented levels of displacement worldwide resulting from persecution, conflict, generalised violence, and human rights violations (UNHCR 2015). In so doing, this study addresses an issue that confronts both international and local

communities, requiring closer examination and evidence-based consideration regarding future policy and practice.

## **1.2 Research problem and aims**

This research is about the settlement of South Sudanese from refugee backgrounds with aim of understanding their level of participation in employment and sport. Therefore, the research question is in three specific societal domains: Settlement experience, employment and sport participation. The literature in the area of refugee settlement suggests that gaining access to various domains and resources can help refugees to integrate into their host countries. These domains include housing, employment, education, and having a supportive social network (Fozdar & Hartley 2013; Marlowe 2011b; Refugee Council of Australia 2011; UNHCR 2015). The rationale for the focus on settlement experience, employment and sport in this thesis is twofold: first, to understand the current status of participation in employment and sport within the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds in research context, and second my personal and professional experience as a social worker with a refugee background, gave me a desire to conduct research about settlement experience. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, employment has long been a prominent focus in this field of research. A body of research evidence shows that when refugees are resettled, employment becomes a central aim and a key step towards meaningful settlement outcomes however the transition to decent and rewarding work is often fraught with complexities including underemployment, job insecurity and labour-market discrimination (Abur & Spaaij 2016; Bloch 2000, Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007; Fozdar & Hartley 2013;).

In contrast, the sport has been largely neglected as a meaningful domain or dimension of refugee settlement, despite its potential to enhance resettled refugees' social networks, physical health, and wellbeing (Olliff 2008; Refugee Council of Australia 2010; Spaaij 2012). For example, while employment is considered a key sphere of integration in Ager and Strang's (2008) influential conceptual framework, sport – or leisure activity more broadly – is not recognised in this framework. Sport can be seen as an emerging area of research in relation to refugee settlement, spurred on in part by the

growing number of sports-based programs targeting people with refugee backgrounds living in countries like Australia (e.g. Dukic, McDonald, & Spaaij 2017; Nathan et al. 2010, 2013).

The overarching question that this thesis will address centres on the extent to and ways in which Melbourne's South Sudanese community's engagement in employment and sport contributes to their integration into the broader community. The research question is: "How do employment and sport participation affect the settlement process, and how the benefits of employment and sport participation do deliver different forms of capital that enable the South Sudanese community to effectively move through the settlement process in Melbourne, Australia?" This question was translated into a research aim, which is to explore the role of employment and sports participation in the refugee settlement process through a case study of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia. Based on this overarching aim, the following objectives guide the research.

They are to:

1. Explore South Sudanese community members' settlement experience, and participation in employment and sport.
2. Examine the benefits members of the South Sudanese community derive from participation in employment and sport.
3. Develop policy recommendations on how participation in employment and sport can better assist this community to navigate their settlement challenges.

The benefits that accrued from employment and sport participation were conceptualised as forms of capital and personal power that could be secured by South Sudanese through engagement in these domains. Five types of capital were identified from the literature: economic, social, cultural, psychological, and physical capital. For each type of capital, it was proposed that its accumulation would enhance the settlement capability of refugees, and provide the resources to consolidate the refugee integration process. At the same time, inability to access or use such capital can lead to experiences of exclusion and marginalisation. This model of capital accumulation underpins the theoretical framework adopted for this study and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

### **1.3 Statement of significance and research gap**

This study seeks to make a significant contribution to knowledge about the refugee settlement process within the Australian context and, specifically, in relation to South Sudanese people with refugee backgrounds in Australia. While there has been some research on the employment situations and experiences of resettled refugees in Australia, including South Sudanese people (Abur 2012; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007; Fozdar & Hartley 2012; McDonald et al. 2008, Marlowe, Harris & Lyons 2014; Refugee Council of Australia 2010; Tipping 2011), there is no research that combines sport and employment to understand refugee community perspectives on these two settlement domains. While employment and housing are essential for successful settlement, they are both basic needs for survival and participation in society, and sport is not. However, the sport is particularly prioritised in Australian society, and participation in sport for people from refugee backgrounds such as South Sudanese may be deemed by some as a way to integrate successfully by connecting with many Australians who participate in sport.

In addition, there is a growing South Sudanese Australian National Basketball Association, which brings together an increasing number of talented basketball players from across Australia. This association comprises teams that support South Sudanese Australian youth with their basketball development. A prominent local basketball team in Sunshine, Victoria is known as the Longhorns has enabled a number of South Sudanese Australian young people (Deng Adel, Lat Mayen, Deng Gak, Mangok Mathiang, Thon Maker and others) to pursue study and develop potential sporting careers via scholarships to basketball colleges in America. For these young men and other young people, their participation in sport has been a highly meaningful component of their settlement journey. The benefits of participation in sport for these South Sudanese young has attracted a great deal of positive media attention in the last five years (Abur, 2016, see Longhorns and South Sudanese Australian National Basketball Association websites). It has also generated many positive media stories, which are a contrast to the depiction of young Southern Sudanese men as gang members and social risk as evidenced by a body of research (Marjoribanks, et al 2010, Sellars and Murphy 2017). Participation in sport and physical exercise can be an important counterpoint to unemployment, as it can provide people with structure and social opportunities which they may be missing through not

working. Sport is also a great way for these young people to manage stress and isolation due to unemployment and other settlement challenges (Abur 2016, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Sellars and Murphy 2017). Participation in sport can assist individuals to overcome daily stress issues and can lead to good health outcomes (Cabane 2013). Young people can also learn soft skills through participation in the sport such as self-esteem, competitive spirit, tenacity, motivation, discipline and responsibility (Abur 2016, Cabane 2013).

The reason for including employment in this study was to better understand the economic conditions of families in the South Sudanese community and explore the settlement processes of families with different work histories. As a social worker and community member, I noted that employment challenges were commonly discussed among South Sudanese Australians. Many were looking for work, but were often unsuccessful in getting jobs, or felt that they were locked into undesirable, low skilled, low paid, and precarious positions. This thesis explores the ways in which participation in employment and sport can assist refugees to accumulate capital – particularly economic, social, cultural, psychological, and physical capital – and use it to enhance their ability to navigate the settlement process. This knowledge can inform future policy, programs, and practice pertaining to these two domains of the settlement, with the purpose of advancing the quality of life of South Sudanese Australians and their families.

#### **1.4 The researcher's position as an insider and motivation to take the study**

I am a South Sudanese migrant from a refugee background conducting insider research in my own community and culture. I am also a qualified social worker with extensive experience in the field of refugee settlement. As such, I bring a wealth of both personal and professional experiences to bear on this research project. This combined experience has sensitised me to employment and sports participation as meaningful domains of refugee settlement, and as key areas for research. My personal experiences include leaving South Sudan during great upheaval and violent conflict and spending ten years in a refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya, before pursuing resettlement to a third country – Australia. I met my wife in Kakuma refugee camp and my eldest son was born there. When I was in the camp, I did not know whether my family and I would end up

in Australia, or move to the United States like many of my friends and peers did. I have now spent ten years in Australia, raising a family of four, while studying and working. I am now a citizen of Australia, yet I am constantly aware of my refugee background and I am deeply involved in issues facing people from refugee backgrounds on both a professional and personal level.

My professional experience as a social worker in Australia has built on my experiences in the refugee camp, where I worked a counsellor with the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS). My qualifications in social work and community development have given me the privilege of working with refugee communities in Melbourne and responding to the complex settlement needs of families and individuals. Based on my professional experience and my first-hand understanding of settlement challenges, the idea for this study emerged: to explore and develop strategies in the field of refugee settlement based on systematic and critical exploration of social issues facing refugee families, individuals, and young people. In my working life as a social worker, the families and individuals whom I work with have regularly raised the issue of unemployment and resulting financial difficulties. They also raised the issue of feeling a lack of connection to the broader community, and lack of knowledge about opportunities for young people to engage recreational/leisure activities. These were some of the key factors that motivated me to conduct research on sport and employment as important factors in the settlement of refugees in Melbourne, specifically the South Sudanese community. As a social worker, I noted that many youths from the South Sudanese community in Melbourne were engaged in basketball, something which has brought a great deal of personal satisfaction, hope and success to numerous individual young people.

### **1.5 Concluding remarks**

This chapter has provided a setting for the study and an explanation of how and why this research is important in the field of refugee settlement. It has discussed refugee settlement policy in Australia and employment and sport as useful settlement strategies. The research problem and the significance of the research have been introduced. In discussing the research motivation, I have taken a reflexive approach in highlighting my own refugee background and my professional experience as a social worker.

In the early stages of settlement, refugees need stable work and housing in order to address their other settlement needs and thus to successfully integrate into Australian society. Among many factors that help people establish themselves in a new country is engagement with host communities via areas such as employment, education, and leisure activities such as organised sport and non-professional community organised sport. Without strategic thinking and engagement, the settlement will remain challenging for both refugees and host communities due to the social issues that arise for people settling in a new cultural context. The processes of gaining employment can be particularly fraught and a lack of employment can have a serious impact on both individuals and families, making basics such as appropriate housing can be difficult to access. On another hand, participation in sport can contribute greatly to positive settlement experiences and further access to network, and integration into the broader community. Sport can also create the structure for unemployed people and helps in developing a range of skills that may be useful in obtaining employment.

The challenges of being, or having been, a refugee and settling in a new cultural and geographic context can be difficult to comprehend by those in the broader community who have not had a refugee experience. Many South Sudanese have experienced extreme levels of conflict, displacement, racism, and discrimination prior to coming to Australia. For many settlements has also involved varying levels of racism and discrimination and challenges around fully participating in society. It is important that Southern Sudanese Australians are able to freely voice these experiences without fear of recrimination and that these experiences are made widely known. This thesis provides an opportunity for the South Sudanese to relate their settlement experiences, specifically focusing on the areas of employment and sports participation in Melbourne. These experiences and my analysis of them make an important contribution to theoretical knowledge and understanding of refugee settlement, and to the broader context of social and public policies on the settlement of refugee.

## **1.6 Thesis structure**

This thesis comprises of nine chapters and they are organised as follows.

**Chapter 1:** set the scene by highlighting refugee experiences and resettlement of refugees as a global issue. It discusses the problem and aims of the thesis, and its significance contribution in refugee settlement policies for the future. It also introduces the background of research candidate for this PhD study and his motivation in choosing the notion of refugee settlement and the use of employment and sport as settlement strategies.

**Chapter 2:** provides context for the research by discussing the social and political context of South Sudan including its people, history, and the impact of civil war. It also provides an overview of the South Sudanese community in Australia and related settlement issues.

**Chapter 3:** discusses literature by highlighting the existing knowledge in both refugee settlement theory and practices from a global perspective as well as in Australia context of resetting refugees. It provides an historical background to refugee settlement and settlement policy in Australia, and discusses the challenges facing resettled refugees. The chapter also discusses both employment and sport as part of strategies to assist refugee groups during resettlement. Employment helps refugees to gain income, which is not just a source of money to meet basic needs, but also a means of meeting psychological, social, and emotional needs. In addition, being employed enhances self-esteem and builds a sense of independence. Sport is especially good for delivering physical benefits, and increasing networking opportunities. Furthermore, the chapter critically reviews the barriers refugees face when seeking employment and initiating their participation in sport.

**Chapter 4:** explains capital accumulation as the conceptual framework that guides this study. This chapter introduces five forms of capital that are of relevance to refugee settlement: economic, social, cultural, psychological, and physical capital.

**Chapter 5:** discusses the methodological approach developed in this thesis. A mixed methods study is constructed comprising a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The justification for using surveys and in-depth interviews to collect the data is provided, and this is followed by a discussion of how the results were interpreted within the parameters of the research question and the conceptual framework around capital building.

**Chapter 6:** discusses findings from quantitative data sourced from the survey, which involved 243 respondents from the South Sudanese community in Melbourne's western

suburbs. The chapter discusses the demographic features of the respondents, and uses descriptive statistics to connect their settlement experiences to their social backgrounds using participation in employment and sport as tools to understand benefits and difficulties.

**Chapter 7:** presents findings drawn from semi-structured interviews with 20 participants from the South Sudanese community in Melbourne. The data collected sought to provide first, more dense and detailed descriptions of settlement experiences, and second, more nuanced reporting on the benefits that arise from having secure employment and/or an ongoing engagement with sport. Additional attention is given to the barriers to employment and participation in sport, and how the resultant frustration, anxiety, and withdrawal can undermine the settlement process.

**Chapter 8:** presents a synthesis of the results by first, integrating the qualitative and quantitative findings, and second, framing the findings within the model of capital accumulation constructed in Chapter 4. It focuses on the different forms of capital, the conditions under which refugees are able to accumulate capital, and the contributions made by employment and sport to the capital building process. It also discusses the impacts of social change, psychological impacts of unemployment and gaps in settlement area.

Finally, **Chapter 9:** contains the conclusions of this study, and proposes future research directions as well as policy recommendations. It provides recommendations for the best way forward in supporting people from refugee backgrounds to settle satisfactorily in Australia. It initially lays out the consequences that can face future generations of African refugee communities, when they are shut off from opportunities to build their stocks of personal capital. It then goes on to propose policies and interventions that can effectively address chronic unemployment, limited sporting opportunities, and systematic discrimination in the workforce and sporting sectors.

## **Chapter 2 : South Sudanese Social and Political Context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter builds on the introductory material contained in Chapter 1 by explaining the social and political context of South Sudan, its people and culture, the civil war, and the composition of the refugee community in Australia. Particular attention is given to the conflicts that displaced many South Sudanese, and the trauma that South Sudanese refugees subsequently suffered as a result of long civil war and difficulties in refugee camps. The chapter ends with an overview of the settlement process in Australia, and a demographic analysis of Australia's South Sudanese community as they were resettled in different states of Australia.

### **2.2 The history of South Sudan and its people**

South Sudan is a newest nation in Africa and has a challenging and protracted history of struggle to gain independent status. The region was known as Southern Sudan during its colonisation. The Republic of South Sudan was declared an independent nation in July 2011, a result of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed between the government of Sudan and the guerrilla movement in Southern Sudan, known as the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) (Deng 2005b). The CPA was signed in 2005 to end hostilities between the people of South Sudan and the government in Khartoum, predominantly led by those with Arab backgrounds (Kevlihan 2013). The CPA was established for a six-year interim period, during which time a number of provisions were to be implemented to assess the possibility of a unified Sudan, and to ensure that peace prevailed in the country. The CPA also provided an opportunity for the people from South Sudan to hold a referendum to determine if they wanted Sudan to remain as one country or to choose separation at the end of the interim period. The result of this referendum led to secession from Sudan.

Historically, South Sudan has a long history of conflict, which has led to ongoing internal violence within community groups. The region was first colonised by Great Britain from 1882 and later granted independence in 1956, when Arabs took over the

nation's governance with no special provision for the indigenous peoples of the south. As a consequence of the lack of services for these people, the first civil war broke out in 1955. This is referred to as the Anya-Nya I War (Deng 2005a). It ended with the Addis Ababa Peace Agreement in 1972, which promised self-government to people from the southern region, with little interference from the Khartoum Government in the north. However, this agreement was dishonoured by the Khartoum Government and people of South Sudan in 1983 formed the Anya-Nya II Movement against the government (Kevlihan 2013). The people of Southern Sudan fought for years to have a state independent of the Khartoum regime, and while they made the occasional gain, the end result was political chaos and enormous economic hardship. In short, a long history of conflict has shaped the identity of South Sudan, with the underlying cause being the imposition of Arab and Islamic culture from Northern Sudan (Daly 2004; Ryan 2014). It is important to remember that the history of the Republic of South Sudan is very different from Northern Sudan in a number of ways, especially regarding the development – and frequent neglect – of country, culture, and identity (Deng 2005b).

On 9 July 2011, the Republic of South Sudan was born, and its people waved an emphatic goodbye to Khartoum. The transitional period had taken six-and-a-half years after the CPA was signed. South Sudan is a landlocked country located in central-east Africa, which is part of Eastern Africa according to the United Nations sub-regional divisions. The River Nile flows north through the country and constitutes a major geographic feature, supporting agriculture and large numbers of wild animals. South Sudan is rich in terms of natural resources, including oil, gold, and wildlife, but the long civil war has restricted development.

The Republic of South Sudan borders a number of countries: Sudan to the north, Ethiopia to the east, Uganda and Kenya to the southeast, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the southwest, and the Central African Republic to the west. It has an area of 619,745 square kilometres comprised of 28 states, according to the governing system. The original ten states (and their administrative centres) for administrative services were Central Equatoria (Juba town), Western Equatoria (Yambio), Eastern Equatoria (Torit), Jonglei (Bor), Unity (Bentiu), Upper Nile (Malakal), Lakes (Rumbek), Warrap

(Kuacjok), Western Bahr el Ghazal (Wau), and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (Aweil) (Lejukole 2008). The following map shows the geographical location of these states.



**Figure 2:1: Map of South Sudan and its old states.**

Source: Republic of South Sudan website (<http://www.goss.org>).

(Note: there are different versions of maps of South Sudan due to the divisions of states within South Sudan.)

In 2015, under the leadership of President Salva Kiir Mayardit, South Sudan was divided into 28 states with the aim of bringing services closer to people in rural areas. The 28-states-policy was supported by a majority of citizens, but opposed by the opposition leader and some rebel groups. In 2016, the President also added four states to the 28 states due to the demands of the citizens. The Republic of South Sudan now has 32 states under President Kiir's Government.



**Figure 2:2: Map of 28 newly created South Sudan states**

Decreed by President Kiir on 2 October 2015.

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/States\\_of\\_South\\_Sudan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/States_of_South_Sudan).

## 2.3 People and society of South Sudan

While the people of South Sudan have diverse backgrounds in terms of language, cultural background, and lifestyle, there are two main groups from which all tribes originate. They are the Nilotic and non-Nilotic groups. The largest tribal groups in South Sudan are Dinka, Nuer, Kakwa, Bari, Azande, Shilluk, Kuku, Murle, Mandari, Didinga, Ndogo, Bviri, Lndi, Anuak, Bongo, Lango, Dungotona, and Acholi (Lejukole 2008; Makol 2012). The religions practiced by these community groups are predominantly Christian and Animist creeds. The national languages are Arabic-Juba and English. These are the common languages used in social settings, commercial transactions, and other official communication in the country (Mamer 2010). Most South Sudanese believe their original background was from the Nilotic group, meaning the group that was created and lived alongside the River Nile, or were the first group that entered the land of South Sudan before the 10th century CE. Many often talk about their Nilotic values and ways of responding to their visitors. They are very proud of their hospitable spirit and cultural values. This Nilotic group includes the Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk tribes. The second group is the non-Nilotic group, which includes the Azande or Zande people who entered South Sudan in the 16th century. They comprise the third largest group in South Sudan (Makol 2012; Ryan 2014).

The social lives and politics of the South Sudanese have been heavily influenced by the civil war, which undermined the social fabric of their communities in relation to their communal and traditional histories. There is a high level of poverty in villages, which lack education and traditional farming practices. However, the people are proud of being South Sudanese regardless of difficulties due to lack of services and infrastructure. Many communities still live in tribal groups as a way of supporting and caring for each other. Each tribe has a distinct area of land for which they are responsible, as the issue of land is about power in relation to cultural tradition. Each tribe is led by a chief, who is responsible for maintaining law-and-order throughout the community (Deng, FM 2011). The politics and social settings of each tribe are similar in many ways, but differ in terms of marriage practices and cattle keeping. Some tribes heavily invest their time in herding and keeping cattle as a form of wealth. When they marry, they use cattle to pay a dowry to the family of the bride as a form of appreciation for raising their daughter in a respectful

and responsible manner. This practice is common in Dinka and Nuer as well as other tribes.

Traditional culture and values are an important part of South Sudanese life. Major life events are commonly celebrated by tribes, and include births, adulthood, marriage, ageing, and the death of a chief or leader as a mark of his or her work in the community. The ceremony for the death of a chief or leader often continues for seven days, and many domestic animals may be sacrificed as community gifts (Deng 2011; Makol 2012).

## **2.4 Family values and cultural practice**

The family unit is an important part of South Sudanese culture and has been integrated into all tribes as part of community life. Most South Sudanese families hold strongly to the notion of extended family (as distinct from the nuclear family). Such traditional values and customs dictate the notions of family. Therefore, a South Sudanese family commonly consists of grandparents, mothers, fathers, children, uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces (Dei Wal 2004; Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc. 2013).

There are roles and responsibilities for each family member. Children have roles to play in the family in supporting their parents to bring up younger siblings, or to undertake some domestic duties, such as looking after cattle, goats, and sheep. Aunts and uncles have separate roles in bringing up children in the family. Girls are often attached to their aunts who are expected to teach them to be respectful and responsible for members of the community and to be good mothers for their own family in due course. Uncles are responsible for teaching boys, including how to protect family and property. Regarding health and welfare issues, every family is responsible for caring for family members and their welfare. Each adult is expected to contribute to the sharing of responsibilities and other tasks (Juuk 2013).

The child-naming process is very important to all tribes, and can express the circumstances of birth, describe a historical event, or the character of the child. A name can also be given to honour a patriarch of the clan or family member who served as a leader. For some tribes who pay a dowry to marry, a child can be given the name of their

best cow or bull. The child can be given any number of names and may add or change names at pivotal points in his/her life. It is also common that the child is named after a midwife, who is then responsible for helping with the child's education (Dei Wal 2004; Duany & Duany 2005).

Traditionally, men are the head of family and responsible for providing food and protection. The traditional role of the father is to keep the family together and to distribute wealth to family members. Family members go to the father or consult him when they need something. When he dies, his wealth and responsibilities are usually passed to the oldest son. Uncles and aunts support the oldest son during transition and teach or encourage him to learn to be the responsible man in the family. Women are responsible for domestic duties, such as caring for children, the sick, and the elderly at home, although many of these responsibilities have been taken over by centralised services delivered in large towns and cities.

However, armed conflicts have placed the burden of these social services on women because many men joined the fight for independence and lost their lives. Many women remain the sole carers for their children, including among those families who resettled in Australia (Abur 2012; Dei Wal 2004; Juuk 2013). It is important to acknowledge that the social and cultural values of South Sudanese families in Australia (and other western countries, for that matter) have changed due to the influence of more cosmopolitan cultures and lifestyles acquired on the way to resettlement. For instance, in Australia, gender roles are more flexible, and these local values and practices have generated serious debate in the South Sudanese community. The western style of dressing and partying has also challenged gender norms and traditional expectations in both men and women. The greater sense of freedom in Australia has also caused intergenerational and gender conflicts within families and communities (Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc. 2013; Juuk 2013).

## **2.5 Political history and conflicts**

From 1930 to 1953, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium governed northern and southern Sudan separately because of contentious issues in religion and traditional practices, but the southern region was under-resourced despite its natural resources such

as oil and gold (Atem 2011b; Deng, FM 2011; Kebbede 1997; Lejukole 2008). The civil war began a year before independence in 1955 and continued until the Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 granted regional autonomy to the South (Daly 2004; Deng 2011). Sudan gained its independence from the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium on 1 January 1956. The northern area of Sudan was, and remains, predominantly Muslim, while the southern region (today, the Republic of South Sudan) was, and remains, mostly dominated by Christians and animists.

According to FM Deng (2011), the great challenge of preserving Christianity in the Sudan, especially in the southern part of the country, was closely linked to the civil war between Sudan's North (Muslim) and South (predominantly Christian). This war has raged intermittently since 1955, making it possibly the longest civil conflict in the world. Ethnographically, Sudan has never been one broad community: it consists of two parts – south and north – which differ in ethno-linguistic composition and religious affiliation. Religious tensions, particularly to do with the spread of Islam, together with land and ethnic divisions have been the main contributory factors to civil war (Ajak et al. 2015, Mamer 2010). In recent years, the Sudanese Civil War has been well documented. The civil war was kept internal until 1983 when many groups from South Sudan took up arms to liberate themselves from what they believed was an oppressive regime of the Khartoum Islamic Government (Ajak et al. 2015).

Thus, the international community knew little about the civil conflict, community, and particularly how badly the Khartoum regime was oppressing people in the south, including denying people basic human services and development opportunities. People were forced to practice Islam against their will in order to obtain services and minor posts in government. The roots of this war lie in longstanding ethnic and religious hostility, fuelled by the discovery of oil in the southern provinces (Ajak et al. 2015; Kebbede 1997). Many people lost their lives, properties were destroyed, and millions became homeless and displaced as a consequence of this conflict (Coker 2004; Duany & Duany 2005).

The referendum of January 2011 was a key part of the CPA and allowed people from Southern Sudan to vote overwhelmingly for secession, resulting in South Sudan becoming independent (Ajak et al. 2015; Brosché 2008). Although South Sudan remains independent, the secession has its own problems as tension on contentious issues

continues, including the demarcation of the north-south border and the status of the oil-rich Abyei region, which has always been claimed by both countries (Deng, L 2005b). Lengthy peace talks have failed on many occasions to find solutions to some key issues despite both nations depending heavily on oil revenues. South Sudan has three-quarters of the oil, but important infrastructure including pipelines, refineries and a Red Sea port are still in the north. Khartoum lost significant revenue from oil when South Sudan became independent (Ajak et al. 2015; Deng 2005b).

Many elements involved in Sudan's political and civil crises. The problems of cultural, political, and religious alienation of the south from the north are an outcome of more recent Sudanese government policies as well as a legacy of British/Egyptian colonial rule (Mitchell 1989). The distribution of political power and social and economic advantage became crucial to the maintenance of government in Sudan, as it maintained colonial rule (Ajak et al. 2015; Deng 2005b). Those rulers who followed continued the colonial practice of ruling by division. The Sudanese government has a poor human rights reputation and is currently under international sanction for killing vulnerable citizens from the south and from Darfur in the west. Nevertheless, the fact that some of the root causes of Sudan's civil wars were due to former British colonial administration, which left South Sudan impoverished at the end of its rule in 1956, should not be forgotten (Mitchell 1989).

## **2.6 Civil war and its impact**

The civil war is generally viewed as a conflict between the Arab Muslim north and black animist or Christian south over oil money, political power, and religious issues (Ajak et al. 2015; Deng 2005a; Makol 2012). The civil war has affected people of South Sudan in many ways, including displacement, torturing and witnessing the killing of relatives – often innocent children and women – in South Sudan. This war also made many things worse in the region, such as shortages of food and medical services. From 1988 to 1998, lives were lost because of famine due to food shortages in the region (Khawaja et al. 2008). Widespread destruction of property and violations of human rights also occurred. A significant number of people were displaced from the region and an estimated 390,000 South Sudanese refugees are still living in camps in Egypt, Chad,

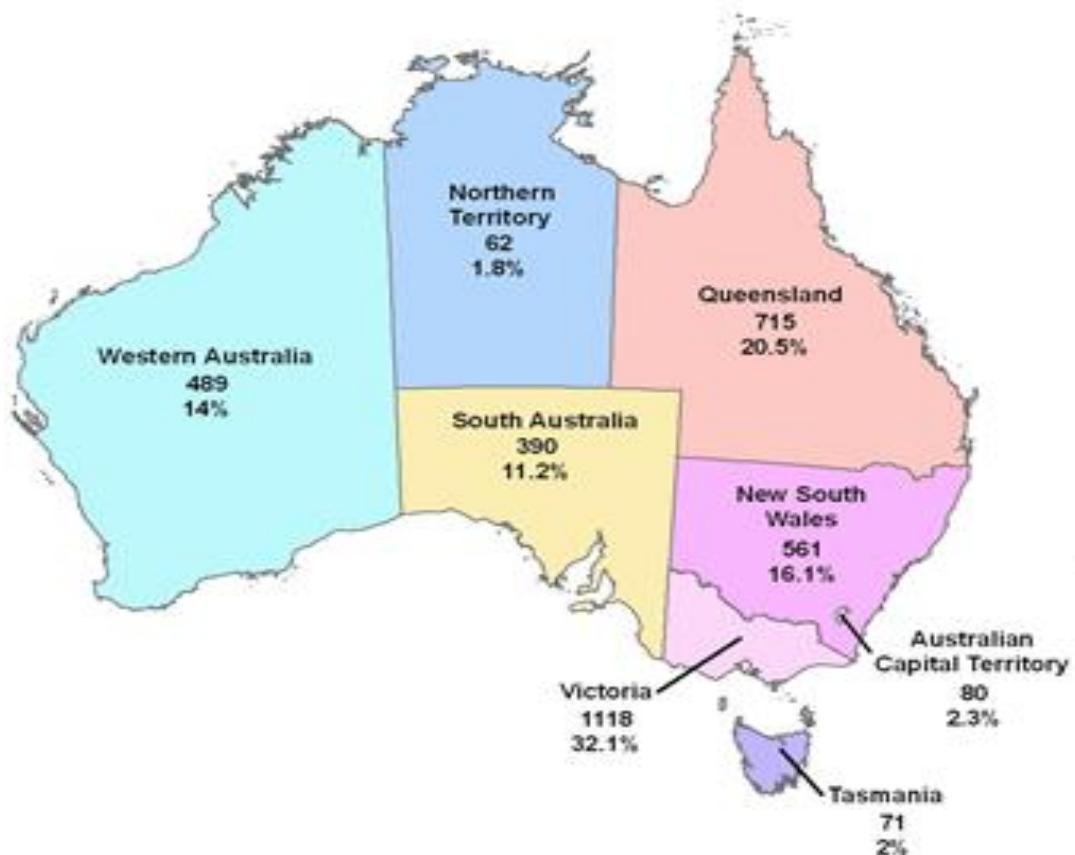
Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia (Abur 2012). The consequences of civil war have extended from generation to generation in South Sudan. Land and properties were stolen and some who took refuge in neighbouring countries later resettled in western countries, including Australia (Abur 2012). The United Nations estimated 2 million deaths and 4 million displaced people (Atem 2011b; Deng 2005b). Urban refugees also reside in Cairo, Kampala, Nairobi, and Addis Ababa (Abur 2012). Some Sudanese Australians returned to their ancestral homeland when the conflict officially ended in 2005.

For those who were resettled in the West, the process often began in refugee camps with help from the UNHCR and Australia's Offshore Humanitarian Program (OHP). The conditions in refugee camps were often unbearable, as the UNHCR could only provide basic services (Abur 2012). On arriving in Australia, these refugees faced considerable challenges in adapting to a new life, new social system, and new culture, and needed time to adapt to a new location, language, and cultural framework. Their abilities and skills were often eroded by their experiences in refugee camps and conflict, and their self-esteem and confidence were shaken by settlement difficulties. On the other hand, many refugees were psychologically resilient, and spent considerable time supporting their 'fellow travellers' (Atem 2011a).

However, there are many barriers and limitations South Sudanese community members face in providing assistance to vulnerable young people and families who are continuing to face settlement challenges. They tend to live in different suburbs, yet they see themselves as one community and celebrate common social activities together, such as birthday parties, marriages, and funerals (Abur 2012).

## **2.7 South Sudanese community in Australia**

South Sudanese people began arriving in Australia in 1997 and a second wave occurred since 2007 through offshore humanitarian programs. The early group established a community to support newly arrived families and individuals. One of the aims in forming a community was to assist individuals and family members who were still in refugee camps. People who register with the UNHCR as refugees are often granted visas to be resettled. South Sudanese people who arrived in Australia were resettled in different states of Australia.



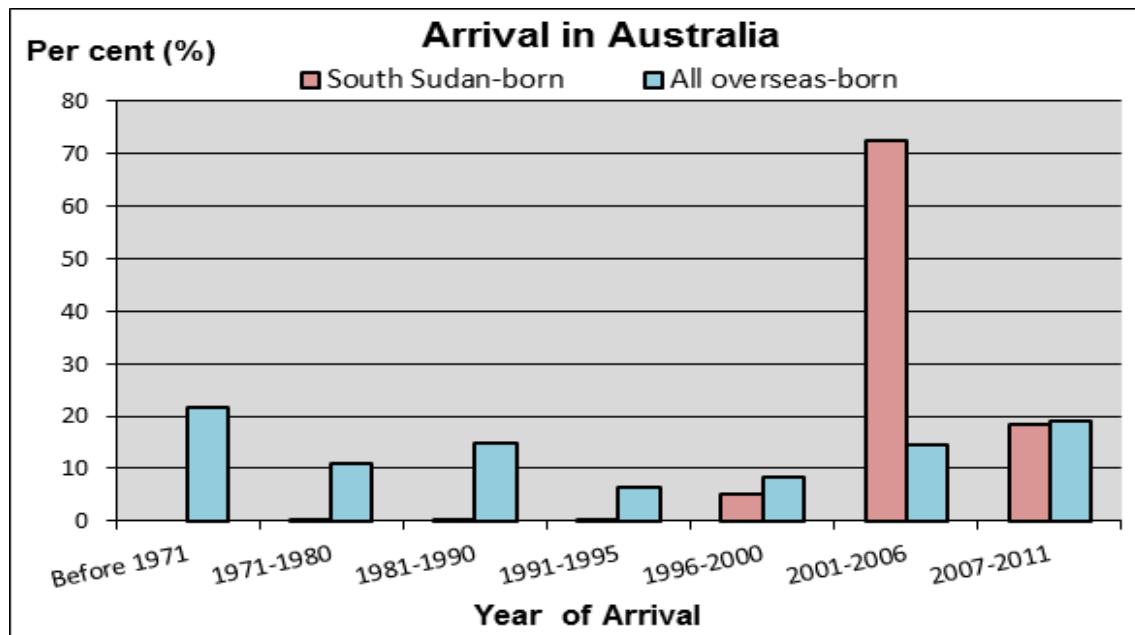
**Figure 2:3: South Sudan-born people in Australia.**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

The South Sudanese in Australia have been one of the fastest growing communities and one of the more disadvantaged groups regarding settlement needs – in particular, with regard to employment and housing (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Marlowe 2011a). The 2011 Census recorded 3487 South Sudan-born people in Australia, and showed that Victoria had the largest number (1118), followed by Queensland (715), New South Wales (561) and Western Australia (489) (DIAC, 2013).

South Sudanese people arrived in Australia at different times, including before 1971 according to the 2011 Census, as shown in Figure 6.6. The largest number of families and individuals arrived between 2001 and 2006. Among the total South Sudan-

born in Australia at the time of the 2011 Census, 72.4% arrived between 2001 and 2006, and 18.4% arrived between 2007 and 2011. Compared to the 62% of total overseas-born population who arrived before 2001, only 5.6 % of South Sudan-born people living in Australia arrived before that time.

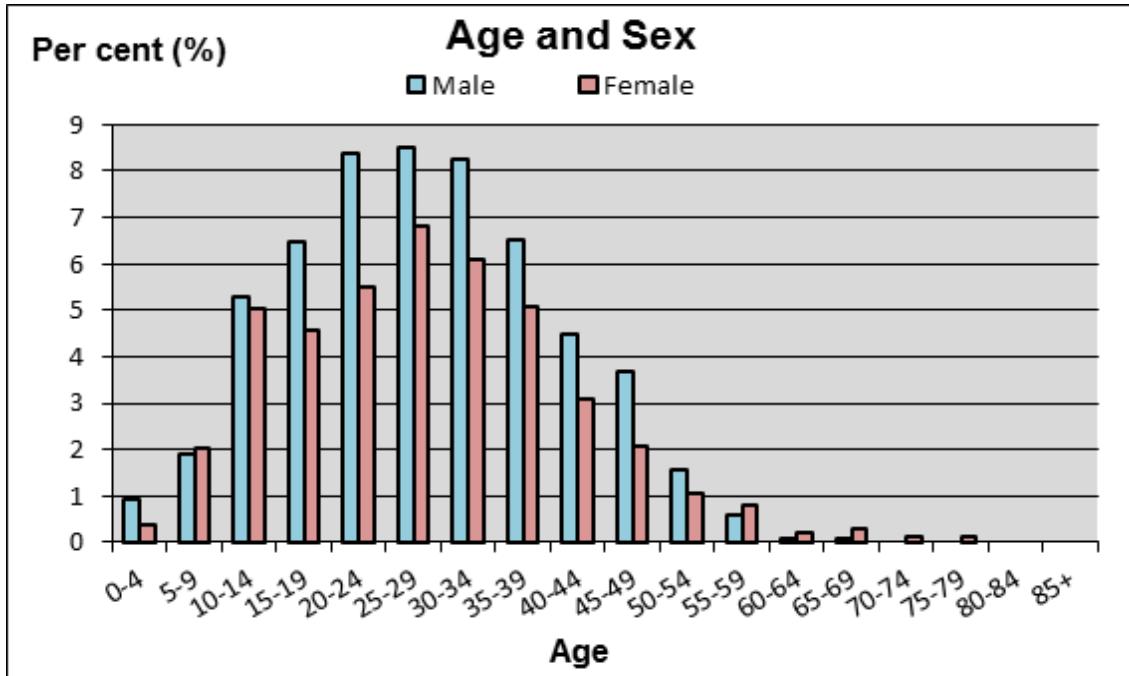


**Figure 2:4: Arrival periods of South Sudan-born people in Australia.**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.8 Age and sex of South Sudanese in Australia

The median age of South Sudan-born arrivals in 2011 was 27 years, compared with 45 years for all overseas-born arrivals, and 37 years for the total Australian population. The age distribution showed 15.5% were aged 0–14 years, 24.9% 15–24 years, 48.9% 25–44 years, 10.1% 45–64 years, and 0.6% were 65 years and over. There were 1979 males (56.7%) and 1509 females (43.3%) among those born in South Sudan who now live in Australia. The sex ratio was 131.1:100 males to females (see DIAC 2013).

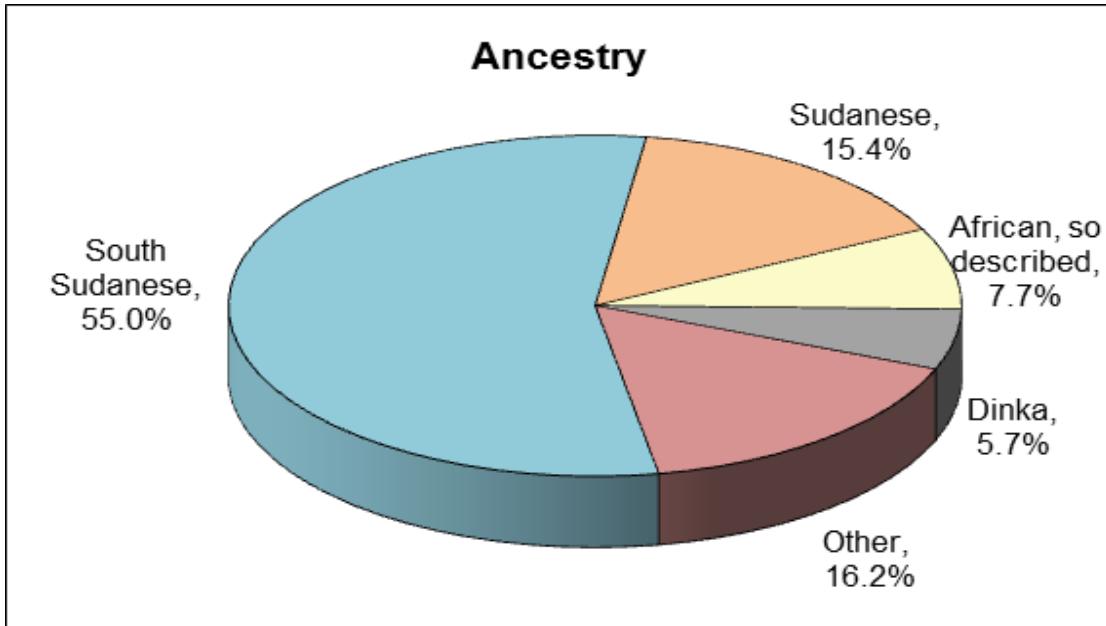


**Figure 2:5 : Age and sex of South Sudanese in Australia.**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.9 Ancestry of South Sudanese in Australia

In the 2011 Census, the top ancestry responses for South Sudan-born people were 55.0% South Sudanese, Sudanese (15.4%), African – not otherwise described (7.7%) and other African groups (16.2%). In that census, Australians reported about 300 different ancestries by ethnicity. A total of 4825 responses claimed South Sudanese ancestry. However, there are difficulties in confirming these numbers, as DIAC was not then set up to distinguish between South Sudanese and Sudanese-born people.

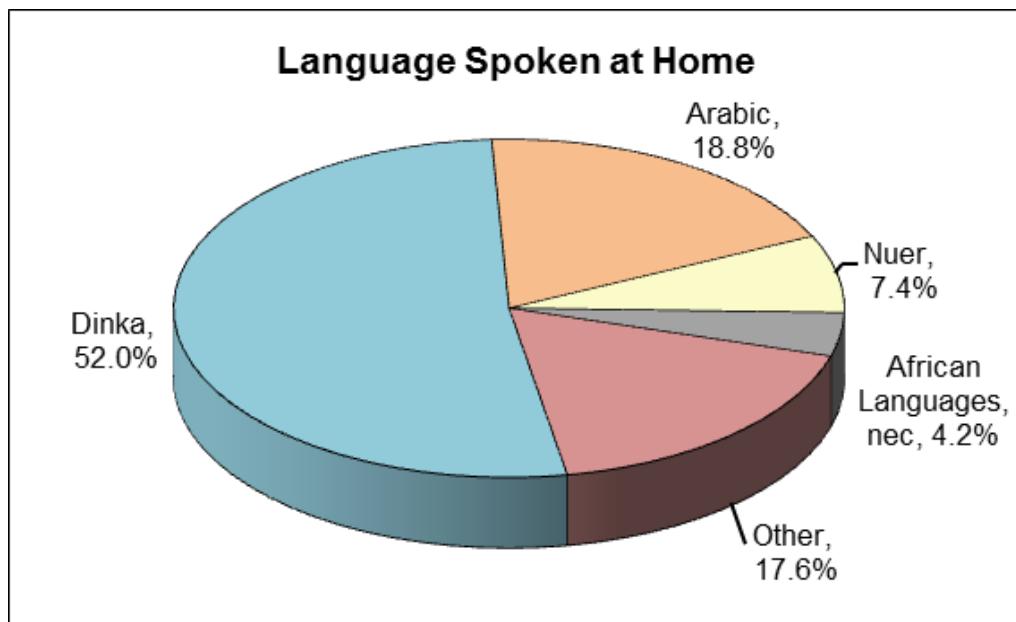


**Figure 2:6: Ancestry of South Sudanese in Australia**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.10 Language of South Sudanese in Australia

The main languages spoken at home by South Sudan-born people in Australia were Dinka (1811), Arabic (656) and Nuer (259). Of the 3388 South Sudan-born people who spoke a language other than English at home, 80.5% spoke English very well or well, and 16.4% spoke English not well or not at all.

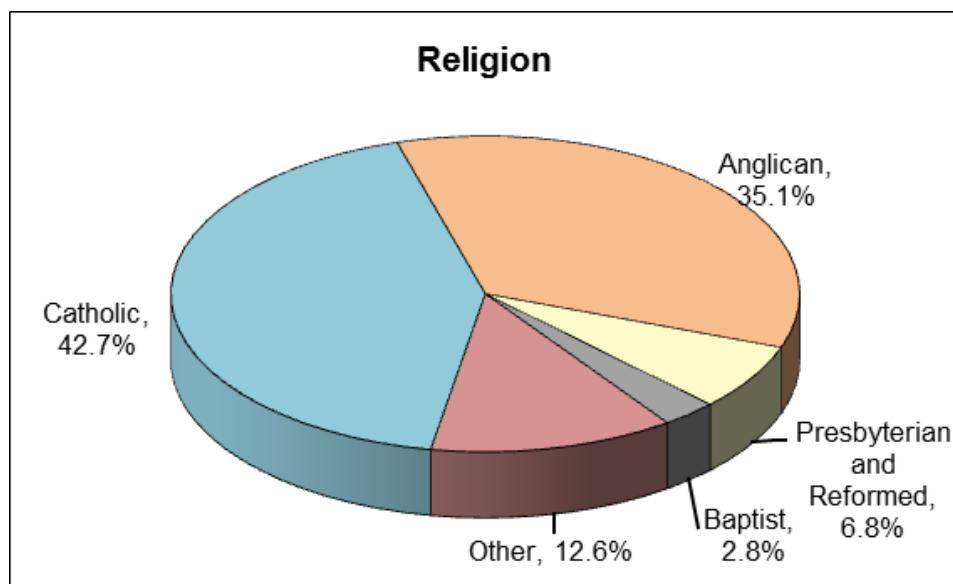


**Figure 2:7: Language spoken at home by South Sudanese in Australia**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.11 Religion of South Sudanese in Australia

At the time of the 2011 Census, the major religious affiliations amongst South Sudan-born were Catholic (1488), Anglican (1222) and Presbyterian and Reformed (238). The percentage for South Sudan-born who stated, “No Religion” (0.6%) was lower than in the total Australian population (22.3%), and a further 1.7% did not state a religion.

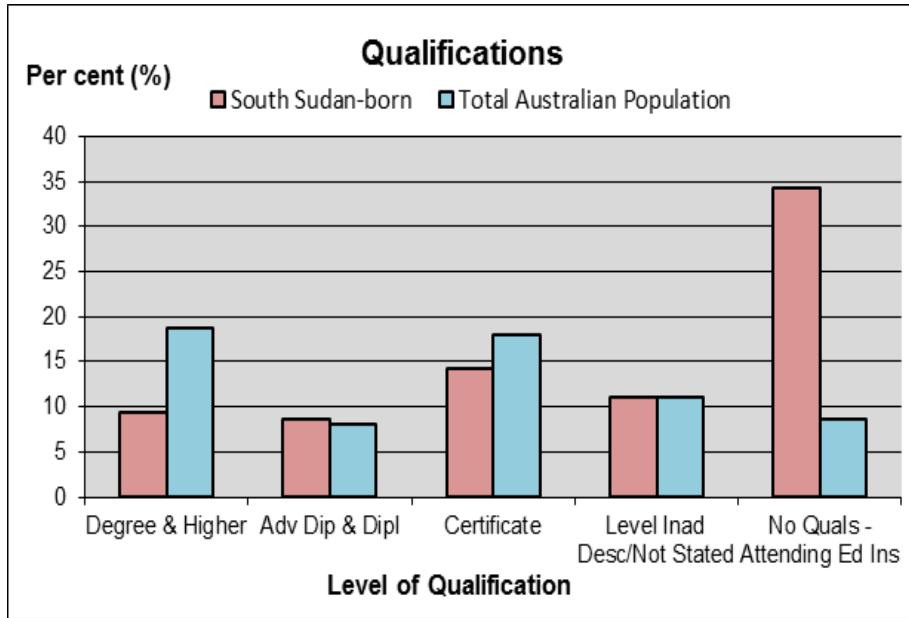


**Figure 2:8: Religious beliefs of South Sudanese in Australia**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.12 Education, employment, and income of South Sudanese in Australia

The 2011 Census showed that 43.2% of South Sudan-born people aged 15 years and over had some form of higher, non-school qualifications compared to 55.9% of the general Australian population. Of that percentage, 34.4% were still attending an educational institution. The corresponding rate for the total Australian population was 8.6%.

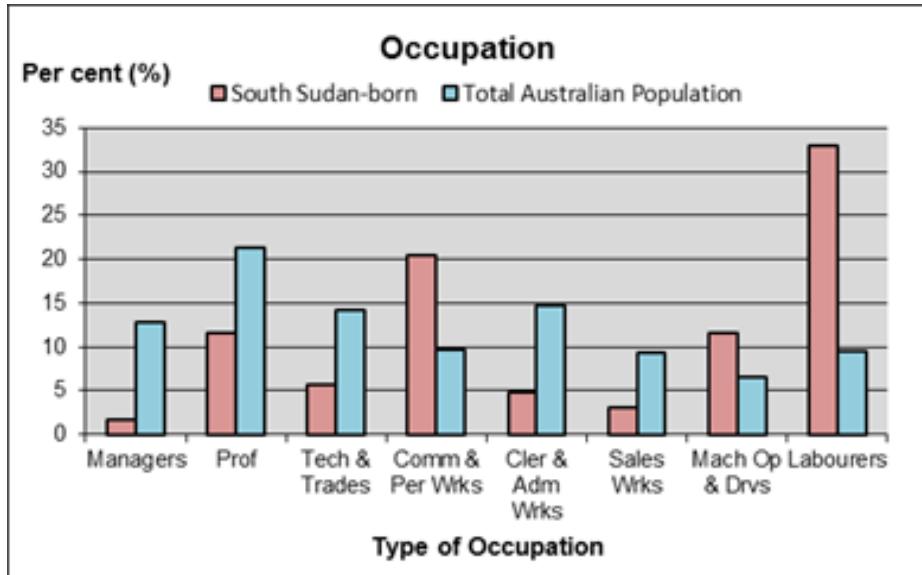


**Figure 2:9: Level of educational qualifications of South Sudanese in Australia**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

### 2.13 Occupation in workforce

In the 2011 Census, the participation rate in the labour force was 50.7% among South Sudan-born people aged 15 years and over. The unemployment rate was 28.6%. Corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 65% and 5.6%, respectively. In other words, the unemployment rate among South Sudanese in Australia was more than four times that of the general Australian population. Of the 1028 South Sudan-born people who were employed, 18.8% were employed in a skilled, managerial, and professional or trade occupation. The corresponding rate in the total Australian population was 48.4%.



**Figure 2:10: Occupation in workforce of South Sudanese in Australia**

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2013)

## 2.14 Incomes of South Sudanese in Australia

The median income at the time of the 2011 Census recorded the individual weekly income for South Sudan-born people in Australia, aged 15 years and over as \$272, compared with \$538 for all overseas-born respondents, and \$597 for all Australian-born. The total Australian population had a median individual weekly income of \$577.

Before their arrival in Australia, people from the South Sudanese community had different experiences, including being victims of civil war, staying in refugee camps, or living in transit in neighbouring countries such as Kenya (Atem 2011a; Juuk 2013). As a result of such challenging journeys, many have missed development opportunities, including education. People are aware of the importance of education in their lives and the lives of their children, but conflict and transition denied them the rights to education (Juuk 2013). Similar challenges face refugees in the area of employment. Many have arrived with no or little experience in the workforce (Abur 2012). This, added to other settlement challenges, presents difficulties in gaining employment. Therefore, solid training and work experience are often required to ensure that people are work ready. In some instances, the South Sudanese immigrants had performed work in the refugee camps, including driving UN cars, undertaking restaurant work for men, while women

frequently sold tea or food in small shops in the camps (see Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc. 2013).

## **2.15 Social and Settlement issues of the South Sudanese community in Australia**

Settlement of the South Sudanese people in Australia brings many social changes, ranging across community and family levels. Some changes are problematic and some beneficial to individuals and family. Education and work are examples of benefits for South Sudanese, while one of the problematic challenges is to understand Australian law. Many struggles with disputes and disagreements, which lead to family breakdown because of the social changes and misunderstandings of the law. South Sudanese come from a system of family and customary law that does not apply in Australia. Thus, many individuals struggle to hold their family together. These family issues are exposed upon arrival because of different values, beliefs, and processes; they are largely unaware of the laws and regulations governing family life (Abur 2012, Milos 2011).

Given the social and family issues, it is cleared that South Sudanese community groups need assistance to be better educated about family law and its procedures (Juuk 2013; Milos 2011). The community need to be informed about the role and function of the law and law enforcement agencies. It also needs to be informed about individual rights when dealing with the legal system (Juuk 2013; Milos 2011). South Sudanese customary law is highly developed and has been established throughout centuries of usage, so cultural and practical differences provide a stark contrast between the two legal systems (Milos 2011). When it comes to family problems or civil matters, South Sudanese refugees have trouble understanding legal issues. A lack of school-based education and poor provision of general information about Australia prior to arrival, and difficulties surrounding language, cause difficulties for many South Sudanese during their settlement period, particularly in Australia (Abur 2012, Juuk 2013).

The South Sudanese community supports its members through advocacy, connecting families and individuals, organising cultural activities and celebrations, as well as assisting families and individuals who are in crisis (e.g. mourning and funerals). The perception of community in South Sudan is linked to a sense of responsibility and respect, especially to their own ethnic group. Community leaders have been working hard

to assist families and individuals to settle by observing the legal issues in Australia more carefully. The community leader's role in helping families has been viewed as vital in the research context, but nothing has been offered to assist community leaders to continue this important work.

Keeping the community stable is of the highest importance for community leaders, who are still expected to hear disputes in the community and apply fair and just outcomes for all. There is a lot of pressure on community leaders and elders to keep peace and stability in the community. However, this vital role of the community leaders is not recognised in the Australian legal system (Milos 2011, p. 13).

## **2.16 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a brief history of post-colonial South Sudan in both political and social contexts, as well as the settlement and composition of the South Sudanese community in Australia. It has explained the settlement and social problems faced by the South Sudanese refugee community whose members have endured a long civil war. Some are recovering from trauma, which sometimes makes things difficult for individuals and families to organise themselves and move on with their lives. The demographic data in this chapter has provided an overview of the South Sudanese community in Australia, which can assist readers to not only understand the origins, customs, and cultural traditions of the South Sudanese, but also to appreciate the challenges they face in adjusting to a new life in a foreign country.

## **Chapter 3 Refugee Resettlement and Settlement Challenges and Participation in Employment and Sport**

### **3.1.Introduction**

This chapter presents a brief overview of refugee crisis and resettlement in the 21st century Australia. The chapter provides a global perspective as a contextualisation of settlement issues in Australia for refugee communities. The chapter discusses some cultural and social clashes encountered by refugee families in Australia including difficulties in raising children in a new culture and ongoing trauma and wellbeing issues as a result of resettlement and settlement difficulties. It discusses participation in employment, and in sport as important factors in assisting the successful settlement of refugee groups (families and individuals). Employment is conceptualised not only in terms of providing income to meet basic financial necessities, but also a means of meeting psychological, emotional and social needs such as the enhancement of self-esteem, a sense of independence and the opportunity to build social and professional networks. Participation in sport delivers more than the obvious physical health benefits. Like employment it can contribute to positive states of mental health, provide increased networking opportunities and assist in breaking down social isolation. Further, the chapter critically reviews the barriers refugees face when seeking employment and initiating participation in sport.

#### **3.1.1. Part 1: Resettlement of refugees**

The concept of refugee protection emerged during World War II, resulting in the Convention on Refugees and subsequently the establishment of the UNHCR (Abur & Spaaij, 2016; McDonald et al. 2008; UNHCR 2015). Refugees are people who have fled their homeland often as a result of political instability, repression, and violent conflict. They leave in order to escape oppressive discrimination, or severe physical and mental harm (Abur & Spaaij, 2016, Mamer 2010). Such sudden departures generally mean that refugees do not have the time or opportunity to pack their belongings or to farewell loved ones (Abur 2012; Mamer 2010, Marlowe 2011a). Often, they leave secretly for fear of

persecution, without knowing if they will ever be able to return. Typically, refugees are then exposed to uncertain and dangerous journeys (Mamer 2010).

'Refugee resettlement' is a term used to describe the relocation of refugees from a country of asylum to a third country for permanent integration, with the aim of addressing the needs of refugees through integration in that third country. While the resettlement process is complex, it is widely viewed as a durable solution for refugee problems (see Marlowe, Harris & Lyons 2014; Refugee Council of Australia 2010; Tipping 2011). Refugees are assessed and accepted for resettlement when they meet the criteria set out by the UN Convention (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007; Fozdar & Hartley 2012; McDonald et al. 2008). The challenges that refugees experienced are significant and multi-faceted (Abur 2012; Fozdar & Hartley 2013) Large numbers of refugees, who are waiting to be assessed and resettled currently live in refugee and displacement camps worldwide, such as the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, from where many South Sudanese have lived before migrating to Australia, as well as camps in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Egypt. These camps are characterised by shortages of food, inadequate medical services, and lack of sanitation (Ager 1999; Ajak et al. 2015; Marlowe 2011a).

In addition to these physical deprivations and hardships, many refugees experience highly traumatising events prior to their arrival in the camps, such as witnessing executions, the death of loved ones, different forms of abuse, rape, and oppression as well as looting and widespread destruction. These experiences can have profound emotional and psychological impacts on families and individuals and it has been widely recognised that as a result many refugees suffer from varying degrees of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Abur & Spaaij, 2016, Ajak et al. 2015, Marlowe 2011a, Tipping 2011). The complexity of the pre-settlement experiences of refugees and the impact of these experiences of individuals and families put pressure on countries receiving refugees to ensure that they can be adequately supported at both a policy and service level (Ajak et al. 2015; Marlowe 2011a). Countries providing resettlement programs do so voluntarily as part of the global sharing of responsibility to protect refugees and provide a durable solution to those who cannot return to their countries of origin (UNHCR 2015). The receiving country is expected to provide refugees with support services and access to resources that facilitate successful integration into the host society (Hurstfield et al. 2004;

UNHCR 2015; Bloch 2000, 2008; Korac 2003; Peisker & Tilbury 2003). These issues discussed in the literature review are very critical and important issues for the South Sudanese community in Australia and in the context of this study. Families and individuals are struggling with resettlement and settlement issues, and may need some support services in order to overcome settlement issues.

### **3.1.2. Settlement of Refugees: a challenging process**

While resettlement issues for refugees in general have been discussed above, this section discusses *settlement* issues for refugees that are of particular significance to the South Sudanese community in Australia. ‘Refugee settlement’ is a term used when refugees arrive in Australia and require a range of support services to establish themselves and become independent in a new cultural and social context (see Abur & Spaaij 2016, DIAC 2013). Settlement is a complex process that requires support from the host community, government, and non-government agencies to address different challenges (Abur 2012, Abur & Spaaij 2016 Lejukole 2008).

Refugees have sometimes been perceived as a burden on receiving countries. This notion of a burden has been central to both policy and research debates about displacement and protection (Zetter 2015, p. 17). Such political and community concerns are indicative of the global challenge of refugee resettlement amidst a trend of decreasing numbers of refugees being able to return voluntarily to their countries (Correa-Velez, Barnett, & Gifford 2015). The complexity of settlement is magnified by attachment to place – how refugees identify with the country that they settle in and how they create a sense of belonging (Hiruy 2009). Arguably this is very much influenced by how they are received; as burdensome or as being able to make an important contribution. Based on the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and Protection, the countries where refugees are resettled must act responsibly in a non-discriminatory manner by ensuring that those people have the opportunity to participate fully in society (Abur & Spaaij, 2016, UNHCR 2015).

Ideally, settlement can be seen as a two-way process of mutual understanding of cultural expectations, with the host community working in partnership with refugees. As the Refugee Council of Australia (2011) (RCA) argues:

Settlement is not just something that a refugee must do, but there is also a need for the wider community to adapt to accommodate the refugees. A “spirit of hospitality”, where refugees are made to feel welcome in a community, underpins successful refugee settlement programs.

Settlement is meant to be the final stage for refugees and migrants to integrate into Australian society and it is a time when families and individuals require support to gain social connection and to develop economic independence (Bennett & Adriel 2014; DIAC 2012). However, Lejukole (2008) has argued that settlement cannot ever be completed; it is an ongoing process that involves the challenges of adapting to a new place and gradually connecting with the host community. At the beginning the challenges of settlement can overshadow its benefits for refugees. These challenges include lack of social capital and language to assist the integration process. Settling in a new environment and social context is a daunting task for anyone, regardless of the educational level one may or may not have obtained (Abur 2012; Abur & Spaaij 2016). The impact of integrating into a new society can cause high levels of stress and anxiety (Pisano 1995; Refugee Council of Australia 2010). Refugees often experience a high level of homesickness and isolation and this is aggravated by culture shock that further hinders their ability to begin a new life in Australia (Abur & Spaaij 2016) As well as promoting optimal levels of wellbeing required to deal with the stress and adjustments involved in resettlement, integration programs that support emotional and personal rebuilding approach can help to prevent the development of more serious mental health difficulties (Marlowe 2010, p. 6, cited in UNHCR 2002, p. 231).

The settlement of refugees has generated a vast body of research globally. Studies in this field have covered a broad array of themes critical to setting the context for this current PhD research in terms of understanding forced migration and displacement. Prominent themes of particular relevance include drivers of displacement and forced migration, legal and moral frameworks, and experiences in refugee camps and countries of resettlement (see, for example, Abur & Spaaij 2016, Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007; Fozdar & Hartley 2012; McDonald et al. 2008). Factors which have been identified as making a significant positive contribution to settlement include: feeling safe from racism and discrimination, obtaining secure and well-paid employment, being able to buy a home, and one’s children feeling well supported at school and in the community (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Ager 1999; Fozdar & Hartley 2012, Fozdar & Hartley 2012, Refugee

Council of Australia, 2010). These studies have discussed general challenges of refugees in Australia, but have not critiqued policies and ways forward to address issues in bigger level as people still experiencing unemployment issues and discrimination related issues.

This PhD research specifically focuses on participation in employment and sport as factors that have a significant positive impact on settlement. Issues such refugee health and wellbeing, social networks and family/parenting are also discussed in terms of a two-way relationship with employment and sport participation. For example, poor states of mental health can contribute to barriers to refugees gaining employment, however obtaining employment can significantly improve overall-wellbeing.

When a host country provides assistance to enable newly arrived refugees to integrate into their new society, services and treatment of refugees are influenced by the politics within the country (Allerdice 2011). In Australia, refugee settlement policy-making, management, and funding are centralised at the Commonwealth level. For the past few years, discussion of refugees in Australia has increasingly focused on refugees from African countries and the recent arrival of boats seeking asylum in Australia (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Marjoribanks, et al 2010). Many of these recent debates in the media have attempted to distinguish between “bad” and “good” refugees. “Bad” refugees are those who “jump the queue”, meaning they arrive by boat and not through the formal UNHCR channel (Abur & Spaaij 2016; Marjoribanks, et al 2010).

The majority of South Sudanese in Australia arrived through the work of the UNHCR in refugee camps. Despite this, they are still often labelled as “undesirable” refugees in Government and media discourse because of their settlement-related challenges in Australia, which have been both exaggerated and widely misreported by the mainstream media (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Marjoribanks, et al 2010, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017). Therefore, understanding these history and challenging issues facing people from refugee backgrounds in Australia including people from the South Sudanese community is very vital in policy and practice contexts.

### **3.1.3. Policy and Practice: refugee settlement in Australia**

Australia has a history of resettling refugees and people in humanitarian need, and is a signatory to the United Nations 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and to the subsequent 1967 Protocol (Cope & Kalantzis 1999, Smith 1998). The Humanitarian Resettlement Program in Australia began in 1947, with the resettlement of European Displaced Persons (DPs) who were displaced by World War II (see Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Border Protection 2013) and brought to Australia where they were accommodated under the auspices of the International Refugee Organization (IRO), the immediate precursor of the UNHCR. Since 1947, more than 800,000 refugees from a broad range of nationalities have been resettled and have rebuilt their lives in Australia (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Atem 2011; DIAC 2013; Pisano 1995; Refugee Council of Australia 2010). Between 1933 and 1939, for example, more than 7,000 Jews fleeing Nazi Germany were settled (Neuman 2006). In 1937, the Australian Jewish Welfare Society pioneered the first refugee settlement support services, with financial assistance from the Australian government. (Refugee Council of Australia 2012). However, Australia also has a history of discriminating against certain ethnicities. After Federation, the Restriction Act 1901, which became known as the White Australia Policy, limited immigration to Australia on the basis of ethnicity (Atem 2011, Refugee Council of Australia 2010).

The White Australia Policy formally ended in 1975 with the introduction of the Racial Discrimination Act. A multicultural political agenda was beginning, but it took until 1989 for the federal government to translate it into policy in the form of a National Agenda for Multicultural Australia. The aim of the policy was to achieve a harmonious society based on Australian values by recognising diversity as a positive contribution to the workforce within Australian culture (see Australian Government 2012). Since 1975 when the first Vietnamese refugees arrived in Australia by boat, many more refugees have arrived from Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. In the last decade, refugees have come from Burma, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan, Sudan, Somalia, Congo, and Burundi (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Atem 2011, DIAC 2011, and Refugee Council of Australia 2010).

As a public policy, multiculturalism encompasses government measures designed to respond to diversity and differences. The government has identified three dimensions of its multicultural policy. The first is cultural identity, which is the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion. The second is social justice, the right of all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender, or place of birth. The third dimension is economic efficiency, the need to maintain, develop, and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of background (Australian Government 2014).

With this multicultural society in mind, refugee community groups are considered to be disadvantaged, and thus deserving of special consideration under social inclusion services after a realisation that some community groups are being excluded (Calma 2008). Social inclusion has become an important policy initiative for state governments, and it often generates debate about which groups are socially excluded, and why (Calma 2008 and see Australian Government 2012). Social exclusion is viewed as a significant social cost, since it pushes new arrivals to the edge of society and prevents them from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, lack of basic competencies, limited lifelong learning opportunities, and ongoing discrimination (Abur & Spaaij 2016). Many refugees have experienced poverty in their home countries as well as the interim country prior to settlement, which in addition to war and conflict has led to poor quality or interrupted education – or in some cases the total absence of formal education. Refugees have varying degrees of written literacy in their own language, and may have very low levels of English language. If they have been living in a refugee camp prior to their arrival, they may also have no concept of how to interact with society and its institutions such as banks, hotels, etc (Abur 2012). A combination of lack of familiarity with systems that are necessary in the navigation of daily life and a lack of ability/confidence with language can result in a struggle to gain meaningful or any employment. This results in limited participation in society with little access to power and decision-making bodies and, thus, often feel powerless and unable to take control over decisions that affect their lives (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Stratigaki 2005).

Social inclusion policy, on the other hand, aims to preserve human and cultural rights, especially in relation to language retention, participation in economic production, recognition of qualifications of refugees and skilled migrants, and participation in decision-making (Calma 2008). The basic values of multiculturalism and social inclusion policy in Australia include the following principles: ***Principle 1***, a commitment to celebrate and value the benefits of cultural diversity for all Australians, within the broader aims of national unity, community harmony and maintenance of our democratic values, ***Principle 2***, a commitment to a just, inclusive and socially cohesive society where everyone can participate in the opportunities that Australia offers and where government services are responsive to the needs of Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Australian Government 2014, p.6).

These principles highlight a mutual obligation for all citizens, whether migrants or Australian-born, to accept that everyone has the right to retain, express, and share their own cultural heritage in return for an overriding commitment to Australian norms (which include the country's laws, democratic form of governance, and adoption of English as a national language). The government's social policy and vision of a socially inclusive society effectively means that all Australians should feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in society. It states that all Australians must have an equal opportunity to be involved in learning by participating in education and training; to be involved in the workforce by participating in employment, in voluntary work, and in family and caring; to engage by connecting with people and using their local community's resources; and to have a voice so they can influence decisions that affect them (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Australia Government 2012).

The Australian Government's concept of social policy and the principles of multiculturalism are particularly relevant to this current PhD study of the South Sudanese community and the benefits of participation in employment and sport. This study demonstrates that the settlement experiences of the South Sudanese community in Australia are contrary to the principles of multiculturalism and social inclusion policy when it comes to participation in employment and sport. As will be discussed in detail in **Chapter 7** and **Chapter 8**, some members of this community have experienced both

subtle and more explicit forms of discrimination and racism in the workplace and on the sports fields (Abur & Spaaij 2016).

### **3.1.4. The South Sudanese in Australia: Cultural Challenges**

There is a general expectation that refugees will adjust quickly to the expectations of the host society, which (erroneously) assumes that acculturation and integration are straightforward, if not seamless, processes. However, cultural differences between the refugee community and that of the host country can mean that integration is complex. Culture has been defined as knowledge, social activities, and the interpretation of life or worldview with which individuals or groups associate, as well as an understanding of their society (Habermas et al 1985).

This study is built from study which I conducted in 2012 for my masters' research that found that South Sudanese community is facing complex issues in adjusting to their new environment including cultural change (Abur 2012). Atem (2011) found that settlement of Sudanese refugees in Australia is complicated by cultural differences and by their experiences prior to arrival. Large numbers of people in today's society now live in cities and towns rather than rural villages (Giddins 1989). Some of families and individuals in the South Sudanese community to Australia with mixed experiences and lifestyles. Some had opportunity of living in cities and town, but some families and individuals were from village to refugee camps and from refugee camps to settle in urban areas in Australia which is different from their experiences in refugee camps or in the villages.

In South Sudanese culture life events such as the birth, sickness, death (mourning), marriage, and reunion are very important as they bring family, relatives, extended family, and friends together in either celebration or to support each other through difficult/sad times. *Togetherness* is essential in Dinka (the largest tribal group in Southern Sudan) culture and is one of the reasons why the Dinka people live in large groups or extended families that can reach beyond 12 families in a kinship chain close in blood relations (Juuk 2013; Makol 2012). This cultural beliefs and practices are still impacting the South Sudanese families and individuals in Australia in different ways. Some families find it

hard to raise their children in Australia because cultural reasons that may be against Australian culture and lifestyles.

Renzaho & Vignjevic (2011) argued that raising a family in a culture new to one's own is a challenge for many African migrant families with very little knowledge of western parenting. Children of migrants tend to adapt quickly, but their parents still hold on to their own cultures and parenting styles. As children adapt to those systems and cultures of their new country, they are often required to interpret the new culture for their parents or other adult family members who are struggling with certain issues (Juuk 2013; Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). These include social issues relating to child rearing, child protection, and school issues. For example, a teenager may choose not to attend school, and not listen to or respect parents' opinions because he/she is more expert in certain areas of interpreting for parents (Abur 2012; Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). This brings critical challenges for parents in terms of responsibilities within the family (Lejukole 2008). Many parents feel their responsibilities and respect are undermined when local authorities' initiate programs to discipline and manage their children (Bye & Alvarez 2007).

Thus, parenting children in a new culture has been one of the challenging tasks for South Sudanese families (Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). Resettling can be highly disruptive and is often a lengthy transitional process. It often involves losing structures that may have provided significant support for child protection and development, and individual and general family functioning (Juuk 2013). Often, there is considerable debate within the South Sudanese community among different generations about where they really belong. Some people consider themselves more Australian by adapting to Australian ways of life, and have criticised South Sudanese ways. The differences in cultural values between Australian and South Sudanese societies have been the main issue causing anxiety among parents. Some South Sudanese parents in Australia are greatly concerned about their young people having contact with those outside their own culture, and resist any kind of relationship that a young person can form in their own community (Abur 2012; Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). One of the things that adults or parents fear is the difference between Australia's liberal values and South Sudan's traditional and conservative values. This frequently leads to intergenerational disagreement and conflict in the family, as well as in the community and among different generations.

The rise of intergenerational conflict among refugees and migrant families due to difference in cultural values and practices is a major social problem. Social workers and people working in the criminal justice system believe that it is a major source of family breakdown (Marlowe, Harris & Lyons 2014; Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). Maintaining one's original culture in the family is important in many societies and carries considerable weight in terms of an argument as to why people want to keep the values of their cultural practice and family relations (Abur 2012; Atem 2011). African, and particularly Sudanese, parents are a case in point. They often want their children to maintain traditional values and roles, but this creates tensions for teenagers who have grown up in Australia, who will confidently challenge such expectations and demands from their parents (Juuk 2013). The difficulties teenagers face in accepting traditional values and cultural expectations from parents include pressure from friends, directly and indirectly, to adopt an Australian or western culture rather than continuing to value their traditional cultures. Conflict can occur within families whose members are all new migrants, as well as within families whose children have been born in Australia (Abur 2012; Juuk 2013). Clashes of this type generally arise regarding modes of dress and behaviour, differences in child-rearing practice and, in particular, a greater sense of independence amongst young people.

### **3.1.5. Post-trauma and wellbeing for South Sudanese refugees**

During the resettlement and settlement process, refugees face many challenges including learning a new language, finding employment, gaining an understanding the systems and culture of the host country and dealing with discrimination (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017). There are also stresses associated with being separated from family members and/or family reunification process in Australia, as well as profound feelings of homesickness and isolation (Abur & Spaaij 2016). These challenges can impede refugees from achieving well-being in the resettlement context (Marlowe, Harris & Lyons 2014, Lejukole 2008; Tipping 2011, Renzaho & Vignjevic 2011). The length of time needed for refugees to settle and to feel settled— is closely linked to the number of support services provided. Support with income, housing, employment, education and health care assists integration into the local community and plays an

important role in enabling refugees to rebuild their lives and sense of self (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Marlowe 2010).

This body of literature demonstrates that both resettlement and settlement difficulties cause some of the mental health and wellbeing issues for families and individuals from refugee backgrounds, in addition to their conflict and displacement experiences before arriving at refugee camps. From this study's perspective, understanding post-trauma and wellbeing issues of South Sudanese community families and individuals is a very important part of this study. There is no doubt that some, if not many, South Sudanese families and individuals have experienced some trauma and other wellbeing issues due to post-settlement and settlement experiences.

There are some less tangible factors that play a vital role in the settlement process include feeling safe and secure, gradually being able to restore a sense of self-worth and dignity, regaining a sense of control over one's life, resolving guilt, and processing grief around the loss of identity and country (Refugee Council of Australia, 2010). One of the ongoing problems for refugees is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is often not discussed openly, but it is a significant issue when it comes to resettlement. Support programs contribute to refugee individual's overall well-being and can decrease both daily and long-term stress, which is a part of PTSD (Abur 2012, Marlowe 2010, and Tipping 2011)

Settlement issues affect the well-being of individuals and families from refugee backgrounds during their settlement period, and often become overwhelming (Atem 2011; Hadgkiss et al. 2012). Generally, there are significant wellbeing and mental health issues that required some urgent preventions for refugees in order for them to overcome some settlement issues (Lejukole 2008; Mamer 2010). The wellbeing and mental health issues include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). There is no intention here to either diagnose or label all refugees, but rather to acknowledge trauma as one of the settlement challenges for people from refugee backgrounds who have experienced appalling situations, including whilst in refugee camps (Marlowe 2010, 2011a). Their experiences in conflict areas and later in refugee camps influence their ability to resettle.

There is ample evidence in the literature to suggest that those with a refugee background have experienced some form of abuse, rape, oppression, or have witnessed horrific atrocities, including killings, looting, and destruction of personal wealth. Some have been in slavery, forced to live in exile and in shocking conditions in refugee camps (see Lejukole 2008; Mamer 2010; Marlowe 2010, 2011a). These experiences evidently affect many refugees, including those from the South Sudan, who may have been forced to live in refugee camps for many years. They bring these difficult experiences with them when engaging in resettlement programs (Mamer 2010).

South Sudanese refugees have been studied for years for post-trauma issues because of their background in the civil war, displacement, and their lives in refugee camps (see Lejukole 2008; Mamer 2010; Marlowe 2010, 2011a). In Australia, most people from South Sudanese community have no idea what trauma means, or how to seek help if one has encountered traumatic challenges (Abur 2012 and Lejukole 2008). In some respects, trauma presents a powerful argument that helps people claim for recognition as refugees (Marlowe 2011a). Trauma is something that has helped many refugees gain entry into refugee camps, acquire refugee status, and access services in Australia (Marlowe 2011b). However, traumatic experiences – or being labelled as having trauma issues – can limit opportunities for refugees to integrate into their host society, as well as to obtain decent employment and participate in decision-making (Westoby 2008).

Post-trauma is a condition that is not often discussed by refugees because of traditional beliefs and taboos associated with mental health (Abur 2012). When discussing trauma issues, South Sudanese people respond very differently to those raised in western societies (Marlowe 2010 and Tipping 2011). This has sometimes made it difficult to offer counselling for trauma to particular refugees such as those in the South Sudanese community. People are more likely to decline services because it is not part of their belief system (Marlowe 2010).

More specifically, it is not uncommon for cultures such as the South Sudanese to decline to discuss their trauma or mental health issues. Trauma is a new concept for them. It is often viewed as a weakness to talk about mental health issues. This is a general observation in relation to common attitudes and feelings around trauma and this is confirmed by other research (Abur 2012; Marlowe 2010). Some of the strengths,

resilience, and coping mechanisms that assist the South Sudanese to deal internally with trauma issues, stating that many do not want to hear about post-trauma, as it labels them in negative ways (Marlowe 2010). This does not mean that there is no trauma among at least some South Sudanese people who have resettled in western countries such as Australia, and among those still living in South Sudan because of the long civil war, they have witnessed. As part of transition and settlement confrontation, families and individuals would find themselves with fewer or no skills to deal with past and present challenges in the new environment (Abur 2012; Tipping 2011).

Having social connections enhances the well-being and health of people through daily contact and support for social issues (Bloom 2014). Personal social wellbeing involves a person's relationship with others and how that person communicates, interacts, and socialises (Bloom 2014, Mikkonen & Raphael 2010). It can also relate to how people make friends and whether they have a sense of belonging. For example, going to the movies with friends can help to ease the daily stress of social isolation (Mikkonen & Raphael 2010). Social health and wellbeing refer to the social hierarchy of people, their financial status, living conditions, social support, level of education, acceptance of race, gender, religion, and behaviours, and access to health care (Hadgkiss et al. 2012). For refugee community groups, such as the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, their social well-being can be measured by a broad range of indicators. They include the level of income of members and their families, social participation and social support networks, current and previous education, understanding social and political systems, understanding critical challenges of settlement (such as living conditions, racism and discrimination, and culture shock), and other factors such as city lifestyle (Mikkonen & Raphael 2010).

The complex roles played by these social determinants of the health and well-being of those who feel socially excluded are at an extreme level for the disadvantaged and may be experienced both directly and indirectly (Hadgkiss et al. 2012). The disadvantaged are more likely to experience social exclusion from decent employment opportunities, due to their backgrounds as refugees, having English as a second language or lacking certain skills and qualifications (Abur & Spaaij 2016). It is very common for refugees to lack supportive relationships, suffer social isolation, and face mistrust of and by others. Racism and discrimination further increase stress and other unsettling emotions (Abur &

Spaaij 2016). Stressful living conditions make it extremely hard to take up physical leisure activities or to practice healthy eating habits because most of one's energy is directed simply at coping day to day. Such conditions can cause continuing feelings of shame, insecurity, and worthlessness, which affect psychological health (Bloom 2014, Mikkonen & Raphael 2010). The social environment brings a new complexity in terms of health and wellbeing (Hadgkiss et al. 2012). For instance, lack of employment and participation in sport can cause many problems for individuals; there is no doubt that a lack of participation in social activities within the local community creates inequality, and feelings of stigma and social isolation, which can lead to serious health and wellbeing issues.

Therefore, obtaining employment-related income is perhaps the most important social determinant of good health. The level of income shapes overall living conditions affects psychological functioning and influences health-related behaviours, such as the quality of diet, the extent of physical activity, tobacco and excessive alcohol use, which are likely factors among refugee community groups in Australia. Participation in employment and sports brings especial connections to individual people who are either would have suffered social isolation in societies.

### **3.2.1. Part 2: Employment and unemployment for refugees**

Modern employment theory argues that there is no single policy that carries more potential benefits than the full employment of individuals willing to work (Forstater 2006). Employment has important social benefits for individuals, families, neighbourhoods, and communities. Research has linked employment with through decreased crime rates, reduced drug and alcohol abuse, and stable healthy families (Cullen 1999; Forstater 2006). Employment is particularly significant for refugee communities as it assists in enabling people to integrate more easily into the host community. Financial independence, opportunities to enhance skills, build social networks and contribute to society all aid in the process of establishing a sense of home in a new country and creating a positive self-identity (Cholewinski 2010; Trewin 2001).

However, while multiculturalism is celebrated, and used to strengthen citizenship, and nation-building programs, there is a gap between the rhetoric and the actual lived

experience of particular cultural communities and individuals. This can be seen in the experience of refugee communities in terms of difficulty in gaining employment and earning an income with which to establish themselves and their families. (Abur & Spaaij 2016). While obtaining, and being engaged in employment is an extremely important aspect of the integration process for refugees (Abur & Spaaij 2016; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007), and a first priority for those who wish to support their families either overseas or where they have settled (Ager & Strang 2008), refugees tend to experience a high rate of unemployment and lower earnings compared to other migrants (Abdelkerim & Grace 2012, Abur & Spaaij 2016).

The meaning and impact of employment and unemployment are critical aspects of the study of refugee settlement and this PhD research focuses on the benefits of employment both in regard to financial enablement and the important skills and social networks that people can gain through employment. Before reviewing previous research in this area, brief definitions of key terms are provided. Paid employment has been defined as a state of having a job or via providing a service for wages or salaries, in cash or via in kind support of some variety (Krahn, Howard & Galambos 2015). Employment provides potent functions such as a sense of societal structure and a meaningful life, as people are able to work and make a contribution to their families and community (Blustein, Medvide & Wan 2012). Employment may be full-time or part-time and range in stability from casual or contract to ongoing. Under-employment is when the hours of paid work may be casual or insufficient to meet living costs (Cullen 1999). Unemployment is a situation where a person has no paid work but is actively looking for paid work (Hussmanns 2007). In order for a person to register as unemployed and claim an unemployment benefit, they must be immediately available for paid employment (Cullen 1999)

In the context of settlement, there are many factors as to why refugees struggle with difficulties in obtaining employment (Abur & Spaaij 2016; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007). These problems often include a shortage of jobs in the market, meaning that there is strong competition for positions. However, gaining employment is also hampered by a lack of fluency in English, lack of local experience and as well as lack of understanding sophisticated system in Australia (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Correa-Velez, Barnett & Gifford

2015). Additionally, people from refugee backgrounds are vulnerable to long-term unemployment and lower earning jobs because of the lack of required skills, non-transferability of skills and qualifications (Taylor 2004). Due to war and conflict and long periods spent in camps refugees frequently have low literacy and numeracy skills, which impact both on their ability to do some jobs and on their confidence. However, even those who are highly literate also face barriers as often their qualifications are not recognised and this causes difficulty in obtaining jobs (Abur & Spaaij 2016; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007 Fozdar & Hartley 2013). These issues around qualifications mean that when refugees are able to find work it is often in low-paid jobs such as cleaning and seasonal fruit picking (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007, Taylor 2004). It is also significant that, as new arrivals, refugees do not have the social networks of long-term residents, which can often be instrumental in assisting people find work.

These are the most obvious reasons for unemployment in refugee communities. However, there are a host of other reasons which are connected to, or a result of the post-trauma, loss and disruption refugees have experienced prior to their arriving in a country such as Australia. These post-traumatic experiences include physical and mental suffering. The experiences also some conflicts in families, caring responsibilities, and a feeling of hopelessness (Abdelkerim & Grace 2012; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007, Lawlor & Perkins 2009, Ziguras & Kleidon 2005). Refugees who have spent a long time in refugee camps may also have substance abuse issues which can interfere with obtaining employment (Ziguras & Kleidon 2005). Families also find harder to access affordable rental houses which add on top of other pressuring issues. Lack of available and affordable rental properties and discrimination towards families and individuals from refugee backgrounds is some which has been experienced by the South Sudanese community in Australia (Abur 2012).

Racism and discrimination is another considerable barrier for refugees engaging with employment (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007, Taylor 2004). Refugees from African backgrounds are more likely to experience racism and stereotyping in the workplace because of their accent and physical appearance (Fozdar & Torezani 2008) as well as various forms of bullying and harassment (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Taylor 2004). Racism and discrimination can hurt, humiliate, enrage, confuse and

ultimately prevent optimal growth and functioning of individuals and communities (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017; Fozdar & Terezani 2008). Refugees are also vulnerable to workplace exploitation due to lack of awareness about their legal rights. This means they are paid less or have worse conditions than other workers because they don't know their legal rights (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007).

### **3.2.2. Impacts of unemployment**

High levels of unemployment and discrimination in the workplace can contribute to refugees feeling alienated and disconnected from mainstream society (Abur & Spaaij 2016). They may feel powerless to reach their potential in terms of work opportunities, are suffer from more financial stress than the rest of the population and, thus, feel that their quality of life, and general wellbeing is significantly lower than average (Fozdar & Terezani 2008). The personal and social costs of unemployment or lack of skilled employment are significant across all communities and can become an overarching issue for families and individuals impacting on many other areas of their lives (Forstater 2006; McClelland & Macdonald 1998). Psychological distress is high amongst unemployed people, who are far more vulnerable to poor states of mental health than those who are employed (Murphy & Athanasou 1999, Warr 1987). Arguably psychological distress and poor states of mental health is compounded for people from refugee backgrounds, by both their previous circumstance and the challenges of settlement. Research shows that settlement process is unlikely to be successful without sustainable employment, particularly for those who remain unemployed due to lack of employability skills (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006; Correa-Velez, Barnett & Gifford 2015).

The impacts of long term unemployment include long-term financial hardship and poverty, housing stress, homelessness, family tension and breakdown, shame and stigma and increased social isolation, as well as increased crime, erosion of confidence and self-esteem, and a deteriorating ability to work (Abur & Spaaij 2016, McClelland & Macdonald 1998; MacDonald et al. 2004). The negative consequences of unemployment also include perceptions about unemployed people, as they are more likely to be stereotyped and ostracised by the public, service providers, and government officials as lazy people who do not want to work (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Cullen 1999).

### **3.2.3. Benefits of employment for a refugee community**

The benefit of participation in employment is a key to refugees' wellbeing, both physical and mental, as it is the best weapon in eradicating poverty and reducing crime (Abur &Spaaij 2016, Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006). Children of employed parents can complete their schooling or spend more years in school (or university) compared to children of unemployed parents (Forstater 2006). Employment can bring real, tangible, and both direct and indirect social and economic benefits, not only for those employed, but for all members of the community. Employment for refugees can facilitate pathways to integration with the host community through positive interaction and learning of different cultures in workplace between employees (Abur &Spaaij 2016, Atem 2011a).

Participation in employment is a key to wellbeing, as employment provides income as well as socioeconomic status. In many cases, people do want to participate in employment to make them feel socially included and to make a contribution in society (Krahn, Howard & Galambos 2015; Wilson 2008). Participation of refugees in employment can make them contribute to the economic development of a nation while supporting their families financially and pay taxes to the government (Abur & Spaaij 2016). Refugees bring different levels of skill and experience. However, some refugees who have spent a long time moving from place to place, have not had the opportunity to attain qualifications and employment experience because of the nature of their migration experiences, including long periods spent in refugee camps can be supported to obtain skills for employability (Abdelkerim & Grace 2012; Abur 2012; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007).

### **3.3.1. Part 3: Sport Participation for refugees**

In Australia, sport is highly valued for its ability to bring people from diverse backgrounds together and creates a strong sense of community and national identity. According to Smith & Stewart (2012), social experiences can be likened to a sporting contest in which every player or social agent occupies a place on a field of play. For the purposes of this study, Participation sport is more than a metaphor, it is a real experience in and of itself. Sport is defined as an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes for entertainment and to win game (Coakley,

Hallinan & McDonald 2011; Akarah 2014). The current view of sport is generally understood to include physical activities that are not only competitive, but also for exercise (Akarah 2014). This definition is supported by the United Nations Inter-Agency Taskforce on Sport for Development and Peace that defined sport as all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental wellbeing, and social interaction. These include activities such as play, recreation, competitive sport, indigenous sport, and others (Akarah 2014). Sport is regarded as universal to all cultures, regardless of socioeconomic and political boundaries and there are 8000 indigenous sports and sporting games played worldwide (see World Sports Encyclopaedia's list cited in Coakley, Hallinan & McDonald 2011). Common sports played in Australia by refugee groups from African backgrounds include soccer, basketball, running, wrestling, and Australian football (Abur 2016, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017).

Refugees carry a number of experiences and have significant barriers to participation in sport at different levels. Those experiences, plus a lack of English, can hold them back from engaging in wider activities and takes away their civil rights to participate at different levels of sports programs (Couch 2007, Keogh 2002). Participation in sport can assist and empower refugees by helping them to understand and change negative perceptions as well as providing opportunities for increasing self-esteem (Couch 2007). Participation often includes involvement in planning and decision-making in community development (Couch 2007). Under this definition of participation, refugee community groups are often excluded from such an important process of working with host communities. In many cases, a lack of initiative to engage with the refugee community may be the main cause. This makes it easier to blame them: the community feels that refugees are not willing or ready to participate in programs (Couch 2007).

The benefits of participation in sporting activities include physical, social, psychological, and cultural capital (Abur 2016). Sport can assist community to develop social bonds, bridges and in building community networks that have been eroded by war and displacement (Spaaij et al. 2014). However, bridging social capital in sport is relatively weak between refugee community groups and the host community. It is often hijacked by negative social encounters, such as discrimination and aggression, which cause and reinforce group boundaries. This makes it harder to access and use social

capital, which is unequally distributed across gender, age, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines (Spaaij 2012).

Participation in sport is regarded as an important activity for young people in different societies (Abur 2016). Some games and contests are grounded in folklore and religious beliefs in some cultures (Coakley, Hallinan & McDonald 2011). Participating in sport is purposeful in many ways. It is a great way to have fun with friends, be productively competitive, and to stay in good physical shape (Abur 2016, Bunde-Birouste 2012). Players can improve their skills, make friends, and learn how to be part of a team. Young people from refugee backgrounds do need some physical activities to keep them engaged and away from the risk of the social isolation (Abur 2016, Bunde-Birouste 2012). Many people choose to engage in sport due to three main factors: (1) a person's abilities, characteristics, and resources, (2) influencers of significance, including parents, siblings, teachers, peers, and role models, and (3) availability of opportunities to play in ways that are personally satisfying (Bunde-Birouste 2012, Leeann et al. 2013). Participants in sport may be given an opportunity to take personal responsibility for the creation of a quality lifestyle (Leeann et al. 2013). There are also other benefits, including gaining employment through sporting networks (Abur 2016, Cabane 2013).

Networking is important in the sports industry because individuals in sports organisations often hire those they know personally (Kornspan & Duve 2013), which can be helpful to refugees and other migrants. As discussed earlier, social networking is important in obtaining employment and career advancement. Recent studies have shown that networking is an important management skill that helps professionals to advance their careers (Kornspan & Duve 2013; Leeann et al. 2013). Participation in sport, therefore, can help refugees and migrants to overcome critical settlement issues and to integrate into mainstream communities (Abur 2016). Sport provides benefits and greater opportunities for all, regardless of race, colour, religion, age, physical ability, and economic circumstance, by connecting people to each other locally, nationally and internationally (Abur 2016, Bunde-Birouste et al. 2012).

Sporting activities bring different people and community groups together through celebration. Regardless of age, people can be involved in organised sport and physical activity as players, participants, or competitors, and also in non-playing roles such as

coach, instructor or teacher, referee or umpire, committee member or administrator, goal scorer or timekeeper, or in medical support. Participation in sport and recreation can assist young people and individuals lacking English to build their self-esteem and improve their communication in English through interacting with other participants from English-speaking groups (Abur, 2016, Olliff 2008). It can also provide a positive point of connection with others, and support a sense of purpose and direction for young refugees recovering from the traumas of the refugee experience or the impact of racism, as they are resettling (Abur, 2016, Olliff 2008). Sports programs can be one-to-one, in a group, structured with rules and set outcomes, or can take a freestyle approach. Structured sport programs are good and can allow participants from refugee community groups to experience consistency, and to build trusting relationships within a team, as well as extending their levels of confidence in connecting with different groups (Abur 2016).

### **3.3.2. Benefits of sport for refugee communities**

Participation in sport is one of the areas in which young refugees have not been well engaged in relation to settlement strategies, yet there are potential benefits that young people from refugee backgrounds miss in failing to engage in sport. Sport and recreation represent a practical and accessible entry point for addressing the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds (Abur 2016, Olliff 2008). Sport can address some wellbeing issues faced by socially isolated individuals and communities by providing them with opportunities for doing something productive instead of being “couch potatoes” (Abur 2016). Therefore, the benefits of sport and recreation programs in relation to their effects on supporting and building healthy communities cannot be underestimated (Ware & Meredith 2013).

Participation in sport has been frequently used by social policymakers and in community development as a source of engaging community, particularly young people (Abur 2016, Olliff 2008). These outcomes cover a multitude of policy areas including health, community cohesion, and integration of minorities, urban regeneration, and crime prevention (Coalter 2007; Spaaij 2012). The beneficial effects of participating in community sports programs for many (including refugees) are wide-ranging (Refugee Council of Australia, 2010, Olliff 2008). As Coalter (2005, p. 4) noted: “Participating in

sport can improve the quality of life for individuals and communities, promote social inclusion, improve health, counter anti-social behaviour, raise individual self-esteem and confidence, and widen horizons.” Historically, the sport has been a powerful tool in tackling social issues of anti-social behaviour and cultural exclusion (Coalter 2007). In some countries, for example, the sport is used to integrate ethnic groups and reduce youth disengagement and crime and promote social cohesion in the community (Coalter 2007; Spaaij 2012).

Sport can bring social change to the community and, in particular, a disadvantaged community can benefit much from the sport in terms of development and engagement of youth in healthy ways (Sherry, Schulenkorf & Chalip 2015). The sport has become an attractive mode of delivery for the community and individual development worldwide; however, there is a dearth of research on the provision and management of sport for social change programs (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). Participation in sport is a catalyst for change to build capacity and develop healthy and inclusive communities (Sherry, Schulenkorf & Chalip 2015). However, one doubts that sufficient efforts in sports management are being made for the social change in order to create more opportunities to work collectively with disadvantaged community groups (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012; Spaaij et al. 2014). It is important that organisations take seriously the concept that sport is an avenue to provide social change. With sport, community programs can be developed and delivered to marginalised community groups by sporting organisations as part of their effective engagement with the community (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012).

One of the critical issues holding people back from accepting social change in sport is a lack of recognition of diversity at the management level (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). This also affects a participation level of newly arrived community groups like the South Sudanese community (Abur 2016) Australia constitutes a multicultural society with people from diverse backgrounds. This makes up a significant proportion of the population (Caperchione, Kolt, & Mummery 2009). Thus, there is a great need for change in the sport to accommodate the needs of community groups, including fair recruitment and positive engagement of refugee and migrant community groups. Sports clubs and associations should reflect the communities they represent (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012; Spaaij et al. 2014). Mobilising resources with a multicultural portfolio may help to meet

those challenges and facilitate engagement to assist sports organisations in reaching out to people from diverse backgrounds (Sherry, Schulerkorf & Chalip 2015; Ware & Meredith 2013). For people who have been displaced, who become disaffected or simply disengaged from their community, belonging to a continuing sports program or team can be a lifeline, especially in times of chaos where routine and stability are desperately needed and hard to find (Caperchione, Kolt & Mummery 2009).

The social change that sport can bring to people with refugee and migrant backgrounds includes real-life issues and challenges that relate to dislocation and tensions during settlement (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). These social issues can sometimes be misunderstood as a microcosm of life's issues, but they are serious issues that retard the progress and potential development of people with refugee and migrant backgrounds (Abur 2016). Sports clubs can help by providing an environment where people from many backgrounds are welcome, heard and supported when struggling with social issues (Ware & Meredith 2013).

Structured sporting programs can unite people from different language groups and backgrounds by using activities with a common goal. This allows participants to engage in a higher level of participation, particularly for those who would otherwise face social isolation or disengagement (Caperchione, Kolt & Mummery 2009). Young refugees and migrants often choose to participate in informal, unstructured games of badminton, soccer, table tennis, and basketball because they have no connection with existing clubs (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012, Olliff 2008). These sports have often been played before coming to Australia and are already familiar to them (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012). Young people and their families from refugee and migrant backgrounds are more likely to participate in the sport that is familiar to them (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012). Young people from refugee backgrounds often show their enthusiasm and aspiration to express themselves through participation in sport with an aim to connect with their peers and to become professional players. Such enthusiasm and desire can be an indication of their selective adjustments of family and cultural values to accommodate personal preferences (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014).

Sports programs can assist families and their young people from refugee backgrounds to facilitate their integration into host nations. This strategy can be an

intervention and can create innovative opportunities for young people (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). Participation in sport and recreation can assist young people and individuals with language acquisition, provide a positive point in connecting them with other members of the community and support a sense of purpose and direction for young refugees recovering from the traumas of their experiences or the impact of racism as they resettle. At some levels, new refugees show an interest in sport and recreation as a major priority along with housing, employment, and education (Abur 2016, Olliff 2008). Participation in sport can be viewed as a good way to meet people and to establish new friendships, but often the ability to participate is limited by other responsibilities, including schoolwork (Brown, Miller & Mitchell 2006).

### **3.3.3. General barriers to participation in sport for refugees**

There are some barriers and limitations to participation for refugee communities in sport that need to be fully understood in order to assist young people or individuals from refugee backgrounds to settle more easily in sport clubs. These barriers and limitations required some awareness and promotion of positive attitudes within sport clubs and in general community. For example, sport can have different results in communities, both positive and negative (Buckmaster 2012; Spaaij et al. 2014). The negative issues in sport include: racism, violence, doping, corruption and sexism. These negative activities can be great barriers to refugee families and their young people, and cannot be ignored (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). Also for refugee families, there are risks when there is too much focus on sport for young people, as it neglects other important activities such as education, employment, and family obligations. These risks are often perceived by parents who want their young people to focus on education more than other activities. These issues do need to be discussed with families and young people from refugee backgrounds when considering participation in sport, in order to avoid conflict between parents and young people (Abur 2016). In addition, participation of refugees in sporting programs can be hindered by some practical issues, such as transport and other costs (e.g. club fees, uniforms). The financial cost in sport is a practical barriers for disadvantaged families and their young people to participation in sport (Abur 2016, Hancock, Cooper & Bahn 2009).

In addition, some players have encountered negative experiences in sports clubs, including discriminatory attitudes, which have caused some refugees to establish their own mono-ethnic clubs. This experience of discrimination, aggression, and violence on the field can create negative implications for community engagement and settlement (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017). The challenges in sport – including discrimination and aggression – are some of the many concerns that prevent refugees from engaging effectively in mainstream sporting clubs (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014).

In 2014, there were many issues with many clubs. In my experience, it was not a surprise, but it was a big shock for some. Once the game starts, opposing players or spectators respond by name-calling, racial abuse . . . it was and still is an issue and sometimes, although you really want to move on, sometimes it holds you back. (Spaaij et al. 2014, p. 2)

Apart from discrimination and racial affiliation of minority groups in sport, sport participation can be detrimental to disadvantaged groups because it exacerbates their disadvantage (Spaaij et al. 2014). This critical view is in line with the perception that sport is a false front that reproduces inequality by trapping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds into a belief that sport is the ticket to a better life, diverting their attention and energies away from more likely pathways to upward mobility (Messner 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014). Although family attitudes to sporting participation are slowly changing as more parents come to value its potential social and health benefits, their reservations indicate how recent migrants and refugees tend to prioritise other means of successful settlement: education and employment. Sport can be perceived as a distraction from these pursuits (Spaaij et al. 2014).

In some cases, emerging communities are consistently identified as communities requiring high levels of support and that need specialised services to support them with enough resources (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012). Such groups, often lacking earlier generations of settlers or even an Australian-born second generation, generally lack organised advocacy or social networks, have difficulty in accessing government services, and may require substantial assistance and time to settle effectively (Abur 2016). However, participants from the mainstream community can be role models by offering positive mentoring programs for young refugees. The latter also has opportunities to meet and socialise with other participants, which can break down social isolation (Birouste et al. 2014).

### **3.3.4. Gender division in sport**

Gender division in sport is something very clear in mainstream community groups, leave alone the emerging refugee community groups. It is clear that many sporting activities are dominated by men, which raises the issue of women in sport (Kanters et al. 2013). However, there are many anecdotal reasons as to why women are excluded. These anecdotal reasons raised a question about young women and girls from refugee community groups about their level of participation in sport and their rights to participate in sport. In South Sudanese community, both young and women matured age had far less leisure and sports opportunities than men because of domestic responsibilities. Often young women were not able to be involved in programs offered after school and on the weekend because they were caring for siblings at homes. Young women and girls from low-income backgrounds are more likely to be left out in sport than their male counterparts (Abur 2016, Kanters et al. 2013). Young players also encounter challenging experiences that are not always beneficial: they can be placed with coaches who are more interested in their own egos than in helping young players to grow (Kanters et al. 2013). Ideally, coaches should be there to facilitate and provide direction for those who work closely with young players, and not to practice their individuality, which may be a difficult situation for young players (Kanters et al. 2013).

Gender identity is a critical part of the sport and is better understood in terms of sports sociology (Kanters et al. 2013). At some sports clubs, girls are treated more harshly and ridiculed by boys and coaches. In addition, male coaches tend to do more coaching while female coaches perform more organisational duties. These are examples of how gender plays different roles in community sports (Kanters et al. 2013). Thus, participation in masculine sport creates gender identity conflict for females, while participation in feminine sport creates gender identity conflict for males. This is a systemic problem in different cultures in many parts of the world (Kanters et al. 2013).

There are sports typically dominated by boys/men in the contemporary sporting system due to the influence of cultural values and beliefs in society (Kanters et al. 2013). Families and institutional sports clubs often decide who is best to play in their teams while the family can think about the resources required to support those young people and individuals who want to play sport at a high level (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). Some sports are dominated by males at a high level, such as basketball in America and

the Australian Football League (AFL) in Victoria, known as “footy”. This is an example of how the sport has created a division in gender. The level of participation for females has often been high in athletics, gymnastics, figure-skating, netball, tennis, and diving (Abur 2016).

Sometimes ethnic communities have ongoing concerns about the challenges facing them in areas of social justice, support for young women and girls, developing diversity policies, and their implementation. It is something that needs to be considered by the sporting associations in order to create safe and inclusive practices by embracing all community groups in their local areas, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or religion (Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). The discourse about female participation in sports programs and inclusive is very critical discourse to be considered by both private and government sectors, especially when people are experiencing unfair treatment in sports programs because of their cultural backgrounds (Buckmaster & Guppy 2012; Spaaij et al. 2014).

All the issues discussed in the literature review of this chapter are applicable to this PhD. study of the South Sudanese community and great contributions to knowledge. This research of the South Sudanese settlement experience is about social inclusion, participation, benefits of participation in employment and sport, barriers to participation, gender issues in sport, culture and social changes, trauma and other wellbeing issues brought by settlement difficulties.

### **3.5.Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed existing literature that is important in providing a background to this PhD. research. It has discussed the resettlement of refugee and settlement theory as a basic concept for protecting people who have escaped oppression and ruthless political regimes. The fear of persecution, constant humiliation from appalling and failed regimes has caused the influx of refugees and continuous crises in the global context. It has assessed that the recent debate in Australia about the issue of asylum seekers who had arrived by boats with an aim of seeking asylum and protection in Australia. However, the chapter has concentrated on critical settlement issues of the

South Sudanese community as a case study of this PhD study, as well as touching base on social issues brought about by settlement challenges faced by African refugee groups. The unsettling issues of African families and young people of which the South Sudanese community was victimised in mainstream media as a failed community to integrate successfully in Australia are the key main issues raised in part one of this chapter.

The second part of this chapter, evaluated employment (or unemployment), the benefits of employment for refugees, both families and individuals, in facilitating their integration and settlement process into the mainstream community have also been discussed. There is strong evidence to suggest that employment eases some of the settlement pressures faced by refugee community groups. Lack of finance causes a high level of stress and creates an unsettling situation for refugees who were hoping to repair their lives in a new home. There is no way that refugee families can repair their lives when they are constantly faced with financial problems. Meaningful employment is essential to quickly fix their problems and repair their lives. However, contemporary labour's competing demands of qualifications and skills do not favour refugees, particularly those from non-English backgrounds. Therefore, it is important that refugees be supported to get jobs where they can also gain skills while working to support themselves and their families. There has been a significant rise in unemployment figures for refugees, which creates complications in their resettlement. Unemployed youths, for example, are more likely to engage in the consumption of alcohol and other drugs as a way to manage their stress because they have nothing tangible to do. Historically, migration also plays a greater role in resettlement and job hunting because of the lack of acquired, relevant skills. Some have arrived in Australia from refugee camps with limited proficiency in English or no English. However, youths can be trained to do some work which does not require high levels of sophisticated skills.

The third part of the chapter, evaluated the benefits of sport, gaps in sports programs for refugees, sports with community involvement, problematic issues in sport, gender division, and sport as an agent for social change in bringing diverse communities together to celebrate and enjoy sporting events and activities. The benefits of sport are many, including facilitation of integration processes and connection with wider community groups. In mainstream communities, sport can be seen as a strategy to achieve success

through competing and potential financial gain, which is also a personal achievement. However, the greater benefits for refugees in sports participation are social inclusion and breaking down social isolation. Sport can help considerably in building a community of interest with the host community by developing the spirit of social change, inclusion, and multiculturalism directed toward marginalised and disadvantaged groups. It facilitates social and economic connections for youth who are more likely to be at risk of negative outcomes. For instance, sport can help to promote healthy lifestyles, including combating diseases, as well as enhancing social capital and community cohesion.

Lastly, this chapter has assessed cultural clashes, social changes and wellbeing issues of families and individuals as part of the South Sudanese experiences of resettlement in their new country. The chapter deliberately touches on post-trauma and wellbeing issues because of long experiences of displacement due to conflict and many other difficulties experienced by the South Sudanese community in their journey of resettlement and settlement in Australia. Some critical themes have been raised, such as social issues surrounding refugee families and individuals because of dependency on low incomes or welfare payments. For instance, the consequences of unemployment – including difficulties in looking for work – affect the psychological and emotional wellbeing of refugees (particularly for refugee community groups such as the South Sudanese).

## **Chapter 4 : Conceptual Framework: Forms and Accumulation of Capital**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Many of the refugee settlement issues discussed in the previous chapter relate to issues of access to resources. In order to understand how access to resources might assist the refugee settlement process, this chapter presents a conceptual model that explains how resources can be accumulated, and examines the ways in which they can improve, in theory, one's capabilities, self-esteem and social position in broader society. The framework used in this thesis views these resources as forms of capital and non-monetary concept of capital. Capital is not just a measure of one's social position, status, personal power, and generalised capabilities, but is also an instrument for making things happen, a resource to action (Hogan & Owen 2000). In the context of this study, the accumulation of such resources to action, the idea of making things happen, is central to the ability of refugees to successfully adjust to their new world.

The conceptual framework presented in this chapter develops five types of capital, and examines their accumulation and interrelationships, and their importance to refugee settlement. These five forms of capital are social, cultural, economic, physical, and psychological capital. This multidimensional conception of capital and of how each type of capital intersects with others draws on Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) important contention that the term *capital* cannot be reduced to the economic realm and monetary exchange, that is, capital that can be readily transformed into money and institutionalised in terms of property rights. Nor can the notion of capital be reduced to social capital, as is often done in the literature on refugee settlement and integration (see Ager & Strang 2008).

In contrast, Bourdieu's use of the term was much broader than this. It signalled "the intention of addressing differential resources of power, and of linking an analysis of the cultural to the economic" (Schuller et al. 2000, p. 3). Bourdieu's purpose was to extend the notion of capital by employing it within a wider system of exchange where different kinds of resources are accumulated and exchanged within complex networks, and within and across different social fields (Moore 2008). By viewing capital as a resource to action, Bourdieu was able to signify the benefits that flowed from its use. It also enabled him to distinguish between different forms of capital, and examine the extent to and ways in

which the accumulation of one form of capital facilitated the accumulation of other forms of capital. Yet, as will be discussed below, the distribution of capital is unequal, often involves forms of social and cultural reproduction rather than social change, and acts as a basis for social exclusion and marginalisation (Bourdieu, 1984).

## **4.2 Theorising Capital**

As Bourdieu (1986) pointed out, the social world can be viewed as a multidimensional space and series of interlinking fields. The interlinked fields are models of behaviours and factors that can be constructed through discovering. They enable humans to navigate their way through the jungle of societal constructs and opportunities of social change and elements (Bourdieu 1986). This study uses Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) concept of capital to both frame the study, and provide a basis for coding and theming, by applying different forms of capital to the findings. These different forms of capital are, in effect, resources, and the power attached to those resources, such as cultural knowledge and social networks and finance, represent power, autonomy, and the capacity to act. Conversely, for those denied access to appropriate social fields and the resources they provide, the result is dependency, passivity, and alienation. As such, Bourdieu's model of capital accumulation becomes a "sound frame for examining the diverse array of rewards and benefits" that accrue to its holders, and, additionally, their distribution (Stewart et al 2013, p. 557). Bourdieu's model thus has two crucial strengths. First, his "use of the 'capital' signals the intent to address differential resources of power, and, second, it links an analysis of the cultural to that of the economic" (Schuller et al. 2000, p. 3).

It is also important to clearly understand the definition of capital, as it has several meanings. In the context of this thesis, capital is defined quite broadly. It is viewed as a resource that can be invested in either social or commercial settings and, additionally, be used to deliver a range of returns, which could be self-esteem in one instance, or social connectedness in another. The concept of capital in this thesis is discussed in relation to the investment of resources that facilitates a return in the form of effective refugee settlement. Bourdieu (1986) makes the additional point that capital is a resource to action. In this study, different forms of capital are important resources for refugees when

navigating settlement issues. This concept helps to provide meaning and understanding of the settlement experiences of refugees. Thus, for instance, connections and social support can assist people to manage the difficulties they encounter while settling in, or adjusting to their new environment (Major et al. 2013).

Capital is a powerful resource that facilitates meaningful relationships, such as networking and accessing employment through networks or friends. It is now accepted – both conceptually and empirically – that capital accumulation has both transformative and linkage outcomes. Money is a resource that can be transformed from an economic to social perspective (Spaaij 2011). For society to grow in a healthy way, people need economic resources and social connections within society. People often display a sense of belonging and social connection in order to successfully achieve their social and economic outcomes in the community (Stevens 2010). This social connection concept is more applicable and needed by refugees who have no networks in their new community, as well as new migrants who are looking for connections and a place to belong in their new community or country. Capital comes in many forms but, no matter what the form, it gives people the capacity to move through the world in productive and creative ways. In the case of this study, the following forms of capital were hypothesised as being important in assisting the settlement process of South Sudanese refugees.

### **4.3 Economic capital**

For Bourdieu, economic capital refers to economic resources, such as cash and property. People accumulate economic capital through making money and purchasing assets that deliver great benefits in their lives (Stewart et al. 2013). Bourdieu's concept of economic capital is based on the economic definition, which is the historical invention of capitalism and reduces the universe of exchanges to business exchange (Bourdieu 1986). The financial assets and wealth that one accumulates through employment or through other sources, such as inheriting from family, are economic capital (Bourdieu 1986). These assets are not only important for material advancement, but also provide opportunities to travel and participate in arts and cultural activities or education. Bourdieu (1986) was therefore able to both stress the importance of economic capital as a resource, and then link it with other forms of capital, such as social capital and cultural capital. Economic

capital is immediately and directly convertible into money, which also leads to other forms of capital. For example, one can have access to a prestigious school that can then reward a person with valuable social capital by socialising and education, which lead to possessing cultural capital (Shilling 2003).

For people from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese community, there are often challenges due to a lack of financial assets. However, there is the probability of overcoming these challenges through employment over time (Allen 2009). As discussed earlier, economic capital is linked to different forms of capital, such as social capital and cultural capital, because it acts as an agent and powerful resource in the social world.

#### **4.4 Social capital**

Bourdieu defined social capital as the sum of the resources, practical skills or virtues that are accrued by individuals or group through a durable network of relationships (Bourdieu 1992, 1986). These resources are essential in social relations and facilitate connection and collective action (Lin 2002; Seibert, Kraimer & Liden 2001). Therefore, social capital resources include thinking around networks, trust, values, and norms for common aims (Cheong et al. 2007; Bourdieu 1986). Bourdieu also discusses social capital as the investment of the members in the dominant class engaging in mutual recognition and acknowledgement as a reason to maintain and reproduce solidarity and dominant positions in-group (Bourdieu 1986; Lin 2002). Dimitriadou (2006) refers to social capital as the ability of individuals to obtain social connections, which can result in benefits by accessing resources that a person would not otherwise have been able to secure. Bourdieu (1986) suggests that social capital is important alongside economic, cultural, human, symbolic, and linguistic capital, as it determines social life trajectories.

In this case study, refugees such as the South Sudanese community have very limited access to resources of networks with which to facilitate other opportunities, such as employment and enjoying sport as participants social. Social capital has an important role to play in the integration process because it is a concrete resource that assists refugees with opportunities, such as work and education, as well as general acceptance into the host community (Dimitriadou 2006). The concept of social capital is embedded in relationships and values that often maintain a stable social connection in the long term

(Dimitriadou 2006; Schuller et al. 2000). Thus, social capital is viewed as a network of relationships and is a form of capital because it is a resource that enables people to work together to achieve what they could not otherwise achieve. John Field's (2003) analysis of theories of social capital suggests that by making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they either could not achieve by themselves, or could only achieve with great difficulty. People connect through a series of networks and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks (Field 2003 and Stevens, 2010). To the extent that these networks constitute a resource, they can be seen as forming a kind of capital. As well as being useful in its immediate context, this stock of capital can often be drawn on in other settings. In general, then, it follows that the more people you know and the more you share a common outlook with them, the richer you are in social capital.

Peoples' networks should be seen as part of a wider set of relationships and norms that allow people to pursue their goals, and that serve to bind society (Field 2003 and Stevens, 2010). The core principle of social capital theory is that social networks have value: social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups (Bourdieu 1986, Putnam 2001). Therefore, social capital consists of goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy, and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families in a social setting, and this is always determined by one's involvement and participation in groups in order to have positive consequences for the individual and community (Aldrich & Meyer 2015). Thus, it is the quality of social relationships between or among individuals that affects their capacity to address and resolve the problems they face in common as a community.

In some cases, social capital and social structures in relationships can be actualised into concrete resources for use by individuals (Coleman 1988). Social capital and networks assists individuals and community groups to access various resources in difficult situations – including information, aid, financial resources, and childcare – along with emotional and psychological support (Aldrich & Meyer 2015). From this perspective of social capital, people can access various benefits, such as preferential knowledge, which may flow through to organisations and individuals. Individual social capital originating from an individual's network can be distinguished by the organisational social

capital derived from an organisation's network of relationships (Inkpen & Tsang 2005). The understanding behind social capital as a resource and collective action a community takes to address issues of concern to improve economic wellbeing, democracy at national or state levels, and the acquisition of human capital in the form of education (Stone 2001). Social capital exists in social connection, group membership, and interaction with others, for instance, through participation in community associations, the workplace, public institutions, and informal networks (Aldrich & Meyer 2015, Spaaij 2012). Thus, social capital can be understood as a resource for collective action, which may lead to a broad range of outcomes, including improved family life. Social capital researchers in health and community sectors posit that the potential benefits of social capital need to be embraced. These include longstanding recognition of the importance of social support for public health and community wellbeing (Stone 2001).

Levels of social capital obtained by individuals often assist in family situations, as family members are more likely to access social support and family engagement through individual connection. Social capital manifests in different communities and distinguished between informal and formal networks or the formality of civic engagement and informal ties (Putnam, 1995, 1998). Both informal and formal networks are effective methods of community-based health promotion in the United States. In Australia, the networks of South Sudanese refugee group leaders often remain less developed than their US equivalents (Abur & Spaaij 2016). Social capital can provide access to relevant information regarding work and the support available. Such information is very helpful to people with fewer social networks and less support from mainstream community networks (Allen 2009).

Given the centralised, institutionalised structure of refugee settlement programs in which policy implementation is likely to be undertaken by professional service providers, refugee leaders are less likely to interact with the broader community, at least during the initial phases of settlement. Similarly, while there is certainly a connection between the faith-based community and refugees, it is not as extensive as in the United States (Allerdice 2011). Community connection does need faith-based communities, secular communities are also well able to connect refugee community groups and individuals to right resources. This suggests that there should be a strong push for community individual

connection (networks) to facilitate integration. Refugees, whether they are new to the country or have been here for a few years without connections to a social network, often face isolation, leading to a breakdown in individual and family social fabric. Thus, the lack of social connection often plays a critical role in setbacks among refugees as their social networks are disrupted by displacement and forced migration (Abur 2012). Social capital and connection are therefore fundamental to their resettlement. When there is a breakdown in social connections or, indeed, where there is no connection, there is likely to be a detrimental effect on wellbeing, which affects the meaning of life (Tipping 2011). Such capital can only develop to assist refugees to integrate into the host society without experiencing difficulties if there is a program to assist both refugees and the host community to learn about the importance of connection. Sometimes, building social capital involves intense efforts to develop and enhance social connections, which lead to sharing norms, understanding, beliefs, and values (Chua et al. 2012).

Social connectedness is pivotal to the management of new circumstances and, as such, is likely to assist refugees in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing (McDonald et al. 2008). The way in which people position themselves in a social order through social connectedness is a good example of how the accumulation of capital, and its enabling capacity, can enhance the personal and collective interest of its holders (McDonald et al. 2008). Human action is self-centred, and based on the need to secure relationships, and use these relationships to build personal worth and social value (Bourdieu 1986). In this context, people from refugee backgrounds may encounter a lack of capital resources, such as networks and basic connections to local groups, which can complicate the settlement process.

Lack of bonding and bridging capital in any society can be difficult because bonding and bridging capital provide a necessary network that enhances future and unforeseen opportunities (Putnam 1995, 2001). Bonding capital is good for binding specific reciprocity and activating solidarity, whereas bridging networks, in contrast, are indeed better for connection to external assets and information distribution. Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological “glue”, whereas bridging social capital provides social connection within a broader community (Putnam 2001). On the other hand, a lack of capital – especially social capital – has troublesome impacts, is often

complicated by the settlement process, and can increase social isolation and many other problems (Abur 2012). Social capital refers to investment in social relationships and the kinds of resources that allow individuals and groups to possess a durable network and positive engagement (Spaaij 2012 and Putnam 2001). For example, participation in sport and employment can be viewed as providing opportunities for people to develop social trust and norms of generalised reciprocity (Spaaij 2011).

#### **4.5 Cultural capital**

Cultural capital is a collection of symbolic elements, such as skills, knowledge, and materials, which individuals can acquire through being part of a particular social class (Bourdieu 1986). For example, it exists as incorporated in the habitus, which is largely created through primary education in early childhood and can be expressed in terms of qualifications (e.g. certificates, diplomas, and examinations). In some instances, people from refugee backgrounds may not have the local skills and local knowledge required for daily functioning. For example, refugees' experience and qualifications are not always recognised in some western countries because of social class (Abur, 2012).

The concept exists in an embodied state in the sense that people acquire knowledge through socialisation and education (Bourdieu 1986). These collections of knowledge are the social assets that promote social mobility beyond economic means (Lamont & Lareau 1988). The concept has largely dealt with the interaction between culture and social structure as it has been considered in relation to a high level of cultural knowledge in society (Lamont & Lareau 1988). Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital comes from improving one's social position through knowledge and intellectual discourse, and demonstrates capacity to engage with the world of literature, fashion and the arts (Stewart et al. 2013). Cultural capital has increasingly become an important topic in sociology because of "the impact of culture on the class system and on the relationship between action and social structure" (Lamont & Lareau 1988, p. 3)

Cultural capital is one of the capitals that form the foundation of social life because of its links to other forms of capital such as habitus, fields, economic, and social capital (Bourdieu 1986). People who have knowledge, skills, or education do have advantages for accomplishing a higher status in society. Parents provide their children with cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the current

educational system (Chua et al. 2012; Major et al. 2013). For example, cultural capital represents ways of talking, acting, and socialising, as well as language practices, values, and types of dress and behaviour

#### **4.6 Psychological capital**

Psychological capital is defined as “an individual’s positive psychological state of development” characterised by : “(1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success” (Luthans et al. 2007). In a similar vein, Henry views psychological capital as a set of dispositions that enable people to cope with the “many adversities, threats and challenges that life typically presents” (Henry 2004; Stewart et al. 2013). Therefore, psychological capital refers to the coping ability and positive state of an individual, such as hope, and happiness (Luthans et al. 2007). Psychological capital goes beyond human and social capital to gain a competitive advantage through development of “who you are and what you can become” in terms of positive development (Polatci & Akdoğan 2014, p. 7). Given the ability for human being interaction socially, psychological capital related to other capitals such as social capital regarding social and other issues matter to individuals and society at large (Luthans et al. 2007). The individual’s motivational propensities come through positive psychological constructs, such as efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Luthans & Youssef 2004; Luthans et al. 2007). Psychological capital theory emerged from the positive psychology, the inclusion criteria used to determine psychological capital so far include hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy (Luthans et al. 2007).

The concept of psychological capital is grounded in the work of Fred Luthans and looks at positive thinking during life struggles (Luthans et al. 2007, Henry 2004). Psychological capital is important in the field of refugee studies, given the challenging issues experienced by refugee families and individuals. Refugees’ abilities to cope with

settlement issues and the trauma of conflict is fundamental in this study of the South Sudanese in the context of resilience to cope with the complex nature of being a refugee who has escaped conflict and many hardships, yet who manages to maintain a certain level of positive thinking about the future (German 2008).

The concept of resilience is an ability to develop positive thinking and thrive, and is present among individuals and families who face social and wellbeing challenges (Ungar 2010). In this case, the South Sudanese community is going through an acculturation process of adapting to Australian culture and ways of life, which is very challenging for many families and individuals. However, maintaining psychological capital, such as retaining a positive outlook and hope for a better future, has assisted many to cope well during their settlement journey. There are several different factors of resilience, such as internal and external factors. For example, external factors include family, and networks of friends, community, or school. These external factors are critical for refugee community groups such as the South Sudanese community special when they have little bridging with mainstream society.

The internal factors include attitudes, perception of one's situation, and behaviours. In a refugee community, gaining a sense of control plays a key role in rebuilding a meaningful life and sense of belonging regarding the present situation. Gaining psychological capital is powerful, as refugees have experienced a loss of control over most aspects of their individual and social life (Correa-Velez, Barnett & Gifford 2015).

#### **4.7 Physical capital**

Physical capital is defined as “the development of bodies in ways which are recognised as possessing value in social fields” (Shilling 2003, p. 111) and is grounded in the works of Bourdieu and Shilling (Bourdieu 1991; Shilling 1992, 2003). The concept of physical capital as participation in sport, requires spare time for a person to participate (Bourdieu 1991). Physical capital is linked to other capitals, such as economic capital (Bourdieu 1991, Shilling 1991, 2003). Physical capital comes with sets of values, body language, dress, or etiquette that increase social capital by presenting the individual with a social space on the sporting field. The interaction of participants is what increases opportunities for economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1991; Shilling 1992, 2003). It also comes with benefits of physical health and healthy lifestyles.

Participation in sport can provide a range of benefits, such as physical and psychological capitals, which foster health, wellbeing, and social inclusion (Eime et al. 2013). The accumulation of physical capital is especially important in social fields that value athleticism, aesthetic display and sports performance (Stewart et al. 2013). Therefore, in the context of refugee settlement, participation in sport may increase chances of gaining other capitals, such as social capital. Participation in sport becomes an important instrument in social policy, in particular, with promotion of physical benefits, mental health (psychological capital) as well as reduction of potential antisocial behaviours orchestrated by youths. It also plays an important role in improving community cohesion and safety, and in inequality reduction (Spaaij 2012).

Sport is a familiar activity in which young people interact effectively and build trusting relationships within the community (Olliff 2008). Sport and recreation provide fertile opportunities for those delivering services in which to engage with young people and build trust, which has significant flow-on effects in terms of supporting young peoples' help-seeking behaviour during settlement (Abur 2016). Physical activity has been associated with positive behaviour of individuals in terms of social and economic aspects, as well as the physical surroundings in which they live (Magnus & Rosvall 2005). This largely explains why some people invest in physical capital, which refers to the involvement of individuals in sport as well as having access to a range of roles in sport (Abur 2016). Sport produces specific physical benefits such as build, posture, internal health, and social connection with friends (Bourdieu 1984; Throsby 1999).

The physical capital that people gain from participating in sport are, in effect, multidimensional. They include developing awareness of one's own physicality and the outdoors, together with informal, family-based activities (e.g. walking, canoeing, and camping). Sport develops knowledge and competence, which comes from traditional, formal, competitive sports at school, and outdoor adventure activities such as those provided by the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts, or even camping (Abur 2016, West & Allin 2000). Participating in sports and physical activities maximises physiological development among young people. Growing bodies are predisposed physiologically to non-specialised physical activities; therefore, physical development and success in sport are enhanced by participating in different sports in a schedule that allows for periods of

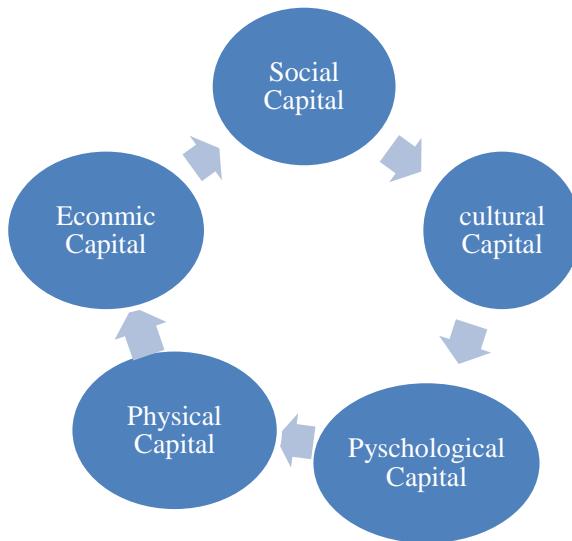
active rest and recuperation throughout the year (Abur 2016, West & Allin 2000). Participating in multiple sports and other physical activities is more likely to enhance balanced physical development, expand skill development, and maximise lifelong fitness and wellbeing. Physical activity is thus regarded as an important factor for a healthy lifestyle (Olliff, 2008; Wemme & Rosvall 2005).

However, several social and environmental factors have emerged as barriers to physical activities in disadvantaged community groups such as refugees (Abur 2016). These barriers include lack of money, and little social support or connection due to lack of supportive family or friends and living in areas with high crime rates (Wemme & Rosvall 2005). People can achieve good health and better lifestyles when they participate in physical activities, regardless of cultural and political backgrounds. Many benefits can be achieved through participation in sporting activities, including reduction of stress and boosts to self-confidence (see Abur 2016, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance 2013).

#### **4.8 Convertibility of different forms of capital**

The transformation of different forms of capital can be directed and redirected depending on the level of investment by individual, family, and community. Society depends on various forms of capital, which are interconnected and, indeed, result in positive effects for each of those units. The advantages of investing in networking, education, and work are convertible in terms of benefit. This theory is well documented in community development and sociology theories (Beeton 2006; Bourdieu 1986), which demonstrate that the success and sustainability of a community depend on access to and utilisation of different forms of capital (Abur 2016, Beeton 2006; Bourdieu 1986; Putnam 1995). Different forms of capital are interrelated through their production of direct or indirect links. For example, social capital can be converted into economic capital as well as cultural capital (Abur 2016, Bourdieu 1986). Those who play sport can gain physical capital as well as social capital and psychological capital through learning confidence, skills, coping with pressure from competition and coaching styles (Abur 2016). Employment comes with economic capital and is often converted into social capital through social connection and exchange of knowledge, care, attention, and support. The

most notable forms of capital in relation to convertibility are economic, social, and cultural capital. Economic capital is straightforward through buying goods and services. It is often converted in the form of paying for education and fees to attend social events with friends, meeting at coffee shops, etc. Social capital determines intangibles such as networks, cultural knowledge, individual support, or support for the family, shared values, and caring. Social capital assists the community to explore present and future opportunities for individuals as well as groups (Abur 2016). As this section deals with different forms of capital, Figure 4.1 visualises the relationship between forms of capital and how each can assist refugees in their settlement journey.



**Figure 4:11 Relationship between different forms of capital**

The convertibility of different forms of capital can result in creation of wellbeing benefits for people from refugee backgrounds. While each form of capital delivers a specific benefit by enabling action that enhances both personal wellbeing and social value, social capital is the interlocking concept. This is because social capital deepens the pool of friends and acquaintances who can assist in accessing both informal and formal networks of action and influence. This is especially important for newly arrived groups to establish their foundation in the new country of settlement. Positive views of the benefits of social participation have potential impacts on building social capital for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds (Coalter 2007; Spaaij 2012). Similar trends were also identified with employment, as people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are

more likely to benefit both socially and financially through employment (Abur & Spaaij 2016).

#### **4.9 Benefits of accumulative capitals for refugees**

Different forms of capital are important for the refugee community groups. People can accumulate capital throughout the community where they live. This is done through sharing – over short or long periods of time – social activities, interpersonal interactions, and friendships. Connection and interaction can be achieved through meetings, playing sport, and working and studying together. These are common ways that people can socialise, as well as discuss things relevant to them, and where they require some support. This is also how the investment of accumulative capital takes place when people are connected socially as friends; they share resources and a network, such as passing information to each other or to people who are looking to employ workers within their organisations. Such organisations may find the right people for employment positions through connection and referral from friends or others (Abur 2016).

Having a social network is useful in a number of ways. A pool of friendship provides support of fundamental importance to taking people to different levels of support in their lives (Field 2003). The types of support that people provide for each other include, but are not limited to, financial support, health services, education, housing, employment, and emotional and social support (Field 2003).

Networks consist of institutions and individuals – family members, friends, religious and community leaders and others – who provide a range of assistance (Fozdar & Hartley 2012). There is an assumption that networks ‘just happen’, and occur organically, but that is not the case for those from refugee backgrounds. Regardless of how long one is in a country such as Australia, there are still great gaps where there is no proper connection to human rights groups and individuals who can offer guidance and advice. Networking and connection with like-minded people can largely contribute to a positive psychological wellbeing. There are five key outcomes of psychological wellbeing for any individual in the community: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and

achieving, making a positive contribution, and economic wellbeing (Aldrich & Meyer 2015).

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided both a framework for the study of the South Sudanese refugee community, and a context for discussing the five forms of capital and provides implications of the framework on methodological and analytical approach to this study of South Sudanese refugee community on access to opportunities. It has explained the benefits of capital accumulation for people from refugee backgrounds. Economic capital for refugees is centred on income received through employment and social security benefits. Employed people have a better opportunity to blend into the system, as well as to use their income to facilitate social activities such as participating in sport. Social capital is discussed in relation to one's ability to participate in a social network through accessing various resources within that network. In other words, social capital is a collection of the benefits of belonging to a network of individuals. Participation in sport was identified as an effective way of accessing social networks, while, in the context of this research it was proposed that social capital also assists refugees to find employment and improve the quality of work.

Cultural capital is about learning a new language and the social system in a new country, particularly for those from refugee backgrounds. Such learning can take place in the workforce and through education, as well as in other settings. Psychological capital is an ability to cope with challenges and daily struggles with settlement issues as well as post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD). Enhancing psychological capital helps refugees to build psychological resilience and strategies that can assist them to overcome settlement issues. Some refugees can use their psychological capital by setting clear personal goals and pathways to achieve those goals. For example, these could include attending school to improve or learn English to gain employment, or participating in a network to connect with the right people who may assist in directing them to appropriate pathways. However, it is easy to lose resilience and positive thinking and thus acquire an inability to generate motivation, hope, and confidence when lacking such capital.

Building resilience and goal-setting are positive steps, which refugees need help to foster in order to develop a bridging culture.

Physical capital is an ability and capacity to participate in exercise as part of social engagement. For refugees, it is important to maintain physical activities for improved health outcomes or benefits. Physical capital is discussed in relation to participation and engagement in both formal and informal activities for better health and social outcomes. As refugees have experienced some challenging issues, physical and mental health issues are problems that may affect them while they resettle. For example, a refugee may have a poor ability to concentrate, may be a slow learner of English and other skills, have low self-esteem, and feel disorientated, worthless, or suspicious.

This chapter has discussed the conceptual framework and analytical approach of this study using five forms of capital with benefits that can facilitate successful settlement of refugees. The next chapter presents methodology.

## **Chapter 5 : Methodology**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods used in this case study of the South Sudanese community settlement experiences in Melbourne by examining the research question of “How do employment and sport participation affect the settlement process, and how the benefits of employment and sport participation do deliver different forms of capital that enable the South Sudanese community to effectively move through the settlement process in Melbourne, Australia?” The research involves mixed methods approach where the quantitative strand is used to both set the demographic scene, and to inform the design and analysis of the qualitative strand of the study. Thus, the qualitative strand is prioritised and drives the data collection and analysis (Bryman 2006).

Thus, within this frame, the philosophical paradigm adopted in this study is primarily interpretive, which foregrounds the importance of individuals gaining knowledge through social interactions, and emphasises life experiences based on a multi-faceted understanding of people and their communities (Creswell 2013). Knowledge derives from peoples’ experience as social beings, and the influence they exert through the application of this knowledge and related social constructs (Andrews 2012; Evans 2013).

This chapter discusses the paradigm that the study is situated in, the research design, data collection and analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. It also includes a detailed discussion of Melbourne’s South Sudanese community as the study’s object of gaze.

### **5.2 Research paradigm**

All research is conducted from the vantage point of a particular research paradigm, which is founded on a set of fundamental beliefs and principles that influence how researchers view their world and construct knowledge (Creswell 2013). Paradigms are reflected in the structure, implementation, and reporting of research (Creswell 2013; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2008; Wijaya 2014). Research is guided by paradigms such as positivism (experimental testing), post-positivism (context-free experimental design is

insufficient), critical theory (ideas in relation to an ideology that knowledge is not value-free and bias should be articulated), or constructivism (where individual constructs his/her own reality so there are multiple interpretations). This is often referred to as interpretivism (see Rubin & Babbie 2015). This study has adopted interpretivism under the social constructivist paradigm (Teddlie & Tashakkori 2008). One definition of social constructivism is based on the fact that human development is socially situated, and knowledge is constructed through the ways people interact with each other (Andrews 2012; Evans 2013). This is a sociological theory of knowledge that applies the general philosophical constructivism into the social (Andrews 2012).

This study is intended to understand settlement experiences and participation in employment and sport for the South Sudanese community from refugee backgrounds utilising insights provided by interpretivism. The general understanding of interpretivist paradigm is that social research aims to understand the world based on peoples' experiences and understanding of social issues (Rubin & Babbie 2015). The interpretive paradigm emphasises the experience and interpretation of social issues and life experiences. It is concerned with meaning and it seeks to uncover the way members of society understand given situations and makes enquiries about producing descriptive analysis that highlights a deeper understanding of social occurrences (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit 2004).

As this study is trying to understand the settlement experiences and level of participation in employment and sport, the meaning behind understanding human actions and process is based on the researchers' interactions in a social setting, and is regarded as a critical concept in social research (Hamilton 2002; Hammersley 1992). Hamilton (2002) described knowledge as being where one can have reasonable confidence in the validity or truth of one's beliefs based on experiences. The aim is to understand human experiences and knowledge based on social reality (Hamilton 2002). This idea of knowledge based on exchange of worldviews has a framework founded in social constructivism and the paradigm of qualitative research. Thus, social constructivism accepts that there is a subjective reality on how knowledge is constructed and understood (Andrews 2012; Evans 2013).

Consideration of the social constructivist framework of conceptualising research is important in collecting data from cultural community groups (Marlowe 2010a). Social constructivism has been used in different cultural studies of refugee community groups in terms of collecting data and meeting the needs of participants who express their knowledge through conversations and storytelling (Atem 2011a).

### **5.3 Case study**

This thesis comprises an in-depth case study of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia. It focuses on those with a refugee background who had to navigate their way through a new and often confusing environment that differs markedly from their past experiences. The intention is to secure a deep understanding of their settlement experiences, while also engaging with people in their general community. Thus, this research explores the engagement of a geographically centred cohort of refugees in activities that have the potential to enhance their integration and settlement in their host community.

At this juncture in the thesis, it is important to discuss the theoretical understanding of the meaning of case studies in the context of the related literature. A common definition is that a case study involves research carried out within the boundaries of one social system – or a few social systems such as people, organisations, groups, individuals, local communities, or nation-states – in which the phenomenon to be studied exists (Gerring & McDermott 2007). A case study includes the nature or context of the case and the process of monitoring the phenomenon, or using an alternative way of collecting information with respect to the development of the phenomenon over time (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter 2006). Thus, a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin 2013, p. 13). A case study is highly contextualised in nature and rich in providing longitudinal information about individuals or particular situations (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006). Yin (2013) argues that case studies are characterised by questions, propositions, and units of analysis with a logical linking to the data, propositions, and the criteria for interpreting the findings. Case studies help to find answers to specific questions through concentrating on specific units of

analysis. Yin (2013) further points out that, as a research design, a case study is used in many situations to contribute to knowledge about the individual, group, organisation, or social and political situation.

Within this case study setting, the aim is to identify and critically examine the factors affecting the settlement experiences of South Sudanese refugees in Melbourne by focussing on two aspects of the process. The first is participation in employment, and the second is participation in sport and related activities. It was also decided to gather data using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The data for the study were collected through a survey (the quantitative strand), and semi-structured interviews (the qualitative strand).

#### **5.4 Mixed methods**

Mixed methods research is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Creswell (2013) suggests that mixed methods is viewed as a triangulation approach and analysis with some advantages for the investigation of a given social state. Several researchers suggest that mixed methods research adopts more than one research method for the benefit of obtaining variety in the research data (Brannen 2005; Wijaya 2014). In this study, mixed methods are used to bridge quantitative and qualitative approaches. The benefit of employing mixed methods includes triangulation when data are used in conjunction with other data sources and methods (Jick 1979; Wesely 2011). There is also a strong argument that any combination of methods helps to capitalise on the strengths of these two approaches, and compensates for any weakness in each (Mohiuddin 2012; Punch 2013). There are several rational and theoretical arguments for the use of mixed methods in social research (Mertens 1998; Teddlie & Tashakkori 2008). One argument is that combined methods assist in looking at the nature of the study through two lenses (Creswell 2006). The second argument is that multiple methods can help to understand the complexities of social phenomena, which is very important in a research context (Greene & Caracelli 1997; Mertens 1998; Wijaya 2014). Bryman (2008) argued that mixed methods can generate enough evidence to suit any set of criteria.

Therefore, mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of data collection and data analysis (Creswell 2013).

In theory, mixed methods research has been called the third methodological movement paradigm, with quantitative and qualitative methods representing the first and second paradigms (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala 2013). Both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used for different reasons, including obtaining divergent views of the same phenomenon. The two approaches are used to compare perceptions of a phenomenon of interest by different participant categories, and then evaluate the contribution they make to the findings and conclusions of the research project (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala 2013).

However, it is important to acknowledge that mixed methods should only be used when it is appropriate to an investigation's research question (Bryman 2008). The decision to use a particular method is often determined by the researcher or research team based on appropriateness in relation to the research population (Jick 1979). There are, however, limitations and biases in any method. Therefore, not all researchers appreciate the benefits of mixed methods. As such, this researcher is clearly aware of some of the weaknesses in mixed methods. In particular, it can be time-consuming compared to a single method approach. Use of mixed methods is simultaneously challenging and exciting as the researcher needs to organise and analyse data from each method separately before combining them (Bryman 2006; Wijaya 2014).

## **5.5 Advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative research**

There are many factors to be considered when choosing a research method. These include the purpose of the study, sample size and distribution, time available, and the environment and conditions under which the study is conducted. This approach has helped the researcher gain a better understanding of the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative strategies. The quantitative method brings advantages and strengths to research as it is useful for studying large numbers of people. It provides precise, quantitative, numerical data that are useful for testing constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur. It is useful in bringing statistical precision to determine similarities and differences among variables (Sarantakos 2013). It also quantifies how many people have different or similar opinions or experiences regarding a particular problem or issue. This often assists researchers to understand how big or small the problem is (Atem 2011a; Creswell 2013). Finally, the collection of data using the

quantitative method is relatively fast, as data can be obtained through telephone interviews or online. A major strength of the quantitative approach lies in its reliability and validity for generalisation, however, it cannot provide an in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon. In social research, the quantitative approach is about collecting data for the purpose of quantifying, counting, interpreting, and comparing variables in the data collected (Bryman 2008).

On the other hand, a qualitative approach is based on personal interpretation and can help to reduce such limitations (Creswell 2013). Qualitative research is more often used in social research as it is concerned with understanding the social and economic conditions of humanity through methodological and procedural studies, where the investigator purposely constructs knowledge from the stories and experiences of people. It is about understanding complex, holistic representations and analyses of words, reporting detailed information about the views of informants and conducting the study in a natural setting (Atem 2011a; Creswell 2013). Qualitative data is descriptive, based on stories collected from participants in a study. This approach also involves re-examining and reflecting on the nature of the data (Neuman 2006). Qualitative data is extremely varied in nature and includes fundamental information captured by a researcher. Qualitative data has nothing to do with numerical data. All academic writing that uses qualitative research tries to tell compelling stories (Corley 2012); this is what qualitative researchers get from participants. Therefore, a qualitative inquiry is a study method that prioritises studying and understanding social phenomena within their environment, and that tries to present events or phenomena in their natural environment in a realistic and holistic manner (Arseven 2014).

There is no single method of collecting qualitative data (Lichtman 2013). However, there is general agreement that a compelling story is essential to good qualitative work (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala 2013). A good story is an engaging one told by an individual through in-depth interviews, which often involve conversations about the research issue. In-depth interviews differ from direct observation, primarily in the nature of the interaction. The purpose of the interview is to probe interviewees about the phenomena of interest (Lichtman 2013). The narrative data reveals and places data in its wider context (Corley 2012). This method can address confirmatory and exploratory research questions

simultaneously and has been used across different disciplines and more commonly in social sciences for exploratory research in order to develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and to generate new theoretical insights (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala 2013).

### **5.6 Data collection for both survey and in-depth interviews**

Data was collected via both quantitative and qualitative processes. In each instance – a survey followed by in-depth interviews – the respondent sample was drawn from the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds who were residents in Melbourne. Both males and females aged 18 years and above who had been in Australia for two years or more were invited to participate in the study. For the survey, 243 respondents responded to the study questionnaire (see survey questionnaire in Appendix D).

For the in-depth interviews, 20 participants provided their consent to participate in the interview, and all were interviewed (11 males and 9 females). These participants were invited to share their narratives about settlement experiences, participation in employment, and participation in sport (see Appendices E and F). The lead research candidate met with prospective participants and provided them with relevant information on the research, highlighting the voluntary nature of their participation and their right to withdraw consent. Each participant for the in-depth interview was invited to sign a consent form.

All interviews were conducted in private rooms in public libraries and community centres at a time that was convenient to participants. Each interview lasted one hour on average. The interviews were conducted in English, as all participants who agreed to participate in the interviews were able to speak the language and were comfortable to share their stories in English. There was also an advantage in the lead researcher's ability to speak Sudanese Arabic, Dinka, and Kiswahili, which were not utilised. The background of the wider South Sudanese community was cautiously considered because of their experiences of forced displacement, political persecution, and the trauma of civil war in South Sudan. The researcher adopted the principles of respecting peoples' cultures, integrity, and ethics (Madden 2010). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interview data were coded and analysed using thematic analysis techniques (see Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 82). All 20 interviews were manually analysed and coded

based on dominant themes from participants' views. (See Appendix F for coding and dominant themes.)

Both the quantitative and qualitative data collected provide useful information about the settlement experiences, participation in employment, and participation in sport for the South Sudanese community. Camfield and Palmer-Jones (2013) argued that both quantitative and qualitative methods increase the use of data as a public or community good within a particular discipline, and can enhance the credibility of social science by providing access to a larger body of data. Therefore, purposive sampling selection was used in this study, but excluded people who had been in Australia for less than one year. People with fewer experiences in Australia were less likely to fully understand settlement experiences and the need for social engagement in critical activities of relevance to facilitating integration in the host community.

### **5.7 Sampling options**

Understanding research sampling is a critical and necessary part of the research process. Therefore, the population or sampling is defined clearly as part of the research design to ensure that the sample selected provides an accurate representation of the population (Thomas 1996). Thus, the participants for in-depth interviews were selected using a purposive sampling approach, deliberately based on four main criteria: employed and participating in sport; unemployed and participating in sport; employed and not participating in sport; and unemployed and not participating in sport.

In social research similar to this study, there are conventional strategies for the use of sampling and selection criteria in research implementation. These include purposive and random selection strategies. Both strategies are useful, depending on the subject population, providing it is appropriate for the group and consistent with research aims (Palinkas et al. 2015). Understanding research sampling and procedure in choosing a sizeable group within society is vital. A sample is a subgroup of the population that a researcher wishes to learn about, possibly in relation to either behaviour or social issues affecting the community, but also many other matters researchers care to include in their work (Chambliss & Schutt 2015). Purposive sampling is a cost- and time-effective sampling method and is appropriate to this study due to the limited number of data

resources contributing to the study (Chambliss & Schutt 2015). This study only considers participants who have been in Australia for two years and above within the South Sudanese community in Melbourne. To better understand the behaviours of people within society, sociologists develop theories, and collect and investigate data to test the validity of those theories. In some situations, it is relatively easy to gather data about opinions, behaviours, or other characteristics of each member in a society (Wienclaw 2009). Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research for identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups who are especially knowledgeable about, or experienced in, a phenomenon of interest. It identifies and selects all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Palinkas et al. 2015; Patton 2002).

### **5.8 Research sampling and procedure**

In line with the research design flowchart illustrated in Figure 6.2, (located before the summary section of this chapter), the data collection process commenced with the administration of a survey to a sample of South Sudanese refugees who had settled in Melbourne. Participants were invited to complete a questionnaire after providing their consent and willingness to participate in the research project. A number of limitations were imposed on the sample. First, the age of participants in the survey was limited to 18 years and above. Second, the demographic was limited to South Sudanese living in Melbourne. Third, the sample was limited to South Sudanese members who had been living in Australia for two or more years. This residential period constraint was imposed because people who have been in Australia for two years and more would have more detailed experiences of settlement issues, and a more nuanced understanding of the link between social connectedness and settlement problems.

The researcher attended many community functions, such as meetings, parties, restaurants, and cafeterias, where the South Sudanese community came together for social interaction. This was an opportunity for the researcher to meet a broad cross-section of South Sudanese migrants, discuss the research project with them, and invite them to participate. When discussing the processes and selection criteria with community

members, the researcher explained that only those who had met the above selection criteria could be invited to participate in the study.

The researcher was often given the opportunity at community functions to explain what the research was about and how people could contribute to the survey questionnaire and participate in interviews. Many South Sudanese people saw this as an educational opportunity to interact with the researcher and to act as role model for the next generation of community members who may consider doing higher degree research in the future. This made recruitment easier, as some participants volunteered their time to distribute survey papers or pass on information to their networks, and many offered to participate in the survey.

After the administration of a screening process, potential respondents were invited to complete a hard-copy questionnaire that asked them to reveal their settlement experiences. They were also asked to provide demographic information, including their gender, age, and time spent in Australia. Using convenience and snowball sampling procedures, 350 survey questionnaires were distributed to people who met the above sampling criteria. Of those, 243 questionnaires were correctly completed and returned to the researcher, who tabulated the results using SPSS software program. The incomplete questionnaires of 107 were redundant. Breaking participants down according to gender, 147 respondents were male and 96 respondents were female.

To secure the qualitative data, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 participants. This was achieved by recruiting 20 interviewees from the pool of 243 South Sudanese refugees who had completed the survey. As existing respondents already selected by years of residency in Australia, the next filter was their willingness to share their experiences in the in-depth interviews, which were audio-recorded. Each of these interviewees was invited to share their experiences and opinions about the research topic. Eleven males and nine females were selected for in-depth interview based on their willingness to participate in the in-depth interviews. They were asked to discuss their settlement experiences, and the benefits they found in employment and participating in sport. The researcher met with prospective participants to go through the selection criteria and explain what was required. All relevant information and explanations about research, the right to choose to participate or not to participate, including the right to withdraw,

were provided as part of the discussion. Those who chose to participate were then asked to sign a consent form after being briefed. All interviews were conducted in private rooms in public library centres, at a time that was convenient to participants. This process is further elaborated in the next section. The researcher's earlier experience of working in the community and his minor research for a Master's degree contributed to his research skills and strengths.

### **5.9 Structure of research questions**

The questionnaire and interview questions for this study were developed and divided into four main sections: demographic information on respondents, including gender, age, years of residence in Australia, current employment status and current involvement in sport; settlement experiences; experiences of participation in employment; and experiences of participation in sport.

There was also some thought and consideration given to different types of questions, such as open-ended and closed questions. According to Collis and Hussey (2013), researchers sometimes disagree over the extent to which questions should be structured. The questionnaire may include open-ended and/or closed questions, having taken into consideration their advantages and disadvantages. Open-ended questions allow respondents to answer in their own words, much like an essay examination question (Peterson 2000; Weisberg, Bowen & Krosnick 1996). One of the advantages of open-ended questions is that respondents are able to give their opinions as precisely as possible and in their own words. However, closed questions offer a series of alternative choices for respondents, like a multiple-choice examination question (Weisberg, Bowen & Krosnick 1996). Closed questions are very convenient for collecting factual data and analysing responses, since the range of potential answers is limited. It is also easy and inexpensive to work with the resulting data. If the closed question format is chosen, care should be taken in framing the answer choices so that all possible options are included and none overlap (Weisberg, Bowen & Krosnick 1996). The appropriateness of either closed or open-ended questions depends on the objective of the questionnaire, the respondents' level of information about the topic, the extent to which the topic has been thought through by respondents, the extent to which respondents are motivated to

communicate on the topic, and the sample size of the study population (Collis & Hussey 2013).

### **5.10 Demographic profiles**

In the demographic section of each data-gathering instrument, questions were designed to allow participants to tick columns relevant to their gender, age, participation in employment and sport, and settlement experiences. Each section had different numbers of columns. For instance, there were two columns to tick for gender: either male or female. However, there were three categories of age groups for participants to select from: 18-24 years, 25-39 years and 40-64 years. The research committee decided to exclude people over 65 based on advice from community leaders, who felt that there was no need to include respected elders in the research, as they were more likely to struggle with paperwork and in understanding the research questions.

There were also three categories for participants to select according to their years of residence in Australia: 2–5 years, 6–10 years, or 11 years or more. The reason for asking this was that those who had been in Australia for two years or more do have more experiences and understanding of settlement, as well as factors that could help community to facilitate settlement in a positive way.

The demographic status for participation in employment was designed in three categories: employed full-time, employed part-time, and unemployed. This was straightforward information to be gathered. Similar categories were also identified regarding participation in sport: “I am involved in sport on a regular basis (at least three times a week)”; “I am involved in sport on a casual basis (less than three times a week)” and “I am currently not involved in sport”. This information was gathered to understand the level of participation in sport.

In respect of the survey, participants responded to all statements in the following sections using a Likert scale of five options. The Likert scale allowed respondents to choose the option that best suited their experience and understanding of the question, a method safe for respondents to make informed choices (Asun, Rdz-Navarro & Alvarado 2015). Therefore, respondents for this study were presented with statements and asked if

they agreed or disagreed by selecting from the following options on a Likert scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The Likert scale is a popular format that is generally used in education and other fields of human research to collect participants' opinions based on their knowledge and experiences of the subject (Asun, Rdz-Navarro & Alvarado 2015; Camparo & Camparo 2012).

### **5.11 Survey questions on settlement experiences**

The survey questions concerning settlement experiences were informed by the literature review of refugee settlement, including settlement challenges. Some research had examined refugee settlement in the context of refugee employment, unemployment, barriers to participation, and refugees' engagement in non-work activities (Abur 2012; Ager 1999; Ager & Strang 2008; Allerdice 2011; Atem 2011; Atwell, Gifford & McDonald-Wilmsen 2009; Bennett & Adriel 2014; Bishop 2011; Camino & Krulfeld 1994; Fozdar & Hartley 2013; Harris 2010; Harte, Childs, & Hastings 2009; Hiruy 2009; Lejukole 2008; Marlowe 2010; Tipping 2011; UNHCR 2014; Zetter 2015). These studies were used to frame the questions, and especially the core issue of the settlement experiences of participants based on settlement outcomes. After careful consideration, it was decided to begin with the question: "To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about your settlement outcomes as a South Sudanese Australian with a refugee background?"

Three survey statements, which asked participants to answer questions using Likert scale options, were used. These statements were designed to determine respondents' experiences and knowledge regarding their satisfaction with their experiences and aspects that may have facilitated their participation in employment and sport. For settlement satisfaction, the statement was: "Overall, I have had a positive settlement experience." For facilitation of employment, the statement was "Having English language skills boosted my employability." For facilitation in sport, the statement was "Having social connections boosted my involvement in local community spirit."

## **5.12 Survey questions on the benefits of participation in employment**

Previous research has found that people from refugee backgrounds can benefit from employment, which gives them a stronghold of economic capital and stable income and which can influence their settlement outcomes (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006; Correa-Velez, Spaaij, & Upham 2013; Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria 2008; Graeme 2011; Lawlor & Perkins 2009). Lack of employment or living in an unemployment situation can add more pressure to the settlement challenges for those from refugee backgrounds (Abdelkerim & Grace 2012; Cullen 1999).

Thus, questions were designed to explore the benefits of participation in employment for selected participants and were asked in the form of statements: "To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about the benefits of employment to you as a South Sudanese Australian with a refugee background?" Under this main question, the following five statements, coded under five forms of capital (i.e. economic, social, cultural, psychological, and physical) were answered using the five Likert scale options, as follows: "Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides" (economic capital); "Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace" (social capital); "Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values" (cultural capital); "Employment gave me a stable income which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing" (psychological capital); and "Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit" (physical capital).

## **5.13 Survey questions on the benefits of participation in sport**

Under a similar arrangement to employment, the questions regarding sport were informed by the literature review in the area of refugees and sport. Previous research has shown that sport facilitates social connection for people from refugee backgrounds with host community groups (Birouste 2013; Bunde-Birouste et al. 2012; Chau 2007; Olliff 2008). Thus, the main question was: "To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about the benefits of sport to you as a South Sudanese Australian with a refugee background?" Under this question, there were five statements for participants using Likert scale options: "Sport assisted me to connect with many people

and improve my integration into the wider community” (social capital); “Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values” (cultural capital); “Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health” (physical capital); “Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing” (psychological capital); and “Sport helped me to obtain paid work” (economic capital).

### **5.14 Structure of in-depth interviews**

The interview questions were shaped by the survey results. Twenty participants chose to participate because of the perceived benefits this research could bring to their community in terms of academic contribution and policy direction. Each interview last between 50 minutes to 60 minutes. The interviews were all audio recorded and transcribed. (Please refer to Appendix E for interviews and guide).

The in-depth interview technique includes individual and group interviews. However, this research focused on individual interviews and omitted group interviews: it was decided not to include group interviews because of the lengthy and difficult process of organising people for that purpose. Atem (2011b) explained that often data from in-depth interviews are recorded in a variety of ways, including audio recording, video recording, and written notes. For this study, all in-depth interviews were audio recorded during interviews and transcribed accordingly. This researcher also attempted to take notes on the main points during interviews as an *aide memoir*. The in-depth interview technique was an important part of this study because it provided a record of critical conversations on settlement-related issues, such as lack of different forms of capital for people from refugee backgrounds, and benefits of employment and sport as being critically needed by individuals and families.

### **5.15 Data triangulation**

Carter et al. (2014) argued that the triangulation methodology is used to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena. It is also viewed as a qualitative research strategy to test the validity of research through information collected from different resources. When the two or more resources provide similar perspectives, then the validity of the research argument is conventional (Bryman, 2008). The data triangulated from both

quantitative and qualitative findings were used to build the case study of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne in order to understand their settlement experiences.

### **5.16 Data analysis**

As discussed earlier, this study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. It is therefore important to explain the processes used in analysing both data. First, the quantitative data collected from the community survey were coded and analysed descriptively using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software to produce frequency and percentage tables, as well as inferential analysis of significant differences (Chapter 7 reports survey analysis and results).

Next, the qualitative data collected from interviews were coded and analysed using a thematic and pattern analysis to extract and classify key themes (Hayes 2000; Atem 2011b). This process identified similarities in interviews or conversations concerning settlement experiences, and benefits of employment and sport using different forms of capital as a way of grouping themes. This is a case study process because it involves inductive analysis of the themes and reconstructing meaningful information from the data generally (Hayes 2000; Zainal 2007). In this process, the researcher was concerned with any emerging information that could generate a new theory instead of testing existing theories. The settlement experiences of those who are engaged in employment and sport may possibly be different to those who are not involved in any activities. The case study of this South Sudanese community has the added advantage of deeper understanding of critical settlement issues affecting families, individuals, and young people. I adopted the principles of case study analysis, which is about observing, thinking, testing, and revising (see Braun & Clarke 2006; Zainal 2007).

### **5.17 Thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis is widely used within the qualitative research field as a “method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 79). This study has adopted the thematic analysis approach where a theme is understood as an idea that “captures response or meaning within the data set” (something important about the data in relation to the research question), and represents some level

of patterned response (Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 82). Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that thematic analysis is commonly used in qualitative research. There are six explicit steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) that are useful in the thematic analysis process. Table 6.1 provides a basic understanding of how the thematic analysis process works in qualitative analysis (see Braun & Clarke 2006, p. 87)

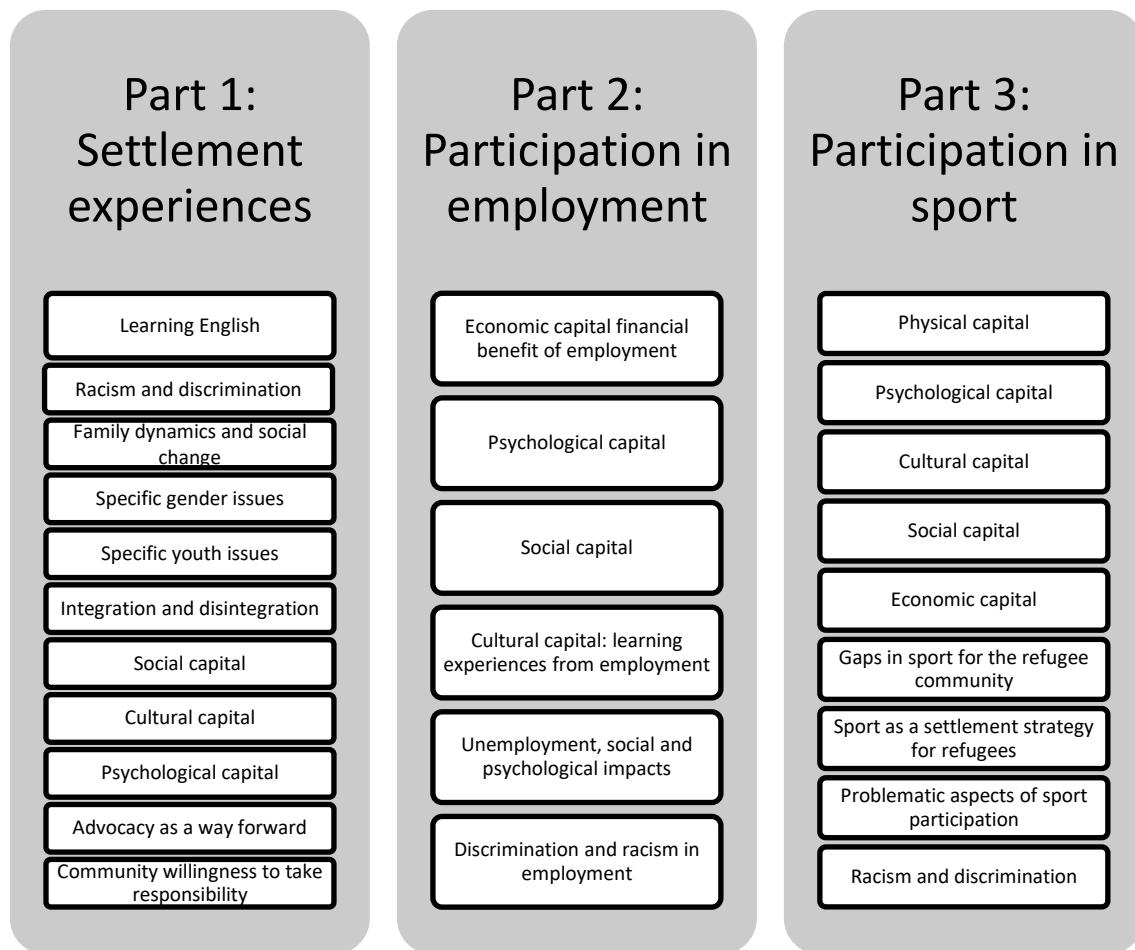
**Table 5.2 Phases of thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006)**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Description of the process</b>
<b>Familiarising yourself with your data</b>	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting initial ideas.
Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic “map” of the analysis.
Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

From a social research perspective, thematic analysis is the most common form of analysing qualitative data to identify important themes according to the research question and hypothesis. The aim is to identify, analyse, and report patterns or themes within the data. Thematic analysis moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas embedded in the data (Braun & Clarke 2006). Codes are typically developed to represent identified themes and applied or linked to raw data (Braun & Clarke 2006). This process involves comparing code frequencies, identifying code concurrence, and graphically displaying relationships

between codes within the dataset (Braun & Clarke 2006). Data analysis is a systematic process of condensing, recapping, and evaluating logically in order for the researcher to understand the results. Therefore, understanding the process of applied data analysis is an important and critical part of the research process. This includes identifying outstanding patterns or themes that emerge, and cleaning, transforming, and modelling data with the aim of discovering useful information and suggestions that can support researchers to make decisions and conclusions from the findings (Braun & Clarke 2006). Data analysis is just as important as implementation of data collection and design. The process can be dynamic and iterative (Bunde-Birouste 2013).

The lead researcher listened to the audio-recorded discussions numerous times while transcribing and coded them into three parts: settlement experiences, participation in employment, and participation in sport. Several subthemes also emerged as the researcher was analysing and coding, and they are listed in Figure 6.1. The themes are coded from most commonly cited to least commonly cited theme.



**Figure 5:1 Final map of the primary themes, subthemes and codes**

### 5.18 Reliability and validity

The validity and reliability of research data are a significant part of the research. This study was conducted under established research protocols and ethical processes to reach the secured data. Several scholars have argued that reliability of data requires a discussion of the procedures to justify claims made in respect of the accuracy of the data, and the truthfulness and credibility in research findings (Bryman 2008; Graziano & Raulin 2004; Neuman 2006; Sagor 2000). Bryman (2008) also refers to reliability in social research as being dependable and consistent: the opposite of reliability is a measurement process that yields erratic, unstable, or inconsistent results.

The idea of truthfulness and reality in research is what a researcher claims to be reliable and valid data. The validity of this research was acquired through a consistent approach in using survey and interview techniques to reduce the researcher's bias

throughout the research process, as well as during critical reflection (Newman & Benz 1998). This is an important consideration when a researcher is thinking about reliability and validity (Neuman 2006). Thus, the validity of this research is about truthfulness and honesty in the researcher's interactions with participants during data collection and data analysis. This researcher firmly believes in truthfulness and authenticity based on ethical accountability and integrity. Lindley (2006) argued that respecting participants' points of view is part of the process of validity and reliability in research. The survey provides an overview of statistics about the South Sudanese community in Melbourne by capturing demographic data including gender, employment status, and engagement or otherwise in sport. As discussed in the survey section, the questions were informed by the literature and measured by five Likert-scale options.

### **5.19 Pre-testing and the pilot study**

The survey questionnaires and interview questions for this study went through a number of developmental stages before final distribution to the community. This is a normal process for many studies. The first stage was to draft survey questionnaires and interview questions from the literature review, grouped into four areas and including demographic information. The second stage was pilot tested with a few participants in the South Sudanese community to gauge an understanding of that community. The questions and survey questionnaires were also checked by experts for clarity of content and understanding of language. These stages were mainly done to test both face and content validity, which are defined later in this section.

The aim of the pilot survey was to establish that the proposed questionnaire was understandable and clear to members of the target population. It is useful to pilot the questionnaire with a small sample of respondents to check its suitability for achieving research aims and objectives (Collis & Hussey 2013). Oppenheim (2000) indicates that the main factor in a questionnaire's design is clarity, and to avoid any complexity and confused wording. Therefore, it is essential that a pilot study should be conducted to establish an understanding by and clarity for members of the community or the targeted population. This helps a researcher to eliminate ambiguity and make research more reliable and valid, which gives the study more strength and legitimacy based on

respondents' understanding of what they have been asked (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson 2012; Oppenheim 2000).

Face validity is about measuring the understanding and clarity of questions with the aim of eliminating or reducing their ambiguity (Humphrey et al. 2013). Face validity is simple and quick to check, as it is at face value that one understands participants' views. For the community, participants in the pilot study were given the survey to read and answer questions to again check their understanding and that the questions made sense. They were then asked to provide feedback on their understanding of each question. Minor adjustments were made based on this feedback to ensure that the community understood the survey questionnaire and interview questions. This process was useful to the researcher as a way of gaining confidence about how people comprehended both the survey and interview questions.

Content validity is about experts testing content as a systematic way of understanding key areas of research. It is about understanding the process and connection between each item logically in relation to research or tasks that need to be established (Humphrey et al. 2013). Therefore, the research committee for this study has made a systematic and thorough review of the areas of research: settlement experience, employment, and sport participation. This determined whether the research questions amply covered each area being studied. Experts, including two PhD students who were also from the South Sudanese community and were studying their PhDs in social science, tested the survey questionnaire. This process is a content validity check where these experts provided critical feedback to the researcher, as well as providing advice in the testing of interview questions before the researcher piloted the initial questionnaire in the community.

## **5.20 Ethical considerations**

As this study involves human research, careful consideration of ethical issues was given to protect the confidentiality of all participants when collecting and managing data. Therefore, this study was deemed safe, respectful, responsible and of a high quality, according to both the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee and under the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) policy. This policy is

based on the *National Health and Medical Research Council Act 1992*, which governs all health research in Australia.

For reasons of confidentiality, the information collected from participants in this research has been protected and stored in a secure place, according to Victoria University's research policy and procedures. Also, as clearly stated in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research Guidelines, all data in this research have been coded and de-identified after transcription, and will be kept in a secure, locked area at Victoria University for a period of five years, as specified by the Ethics Committee.

All participants who were involved in the research were given information sheets before the interviews. It was clearly explained to participants and in the information sheets that participants were not obliged to take part in this study and could voluntarily withdraw at any stage. The background of the South Sudanese community was cautiously considered because of their experiences in refugee camps and/or of oppression and political persecution, forced migration, and the trauma of civil war in South Sudan. In addition, people under 18 years of age were not included in this study due to ethical considerations and because they were legally under-age. The South Sudan community consisted mostly of younger people, with a few over 65 years of age. It was deemed that trauma issues would more than likely be revealed in the course of data collection. It was thus decided that the researcher would refrain from asking any personal questions that could traumatisise participants.

The researcher was also aware of his responsibilities to terminate the involvement of any participant or refer them to a relevant organisation for trauma counselling if there was any adverse reaction during interviews.

All participants were made aware of and consented to interviews and digital recording after all relevant information was provided, including a statement about interviews being recorded. It was emphasised that the researcher would not under any circumstances endanger participants' physical, emotional, social, and legal wellbeing. This explanation was provided to all participants during the collection of both survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Only de-identified data have been reported in the thesis, and presented or published in conference papers and journal articles that have

drawn on this research. The researcher and supervisors can only access the data during the study. The researcher has reported the data in such a way that participants in the research cannot be individually identified.

As a South Sudanese migrant who came to Australia through a humanitarian process, (i.e. a refugee granted a visa to enter Australia pursuant to a formal arrangement with the UNHCR), it is important to acknowledge that I already have some knowledge and ideas on refugee issues. However, my professional work as a social worker with refugee families and individuals has always guided me in my reflections and allowed me to suspend my judgement. I had previously conducted minor research on settlement issues as a part of my Master's study, in which I learned a great deal about how to manage my biases and suspend judgment. I was mindful of my personal positioning and professional responsibilities in conducting this research. I thought to reflect on my role and my background as a South Sudanese man and how my experiences could influence my research. I acknowledge my position as a professional who is aware of the importance of ethical issues and engagement with this community while investigating their experiences of employment and sport. I have consulted relevant community members in all aspects of this research: from its original design, through to data analysis and interpretation. My approach was to let participants be the experts of their stories, and my role was to guide them towards the questions and elicit relevant data in order to answer the research question. This approach has governed the whole process of my interaction with participants throughout the research.

My relationship with the community has been powerful and encouraging for the researcher during this study. Accessing the community to talk about social and cultural issues can be a nerve-wracking process, regardless of whether one is an insider or outsider in that community. Given my position as an insider, I was not sure about what challenges I would encounter within the community during data collection because of my new status as a PhD candidate. This position holds status in the community, where few members have doctorates. I thought about this matter carefully and concluded that I could – and should – go into the South Sudanese community. There would be people who would support this research and others who might feel jealous or refuse to engage with the topic. I set my goals clearly: that I would respect peoples' opinions with mutual respect. I was

however encouraged by the support and willingness of many South Sudanese who were receptive, open, and interested in my research. Some were motivated by the fact that they had participated in previous PhD research, working with researchers who were not members of the South Sudanese community, and they had not been advised of the research outcomes. Some informed me that they disagreed with some information and assumptions about their community issues. These members were hoping my research would make a difference, coming from an insider. I was told openly that it would be good to see how my research interpreted the social issues faced by the community. I felt a bit of pressure, as I was not sure what that meant for this study. I asked people to wait and see how the research progressed, as I did not know what the results would show or what the participants would discuss. I also learned to explain that results of research are often determined by participants' stories and the literature review. My interaction with community members during data collection has shaped my assumptions in a positive way. Therefore, I am sincerely thankful to the South Sudanese community that engaged with me, and encouraged and supported me through their networks and connections. It has been a positive experience and has allowed me to understand the community better.

## **5.21 Positioning in the field as an insider in the South Sudanese Australian community**

As an insider researcher, I was aware of my duty of care to participants and the community at large. I took extra precautions and further steps in reading more about ethical issues in human research, for example how to suspend judgement, exercise empathy, and not interfere with participants' opinions during conversations. Camfield and Palmer-Jones (2013) observed that there should always be careful consideration, alongside methodology and reporting findings, regarding the public interest and wider society, including holding a duty of care to participants, to research benefits to society directly or by increasing knowledge and understanding of critical issues that matter to the researcher in the community. I have deeply considered these kinds of approaches during the research process and data analyses. Crucially, I have sought to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of community participants, and to be accountable by listening carefully and respectfully to their stories during data collection.

Being an insider researcher comes with both advantages and challenges (Kusow 2004). Advantages include understanding of the group's culture, the ability to interact with members naturally, and establishment of confidence and a relationship with the group (Bonner & Tolhurst 2002; Breen 2007; Unluer 2012). However, these advantages are also related to disadvantages at some points. For instance, greater familiarity, experiences, and knowledge can lead to a loss of neutrality (Bonner & Tolhurst 2002; Breen 2007; DeLyser 2001). In this case, I acknowledge my role as an insider and my experience as a social worker in the field of refugee settlement. To the best of my ability, I have dealt with the ethical responsibilities of being an insider.

The researcher also considers how these beliefs and personal experiences might influence research through any political and social identities one may hold (Lambert, Jomeen & McSherry 2010; Parker 1999). As I acted as a community researcher during and after the data collection, I read and thought about the ethnography framework for this study. Firstly, the subject community in Melbourne was familiar: I have been living there and have attended a number of community functions and events. Secondly, I have been a part of this complex situation and the social settings based on my experiences in the community, as well as experiencing the conflict and the settlement journey. However, my experiences cannot be classified with other peoples' experiences. It is important to adopt ethnography as a method of conducting research in a community as every individual has unique experiences. For instance, the settlement experience of a single mother with young children is not the same as that of a family with both parents and possibly other family members. Similarly, the settlement experience of a single man with no family to support is not the same as a man who has children and a wife to care for.

Ethnography is about exploring personal experiences, life stories, and interaction with other people as a way of achieving social, cultural, and political understanding of personal life journeys (Anderson 2006; Pace 2012). The ethnographic method is a study of people in their own situations through participant observation and face-to-face interviewing (Whitehead 2005). Benefits and attributes to ethnographic study includes the holistic approach to the study of cultural and sociocultural contexts, personal stories and experiences, processes and meanings within cultural systems (Anderson 2006; Madden 2010; Pace 2012; Whitehead 2005). Cook and Dorsch (2014) also argue that

ethnography has some advantages of understanding social and cultural contexts in detail, which can inform knowledge claims.

Being an ethnographer “at home” is a privilege that carries many positive aspects in different ways; for instance, through open discussion on critical issues that really matter to people. It is also easy to access participants as people have a greater interest in this research subject, because it is about issues that concern their community, family, and personal life (Anderson 2006; Madden 2010; Pace 2012). Ethnography involves collective or individual experiences. This research process involves documentation and a better understanding of sociocultural relationships within a community. It can introduce pathways of intervention through insider learning and a deeper understanding of cultural knowledge within that community (Bunde-Birouste 2013). Most ethnography research includes community-focused, multi-method data collection strategies with the aim of the research or learning taking place within the community, with a consideration of people’s social and worldviews (Madden 2010).

For these reasons, I considered the ethnographic process as part of my research and was critical about my reflection based on my observations in the community concerning employment/unemployment, sport participation, and other settlement experiences, including cultural shock, family issues, intergenerational conflict, and an understanding of education as it relates to South Sudanese culture. For example, as an insider, I have heard many stories about the South Sudanese ways of education, parenting/teaching children for the future, settlement challenges, both positive and negative aspects of culture, and stories of change that families and individuals have been through. One of the best stories about the South Sudanese commitment to education relates to career choice. Community leaders and elders often advise young people who want to do well to study law and the sciences. The idea behind this is that lawyers and doctors are well respected in the South Sudanese culture. Other careers, such as hairdressing and running commercial businesses, are considered less important.

## **5.22 Limitations of the study**

As with any other study, there were some limitations and delimitations in this study due to the nature of the social issues attached to the study and the community’s diversity.

This study investigated the lack of engagement for South Sudanese refugees in employment and sport. In the case study, issues of social isolation, unemployment, and discrimination were clearly reflected by participants in different ways. Further, the South Sudanese community in Melbourne has different dialects, languages, faiths, and experiences in their settlement journeys. Some came through Egypt from Khartoum and had a strong background in Arabic; others came from Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia with some English background. Although many people in this community still shared common experiences, such as poverty and traumatic events because of forced displacement and migration, it is important to acknowledge that every person in the South Sudanese community must be treated as an individual rather than a collective group, with both bad and good experiences. For such diverse experiences and culturally sensitive reasons, the research has been limited to the South Sudanese community in Melbourne.

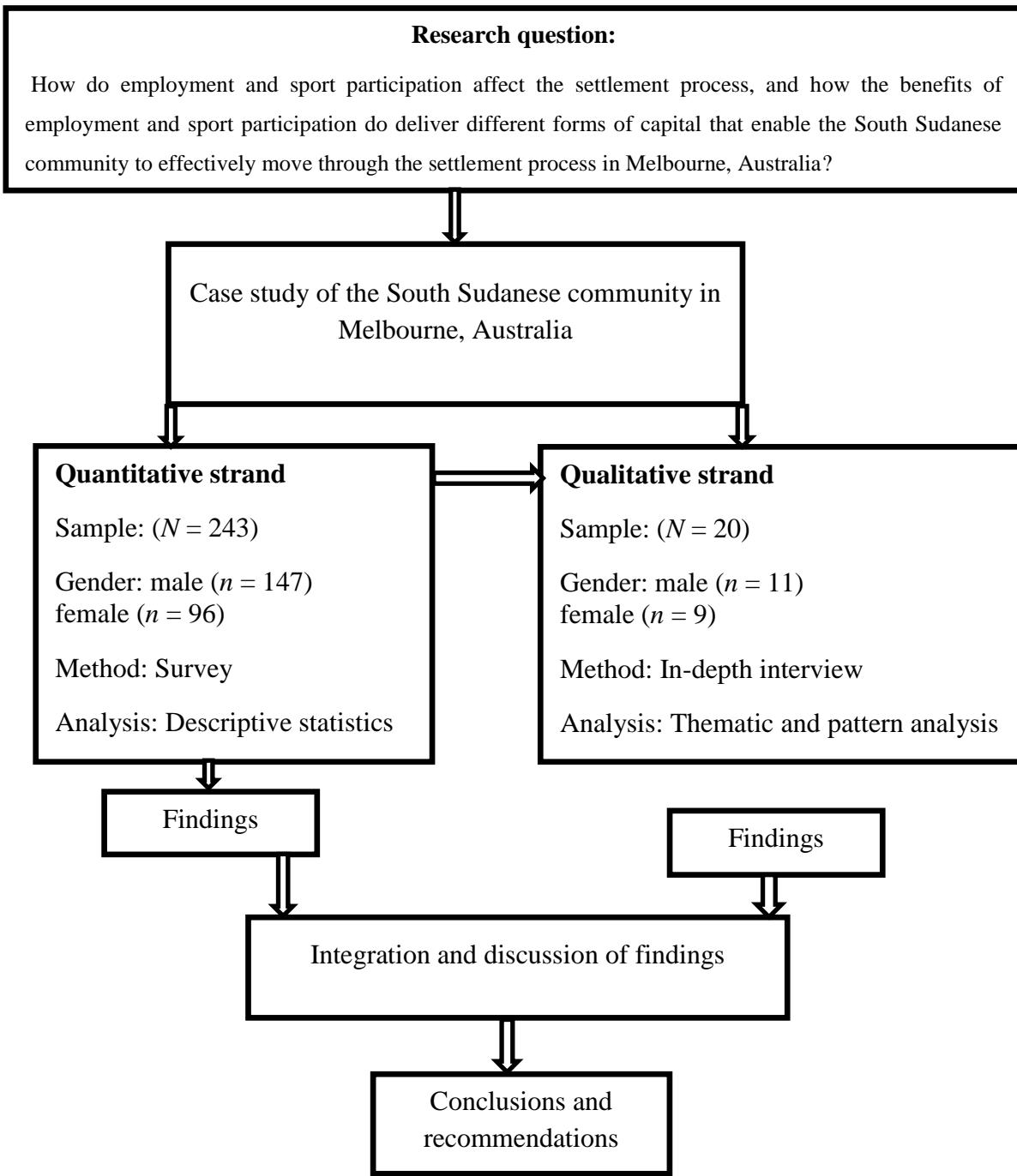
There are also issues related to culture, such as gender and multi-dialects spoken within the community. This has its own challenges in terms of research limitations, as there are more than 64 indigenous dialects spoken within South Sudan, and different cultural expectations when dealing with women, youths, and elders. This made the process of translating documents more difficult, but after consultation with community members, I realised that it was not worthwhile translating the documents to avoid complexities in dialect. Therefore, the research was entirely conducted in English; the researcher was able to paraphrase some words in Arabic because most participants spoke these languages. Due the diversity of dialects mentioned earlier, English was considered as a selected criterion with provision of any interpretation in Arabic if needed by any participant. This was one of the limitations of this study, although there were no difficulties encountered during research with any participant who was not able to express in English. Literacy in any of the earlier-mentioned dialects was not considered during the selection criteria.

Some of the limitations of this study include that some critical domains were not included in the questions, such as level of education, housing, youth issues in Melbourne, or family conflict. There was also a shortage of questions that were about different forms capital. It was later realised that more questions should have been asked to measure each form of capital in the survey. It was similar view to design specific questions to ask about

gender, age, involvement in sport and employment to test various forms of capital. These areas were left out to be investigated in future research, as this current research only focuses on two fields of employment and sport.

There were also limitations in sampling criteria, as some of the South Sudanese members who have been in Australia less than two years were not included in the research. Non-South Sudanese who have experiences in working with the South Sudanese community in Australia, and who may have made some vital contributions to research findings, were not included. The recruitment through community functions may have excluded some of the isolated community members who do not attend community functions and events for their own reasons.

Figure 6.2 below illustrates the research design, the data collection process and data analysis.



**Figure 5.2: Research design flowchart**

### 5.23 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology for this research based on a case study of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia, and members' experiences of settlement, with particular emphasis on the benefits of participation in employment and sport programs.

A case study approach enabled the collection of rich data to address the research question by exploring settlement experiences and the benefits of participation in employment and sport as a viable way of understanding social issues affecting refugee settlers in Melbourne (and possibly in Australia generally). The data for this study was collected through mixed methods: quantitative (survey) and qualitative (in-depth interviews). This involved conducting a community survey of participants, followed by semi-structured interviews, as explained in Section 6.14.

This chapter has also addressed the validity and reliability of the data and ethics of the data collection process. The limitations of the research were cultural issues, gender sensitive, multi-dialects because more than 64 indigenous, different years of experiences about settlement issues. One example was that participants were limited to those who have been in Australia for two years or more, because they have a better understanding of issues related to settlement. This chapter also details a thorough reflection of the researcher as insider through his reflexivity, including his ethical values and beliefs. The reader has been offered critical reflections to understand how background and ethical values and beliefs affect the way data was collected and interpreted. The position of the researcher as a member of the South Sudanese community with a similar refugee background was also discussed, but it is also acknowledged that his education shaped his views of settlement issues for refugees. The focus of this research is thus restricted to the benefits of participation in employment and sport as strategies to assist refugees to settle in Australia. This view was shaped by the researcher's own social work experience in the settlement sector in which unemployment and lack of participation in local sporting activities were not well addressed. However, as a social work practitioner, his social work ethical values were combined with ethical values in human research, which made his

critical reflection comprehensive. The next chapter presents the findings from the survey in both descriptive and inferential statistics.

## **Chapter 6 : Quantitative Findings**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter 5 presented the methodology, which provided the conceptual and operational frame for this study. This chapter presents the survey findings using both descriptive and inferential data analysis. The aim is to provide a quantitative overview of the settlement experiences and levels of participation in employment and sport for the South Sudanese refugee community in Melbourne, and to understand how these different levels of participation can assist the community in their settlement journey. Part 1 provides the demographic profiles of respondents and data about their participation in employment and sport activities. This addresses objective 1 in this research, which is detailed in section 1.4 of the thesis. Part 2 provides information about associates of settlement-related challenges and benefits of different forms of capital. These statistical tables address research objective 2, which is also detailed in section 1.4. Part 3 of the data analysis examines the significant differences in the variables relating to settlement experiences, participation in employment, participation in sport, and their capital-building capability. This addresses research objectives 1 and 2.

These results were used to both illuminate the settlement experiences of Melbourne's South Sudanese community, and shape the design of the qualitative study, and in particular, the form and content of the interview schedule. This second initiative was crucially important, since the interviews were envisioned as the mechanism for delving deeper into the refugee settlement experience, and retrieving rich veins of meaning, beliefs, and attitudes around the two key research areas of employment and sport participation.

## 6.2 Demographic profile of participants

Understanding the demographic profiles of participants is a vital part of this research project. The refugee experience can differ according to gender, age, and years of residency in the host nation. Thus, the demographic information for this study begins with a brief discussion of the age, gender, and years of residence of respondents. This will then lead into a more detailed examination of how respondents viewed the importance of employment and sport participation as instruments for improving the settlement process. Of the 250 respondents who completed the survey, 243 met the inclusion criteria for analysis.

**Table 6.1 Age and gender groups**

Age range	Female	Male	Range Total
18–24 years	24	66	90 (37.0%)
25–39 years	48	36	84 (34.6%)
40–64 years	24	45	69 (28.4%)
<b>Gender Total</b>	<b>96 (39.5%)</b>	<b>147 (60.5%)</b>	<b>243 (100.0%) *</b>

\*Please note that to avoid overly detailed data, numerical data within this table – and throughout the thesis – have been rounded to a single decimal place. This may at times lead to minor rounding errors providing totals slightly over or under 100%. The rounding-off process was undertaken for the sake of clarity

Table 6.1 provides demographic information about the age range and gender of 243 participants in the survey. There were more males (147) than females (96) who chose to participate in the survey. This may tell us that males are more likely to participate in research. This reflects the fact that a majority of males were willing to engage in research to tell their experiences.

In terms of age, 90 participants (37%) were in the 18–25-year-old age group, 84 (34.6%) were aged 25–39, and 69 (28.4%) were in the 40–64-year-old age group.

## 6.3 Years of residence in Australia

Based on years of residence, most participants in this survey have been in Australia between six and ten years. Table 6.2 below shows the breakdown in numbers of respondents.

**Table 6.2 Years of residence**

<b>Years of residence</b>	<b>Number (%)</b>
2-5 years	57 (23.5%)
6-10 years	102 (42.0%)
11 years or more	84 (34.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>243 (100.0%)</b>

#### **6.4 Participation in employment**

Understanding the level of participation in employment is fundamental to this study as it addresses research objective 1. Table 6.3 below provides data for the employment status of respondents at the time the interviews took place. This table shows that just under 40% of participants indicated that they were unemployed or looking for work. In addition, a considerable number – 38.3% – revealed that they were employed only part-time. Some 48.4% of females worked part-time and 51.6% of males. Most of these males worked in factories, and females worked in childcare or family day-care centres. Some 43.8% of the unemployed respondents were young people aged 18–24. The data confirms that unemployment is a major concern for youth groups in the South Sudanese community. This finding is in line with ABS data, which similarly show highly levels of unemployment among this demographic.

**Table 6.3 Distribution of participation in employment**

	Gender			Age			Length of residency		
	Total	Male	Female	18–24 years	25–39 years	40–64 years	2–5 years	6–10 years	11+ years
<b>Full-time</b>	54 22.2%	42 77.8%	12 22.2%	24 44.4%	9 16.7%	21 38.9%	18 33.3%	15 27.8%	21 38.9%
<b>Part-time</b>	93 38.3%	48 51.6%	45 48.4%	24 25.8%	45 48.4%	24 25.8%	15 16.1%	45 48.4%	33 35.5%
<b>Unemployed</b>	96 39.5%	57 59.4%	39 40.6%	42 43.8%	30 31.3%	24 25%	24 25%	42 43.8%	30 31.3%
<b>Total</b>	243 100%								

The study revealed that only 22.2% were employed full time whereby 77.8% were males and 22.25 were females. Part time employed 38.3%, males were 51.6% and females were 48.4% employed part time. However, the 39.5% unemployed cohort is likely to experience a settlement process that is more challenging than it might otherwise be, since unemployment brings with it a higher degree of vulnerability to social isolation. The low participation in employment also suggests that some refugees will face additional difficulties when acquiring English and related communication skills required for entry into the Australian workforce. Lack of English language and skills reduces peoples' capacity to not only access information relevant to employment, but also to understand the complex job search systems when seeking employment. This study did not investigate whether these 40% unemployed people were studying, previously employed, or looking for employment. This is one of the limitations of this study and has been acknowledged to be addressed in future study.

## 6.5 Participation in sport

Understanding participants' level of participation in sport was also a critical part of the study. The survey questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their level of participation or involvement in sport. The data in Table 6.4 below quantifies respondents' engagement with sport at the time the surveys took place. The table is inclusive, providing statistics for gender, age, length of residency, and employment status. The results revealed

that for respondents who participated in sport at least three times a week, only 36.4% were employed full-time, while 18.2% of respondents were employed part-time, and 45.5% of respondents were unemployed. The 50% of respondents who were employed part-time were able to participate in sport less than three times a week. Males were the heaviest users of sport programs with 95.5% compared to females. Only 4.5% of female respondents participated three time or more a week and 65.4% of female respondents participated in less than three time a week, while 42.4 % of female respondents were not involved in sport.

**Table 6.4 Distribution of weekly participation in sport**

Table 6.4 also shows that 41% of respondents were not involved in sport at the time of the survey. Thirty-two percent of respondents had a casual engagement with sport, having participated once or twice a week, while 27% were heavily committed to sport, having said they played at least three times a week. Overall, 72% of respondents were either only casually involved in sport or not involved at all. This suggests that a significant majority of the South Sudanese refugees had limited contact with sport activities. For example, 4.5% of female respondents participated three time or more a week and 65.4% of female respondents participated in less than three time a week, while 42.4 % of female respondents were not involved in sport. While 95.5% males respondents participated three time or more a week and 34.6% of male respondents participated in less than three time a week, while 57.6% of male respondents were not involved in sport.

The low level of participation in sport could be the result of a number of factors, including a lack of finances to register with a sport club, or, alternatively, a fear of the unknown and a deep concern that they may not be fully accepted by the sport club's members. These issues are explored in detail in the next chapter. This apparent low level of sport engagement is problematic. In Australia, there is a tradition of local sport participation in community centres, which are run for all ages and across a broad range of activities. Participation in sport is viewed as highly desirable since it enables both young people and adults to not only engage in healthy programs, but also build their social networks, and thus create strong social bonds with their peer groups. It provides an opportunity for connection for players and their supporters or parents who choose to engage in sport by watching games. Many engage in local sport as a way of establishing a stronger community connection, and absorbing the mainstream culture.

## **6.6 Relationship between employment, sport participation, and settlement outcomes**

Table 6.5 below explains the relationships between positive settlement experiences and participation in employment and sport. The evidence suggests that having both English language and general communication skills play an important role in enhancing access to information, social connections, participation in sport, and obtaining employment, all of which can lead to settlement satisfaction. Respondents were also

invited to comment on the extent to which employment contributed to their wellbeing through its impact on their capital accumulation capability, where capital covered economic (a reliable income) and social capital (greater social connectedness).

The results indicated that unemployment was a problem; and conversely, that those who were employed were likely to have positive experiences. The same views were expressed when considering engagement in sport; that is, sport participation can enhance the settlement process. These are important issues, since they address research objective 3, which is about understanding how engagement in employment and sport assists those from refugee backgrounds to overcome some settlement challenges. Respondents indicated their levels of settlement satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the help of participation in employment and sport. The results show that 75.3% respondents had positive settlement experiences because of their active engagement in employment, and 63 % of respondents reported that their settlement experiences have been positive because of their active engagement in sport.

English language was also an important factor in the settlement journey because it assisted refugees to interact with mainstream community members and access some relevant information, which could assist them in addressing their settlement issues. Therefore, 77.8% of respondents indicated that having English language skills boosted their employability. Similarly, 79.8% of respondents agreed that having access to work-related networks boosted their employability. In other words, participation in learning, work-related skills and connection come with employment outcomes.

With regard to participation in sport, the survey results show that 79.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their social connection boosted their involvement in local community sport. A similar number of respondents (76.5%) also agreed or strongly agreed that having a regular income boosted their involvement in local community sport. Thus, the key message is that social capital and economic capital facilitate a better connection for South Sudanese in Melbourne to participate in sport.

Table 6.5 provides further details about these issues.

**Table 6.5 Distributions of responses regarding settlement experiences**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)	<i>n</i> (%)
Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment. (Employment facilitates better settlement outcomes.)	15 6.2%	15 6.2%	30 12.3%	<b>144 59.3%</b>	<b>39 16.0%</b>
Overall, my settlement experiences have been positive because of my active engagement in sport. (Social capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.)	6 2.5%	48 19.8%	36 14.8%	<b>111 45.7%</b>	<b>42 17.3%</b>
Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Participation in learning connects to employment outcomes.)	18 7.4%	21 8.6%	15 6.2%	<b>132 54.3%</b>	<b>57 23.5%</b>
Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Work skills connect to employment outcomes.)	18 7.4%	12 4.9%	39 16.0%	<b>129 53.1%</b>	<b>45 18.5%</b>
Having a social connection boosted my involvement in local community sport. (Social capital facilitates a better connection to sport.)	6 2.5%	30 12.3%	12 4.9%	<b>147 60.5%</b>	<b>48 19.3%</b>
Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport. (Economic capital facilitates a better connection to sport.)	12 4.9%	27 11.1%	18 7.4%	<b>147 60.5%</b>	<b>39 16.0%</b>

## **6.7 Benefits gained from employment**

The study looked at the extent to which the benefits gained from participation in employment assisted refugees to accumulate different forms of capital. Table 6.6 lists the factors that might make the settlement journey of refugees more comfortable and ease their integration into mainstream society. In this instance, five forms of capital were discussed. In addition to economic and social capital, there were references to psychological capital (confidence, emotional resilience, and overall wellbeing), physical capital (physical fitness and health), and cultural capital (being able to fit into the ‘Australian way of life’, and being able to speak and write in English).

Psychological capital was rated most highly with a combined percentage (agree and strongly agree) of 86.4%. The statement, “Employment gave me a stable income which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing”, measured this. This means that those who were employed may have had less to worry about when it came to the financial side of their lives. They may have been in the good position of attending some events, such as sport activities.

Social capital rated second, with a combined percentage of 83.9%. This was measured by the statement “Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace”. This ranking means that workplace provides some connections to those South Sudanese people who are employed compared to unemployed people within their community.

Physical capital rated third with a combined percentage (agree and strongly agree) of 76.6%. This was measured by the statement “Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit”. This means that there are people within the South Sudanese community who participate in sport with recognition of health and fitness in mind.

Economic capital rated fourth with a combined positive agreement percentage of 76.6%. This was measured by the statement “Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides”. This means that 76.6% of respondents believe that their settlement outcomes were influenced by their employment status.

Cultural capital rated fifth with a combined positive percentage of 71.6%. This was measured by the statement “Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values”. This means that their employment provided some learning opportunities for those South Sudanese who were employed about workplace expectations, policies, and values.

The data in Table 6.6 addresses research objective 2, which examines the benefits of participation in employment.

**Table 6.6 Distributions of responses regarding benefits of employment**

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides. (Economic capital)	15 6.2%	12 4.9%	30 12.3%	75 <b>30.9%</b>	111 <b>45.7%</b>
Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace. (Social capital)	12 4.9%	9 3.7%	18 7.4%	105 <b>43.2%</b>	99 <b>40.7%</b>
Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)	6 2.5%	42 17.3%	21 8.6%	90 <b>37.0%</b>	84 <b>34.6%</b>
Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)	9 3.7%	3 1.2%	21 8.6%	99 <b>40.7%</b>	111 <b>45.7%</b>
Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit. (Physical capital)	6 2.5%	12 4.9%	39 16.0%	102 <b>42.0%</b>	84 <b>34.6%</b>

## **6.8 Benefits gained from participation in sport**

The benefits of participation in sport are detailed in Table 6.7. This data addressed research objective 2, which aims to understand the benefits of participation in sport in addition to employment. The accumulation of physical capital was rated most highly, with 82.7% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health”. On a scale of 1–5 (which applied to all questions). This means that 82.7% of respondents believed that participation in sport assisted with physical fitness and health within the South Sudanese community in Melbourne.

Social capital was rated second, with 82.7% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration into the wider community”. This means that social capital was an important part of sport for the South Sudanese community. Some people did attend sport for socialisation and leisure, which is an important part of social capital.

Psychological capital was rated third, with 76.6% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing”. This means that sport was considered good for psychological wellbeing and may be a great reason for some people to participate in sporting activities.

Cultural capital was rated fourth, with a combined 67.9% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement “Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values”. This means that 67.9% of respondents of the South Sudanese community believe that their participation in sport provided them with some other opportunities of learning from the mainstream culture.

Finally, economic capital was rated fifth (the lowest rate), with a combined 44.4% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing, measured with the statement “Sport helped me to obtain paid work”. This means that only 44.4% the respondents obtained employment through sports. The remainder of respondents did not agree with the statement.

**Table 6.7 Distributions of responses regarding benefits of participation in sport**

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor agree- disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration into the wider community. (Social capital)	12 4.9%	3 1.2%	27 11.1%	<b>120</b> <b>49.4%</b>	<b>81</b> <b>33.3%</b>
Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)	21 8.6%	33 13.6%	24 9.9%	<b>108</b> <b>44.4%</b>	<b>57</b> <b>23.5%</b>
Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)	15 6.2%	9 3.7%	18 7.4%	<b>81</b> <b>33.3%</b>	<b>120</b> <b>49.4%</b>
Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)	6 2.5%	18 7.4%	33 13.6%	<b>111</b> <b>45.7%</b>	<b>75</b> <b>30.9%</b>
Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital)	42 17.3%	63 25.9%	30 12.3%	<b>63</b> <b>25.9%</b>	<b>45</b> <b>18.5%</b>

## 6.9 Inferential analysis of significant differences

This section examines the extent to which demographic differences existed in respondent answers to questions on employment, sport participation, and the accumulation of personal capital. This task was undertaken by subjecting the data to the Mann-Whitney U test. The Mann-Whitney U test – which is also known as the Wilcoxon rank-sum test – is a nonparametric test of the null hypothesis that addresses the probability that a randomly selected value from one sample will be less than or greater than a randomly selected value from a second sample. The Mann-Whitney test can be used to explain which particular ‘group means’ are significantly different from each other at  $p<0.10$ ,  $p<0.05$ , and  $p<0.01$ . The Mann-Whitney test also enables P-values to be calculated. A P-value is defined as the probability of obtaining a result equal to or ‘more extreme’ than what was actually observed, assuming that the hypothesis under consideration is true. Non-significance occurs when P-values is over 0.05, meaning there were no significant differences in opinions among different participant groups.

## 6.10 Gender differences for employment domain responses

This analysis also shows significant gender differences for the benefits secured by participation in employment. The analysis reveals that there was only one exceptional item of non-significance among the five statements of employment in gender. The statement with non-significance was “Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing”, with mean score of 4.24 for males and mean score of 4.22 for females. The rest of the statements revealed significant differences between males and females, as can be seen in Table 6.8 below.

**Table 6.8 Gender differences for employment domain responses**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences in gender</b>		<b>Mann-Whitney test</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and p-value</b>
Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us (Economic capital).	3.10	4.19	***	.000
Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace (Social capital).	4.08	4.16	***	.000
Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values (Cultural capital).	4.16	3.34	***	.000
Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing (Psychological capital).	4.24	4.22	not significant	.597
Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit (Physical capital).	4.22	3.69	***	.000

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### 6.11 Gender differences for participation in sport domain responses

This analysis shows that there were no significant differences in responses between males and females regarding the benefits secured by sport participation. Table 6.9 presents the result of this analysis.

**Table 6.9 Significant differences in gender for participation in sport domain**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences in gender</b>			<b>Mann-Whitney test</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and <i>p</i>-value</b>	
<b>Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration to the wider community. (Social capital)</b>	4.14	3.91	**	.004	
<b>Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	4.00	3.00	*	.030	
<b>Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)</b>	4.20	4.09	.000	***	
<b>Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.16	3.63	***	.000	
<b>Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital)</b>	3.39	2.47	***	.027	

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## 6.12 Gender differences for settlement experiences domain responses

This analysis revealed that there were significant differences in responses between females and males regarding the way in which employment and sport affected their settlement experience. There was only one non-significant result in the analysis results, with mean score of 3.86 for males and mean scored of 3.53 for females. Table 6.10 reveals the significant differences between males and females, based on their settlement experiences.

**Table 6.10 Significant differences in gender for settlement experiences domain**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences in gender</b>			<b>Mann-Whitney test</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and p-value</b>	
<b>Overall, I have had a positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment. (Economic capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.86	3.53	Not significant	.168	
<b>Overall, my settlement experience has been positive because of my active engagement in sport (Social capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.80	3.19	***	.001	
<b>Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Education facilitates connection to Economic capital)</b>	3.67	3.94	***	.001	
<b>Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Social capital and work skills facilitate employment.)</b>	3.82	3.53	**	.028	
<b>Having social connections boosted my involvement to local community sport. (Social capital facilitates connection to sport.)</b>	3.90	3.72	***	.000	
<b>Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport. (Economic capital facilitates connection to sport.)</b>	3.73	3.69	**	.027	

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level

### 6.13 Significant differences in age groups for participation in employment domain

This analysis shows that there was one significant difference in opinions in age groups, on “Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace”, with mean score of 3.80 for those aged 18-24, mean score of 4.18 for those aged 25-39, and mean score of 4.43 for those aged 40-plus. The rest of the test results reveal non-significance in testing for participation in employment benefits. Table 6.11 provides the observation of significant and non-significant differences.

**Table 6.11 Significant differences in age groups for statements regarding employment**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in age			Kruskal-Wallis test	
	18–24 years	25–39 years	40–64 years	Sig.	Result and <i>p</i> -value
<b>Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us. (Economic capital)</b>	3.87	3.93	4.43	Not significant	.119
<b>Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace. (Social capital)</b>	3.80	4.18	4.43	***	.000
<b>Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	3.83	3.82	3.87	Not significant	.251
<b>Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	3.97	4.18	4.65	Not significant	.809
<b>Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit. (Physical capital)</b>	3.80	3.82	4.52	Not significant	.385

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### 6.14 Significant differences in age groups for participation in sport domain

The analysis results show that there were three significant differences in the age groups for the participation in sport benefits. These were: "Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration to the wider community" with mean score of 3.77 for those aged 18-24, mean score of 4.07 for those aged 25–39, and mean score of 4.39 for age 40-plus. "Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values" with mean score of 3.90 for ages 18-24, mean score of 3.54 for ages 25–39, and mean score of 3.30 for age 40-plus. "Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing" with mean score of 4.00 for ages 18-24, mean score of 3.61 for ages 25–39, and mean score of 4.30 for age 40-plus. The rest of the statements show non-significant differences in opinions regarding participation in sport. Table 6.12 below shows the analysis results.

**Table 6.12 Significant differences in age groups for participation sport domain**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in age			Kruskal-Wallis test	
	18–24 years	25–39 years	40–64 years	Sig.	Result and p-value
<b>Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration to the wider community. (Social capital)</b>	3.77	4.07	4.39	***	.000
<b>Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	3.90	3.54	3.30	**	.021
<b>Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)</b>	3.87	4.07	4.65	Not significant	.389
<b>Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.00	3.61	4.30	**	.033
<b>Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital)</b>	3.27	2.71	3.09	Not significant	.249

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## 6.15 Age group differences for the settlement experiences domain

The results of this analysis show that there were some significant differences in the responses related to settlement experiences for different age groups. They were, (1) “Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability” with mean score of 3.77 for ages 18–24, mean score of 3.50 for ages 25–39, and mean score of 3.87 for age 40-plus. (2) “Having social connections boosted my involvement in local community sport” with mean score of 3.87 for ages 18–24, mean score of 3.46 for ages 25–39, and mean score of 4.21 for age 40-plus. And (3) “Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport” with mean score of 3.73 for ages 18–24, mean score of 3.57 for ages 25–39, and mean score of 3.87 for age 40-plus. The rest of the statements show non-significant differences in the analysis results. See Table 6.13 below.

**Table 6.13 Significant differences in age groups for settlement experiences domain**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in age			Kruskal–Wallis test	
	18–24 years	25–39 years	40–64 years	Sig.	Result and <i>p</i> -value
<b>Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment. (Economic capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.63	3.79	3.78	Not significant	.194
<b>Overall, my settlement experience has been positive because of my active engagement in sport. (Social capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.63	3.25	3.83	Not significant	.503
<b>Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Cultural capital facilitates employment opportunities.)</b>	3.60	3.68	4.13	Not significant	.201
<b>Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Social capital facilitates connection to employment opportunities.)</b>	3.77	3.50	3.87	**	.034
<b>Having social connections boosted my involvement in local community sport. (Social capital facilitates connection to sport.)</b>	3.87	3.46	4.21	**	.026
<b>Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport. (Economic capital facilitates connection to sport.)</b>	3.73	3.57	3.87	**	.020

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### **6.16 Results of significant differences in years of residency for employment domain.**

The results of analysis for the length of residence in Australia show that there were three significant differences in opinions regarding the years of residency in Australia for the employment domain. These were, (1) “Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us” with mean score of 4.11 for years of residency between 2–5 years, mean score of 4.12 for years of residency between 6–10 years, and mean score of 3.93 for years of residency 11-plus years. (2) “Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace” with mean score of 3.95 for years of residency between 2–5 years, mean score of 4.35 for years of residency between 6–10 years, and mean score of 3.93 for years of residency 11-plus years. And (3) “Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing” with mean score of 4.21 for years of residency between 2–5 years, mean score of 4.29 for years of residency between 6–10 years, and mean score of 4.18 for years of residency 11-plus years. The rest of the statements in this analysis shows non-significant differences in opinions regarding years of residency in Australia for participants. See Table 6.14 below.

**Table 6.14 Significant differences in the years of residency for employment domain.**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in years of residency			Kruskal-Wallis test	
	2–5 years	6–10 years	11 + years	Sig.	Result and p-value
<b>Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us. (Economic capital)</b>	4.11	4.12	3.93	***	.007
<b>Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace. (Social capital)</b>	3.95	4.35	3.93	***	.003
<b>Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	3.89	3.74	3.93	Not significant	.149
<b>Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.21	4.29	4.18	**	.047
<b>Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit. (Physical capital)</b>	4.11	4.12	3.82	Not significant	.120

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### 6.17 Results of significant difference in years of residency for participation in sport Benefit

The results of this analysis show that there were significant differences in responses regarding years of residency for participation in sport for all statements. There was non-significant difference shown in the results of this analysis. Please see the Table 6.15 below for all significant differences.

**Table 6.15 Significant differences in years of residency for participation in sport.**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in years of residence group for sport statements			Kruskal–Wallis test	
	2–5 years	6–10 years	11 + years	Sig.	Result and p-value
<b>Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration to the wider community. (Social capital)</b>	3.74	4.32	3.93	***	.000
<b>Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	3.95	3.35	3.68	***	.000
<b>Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)</b>	4.32	4.09	4.14	*	.071
<b>Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.16	3.91	3.86	***	.000
<b>Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital).</b>	3.26	2.88	3.04	***	.000

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### **6.18 Results of significant differences in years of residency for settlement experiences**

This analysis shows that there were significant differences in years of residency for all the statements regarding years of residency for settlement experiences. There was non-significant difference in responses in lengths of time spent in Australia. This is perhaps not surprising because of the time lapses between the participants' arrival in Australia and the circulation of the questionnaire. Table 6.16 shows all significant differences in the results.

**Table 6.16 Significant differences in years of residency for settlement experiences.**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences in years of residence group for settlement experiences</b>			<b>Kruskal-Wallis test</b>	
	<b>2–5 years</b>	<b>6–10 years</b>	<b>11 + years</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and p-value</b>
<b>Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment. (Economic capital facilitates settlement to better outcomes.)</b>	3.84	3.65	3.75	***	.000
<b>Overall, my settlement experience has been positive because of my active engagement in sport. (Participation in sport facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.68	3.53	3.50	***	.005
<b>Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Participation in learning connects to employment outcomes.)</b>	3.89	3.59	3.93	***	.000
<b>Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Work skills connect to employment outcomes.)</b>	4.05	3.53	3.68	**	.028
<b>Having social connections boosted my involvement with local sport. (Social capital facilitates a better connection to sporting involvement).</b>	4.05	3.62	3.93	***	.001
<b>Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local sport (Economic capital facilitates a better connection to sport).</b>	3.95	3.53	3.79	***	.003

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

### **6.19 Results of significant differences in employment status.**

The results of this analysis show that there were two significant differences in responses to employment status. They were, (1) "Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values" with mean score of 4.00 for full-time employed, mean score of 4.16 for part-time employed, and mean score of 3.84 for unemployed. And (2) "Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit" with mean score of 4.28 for full-time employed, mean score of 3.94 for part-time employed, and mean score of 3.94 for unemployed. The remaining responses were non-significant in employment status of respondents. Table 6.17 present results of the analysis.

**Table 6.17 Significant differences in employment status**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences for responses to statements on employment according to employment status</b>			<b>The Kruskal–Wallis test</b>	
	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and p-value</b>
<b>Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us. (Economic capital)</b>	4.33	4.23	3.72	Not significant	.768
<b>Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace. (Social capital)</b>	4.44	4.16	3.88	Not significant	.587
<b>Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	4.00	3.74	3.84	***	.000
<b>Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.50	4.16	4.16	Not significant	.155
<b>Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit (Physical capital)</b>	4.28	3.94	3.94	**	.037

Denote: \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## 6.20 Participation in sport according to employment status.

The analysis results revealed significant differences in participant responses to all statements regarding their participation in sport for employment status. There were no results indicating non-significant differences according to the respondents' respective employment status. Table 6.18 shows all these significant differences in the statements as below.

**Table 6.18 Participation in sport according to employment status**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean and significant differences in sports participation based on employment status</b>				<b>Kruskal-Wallis test</b>	
	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>Part-Time</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Result and p-value</b>	
<b>Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration to the wider community. (Social capital)</b>	4.44	3.84	4.03	***	.002	
<b>Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	4.11	3.10	3.81	**	.014	
<b>Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)</b>	4.56	4.06	4.03	***	.000	
<b>Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.44	3.65	3.97	***	.000	
<b>Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital)</b>	3.44	2.52	3.28	*	.063	

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## **6.21 Settlement experiences according to employment status**

The results of this analysis showed that there were two non-significant differences in results according to respondents' respective responses on employment status. They were, (1) "Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability" with mean score of 4.06 for full-time employed, mean score of 3.63 for unemployed, and mean score of 3.58 for part-time employed. And (2) "Having a regular income boosted my involvement in community sport" with mean score of 3.89 for full-time employed, mean score of 3.94 for unemployed and mean score of 3.39 for part-time employed. The responses to the remainder of statements revealed significant differences. Table 6.19 presents the results of this analysis.

**Table 6.19 Significant differences in settlement experiences according to employment status**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in settlement experience statements regarding employment status			Kruskal-Wallis test	
	Full-Time	Part-Time	Unemployed	Sig.	Result and p-value
<b>Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment. (Employment facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	4.22	3.58	3.59	*	.052
<b>Overall, my settlement experience has been positive because of my active engagement in sport. (Participation in sport facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.94	3.51	3.38	*	.530
<b>Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Education facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	4.22	3.74	3.56	*	.057
<b>Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Social capital and work skills facilitate employment outcomes).</b>	4.06	3.58	3.63	Not significant	.416
<b>Having social connections boosted my involvement in community sport. (Social capital, such as sporting involvement, facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	4.00	3.55	4.00	**	.033
<b>Having a regular income boosted my involvement in community sport. (Economic capital facilitates positive settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.89	3.39	3.94	Not significant	.423

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## 6.22 Results of significant differences for participation in sport status

The analysis of participation in sport status shows two significant differences in the analysis results. They were, (1) “Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values” with mean score of 4.14 for participation three times a week, mean score of 3.46 for participation less than three times a week, and mean score of 3.94 for non-participation in sport. And (2) “Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit” with mean score of 3.82 for participation three times a week, mean score of 4.27 for participation less than three times a week, and mean score of 3.94 for non-participation in sport. The remaining responses reveal non-significant differences according to the level of participation in sport. Table 6.20 below presents the analysis results.

**Table 6.20 Significant differences for participation in sport for employment status.**

Statement	Mean and significant differences for participation in sport regarding statements concerning employment			Kruskal–Wallis test	
	At least 3 times a week	Less than 3 times a week	Not involved in sport	Sig.	Result and p-value
<b>Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides us (Economic capital)</b>	3.95	4.08	4.09	Not significant	.439
<b>Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace. (Social capital)</b>	4.00	4.15	4.15	Not significant	.506
<b>Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	4.14	3.46	3.94	***	.000
<b>Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.09	4.46	4.15	Not significant	.755
<b>Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit. (Physical capital)</b>	3.82	4.27	3.94	***	.000

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## 6.23 Results of significant differences in level of participation in sport for participation in sport status

The analysis shows that there was only one non-significant result in level of participation in sport. This was, "Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health" with mean score of 4.00 for participation three times a week, mean score of 4.50 for participation less than three times a week, and mean score of 4.00 for non-participation in sport. The rest of the results revealed significant differences, presented in Table 6.21 below.

**Table 6.21 Significant differences in level of participation in sport status.**

Statement	Mean and significant differences for participation in sport statements on respondent participates.			Kruskal–Wallis test	
	At least 3 times a week	Less than 3 times a week	Not involved in sport	Sig.	Result and <i>p</i> -value
<b>Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improved my integration to the wider community. (Social capital).</b>	4.05	4.31	3.85	***	.007
<b>Sport helped me to learn more about Australian culture and values. (Cultural capital)</b>	4.00	3.38	3.52	***	.000
<b>Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health. (Physical capital)</b>	4.00	4.50	4.00	Not significant	.481
<b>Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing. (Psychological capital)</b>	4.32	4.039	3.64	***	.000
<b>Sport helped me to obtain paid work. (Economic capital)</b>	3.36	2.92	2.88	***	.000

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## **6.24 Results of significant differences for settlement experiences domain according to the level of participation in sport status**

The results of this analysis revealed two non-significant differences in responses. These were, (1) “Having social connections boosted my involvement with community sport” with mean score of 4.09 for participation three times a week, mean score of 3.77 for participation less than three times a week, and mean score of 3.70 for non-participation in sport. And (2) “Having a regular income boosted my involvement in community sport.” with mean score of 3.78 for participation three times a week, mean score of 3.85 for participation less than three times a week, and mean score of 3.58 for non-participation in sport. The remaining responses showed significant differences according to the level of participation in sport status. Table 6.22 shows these significant differences and two non-significant results.

**Table 6.22 Significant differences for settlement experiences domain according to the level of participation in sport status**

Statement	Mean and significant differences in participation in sport statements			Kruskal–Wallis test.	
	At least 3 times a week	Less than 3 times a week	Not involved in sport	Sig.	Result and <i>p</i> -value
<b>Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment (Participation in employment facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.86	3.81	3.58	**	.028
<b>Overall, my settlement experience has been positive because of my active engagement in sport. (Participation in sport facilitates better settlement outcomes.)</b>	3.82	3.50	3.42	***	.000
<b>Having English language skills boosted my employability. (Education facilitates employment outcomes and perhaps positive settlement experiences.)</b>	3.59	4.00	3.73	*	.046
<b>Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability. (Work skills facilitate employment outcomes and perhaps positive settlement experiences.)</b>	3.77	3.81	3.58	*	.077
<b>Having social connections boosted my involvement with community sport. (Social capital facilitates a connection to participation in sport.)</b>	4.09	3.77	3.70	Not signif icant	.213
<b>Having a regular income boosted my involvement in community sport. (Economic capital facilitates participation in sport and perhaps positive settlement experiences.)</b>	3.78	3.85	3.58	Not signif icant	.992

Denote \*Significant at 10% level. \*\*Significant at 5% level. \*\*\* Significant at 1% level.

## **6.25 Conclusion**

This survey data highlights the importance of participation by individuals and families from refugee backgrounds in employment and sport as part of their settlement in Australia. This chapter also indicates that while 75% of respondents agreed that employment had assisted their settlement, around 40% of respondents were not employed at the time of the survey, which is an important finding of this study. A similar set of results were found in the responses concerning the relationship between sport participation and settlement: whereas 63% of respondents agreed that sport participation had assisted their settlement, around 41% were not involved in sport at the time of the survey. The survey data therefore not only shows the benefits of participation in both employment and sport, but also points to some barriers facing the South Sudanese community in their attempt to participate in meaningful activities in the wider community. A considerable number, 38.3 %, revealed that they were employed only part-time. Of those, 48.4% of part-time employees were females and 51.6% were males. Further, 43.8% of unemployed people were young people aged between 18 to 24 years.

An almost similar situation is revealed in participation in sport. Some 41% of respondents were not involved in sport at the time of the survey. Another 32% of respondents had a casual engagement with sport, participating once or twice a week, while 27% were involved in sport at least three times a week. The level of gender participation in sport were clearly revealed with greater differences. For example, 4.5% of female respondents participated three time or more a week and 65.4% of female respondents participated in less than three time a week, while 42.4 % of female respondents were not involved in sport.

However, 95.5% of male respondents participated three time or more a week and 34.6% of male respondents participated in less than three time a week, while 57.6% of male respondents were not involved in sport". Both participation in employment and sport revealed significant differences between females and males. This shows that participation in both sport and employment was very important for the South Sudanese community. The proportional lack of employment causes financial constraints and lack of participation in sport. Lack of economic support, and difficulties in connecting with

employers and club officials, which was in part the result of limited English language skills.

The analysis shows that there were no significant differences in opinion between males and females regarding participation in sport. While the participation in employment analysis reveals that there was only one exceptional item of non-significance regarding gender difference in employment participation. This was “Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health” (Physical capital).

However, analysis revealed that there were significant differences in opinions between females and males regarding their settlement experiences. This was, “Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment” (Economic capital facilitates better settlement outcomes). There was only one non-significant result. The age analysis shows that there was one significant difference in opinions in age groups. The rest of the test results reveal non-significance regarding age and participation in employment.

However, there were three significant differences regarding settlement experiences between age groups. These were, (1) “Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability” (Social capital facilitates connection to employment opportunities.) (2) “Having social connections boosted my involvement in local community sport” (Social capital facilitates connection to sport.) and (3) “Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport” (Economic capital facilitates connection to sport. In addition, participation in sport shows two significant differences in the analysis results regarding settlement experiences. The remaining responses reveal non-significant differences according to the level of participation in sport.

These results, thus, confirm the significance of employment and sport participation as vehicles for building personal capital, and using this additional capital to enhance the settlement process. The survey results were used to re-shape the interview schedule, with the aim of not only addressing the core issues identified in the survey, but also securing deeper insights into the settlement experience of South Sudanese refugees. The findings that arose from the interviews are presented in detail in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 7 : Qualitative Findings**

### **7.1.Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the survey findings on respondents' views about settlement challenges, and the extent to which participation in employment and sport was able to ease these challenges. This chapter presents the interview findings of 20 participants who were invited to talk about their settlement experiences in Melbourne. Participants were asked to reflect on their understanding of participation in employment and sport as avenues for enhancing the settlement experience and, in particular, how this addition to their personal stocks of capital might make the settlement process less stressful and more productive.

Discussions with participants during interviews were classified into main research themes: settlement experience, and participation in employment and sport. Based on this thematic analysis, the data from the findings were enriched by the participants' narratives and case examples (participant profiles can be found in Appendix F). During the interviews, participants discussed common themes that they considered important to their families, themselves and to their South Sudanese community. They were also able to share some of their personal experiences of settlement in Australia. Therefore, the reader is presented with selected texts from the interviews primary voices of participants based on their as reflection of personal experiences and community experiences. The discussion of the identified themes of primary findings is presented in the next discussion chapter.

Table 7.1 identifies the characteristics of participants in relation to gender, age, length of residency in Australia, employment status, and participation in sport status.

**Table 7.1 Characteristics of South Sudanese participants for the in-depth interview**

<b>Participation in employment</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Employed</b>	5	5	10
<b>Unemployed</b>	5	5	10
<b>Participation in sport</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Involved in sport (3 times/week)</b>	7	2	9
<b>Casually involved (1-2 times/week)</b>	1	1	2
<b>Not involved in sport</b>	3	6	9
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-24-year-old</b>	<b>25-39-year-old</b>	<b>40-64-year-old</b>
	8	11	1
<b>Length of residency (years)</b>	<b>2-5 years of residency</b>	<b>6-10 years of residency</b>	<b>11 + years of residency</b>
	0	10	10

*NB: Please refer to Appendix F for the profile description of participants*

Five females were employed, and five females were unemployed. Similarly, five males were employed and five unemployed. In the participation in sport category, there were six females who were not involved in sport, and two females deeply involved in sport. Seven males reported that they were deeply involved in sport. Three males were not involved. There was no participant who had been in Australia between two and five years. There was only one male interviewed in age category between 40 and 64 years.

This chapter is organised into three parts. Part 1 discusses settlement experiences, part 2 discusses participation in employment, and part 3 discusses participation in sport.

## **7.2.Part 1: Settlement experiences**

The overarching area of research for this study is the settlement experience of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia. The understanding of the settlement experience of this community comes with mixed experiences. These mixed experiences are negative and positive, for individuals and families – depending on social connections with the host society and learning experiences. Some people managed to settle better within a shorter time, and some continued to struggle to overcome settlement issues.

Successful settlement and integration comes when there are enough support services to obtain advice, guidance, and active participation in education and employment, as well as in sport, particularly for young people. During this study, participants were asked to describe the settlement process from their own personal experiences and understanding. One participant highlighted the broad range of description:

*Settlement is a hard thing to measure, how to define successful settlement? Settlement and integration have been misunderstood: integration and settlement are long-term work, which cannot be achieved within a short time. People can still work, doing jobs they do not really like or enjoy. This can make them feel homesick sometimes when they feel unwelcome due to some issues. Some people struggle with settlement issues such as housing, unemployment and other [things] such as racism and discrimination. To me, there are people who are really doing well in terms of settlement and there are people that are struggling with challenges. But the thing is: how do you define successful settlement and unsettlement? (Participant 18, 30-year-old females, 15 years in Australia)*

The above explanation illustrates some of the challenges facing people from South Sudanese community in Melbourne when it comes to settlement and integration. Lack of understanding of settlement difficulties and challenges by the general population or some policy makers in relation to integration are clearly demonstrated in the above explanation.

Participants also demonstrated the difficulties faced when they were new in Australia. They described their experiences as initially routine, and as involving little more than simply eating and sleeping. However, things got better over time.

*When we came to Australia for a better life and other opportunities, our settlement experiences were very boring at first because we knew nothing about Australia. We just eat and sleep, eat and sleep. Life was a bit hard when we were new but at the end of the day because we were able to be outside in the park, play, and watch people playing sport we became active in different things, which helped us to understand our settlement better. We later managed to do [new] things, which*

*made our lives better compared to the time we just eat and sleep, eat and sleep.*  
**(Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)**

There were also differences in the settlement experience between young people and their parents in the South Sudanese community. Some parents or adults were and still struggling because they miss their networks and their old ways of life.

*Some are settling well and some are still having difficulties in settling, especially the adults or parents who are still struggling lots with settlement challenges. Their ways of living in Africa are very different to the lifestyle here. They have no network and neighbourhood support as they used to chat freely in the village. Here, they have to think about bills and issues of children at school or work[ing] to pay bills.*  
**(Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia).**

Relying on other people to tell you how to deal with little issues can be a big shock and change for some people who, perhaps, are used to being independent. Some parents in the South Sudanese community relied on their children to tell them what to do in Australia because of problems learning English as they did not know what to do, even in reading basic information.

*So, for me, there is no doubt that many people in the South Sudanese community struggle with settlement issues. Not knowing what to do is big, if even reading basic information or letters can be big for people who cannot read and write. They also rely on other people to get information. Some parents rely on their teenagers or children to read a letter to them. This can change the whole responsibility [role] in families when teenagers seem to be the ones taking responsibility for telling parents what to do.*  
**(Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)**

Finding housing for family is one of the settlement problem for newly arrived people from refugee backgrounds. Some families and individuals from the South Sudanese community encountered accommodation problems as part of their settlement experiences.

*When I came to Australia, things were really new for me and my family. We thought and said to ourselves, “This will be interesting”. Indeed, things became harder and harder, particularly when we were looking for accommodation, it was so difficult because none of us were working. No-one was helping us to find a house, and we had no experience in dealing with estate agents. Later on, someone helped us to get a house, but we found it difficult because we had no money to pay rent. We tried to apply for government housing, but this was also hard to get because there were many people on the waiting list. The waiting list can go for more than five years, depending on your case/situation of your family.* (**Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia**)

Financial problem can contribute to other settlement problems such as paying cost of renting for families and individuals who are not working. The experience of financial difficulties for families and individuals was commonly talked about among participants. Among some of the South Sudanese community members this experience was one of the most challenging. According to Participant 7:

*The cost of renting a house was very high and everything was tough. We later lost the house because of financial problems. We joined one [of] our family members in Melbourne and shared the accommodation which was later better, but again the house was not [big] enough for us all. Sometimes living as a family is better than living alone in terms of housing: accommodation can be so challenging and difficult to manage financially when you are not working. Getting housing is one of the many challenges that refugees face, especially when they have no work. They cannot afford to pay rent through Centrelink payments.* (**Participant 7, 38-year-old male, 10 years in Australia**)

Further, the cost of child care was also affecting parenting of young children as parents would want to put their children in childcare to allow them attend English classes or other activities that may assist them with settlement issues. In the words of some community members:

*Financial hardship was one of the many issues that we have been struggling with, I was not able to put my children in childcare because of the cost. (Participant 16, 28-year-old, 10 years in Australia)*

Social isolation is one of the settlement difficulties for people with refugee backgrounds who have no connection with the mainstream community. Psychological stress and despair are caused by lack of participation and connection during the settlement period. The experience of social isolation is a problem that could lead to self-isolation, stress, frustration, and negative thoughts in a new country of resettlement. In the words of Participant 8:

*Social isolation is a big thing for people who stay at home without socialising outside their homes. Sometimes they become aggressive to themselves and their family members and cannot learn or see the world in a big picture [sic]. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

A lack of internal and external supports was noted as part of the problems faced during the settlement period by participants. Many of the South Sudanese families and individuals left some of their close relatives overseas. Those who had their family members with them found it a bit easier to settle because they were able to help each other more than those without close relatives or family members.

*Settlement can be easy if you have a family, but if [you] don't have a family; settlement can be a difficult and challenging experience because you don't have enough support and interaction with people. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Supports from community members to newly arrived individuals and families help to reduce some of the settlement difficulties for those who have no relatives to assist them.

*People from your network in the community can help you settle better if they came here before you. They can drive you in their cars and show [you] places and what*

*you need to do to get organised and move on. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

*Good things, I was welcome in Australia and had a great support from the community. Everything was provided to me freely, which was great. (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Good planning with clear goals and vision is helpful when you are in new place. Some members in the South Sudanese community who had clear vision and willing to seek some advice from the first members who have settled or have some experiences of how to deal with some settlement issues were able to settle well. Participant 15 hinted at strategies for successful settlement:

*When it comes to settlement experiences and contentment, there are people who have settled well and there are people who have not settled well. Those who have settled well are those who seek advice, educate themselves, look for employment or engage in good activities, which they benefit from. They have a high level of dreams or goals. They want to contribute to the Australian community through doing good things and to be seen by those who are not actively engaged for some reason. People who have support services or seek support from others had positive experiences in relation to their settlement outcomes. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia).*

Living in a new country often requires a person to make cautious decisions every day. Such decisions mean that one needs to ignore some activities that may be problematic both in the short term and long term. It also means that people need to seek advice from host community members who are willing to advise, as well as those with refugee backgrounds who have enough experience and understanding of issues.

*The settlement required people to be little bit wise by focusing on things that can help them to grow and ignore negative things like people who try to put them down. It is always important to focus on people who help you grow as a person and not people who put you down for their own interests. I met people who helped me to grow as a person and also people who put me down. Those who put me*

*down were the people who don't want me to grow and I quickly understood their intent. (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Settling well in a new country required some sacrifices, commitments, hard work and making the right choices for future directions. These include active involvement in sport and other activities, such as education and work, to access connections and other resources. However, participants noticed the differences between young people and adults in their ability to adapt within the South Sudanese community. Young people adapted more quickly to the Australian way of life, whereas adults tended to struggle more with settlement challenges. Participant 17 gave a perceptive analysis of how settlement went on as a generational issue:

*There are generations of young people in the South Sudanese community who are settling or have settled well because they have adapted to the Australian way of living quickly and [are] moving beyond their settlement issues. Those who used the freedom and the opportunity of education to educate themselves and work for themselves are settling well. They have open minds and use their opportunities very well. For example, there are lots of opportunities and freedom for women here. Some had never had the freedom and opportunities before. To settle better, you have to be open-minded, ready to learn and to face new challenges. In the end, you will find yourself knowing much about Australian culture, systems and ways of living. You can organise your life easily and end up being satisfied with your settlement. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants acknowledged that there were improvements in community in terms of settlement difficulties compared to the time many of the community members were new in Australia or in Melbourne. Indicators of this improvement were captured in Participant 16's explanation below:

*I have seen a big improvement in terms of the community settling in Australia. When we arrived, we were really struggling with settlement issues. We were not able to drive cars for shopping, but now many South Sudanese people are able to drive. It*

*was really hard to see someone going shopping with three children and a push pram. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

### **7.2.1. Learning English**

Settling in a new country and learning the language is not an easy task, regardless of cultural background and language. Some migrants and refugees from non-English speaking countries often face pressure to learn English as quickly as possible, to benefit from daily communication and reading simple information. Many were not able to communicate in English because they had no prior opportunity to learn English. For example, the English-language barrier was a bigger problem for some South Sudanese in Australia, as many of them had not had opportunity to learn English before their arrival for resettlement in Australia.

*The settlement was very difficult when I came because of the English barrier; it was hard to understand the Australian way of living, culture and English as well as understanding life and different ways of doing things. However, I find it easy now because I am able to communicate or express myself in English. The bad things for me were [that] I missed my family and relatives because they were not here with me. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

In addition

*Learning English was challenging for me because I was not able to express words correctly in English. I always feel scared and not ready to talk because people will correct my English. I was not able to use correct words or was unsure about some words. I felt scared to talk to people and felt like I was not part of this society. (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Difficulties in language barrier is part of the South Sudanese experiences in Australia and cannot be underestimated. Participants stated that the language barrier made their settlement with their family members difficult when they arrived in Australia, but they have overcome this by learning English.

*Some people are having a hard time settling in because of the language barrier. It is a big thing; I remembered from my family members when we came it was difficult for some of us, but we are overcome (**Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia**).*

Some participants noted that many South Sudanese people are multilingual and English became a third or fourth language for them, which makes it harder for them to express themselves well in English without thinking in their other languages.

*One of the challenges for settlement is learning English, [because] English is a second or third language for the South Sudanese people. Sometimes it can be so difficult to express yourself well in English and this can be frustrating, especially when there is no one to assist you. English is so hard for us, especially when you choose hard subjects: it can be so difficult for you because no support is available for you as a learner. Lots of people become frustrated with the new challenges; some choose to isolate themselves from the community or groups. This is where depression kicks in and the settlement became so difficult and challenging in many ways. (**Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia**)*

Participants were quick to challenge the general expectations of wanting them to learn English and adopt Australian ways of life as part of integration and adjustment.

*It is ridiculous with a high expectation of wanting people to learn perfect English in six years, and move on quickly to get a job and manage settlement issues or cope with difficult situations in a new culture. (**Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia**)*

### **7.2.2. General racism and discrimination**

This section presents general racism and discrimination experienced by the South Sudanese community members during their settlement journey. Some of the specific issues of racism and discrimination in relation to participation in employment and sport are discussed under each section later. It appears that racism and discrimination have been widely experienced in institutional settings as well as random occurrences in community neighbourhoods.

*My sister who started her primary school at Year 5 here was told she would not do her VCE because she came from a non-English background. This was really bad for her and for her family because we believe that the school let her down. There was not enough support given to her at school. They know she came from a non-English speaking background. The school should have supported her to learn English and not say she cannot do this and that because of her poor English.*  
**(Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)**

Participants reported some issues of racism and discrimination based on their experiences or experiences of their family members.

*Racism exists in schools and workplaces. Some people let their personal opinions overarch their professional responsibilities and a duty of care by becoming racist. It is not good for people to be racist to other cultures and let their professionalism down. It is not good to be emotionally negative to other people or cultures because you are adding to their emotional sorrow and you are discouraging them from growing as good citizens. I think people need to do things based on the ethical and moral duty of the schools or organisations they are working for.*  
**(Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)**

Consequences of racism and discrimination do affect people psychologically and limit their free moment in public places. Some participants in South Sudanese community reported that those who experienced racism and discrimination in public were fearful of going out and beyond their comfort zone again because the experiences remained with them.

*People who experience racism remained closed and were not ready enough to go beyond their comfort zone. This is a hard thing for many of our people. It is unfortunate that racism still exists: the important message is not to let racism hold you back. When I came to Australia, I went through racism and discrimination. People used to say to us on the street, "Go back to your country," and people said to mum, "She comes from banana land; go back to your banana land". People used to spit at me and sometimes I went home crying and thinking, "Why did people treat me like this? What is wrong with me?" However, later I learnt that racism and discrimination should not hold me back. I have studied as much as I wanted to. I learned quickly that there are good people out there; there are good and bad people in every society. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

The negative interactions between young people from the South Sudanese or African backgrounds with police in Melbourne have created a lack of trust in the community. This created a perception that the police officers are racially targeting young people from African community groups

*I am concerned with the way police interact with young people from the African community while they expect you to integrate successfully in Australia. Police are punitive on young people, they treat them badly even when the young people have done nothing wrong and were just socialising as a group. Police can interview them as if they committed a crime. Such attitudes make it hard for young people to trust and believe that police are there to protect people – including them. Many young people from South Sudanese and other community groups believe that police treat them as a gang while they are not, but once they are treated as a gang by the authorities, they turn against the authorities and do not trust them anymore. Now*

*many of young people are in prison and this shows the system does not support newly arrived refugees and migrants to settle better. Small issues can fuel them and if they react negatively, they will end up facing gaol. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that not all South Sudanese young people were bad when it comes to poor behaviours. Some participants stated that they decided to get involved in advocacy because of young people being targeted by police officers and treating them badly.

*I was involved in an advocacy group because I did not like the police targeting refugee young people, particularly black young people from Africa who are often treated or targeted by police as criminal. Look at me; I am a South Sudanese and I have never fought in my life but guess what? The police or some people think that all the South Sudanese young people are bad because they fight lots on the streets. This is not true to generalise and treat the whole community as bad people. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia).*

A lack of empowerment and skills to deal with some racial issues was highlighted by participants as something affecting their community members. However, some participants had strong feelings toward claiming their rights as an Australian citizen.

*There is no doubt in my mind and the minds of other South Sudanese that we are citizens of Australia. Although there are discrimination and racism here and there, we need to claim we are South Sudanese Australians. Nobody is going to give them that; we needed to claim this for ourselves. Many people in South Sudan respected the system; they respected the judicial system and laws. However, this does not mean people cannot be critical of some things. I do think that people eventually feel as citizens of Australia, not by holding passports, but by asking the question: "How long is it going to take?" The real point is this: People are going to go; people do need to be given opportunities in the workforce to feel that they*

*are contributing to this society and not depend on welfare payments. When people enter the workforce and become taxpayers, involved in the army, police force, studying and so on. I think people do need to respond to racism: I am an Australian citizen as much as anyone else who thinks they are an Australian citizen. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that there was a negative stereotyping of South Sudanese community. They believed that there are people who constantly stereotype them without knowing much about their backgrounds. They also believed that people in the South Sudanese community need to stand up and talk about racism and discrimination issues.

*Some people can judge you when they see you without knowing your background. I think the issue of racism and discrimination needs to be discussed and challenged openly. Racism and discrimination are everywhere, but the problem is that people do not want to discuss this openly. This is what makes it alive in the community: people need to be encouraged to talk about racism and discrimination openly. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Ignorance can lead people to make wrong comments about other peoples' cultures or backgrounds based on their situations. One of the participants described her experiences of growing up in Australia as a black child as very difficult because of the racism and discrimination she had witnessed.

*I grew up in Australia as a black kid for over 15 years. People are often subjected to racism [pause] and the argument that Australia is not a racist country is not true. There is still racism in Australia compared to America. America has a long history of dealing with the black population and the black community has emerged strongly in America, while in Australia indigenous black people have been marginalised and always treated as low-class citizens. The same attitudes have now been applied to African migrants. Their rights and dignity are often undermined or ignored. The thing is, there is an open or hidden racism in Australia, which is affecting people because people that experience racism always*

*remain isolated from the rest of the community. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that casual racism is very common and is expressed in different ways such sarcastic expressions. Some participant believed that nobody liked to be talk down to, and people did not deserve to be treated in that way.

*Settlement experiences can be bad sometimes when you meet people who have their personal issues with certain ethnic groups. They can try to talk you down because they don't like you or people from your background for some reason. Such people make settlement difficult because you always think; I don't deserve to be treated like this. I deserve an equal opportunity like others. It is unfortunate that there are people who aim to distract the others and deny them opportunities to grow and contribute to Australian society as good citizens. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

### **7.2.3. Family dynamics and social change**

There is often a high level of confusion for many families and individuals when confronted with social change and settlement issues. There is a strong trend towards family dysfunction because of social change and welfare dependency. Many families have experienced some pressure in maintaining relationships either between parents or between parents and their children, especially teenagers. These relationship issues in families is a result of social and cultural change due to settlement pressures. Family breakdown and intergenerational conflict were trends raised by participants as part of their settlement challenges.

*Culture is a big thing; people are struggling with change and fear of losing your own culture and replacing it with a different culture. Change is not an easy thing for many people; there is a fear of [the] unknown attached to change. There are lots of cultural issues that still exist or [are] practised within the South Sudanese community. I think people need to ask themselves where they want to be in the*

*next 10 or 20 years. If people want to remain in Australia, they must accept change and be ready to go through changes and beyond. Unless they want to go back to South Sudan, then that is a question in terms of accepting change and adjusting to Australia. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Cultural change is one of the big issues faced by the South Sudanese families in Australia during their settlement journey. Another participant echoed the preceding quote that social change and culture was affecting South Sudanese people and other African people in Australia as they were born and raised in a different environment to Australia.

*Culture and social changes affect South Sudanese people and African migrants as they adapt to Australian social life. People who were born in Africa were raised in a different social environment, which is not the same as the Australian way of life/ social situations. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

#### **7.2.4. Specific gender issues**

There are different and specific views about gender-related issues in the South Sudanese community. Participants believed that South Sudanese men were struggling with social change within their families because of migration and settlement in a new culture. This changed some of their roles and expectations in family. One of the female participants had offered her advice to South Sudanese men to learn some soft skills that may be useful to them in their families.

*Men need to learn soft social skills and be ready to embrace the changes. Their hard or tough skills are not working in Australia as they used to be tough on women and children. Running away to avoid family challenges is not the solution. Willingness and [readiness] to learn soft social skills is a way forward that can help men from African backgrounds. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

The tension of gender issues was part of social change and family problems. Another female participant stated that South Sudanese women tended to have more power in Australia than their male partners. Some told their male partners that Australia was not Africa, meaning that men had no voice or authority to tell their female partners to do things they may otherwise not want to do in their house.

*Some families have experienced difficult relationships because of settlement; changes have been so dynamic and have caused some difficulties in relationships between men and women. Sometimes each side starts blaming the other, or sometimes women would tell men: "This is not Africa." Women have more freedom in Australia than in Africa. This has raised many tensions in families and men appear to be not coping with the changes. The only way for men is to escape from Australia and go back to Africa. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia).*

Young women in the South Sudanese community were also facing some issues of blame in their families and in the community. This blame related to gender tension because young women who grew up in Australia were working their way towards Australian values, which could be seen as going against their family's wishes and culture. Some people blame young women for abandoning relationships and choosing to be single mothers.

*Young women/women are going off-track in the community because the system (Centrelink) supports them to remain single to get more payments because she is a single mother. Many married women now take advantage of this [assistance] and kick [sic] their men/husbands away because of the Centrelink support. This help is short-term for single mothers, but in the long-term, their children will remain disadvantaged because some will miss the role of their fathers. I see that in the long-term, it is destroying the community. I have seen some young women having children with different fathers, and this is causing a bit of a problem as in traditional South Sudanese culture [where] it is not good to have children by different fathers; it has shamed [them] and stigma [is] attached. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

### **7.2.5. Specific youth issues**

Youth issues have been the centre of media scrutiny in recent years. The specific youth issues are linked to parenting responsibility and the lack of role models for young family members. Parenting is one of the challenging issues for South Sudanese families. The task of single parenting is not easy for many parents. In South Sudan, war has caused single parent issues as many men lost their lives in conflict, and some male parents were forced to separate from their families due to the conflict. Another cause is cultural change or culture shock in Australia. These issues have torn many relationships apart and left the responsibility of caring for children with one parent, most likely to be the mother. During interviews, single parenting emerged as one of the difficult issues in discussions about family matters. It is very clear that single parents in the South Sudanese community were struggling with their teenage children, who were taking different directions.

*Many young people are lacking parenting discipline; many families or young people are being parented by single parents – particularly by mothers. Many of my friends and cousins are lacking male parenting or male role models because their fathers are not here in Australia. Some lost their fathers during the war in South Sudan/Sudan. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Youths who spend some of the time socialising in public places, such as train stations, were viewed by their parents as wasting time instead of spending their time focusing on education. Participants raised concerns about youth congregating at train stations and shopping centres as ways of killing time. Those youths who choose to do so were blamed in the community, because the community had a view that they were wasting their time. They should instead be engaged in education or helping their families at home instead of walking around aimless.

*Those youths who choose to spend their time walking in the streets, shopping centres or hanging around public transport stations will not be settled in my opinion, because there is nothing important that they are focusing on, unless they*

*focus on things that are good for their future aspirations. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

There were also different understandings and perceptions of issues faced by parents and young people. It appears that young people were aware of their needs and challenging issues related to them. Participants believed that some parents had no understanding of the issues affecting young people. This is just one of the gaps between South Sudanese young people and their parents.

*Young people are facing many challenges, which their parents cannot understand. These challenges can generate conflict between parents and young people who are not supported by their parents at home. The South Sudanese think that learning in Australia is similar to learning in Africa. Young people find it hard to deal with their education without support from parents or relatives and that is why some young people drop out from their schooling. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Parents from the South Sudanese community do have high expectations and tough parenting strategies, which can sometimes cause great tension between young people and parents. Although there were some tensions between parents and young people, some young people acknowledged that what their parents had done for them could not be easily forgotten by their generation. They also acknowledged the issues of the past as difficult issues, but felt these should not hold them back from progressing.

*We have gone through tough times and many challenging issues during our settling time, but I think if young people from our community learn from what their parents and older siblings, cousins went through, the next generation will be better. The South Sudanese community is a young community; we are still working on many things to establish ourselves better. The past will be passed, and there will be a better future, although we will not forget what our parents have gone through, but it will not hold us back as a young generation to do better in my opinion. (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Lack of central meeting places for youth groups is one wish the community has for its young people. Participants reported that youth issues increased because there was no space for them to run their social activities and programs.

*Community centres for young people from refugee backgrounds need to be provided; young people don't have places to do their activities. We find it hard to go to mainstream youth places because of certain attitudes people display toward us. This makes settlement hard for young people whose parents are juggling no jobs and responsibility for their kids. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

Lack of educational support at schools was reported as one of the many problems affecting young people. Some young people from the South Sudanese community dropped out from due to challenging issues they have faced in school without sufficient support services. Participants believed that this was due to institutional racism in school and lack of support to young people and their families.

*Our children are facing huge challenges at school because there is no strong support for them and adults are facing issues of unemployment, no work for them. This makes the settlement a bit difficult for some families within some communities and African groups. (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)*

The consequences of not participating in sport and the workforce are greater for youths from the South Sudanese community due to their backgrounds. Participants believed that youths who were not engaged in sport and the workforce would always remain as victims of settlement challenges unless they made informed choices to get involved in something useful for their future.

*Refugee youths who are not engaged in the workforce and sport, many of them will be victim of settlement challenges because they have nothing productive to engage*

*in, such as work and sport. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

#### **7.2.6. Integration and disintegration**

The concept of integration is something that has been discussed and promoted well by some politicians for emerging communities such as the South Sudanese community. The expectation is that newly arrived community groups are to integrate as quickly as possible into the mainstream community (Ager & Strang 2004). In recent years, there were some discussions targeting the South Sudanese community as one of the communities that have not been integrating well, due to several settlement issues discussed in this thesis. Participants believe that some South Sudanese people are integrating well by adopting Australian ways of life. They also acknowledge the settlement challenges as hard to overcome in a short period.

*I remember when the South Sudanese community was labelled as a community that has not been integrated well in Australia. I think this is not true because we have people who are doing well in education, people who are working and people who have taken mortgages for their families. I think we are part of the Australian community. It is only a small proportion of people who are struggling or heading in the wrong direction, because of lack of support, as they are new to Australia.*

**(Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)**

Members of the South Sudanese community were fully aware of those who were integrating well and those who were not integrating due to settlement difficulties. All participants believed that that some individuals and families managed to settle well, but some were struggling with integration.

*There are families and individuals who are doing well, and there are families and individuals who are not doing well because they are new or not able to move beyond settlement challenges. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Integration occurs when refugees participate in the mainstream community, attain rights similar to those enjoyed by others in their country of settlement, obtain citizenship or permanent residence, as well as access to employment that matches their skill level. There are many challenges to local integration for both refugees and host communities. Sometimes there is tension between refugees and local communities who compete for scarce resources, including land and food. However, there are steps that need to be taken to support both groups to make integration succeed. These steps include raising community awareness and promotion of the benefits that refugees can bring to the local community.

The reason for the labelling of the South Sudanese community's failure to integrate – it's 'disintegration' – is the youth riots, including recent events in Melbourne related to the "Apex Gang". The perception within the community about the failure to integrate is that disengaged young people do things that go against societal expectations. However, participants believed that Sudanese crime is far smaller than that of other community groups.

*If you compare the crimes committed by South Sudanese with other ethnic groups, you find that South Sudanese people have less crime. These could be things related to alcoholism and not like other ethnic communities, which may have major crimes. The South Sudanese people have not been in Australia for long; we are still working out how to establish ourselves as a community. (**Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia**)*

There are always unmet needs for people to react negatively or cause disintegration into a mainstream. There must be a reason for someone to decide not to participate in the general community's activities. Lack of participation in the mainstream community's activities could be something beyond their control. Participants reported that those who were not settling into the community were facing social isolation and a lack of activities in which to participate.

*Those who are not settled are those who choose to remain to isolate themselves, disengaged from activities that can help them to move on. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

The community is not happy with people – young people – who are burning bridges by causing some problems for the community. These young people are being blamed in the community and in their families.

*There are people within the community who avoid assimilating into society by choosing to engage in negative things or behaviours that do not help them to integrate better. These people refuse to learn English and refuse to look for work. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants acknowledge the challenges of coming from refugee backgrounds as a contributing factor to the disengagement of some people. Others see the South Sudanese community as doing well compared to the first few years after they arrived. Some were running their small business and driving cars. However, participants recalled tough life experiences for some people in their community not integrating well.

*Yes, we came from refugee backgrounds and tough life experiences, but I think we are doing well. We have people who have done well within 10 years of their time in Australia in both education and participation in the workforce. We have people who are driving good cars and people who have shops in Footscray – running their small businesses like other communities. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that mainstream media treated issues of integration and disengagement in their community poorly. They believed that there were positive stories of integration, but the media has not reported them. A young man stated that there was fear of unknown people affecting the South Sudanese, and this makes their integration more difficult at some points. The interaction of young people with police was one of the difficulties this young man experienced.

*I had difficult reactions with police and the system. There is a fear of unknown people, which always affected people from the South Sudanese community because their positive part is not known in the media. These make our settlement experiences more challenging and hard for some of us to integrate. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Lack of integration comes when a conflict occurs between host community groups and refugee groups, and this causal factor can be why some refugee groups such as the South Sudanese become disengaged. In this case, disengagement is viewed as a major issue for young people who are struggling with settlement issues. They are more likely to disengage from community activities or school. However, the community wants to teach these young people – particularly boys who become disengaged from school – to work hard for their future. The South Sudanese traditional family taught young people to work hard by starting with their tasks within the family. This tradition appeared to be useful when a person grew up and entered the workforce.

*When we came to Australia, my mum pushed us to work hard on learning and interacting with people in a different community as a way of improving our English and connections because we were in a place where there were not many Africans. Our family was the only family from an African background. Mum believed that it was important for her children to integrate and not to be left out of the wider community. Pushing myself helped me to connect with people from different groups. To integrate well, you need to go beyond your comfort zone. You can be rejected, but you need to be ready for rejection or disappointment. Integration needs you to be courageous enough to face challenges and you will succeed after you try many times, with some disappointments. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

### **7.2.7. Advocacy as a way forward**

There is a great need for support services and advocacy in order to allow refugees to settle better and be accepted with fewer prejudices. Advocacy can be one way of supporting the community in order for other people within the mainstream community and politicians to understand the critical issues facing refugee communities like the South Sudanese community. Australia is well known for embracing multicultural policies, meaning that all people are given a fair go, regardless of their cultural backgrounds and practices. Many in the South Sudanese community appreciate the generous opportunities and multicultural policy of Australia. Despite this multicultural policy and spirit, some members have encountered difficult challenges or think that they have been side-lined by being treated unfairly in the workplace, and in other areas such as education, and may not always speak out about their experiences. As such, participants in this study have called for support from the government to help their community by creating jobs and awareness among employers and agencies in order to accommodate those from their community in the workforce. They believe that this may reduce some challenges and could provide them and their community with opportunities, which may lead to better settlement outcomes for families and individuals.

*We believe that Australia is a fair nation as we sing the words of the national anthem. We should be treated equally in the workplace and given the opportunity to work. The government should pressure those agencies who have denied jobs to refugees and people from non-English backgrounds. Jobs should not be given because you are white or black. I think people should be given jobs according to their willingness and capabilities to work. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

The importance of advocacy on behalf of vulnerable families and individuals was emphasised by participants. Advocacy can be carried out by anybody, including service providers who work with community groups such as the South Sudanese community. Sometimes a lack of skillsets or English-language problems can make it more difficult for the non-English community groups to express their views well. They need assistance

from policymakers and individuals who can advocate on their behalf in areas of employment, housing, and sport, and to combat racism and discrimination.

*The community should stand up for its members' rights and advocate on critical issues that are affecting the community and its young people. We are part of Australian society, we cannot be [mis]treated or told, "go back to where you come from," without challenging such attitudes. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Support services are critical for newly arrived families and individuals. All participants requested more support services for their community from government agencies and for agencies to work with the community in order to identify issues affecting the community. They raised issues of youth and elderly people needing some support. They stated that the main reason for the negative reports and social issues in their community was the lack of support services.

*The government needs to work with community leaders to identify issues affecting the community socially, particularly young people and old people. They [refugees] need government support services as well as community support, but at the moment, they don't have such support, and that is why all these social issues that come out of the media are present. Young South Sudanese are struggling with a number of issues including where they belong. They don't fit into their community and not in the Australian community because their friends still tell them, "You are from the South Sudanese community and don't know much about Australia". This is really holding people back at the moment and making them feel isolated. There is no aspiration as they don't get jobs and some of their friends tell them, "Well, it is a piece of paper which you have, but the reality is it will not get jobs" (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Empowerment through training is one of the supports that the South Sudanese community needs in order to participate in the wider community. All participants requested specific support to undertake job training in order to assist them to get into the workforce.

*I think we still need more support from the government: training and engaging in work can be good for the community or people who are not working. The government needs to promote and support refugees and migrants [to get] more jobs. (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Increased resources and support were reported as something that the government could do to assist vulnerable members within the South Sudanese community.

*It would be nice if a government supports those people who are not able to support themselves by providing resources to assist them [to] move on with their lives. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

There are specific issues facing young people as part of their settlement challenges. Participants have pleaded for recognition of the need for support services specific to young people. They have asked for support services from government organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs) to engage young people in productive activities, which can help them to grow as good citizens instead of living without well-planned and directed activities.

*I think there should be more support services for the community and young people who are new to Australia. The government needs to provide enough services to help people settle better. Without proper support, our young people and the community will continue to struggle with many issues. (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Programs for young people can assist in engaging young people in the South Sudanese community. Participants request government assistance for their community by creating programs for youths to engage them. They suggested that sporting programs are good for their young people.

*I think our young people need support and to actively engage in the activities that can assist them to grow as good citizens. The government should also provide better*

*services and support for the newly arrived community groups to settle better by listening to their needs and help them grow as good citizens. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Lack of transparency and partnership from settlement agencies and the South Sudanese community were reported as issues. Some of the participants were critical of settlement support services. They felt that some settlement agencies received funding from the government to provide support services to the newly arrived, however, some providers failed to assist the community.

*People face tough issues sometimes when they are in a new environment. The critical aspect of being in the new system is that when they react, they can suffer more. They can be put in the difficult position of being victims while people who are critical seek to prove they [refugees] are not able to participate. The community feel they contribute less to the system while its young people are struggling with settlement-related issues, which reflect back on the community as its own failure. This is not true. The community should be serviced by organisations which are funded for that purpose. Those organisations need to work for the community rather than spending a very small proportion of those funds on the community.*

**(Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)**

Working with refugee communities such as the South Sudanese community in partnership can help build relationships with service providers. Partnership can empower people through mentoring programs and advocacy; raise awareness on behalf of the vulnerable community of issues such as employment; and empower them to address racism and discrimination issues.

*I think there is a need for people to move into partnerships of working with new community groups, which are very vulnerable. The partnerships should bring in comprehensive programs to improve ways of understanding how settlement issues affected the refugee issues. For example, family violence can affect a child's education or employment, and it has affected the possibilities of how parents can*

*support their children at school and sports. I think there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of social issues; a short consultation of 30 minutes is not enough to capture all social issues that people are facing. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Involving community members in the process of planning or even including them on a board of management can be an empowering process for them. Participants stated that community organisations should work collaboratively with the community to better understand the social issues affecting families and the community.

*The community organisations should work collaboratively with community groups. For example, by having community members represent their community groups in organisations such as on a board can bring a better understanding of social issues and better ways of working collaboratively. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

#### **7.2.8. Community willingness to take responsibility**

Having discussed what the community expected from government and non-governmental organisations, there is also a significant role for community members to play in helping and supporting each other in order to overcome some of the settlement challenges. During interviews, participants identified problems and requested community members play their part in addressing social issues affecting families and young people. They stated that the social issues affecting young people and families in their community could not be addressed by the supporting organisations without the involvement of community leaders or well-educated community members. They believed that these members had more understanding of the critical social issues affecting young people and families.

*The community needs to come up with some plans that can help them and young people. People who have more experience in understanding settlement issues can advise others who are stressed because of social issues with families and children. (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)*

Community leadership is needed when there are difficult issues facing families and young people. Participants reported that their community leadership should act quickly on issues affecting their community members.

*I think there are issues that a community needs to work on very quickly. Without addressing those issues, it is hard to move on. Once the community knows they really matter, people can move on quickly. People need to prepare themselves to deal with those issues. I want to see the community flourishing and to see community prosperity in Australia. I don't want to see it failing and not [be] able to move on and beyond. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Some people, if not all people, do need encouragement and support in order to realise their potentials or work harder to reach their potentials.

*I would encourage people within my community to take things seriously and not take them for granted. We need to work hard and contribute to society as good citizens and not as a bad image for those who cannot contribute. Our community leaders and educated people should help those on the streets to understand and learn good things for the benefit of all. (Participant 14, 23-year male, 9 years in Australia)*

People suggested ‘Prevention is better than cure’, with some participants offering advice to their community members to help those who needed help before it was too late. They wanted South Sudanese community members to come together and help each other with settlement issues. They also wanted to see their community leaving tribal issues behind and making positive contributions for each other in Australia.

*I think it is important that people get help in times of need: help from your community, agencies and friends in particular during their settlement time. The community needs to work hard and support each other, to leave their tribal conflicts [behind] when they arrive in Australia and work as one South Sudanese community.*

*If we support each other, we can overcome settlement difficulties. We can also contribute well to society. It is not good for those young people on the streets if community leaders do not engage with them, to think positively instead of having problems with the system all the time. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

The importance and benefits of community programs were raised during interviews by participants who stated that it is helpful if there are family members and community members who can take the initiative to support programs for young people, such as organising sports days or other events for young people. All Participants stated that their community members could play a crucial role in supporting young people to engage in sports programs. They want their community members to become role models for young people and get them involved in meaningful social activities.

*I would like us to become involved in sports programs as an example to young people. Sport can break down social isolation and help them to meet other people from different ethnic backgrounds. There are more opportunities in sport by which they can overcome their weakness because the South Sudanese are very athletic. They need to show their talents through sport. I joined basketball when I was not a good player, but I managed to learn my skills within a short time. Sport is all about dedication and you commit yourself and practice. Therefore, I encourage young people to be active in sport and see sport as a good thing for them to grow and discover. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Lack of collective views and vision in the South Sudanese community was identified as an issue. It is not a bad idea at times to have collective views as a community, but it is also difficult to have collective views in a community affected by so many issues. During interviews, participants suggested that their community collectively come up with clear goals and visions for their community and create some programs. They believed that their community should have goals about what they want to achieve as well as what they could

contribute to society. Success can only come when people work hard on their goals and have a wider vision for their community and families.

*The community must work hard with clear goals. People need to work hard by defining their goals, why they are here, what they really want to achieve or contribute in a positive way [pause for reflection]. There are people with a mind-set that they will go back to South Sudan and have better lives. Yes, but it is a problem if you don't work hard here to establish yourself well. People need to think about things like, "If I do this now, it will help me in the next few years there and here, or if I do this now it will help my child in future. I am using sport now as something that I will be remembered for and I think it will also be easy for children to remember if I do well." People will be saying, 'Oh, he is the son of so and so; she is a daughter of so and so,' in sport. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Getting advice from the right people was one useful way to assist families and individuals. Participants believe that people who are struggling with settlement issues need to seek support and advice from others. Indeed, talking with people with experience and a positive mind-set is something that can help some people realise what they need to do in order to address some of their settlement challenges.

*Those who are confused to work out their problems, do need to seek help and advice in order to assist themselves with their families' difficult issues (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

There is always a need to be wise and make the right choices in what we do as people in life. Making the right choices in life can come with experience and guidance from the right people with experience. It can be so easy for people to lose their cultural values in a multicultural society like Australian society.

*It is always easier to be wise enough to choose when you are in multicultural groups. I am more open to different cultures in Australia, but I am very cautious*

*that some of those cultures are very toxic and can easily take your good vision away as a young person. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Engaging with other community members through mentoring was a great help in connecting with the mainstream community. All participants believed that mentoring and training as something that could assist the South Sudanese community to connect with host community members. They believed that their community members could obtain connections and other social skills through mentoring.

*I think the community needs support in mentoring and training to help them engage with mainstream community and learn to do things for themselves. I think training should be around health, employment or hunting for jobs and financial counselling to address financial stress (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia).*

Participants had clear views of what about their community needed to do in order to support each other with difficult issues. However, the community had no resources to operate those support services for families and individuals. Their calls for support from government and other non-governmental organisations may be one of the solutions if authorities could listen to their voices. Part 2 discusses participant responses regarding employment.

### **7.3.Part 2: Participation in employment**

The benefits of participation in employment include financial and social benefits through connecting with like-minded individuals who have positive attitudes to assist others, such as people from refugee backgrounds. Participation in employment is very important, particularly for people who are re-establishing themselves in a new country, such as the South Sudanese community in Melbourne. There are many factors holding people from refugee backgrounds back from participating in their host community. However, with greater support for those people to enter the workforce, it is likely that the settlement challenges confronting refugees can be reduced and employment can

open more opportunities for them to integrate successfully. During interviews, participants raised the benefits of participation in employment, including providing financial benefits, social capital or social connection, and learning opportunities. Good learning experiences can occur when a person finds work. In addition, employment provides a platform for financial stability, which helps to reduce stress and other settlement pressures.

*There are lot benefits of employment to all people. Employment can help people financially and with many [other] aspects. It helps a lot in making people settle better, particularly refugees or migrants like us. The financial benefit of employment is paramount, as we all need money to pay bills and make a living. This is one of the many reasons why people go to work; it is to get payment at the end of working days. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Employment brings both social and financial benefits for people who are working, particularly those who have no connections as they are new in the mainstream community.

*Employment is very important because you earn money and it gives you something to do routinely. You can also meet many people at work and have many friends who help lots. If you work in customer services, for example, you meet many people and talk with them on different issues, which you learn lots about, and it helps you lots as individuals. This can help newly arrived migrants or refugees to integrate easily, compared to people who are not employed. (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Some people want to work and avoid being “parasites” by depending on social security. They also want to make contributions to the community through either paying tax or other means of contribution, including supporting family members. All participants believed that having work is extremely important in Australia.

*I don't think that anyone wants to be a parasite and stick to welfare benefits and suck government's money. Some people like to work and have a sense of identity, a sense of belonging as workers. Therefore, employment is extremely important to people. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Employment brings stability and independent life for people because of financial benefits. Participants believed that stability and independence from relatives were important aspects of employment. Learning and socialisation with friends comes when a person is stable and financially independent.

*Employment helped in many ways. First, you can support yourself if you don't have relatives or friends to support you when you want something. You can buy things that you want if you are employed, pay rent and other bills. You can also learn lots in workplaces by meeting friends, socialising with workmates, learning from workplace culture and English. It always helped to get employment. I enjoyed my time when working because I could buy what I want. (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

A sense of contributing to society was very important for some people because it gave them meaningful life within the community, helping people in their own community and beyond. Participants described how important employment is for them as they were able to make contributions and gain independence.

*Employment is essential, not only to provide income for yourself, but also you feel like you are meaningfully contributing to society through work and taxpaying. I don't think that anyone wants to be a parasite and stick to welfare benefits and suck government's money. Some people like to work and have a sense of identity, a sense of belonging as workers. To me, employment is extremely important as it can help people get and use money. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Responsibility for family and community is always strong when there is financial stability. Participants believed that when a person is employed, it comes with responsibility as well in terms of contributing to family and community.

*You become a responsible person, because you know that you are contributing to yourself, family, community and government by paying taxes (**Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia**).*

Participation in employment brings encouragement and a sense of contributing to the community through tax paying. This makes some people feel special because they are making a contribution to society.

*When I was working, I got many benefits. I benefited from working as an individual and contributing to the community through paying taxes as a citizen of the country. One of the many benefits I got from work was an active engagement and routine focus on my work (**Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia**)*

There is always a strong feeling about assisting the community in the South Sudanese community. Some people do feel that they have a responsibility and duty of care to work for the community because it is great way of winning respect with the community. Feelings of respect and meaningful contribution are also benefits of employment, as one is able to make a contribution in society.

*Employment is essential, not only . . . to provide income, for yourself, but also . . . you felt like you are meaningful, respectable and contributing to society through work and tax paying (**Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia**).*

There was a recognition of participation in employment as something that assists people with social problems to stay away from their problems because they have no time. Participants also believed that employment was a great way to exclude other social problems. Those who were employed had no time to engage in negative activities. The

negative activities South Sudanese people referred to included drinking heavily, and having no plans for the future, or not being involved in schooling and family issues as some men and women abandoned their responsibilities due to drinking problems.

*To me, employment controlled me and engaged me which helped me to avoid being with people who are not contributing positive things to the community. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

### **7.3.1. Economic capital and financial benefits of employment**

Any financial benefit of employment is regarded as economic capital, which can assist individuals to access other important capitals such psychological, social, cultural, and physical capital. Economic capital is a resource because employment provides economic stability, reduces psychological stress, and assists in gaining inner peace and psychological satisfaction. During interviews, participants described financial benefits through employment providing a great deal of psychological and economic stability. People who have work seemed to be happy and more settled than those who depended on social security benefits.

*It is good to be engaged in work to get a financial benefit and experience of working. This helps people to move on with their lives and grow as good citizens rather than depending on welfare payments, which are not enough to cover their living costs. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that when a person is working, she/he can gain independence from the family in terms of financial support. They also believe that if one is working, the financial benefit is extended to the family by providing financial support to family members.

*When you are working, you don't need financial help from your family or friends. Your financial benefits from work can be extended to your family members who need your help. I believe when you are working, you are working for your own good at the end of the day, because when you don't have money you cannot buy things*

*that you need or want for yourself and your family. Working is a good thing because you benefit lots for yourself from employment. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Financial resources and stability come from employment, which assists people to be independent from welfare. Managing one's own needs, such as buying a car and paying bills, were examples of the financial benefits.

*Work is beneficial to me because I am able to pay bills, my car's fuel and buy things that I wanted to buy for myself. This is helpful lots compared to someone who is living on welfare security benefit. It is difficult to meet your needs due to financial difficulties (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Employment assists people to access different opportunities and support themselves financially

*I am currently working part time and enjoy my work while studying at the same time. Being employed, you have many opportunities. I am able to support myself, buy things that I want; buy a car for myself, as I was not able to buy a car before. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that the financial benefit of employment compared to the time they were unemployed, were the financial freedom to support himself and assist their family members overseas.

*I am employed in one of the factory companies in Melbourne. I do factory work and I have benefited a lot from my work because I am paid fortnightly and I am able to support myself financially compared to the time I was not working. When you are employed, you depend on yourself and are not depending on social security Centrelink payments. You can afford to rent a house, buy a car for yourself and afford to support your relatives or family members. Especially as we, South Sudanese or Africans, have our relatives/family members back home in Africa: we send money to support them. In my workplace, I have a good relationship with my*

*team in which I have learned lots because we work as a team, not as individuals or in isolation. Because of my hard work, I was promoted to an assistant supervisor. I know my role well and it was hard for people to put me down for what I was doing.*  
**(Participant 7, 38-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)**

Participants had a similar view that employment gives them the benefit of financial stability, which allows them to access other resources. Participants who had employment experiences also agreed that there is a great learning opportunity in the workplace.

*Employment is also good for the individual when you are employed; you have a sense of stability and you can learn lots about employing new knowledge and skills*  
**(Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)**

Participants believed that the importance of financial stability, associating it with better lives, purchasing a house, and less stress.

*The benefits of employment are many and can range from making a better living, pay[ing] the mortgage when you have money or are employed. Employment brings many benefits including a financial benefit that helps people enjoy a better life in general. When you are employed, you can have less financial stress as well as having a decent life because of financial stability.*  
**(Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)**

Financial benefits are just one of the many benefits that people get through employment. All participants believed that people can meet great friends through employment.

*The financial benefit is one of the benefits that I got from my work as an individual and connecting with people in my workplace. You can meet some great people who can support you and socialise with them*  
**(Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)**

### **7.3.2. Psychological capital**

Having a positive state of mind can assist individuals to participate widely in many activities, such as education and work. During interviews, participants believed that employment could bring benefits such as a positive life, peace of mind, and happiness. People with a positive state of mind similarly made positive contributions in the workplace and in connections with others.

*Employment is good for me because it gives me a positive life experience, peace and happiness for myself with my job, as I was able to do something productive. I was able to sponsor my family and support them to come to Australia through my job. I feel like I was able to contribute back to the community because I was able pay taxes and support family and relatives. I had a positive relationship with my workmates and manager and I learned lots from them and through my work. I was able also to inspire my friends because they always meet me and say, “You have done a good job at your work and career wise”. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Having positive emotional wellbeing and good health are associated with psychological capital. Participants believed that having employment was good for their emotional wellbeing because it reduced financial stress.

*The benefit of employment is financial and health because of emotional wellbeing attached to employment or finances. So, employment improves your psychological and physical wellbeing. With work, one could support himself or herself with finance or you could support your family members who are going through financial hardship. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Living expenses are growing higher and higher in cities such as Melbourne. People have to pay a variety of bills as part of city life. Participants believed that having an income to pay these bills was a big relief of financial stress. Similarly, one could buy and maintain a car.

*The benefit of employment is that I am able to pay my bills, buy fuel to go to school and other expenses. It was difficult for me before when I was living on welfare payments, which are not enough. I was not able to pay for my schoolbooks, but now I can pay for my books for school (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Providing financial support for family is one of the big issues that people from the South Sudanese community face daily, as many of their close relatives and friends live overseas. A lack of finance to support family members and friends could cause high levels of stress. Participants stated that many people in their community would like to get employment to earn income in order to provide some support to their close relatives and friends in Australia and back in Africa.

*Employment helps you financially and reduces your financial stress because when you are employed, you can earn income and pay bills; buy things that you need for yourself or to support your family members when they need your help (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Some people enjoy their lives when they know that they have something to do tomorrow or something they do daily. For some South Sudanese, having nothing to do every day is problematic.

*I am working; I got a job that helped me to get myself up and support myself financially. When I got a job, I know that I have money coming in and know that I am working for myself and not being in Australia for nothing. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

The power of financial freedom cannot be taken lightly for people with refugee backgrounds such as people from the South Sudanese community. For some, becoming independent can be a significant achievement for people who have never had financial freedom and independence, as many refugees have been dependent on UNHCR food and

other provisions. Some participants reported that employment assisted them to obtain financial freedom and reduce other stresses.

*The financial benefit of employment for me is that when I was employed, I became independent because I have financial freedom; I buy things that I want and pay rent on time. I was not having stress because I was employed (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Feeling valued and included in society are associated with psychological capital for some people. Participants believe that participation in employment made them feel that they were contributing to their wellbeing and community. Similarly, employment gave people a sense of inclusion, compared to some of their community members who had no jobs.

*I'm not a psychologist, but I think there is more than what I just said as social and psychological benefits of employment; it is important that people feel included in employment to participate and contribute to society. You feel valued when you are employed, which is opposite to when you are not employed. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Employment assists people to have a better routine and something meaningful to focus on in their lives.

*Talking about employment, it is a good thing because when you are working it keeps you out of trouble as you come home exhausted and there is no time to go and see something that may take you in a different direction. Work keeps you busy and you come home a bit tired, but it helps you because you know what is coming in, in your account and that is a good thing to have. You don't have to stress any more when you need finance because money helps you settle down quickly too. [Pause] When you have a job, you have no time to engage with people who can cause you problems. You can only do your job and go home, go back to work tomorrow. But when you are not working, you are more likely to encounter bad people on the streets because you are more likely to walk around when you have nothing to do. When you have a job, you are safe in both psychological [terms]*

*and even from other physical problems on the streets. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Having less financial stress, buying yourself things you want and not needing to seek financial assistance have a positive impact on people's lives. Participants reported that some young people in their community who were not working and had financial problems caused themselves trouble by stealing, which is a crime.

*You have less financial stress when you are working and you are able to spend your income on the things you wanted to have instead of waiting and asking someone to assist. Employment helps you to stay away from committing crimes because people who are [not] working, particularly young people, some can attempt to steal or do stealing which is a crime and not good for their future. To me, employment is so important to anyone's life. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

*I like to work and contribute to the community and myself and in that way, I can feel good about myself. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

### **7.3.3. Social capital**

Meeting friends and colleagues in the workplace and outside work are associated with social capital. People from the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds often have little or no social network due to a lack of connection with people in Australia. Participants believed that connections in the workplace were one of the benefits that assisted them to integrate into the mainstream community.

*Employment can help refugees to integrate easily because it is a great way of connecting people. With refugee communities, employment is the first priority for them because they want to get work and assimilate quickly into the host community*

*through a network. Without employment, how would one integrate and form networks? If as a refugee you are not employed, you feel that you are not given an opportunity to contribute and feel that you are part of the community. It is hard to form networks without employment. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Building social capital through networking with colleagues from the workforce is an incredibly powerful way of integrating for refugees. Major learning and job opportunities are often enhanced through networking with friends, and present and past work colleagues. Social networks are important for sharing formal and informal knowledge that enhances future opportunities and innovative thinking. They also provide learning opportunities for those involved in three main areas: knowledge transfer, support, and generation of ideas.

*When I started my job, I had a friend working in the same company with me. I got work for him there and we quickly became best friends. We always enjoyed our time together and that motivated us all the time to come to work. When you have good friends at work, you always think of going to work because weekends can even become boring for you and that is a benefit of work too, apart from financial benefits. We always had good break times socialising with each other and that was what made us love our work. Socialising at work is great as it makes you think on the weekend that Monday is to . . . I wanted to go to work and meet friends. I have great friends at work and in sport. They say, "Hey, how you are doing?" checking in with me all the time when I meet them, which is great for me. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Making local connections is very important for people who are new in the community, but it often takes time for people to establish themselves through making local connections. People need support and facilitation to join a local community network and to have the courage to involve themselves in local social activities. Without support and facilitation from the host society to work with people from refugee backgrounds, it is hard

for the latter to get into the workforce. Therefore, lack of social capital and networks in the job market is a major issue holding people back from accessing employment.

*At the moment, I am employed but it took me a long time to get employment. Getting a job is about networking, online cannot work when your names do not match English names, particularly with the South Sudanese people who are badly painted in the media. This makes things hard for us: some people deny us opportunities because we are South Sudanese or of African backgrounds. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Gaining connections with people outside your community group comes with some opportunities and social benefits. Participants believed that participation in employment brings networking with people outside of her community.

*The social network is very important in the workplace. Work contributes to your social life as you meet people in the workplace, some of these people can become your best social friends (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that employment assist people are socially isolated to break a cycle of social isolation in their lives.

*One of the benefits of employment is active engagement with people from work. Work helps to connect people or colleagues to network, which break social isolation and stress. Networking and socialising with friends helps refugees and migrants to integrate in Australia. There are some people in the South Sudanese community who choose to alienate themselves from engaging in active networks or community groups. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that some people did obtain their employment through networking with different groups and different professional workers. They stated networking assisted those seeking employment to access useful information about jobs through their friends.

*Networking is critical because people get jobs through their networks. I would encourage people to seek networks as a way forward to get jobs. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that readiness to take some challenges by participating in meetings outside comfort zones could eventually assist people. They stated that networking requires a person to leave his or her comfort zone and be willing to meet people.

*I attended many networks when I was looking for work. I am always ready to take a challenge. I got my job through networking and my personality. It is important for people to take available opportunities and not to be selective when hunting for work. Without that network, it is challenging for refugees to find employment. There is an unemployment problem with South Sudanese and other African migrants. The benefit of employment: there are many benefits when you are employed, especially within a refugee community; you learn a lot of work. Get experience; build your network with people you are working with. You learn about work and of course, get an income to pay bills and rent. It is very important to rent a place for yourself and family. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that social connections with people in the workplace often assist people to break the cycle of social isolation, particularly those who are new in the country and have no connections.

*I met many friends through work and we all shared our experiences and cultural knowledge with each other. They learned lots from me and I learned lots from them. Work teaches you to be responsible because you follow policies in the workplace and under the guidance of your boss. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

One participant got employment by discussing unemployment situation with friends through networking.

*I got my job because of an idea which I discussed with my friend; I applied for the job and was called for an interview. I was given the job because I had done well during the interview. When you are working, your living standards change because you can be in a better position financially, in which you have no worries about financial stress (**Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia**)*

Participants believed that lack of opportunity is a great barrier to participation in social connection. Having an opportunity to engage with professionals and other members of the community outside your own community group is important for people from refugee backgrounds such as the South Sudanese community members.

*A social benefit of employment is that it gives you an opportunity to engage with people from different community groups. At the same time, you can engage with professionals in the government and private sectors. My work is linked to both sectors, which helped me to understand their work and the way they engage community groups on different social and public policies. (**Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia**)*

Participants who were employed reported that they had accessed both social benefits and financial benefits as a result of their employment.

*It helped me to get financial benefits as well as meeting people and socialising with them. Some people became my friends; sometimes we catch up after work or even when we are not working. There are huge benefits in working as you can wake in the morning knowing that you have got something you need to attend to, compared with those who are not working. (**Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia**)*

### **7.3.4. Cultural capital: learning experiences from employment**

Skills learned through work and experiences through work are associated with cultural capital. Cultural capital is important to people who are new to a country. The South Sudanese community in Melbourne is a case in point. It is vital to secure cultural capital in order to interact with host community members with confidence. Cultural capital consists of informal and formal learning that individuals obtain through social and educational knowledge within their new community by, for example, attending classes for English language, or learning from cultural orientation discussions with neighbours. Participants of this study believed that people built their knowledge through employment because of the experiences learnt at work. They believed that benefits of employment can also contribute to cultural capital.

*I like working with people; we do lots of teamwork in our team. When you are working you can learn about teamwork which is very crucial in the workplace because without teamwork skills, the workplace can be challenging and people cannot support themselves. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

All participants believed that South Sudanese people have come from a protracted civil war, which has deprived them of accessing education, and they appreciate educational opportunities in Australia. They take education seriously as one of the best opportunities they have had, and they do not want to miss out.

*Education is very useful for us: we are benefiting lots from Australia's education. The only problem is that English is hard for some of us because it is the third or fourth language. It is also hard for those who never went to school because there were none or because of conflict, which made them run from place to place. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that interaction in the workplace with different professionals can be a great learning opportunity for people from refugee backgrounds who want to learn new

ways of working in their new country. People from the South Sudanese community are a great example of this.

*Participation in the workplace is a good way of meeting people with different backgrounds and learning from their cultures, and their stories from their previous work which can be so beneficial for you as a worker. It helps you to understand someone who is serious and someone who is rude to you. Work teaches us to leave your personality issues and collaborate with colleagues in respectful ways. You can meet people who are rude to you or to your race, but you learn much how to deal with such rude or racist people in professional ways.*

**(Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)**

Cultural capital can be obtained through work and study, all participants who were working shared their experiences that they had opportunities of interacting with different people through the work, which they described as a learning opportunity for them.

*I am currently working in retail and I have been enjoying working there; something different every day, which I love. Something different every day is to meet customers; some customers talk with you on different topics every day. Some talk about the things they want; some talk about the things that are going on in their lives, which are very interesting for me. Yes, there are many learnings at work through interacting with people. Socially, it is a great benefit meeting people, talking with them can be therapy for some people, and it carries a great learning. For example, you could meet an elderly person who can tell you about some of the things he or she has done or talk about their children or grandchildren.*

**(Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)**

Participants viewed education as a fundamental need for their community. They believed that education shapes their future directions, as well improving their social situation, health, and wellbeing. Many have taken the opportunity to engage in education as a way of learning about the Australian system and culture. It is also a pathway to employment, and improves the level of English and social interaction with host community members.

*It was hard for people a few years ago because they were struggling to understand English and to communicate well with others. This is not the case anymore because most are able to communicate in English and have more understanding of social issues and things that are critical in terms of the settlement. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition

*South Sudanese value education more than other things because education comes with many modernisations such as working for good money. It is good to integrate or be around people who can help you and avoid people who talk you down in terms of education. Education is a way of changing a life; South Sudanese want to be educated better and change their lives. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants acknowledged and appreciated the education opportunities in Australia – to which many of them would not have had access in South Sudan.

*A good thing in Australia is education: you can learn through government payment, although you later pay it back when you get work. I think it would be difficult for many people in Australia [to] participate in education if the government was not able to support people through [the] educational loan scheme. (Participant 7, 38-year male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that participation in employment can provide skills and experiences. For people with refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese, these learning experiences and skills are very important in understanding Australian culture and workplace policies, including understanding the systems and policies of organisations, workplace politics, and general behaviours of employers, as well as employees.

*I used to work with people from different community groups and I have learned lots of their ways of doing the work and their cultures. For example, I worked with Chinese and Indians in my company. We talked to each other about food and*

*culture, which was good for me in terms of learning. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

In addition.

*There [is] lots of learning in employment depending on your field of work, your role or job description. You can learn about the system, policy in the workplace, connecting with people. You can always meet new faces at work that may want to know a bit about you or share their own stories with you, which you really benefit from in terms of learning. It depends on the industry: in some, you can learn so much about work and many other responsibilities, which can be used for future responsibilities. Some industries are just about going there, and make money and go [home] at the end of the day. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that finding employment means a great deal for those have been struggling with unemployment issues for a long time.

*Having a job means a lot to me because I learned lots from work; it is a bit tougher with expectations and responsibilities. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Some participants who were exposed to leadership skills believed that leadership can be learned in workplaces.

*I was managing a team and there was a senior manager who came to oversee our works. It was a great time for me working with a team, although I was in charge of making sure things were done in an orderly manner. I always communicated openly and clearly with my team about teamwork and we all got on well. We supported each other in working as a team when someone needed help and you had finished your task for the day. You can help a person who needed help at that particular moment. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that teamwork and social skills are some of the skills expected from workers in workplaces. Those with very limited experience and skills can benefit from their colleagues by working together and learning from each other.

*I work in a small environment with a great team; we know ourselves well in terms of skills and strengths. Work can expose you to meet people from different backgrounds and some can be so helpful. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants described their first jobs as an important step towards their future jobs because of the experience they could obtain. They also believed that a lack of local employment experience is one of the problems affecting people from the South Sudanese community.

*There are many benefits when you are working including the fact that people get skills through work, which they can use for their next job. As someone who worked previously and continues working part-time, I have better employability skills, which help me to engage with people from different backgrounds. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that dealing with people in the workplace does comes with interesting challenges in terms of behaviours. For someone who is new, it can be a learning opportunity when interacting with people.

*Working is very interesting because sometimes you can find grumpy people and good people, and you learn from both sides. For example, with grumpy people, you can learn to understand that they may have had a bad night and “cannot be bothered.” Let me deal with this in a positive way and let them play their grumpy way if they want to continue being grumpy for a day. Sometimes you can treat such grumpy people in a nice way that can change their day and see it in a positive way. In my opinion, it is good to work and meet all different people with different*

*behaviours, which can assist you understanding society better. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that working in a good organisation (i.e. one with a positive attitude) can be rewarding with professional development that can assist in the next job. They believed that work experience for them is about both personal and professional development.

*Personal development is one of the big benefits that you get from employment because you can learn from people and people learn from you as well. There is a lot of learning in which you can be a teacher at some points and be a student at some points. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that for people who have never worked in professional organisations, obtaining employment is a good way of learning about policies and workplace communications.

*When you work, you can learn about workplace policy and communication. Your boss can ask you to deal with some issues that need more understanding before you approach it. You may not fully understand it, but learn or read about it until you understand the policy or procedures to manage tasks. People can tell you what you had never heard before and you ask what it means. This can be a learning moment for you at work. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants described their experience of meeting different people in the workplace as enjoyable because it provides a great learning opportunity for them.

*One of the benefits of working with people is the learning and experience that I got from talking and handling some challenging issues which people seek help for. I enjoyed working and meeting people from different walks of life. Some with great social skills and some with hard or challenging issues in their lives (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)*

Some participants stated that financial management was another skill gained by those who are working by budgeting their own incomes accordingly. This skill is not necessarily to be learned through working in the finance section, but by being in charge of one's own finances.

*When you are working, you learn how to manage your finances and be in charge of your life. If you are not working, you feel like you are dependent on someone else or government and not contributing. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

### **7.3.5. Unemployment, social and psychological impacts**

This section presents social and psychological impacts of unemployment from participants' findings. Unemployment is one of the major challenges of settlement for refugee community groups, particular people from the South Sudanese community. Unemployment carries the burden of psychological stress and despair among those who want to work, but are unable get to jobs. During interviews, participants described unemployment as a factor affecting their community because unemployed people were not able to support their families financially.

*Unemployment is an issue facing many people in this community. The government needs to help people to get a job and settle better. People struggle from time to time with many settlement related issues (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

In addition

*When I was not working, I struggled a lot with many things. I was not able to pay bills and books for my course. My living standard was not good; I was not able to buy food sometimes if I wanted particular food and had no money to buy it (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that the psychological impacts of unemployment are largely felt in the South Sudanese community. They believed that people who have been trying their best for a long time to find work without success face a major psychological setback. A lack of sustainable employment has a critical effect on individuals and families from refugee backgrounds.

*To get employment is one of the many settlement challenges with people from the South Sudanese community. There are people who have finished their schooling, but still have difficulties in getting employment because there are no jobs or employers refuse to give them [work] because of some racist attitudes. These people have isolated themselves from the community because they see themselves as failures and others are doing better than they are. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants viewed lack of employment as a problem preventing the South Sudanese community from progressing. They believed that unemployment comes with feelings of frustration, hopelessness and desperation.

*Lack of employment is a problem that can hold people back and not integrate [into the community], and this can later be seen by small groups of people with negative perceptions about the South Sudanese as a failed or bad community. In my opinion, we are not bad people; every community has bad people and good people and that is how we are, as the South Sudanese community in Australia. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that gaining employment is a relief for people such as the South Sudanese people in Australia. They believed that unemployment can be associated with mental health problems, such as depression and low self-esteem, because people are not able to help themselves and their family with financial issues.

*Unemployment issue is a problem – holding people back from settling better. When things are difficult or hard for refugees, it affects them psychologically because it was not their intention to face all the challenging issues. They had already had*

*enough from where they came from; they just want to rebuild their lives. Some people cried; they became depressed not knowing what to do, as things got harder and harder for them. Some tended to engage in negative activities such as drinking heavily or experimenting with drugs. This is a result of being unhappy and not settling well. To make settlement easier for refugees, the government needs to provide jobs for them to avoid stress and mental health issues. People who have families and children are stressed because they cannot afford to take their children out for entertainment due to financial hardship. This can cause a worry within families and can sometimes create conflicts. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that lack of local skills and experiences were among the factors making it difficult for people from the South Sudanese community to be employed. They believed that people should be given the opportunity to gain local experience, rather than employers refusing them work because they have no local experience.

*People are denied employment because they don't have local experience. How would someone get local experience in Australia when they are not given the opportunity to participate? Government and policymakers need to understand and help refugees or people from refugee backgrounds to access employment opportunities. Some people in the South Sudanese community have higher education now, I mean a good degree, but they have no jobs. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that a lack of employment caused many problems, such as the disengagement of youth in their community. They believed that when young people were employed, their problems decreased because they became responsible people.

*Lack of employment caused many problems including disengagement. Disengaged young people are always viewed as troublemakers, and that is how many African or South Sudanese people are perceived. I know someone who used to have problems here and there when he was unemployed. As soon as he got a job, all his*

*problems disappeared and he became a great man in the family. He is looking after his family very well. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

The social impact of unemployment ranges from social breakdown, family break-up, and lack of self-care to abuse of alcohol and other drugs as ways of managing the stress of unemployment. Being unemployed does have long-term effects on an individual's ability to support the family and one's own needs and wellbeing. For the South Sudanese, it is almost a duty of each individual to contribute to the family when reaching a reasonable working age. This expectation is weakened by the lack of employment, which leads to dependence on welfare. Participants believed that living on social security payments is problematic, because there were not enough incomes to meet the daily cost of living.

*The impact of unemployment is that it makes people live on the social security benefit, which is not enough for family and individuals. Sometimes people think those who are not working are lazy; they don't want to work. That is not true for many people. People do want to work, but there are no jobs for them. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that unemployment is linked with homelessness, as some experienced homelessness due to the fact they were not able to pay for rent. Young people and some adults have experienced homelessness because of financial problems.

*So, joblessness and homelessness are the key challenging issues in the settlement. People can suffer psychological stress; lack of psychological freedom can lead to self-destruction such as causing people to drink heavily, which is because their minds are not free. They have to find something that can help to deal with psychological stress and drinking is unfortunately not a solution because alcohol is a depressive and habit-forming. It becomes a habit to drink and is hard to get out once you get used to it. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that financial stress is associating with drinking problems and other social issues such as disengagement and homeless.

*If you are not working, you can face many challenges, including financial stress, disengagement, or engaging in negative activities like drinking heavily. You can become homeless if you are not managing your social security payments. Sometimes, those are not enough for the things you want to buy for a living. Unemployment can lead to crime, especially for young people who are looking for jobs but cannot find them; they tend to do negative activities. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants described how some refugees arrived with expectations that they could return to South Sudan, even after much suffering because of the war, through earning income. Therefore, when people remain unemployed for long periods, other social and psychological issues kicked in. This could make settlement increasingly hard for both families and individuals.

*Unemployment is not a good thing for people when they are looking for work but don't get it. I know there are many people in the South Sudanese community who are looking for employment. It is unfortunate that people have tried their best to look for work, but there is no work for them. This makes their lives miserable in many ways. Unemployment makes people feel depressed, hopeless about future and wonder why they are in a beautiful country like Australia and still suffer so much from being unemployed. Unemployment is destroying the whole community at the moment because people who are not employed tend to be depressed, get involved in heavy drinking, which holds many of them back from achieving their goal of coming here to have a better life. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that some causes of family breakdown in their community are associating with financial distress and conflict over finances. They believed that lack of employment in the South Sudanese community led to unhealthy relationships within the community.

*Unemployment creates a lot of psychological stress and tension in families when there is no work and no income. It creates anxiety. Lack of employment has led to unhealthy relationships within the community. There is a high level of family breakdown and financial stress. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that people from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese, must seek ways to deal with unemployment. They believed that long-term unemployment has affected individuals, families, and the South Sudanese community at large. For instance, people with a long-term issue of unemployment are more likely to have social and psychological problems.

*The problem is that people don't know how to deal with social issues. Unemployment is a challenge for us: if people are not employed for a long time, they are more likely to do things that are not good for themselves and community. Lack of work is very discouraging to many people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. People desperately want to work, but there is no work for them. One of the reasons why young people or adults drink heavily is because there is nothing for them to do. They tried their best to find employment, but always failed. They stress and then tend to begin drinking as a way of managing psychologically.*

**(Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)**

Participants see unemployment as the “end of the world”, particularly those who have been to school, hoping that when they finished their studies they would be able to find work and earn an income for a better life. When it seems to have become an unreachable dream, it becomes hurtful and difficult to normalise.

*Unemployment is challenging and it can be like the end of the world for some people who are looking for employment and not able to get work. In modern society, people go to school hoping that they will find employment when they finish school, or even before finishing. Life cannot make sense sometimes when you are not employed. You cannot make new friends if you are unemployed because you miss out seeing*

*many friends that you would meet at work. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants raised financial stress as something that could lead to serious issues, such as despair and suicidal thoughts. They expressed that social isolation was related to unemployment in their community.

*The main issue facing people who are not employed is stress. Stress is a big factor because people from refugee backgrounds had already experienced many issues in their lives, and stress of unemployment can lead to depression and suicidal thoughts. People feel isolated and lack of employment can lead to criminal activities. Unemployment brings or causes a lack of self-esteem and confidence. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Participants described unemployment as having a devastating psychological impact on families, because people had a very limited choice of where to live and where to educate their children.

*The psychological impacts of unemployment are devastating. Find yourself with no income and the Centrelink payment is not enough. People who depend on Centrelink income are struggling. I'm talking from my own perspective relating to the South Sudanese community here. People are struggling with financial issues because they are depending on Centrelink payments, which [are] not enough to address their financial needs. When you have such financial resources, you also have very limited resources; you can have very limited choices of where you can live and where you can educate your children. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants have described the general difficulties when they were looking for work and their applications are continually rejected. Becoming unsuccessfully when applied for employment is painful and can force some people to consider going back for further studies as a way of preparing for employment.

*Unemployment is very difficult and I would encourage people to help those who are looking for employment. For example, you know that there is a job available at your place of work: forward it to your friends and encourage them to apply. I think it is difficult for the South Sudanese, but they need to continue trying by looking around and applying for jobs. When you are looking, you also need to be organised and ready to knock on doors because work will not come to you without working really hard at it. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

In addition

*Unemployment is a difficult thing to live with, and especially when you are looking for a job and always get nothing as your application is rejected. It is a heart-breaking time when you apply for a job and sometimes receive no acknowledgement. You begin wondering why they have not even acknowledged the application. What is wrong with the application and my luck? Sometimes you learn to be open to any criticism when you are looking for the job. Sometimes you try to contact people from where you submitted your application. They will tell you your application is with a human resource officer and you will be contacted by the officer in charge but that never happens. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that competition in the job market is a particular problem for non-English speakers and especially for the South Sudanese community. They often have not acquired enough or sufficient skills to compete with people who have achieved a high level of skills and education.

*There is also a high competition in the job market. It is hard for someone from non-English speaking backgrounds to compete with an Aussie who's English is their first language. South Sudanese people are easily knocked back in the job market because of English being their second, third or fourth language. I think there is no fairness and justice: people should not be denied work because English is not their first language. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants also believed that job scarcity forced people to take jobs that do not match their skills.

*When I was looking for a job, it took me a while because of the high competition in the job market. It is always disheartening to see people from refugee and migrant backgrounds looking for work and there is nothing for them in the field. Sometimes, conditions force them to take jobs that are not equivalent to their skills. Many have higher education, but they have no jobs in their fields of study. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that lack of English language and lack of understanding the process of job hunting and networking with the right people in the labour market were among factors impeding employment.

*Factors that cause unemployment within the South Sudanese community are many; they include the lack of skills, lack of English language and not knowing the process of looking for jobs. For example, most work requires you to apply online, which is a major issue for those who have not enough skills in computing or do not know how to apply online. People who came to Australia as adults also have a language issue: their education is very low and it requires a lot of support to learn English to be able to look for work. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition

*Employment is difficult for our community because of high competition in skills demanded as well as lots of pressure and expectations that our community is not ready for, in term of skills and experience. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

As evidences of the social and psychological presented in preceding section, it is critical to understand that a community where there is a high level of unemployment, there are always many social problems, such as crime, family breakdown, a high level of drug and

alcohol consumption, mental health issues, and lack of education for the younger generations. These are facts in the South Sudanese community in Melbourne, Australia.

There are people who are willing to work and looking for work but are not employed. The historical record of the labour market shows that people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are less engaged in the employment sector. This leads to their community suffering from the risk of exclusion. There are factors behind this that would warrant serious consideration from a policy perspective. These problematic aspects of employment or barriers to employment include lack of local skills and experience, racism, and discrimination.

#### **7.3.6. Discrimination and racism in employment**

This section presented issues of racism and discrimination in workforce based on the findings from participants from the South Sudanese community. Their experiences and voices on the discrimination and racism is very important in contribution to knowledge. Employment is fundamental to peoples' lives in the contemporary world with many people hunting for employment opportunities.

In terms of racism and discrimination, it can be very challenging and daunting for people when they encounter discrimination and racism in the workplace. Many workplace laws and policies recognise that discrimination and racism in the workplace are unlawful. Discrimination happens when a person from a different race, culture, or religious background is treated unfavourably or unfairly because of that difference. It also occurs when employees experience unequal treatment due to their possession of specific characteristics, such as associating with certain races or cultural groups. During interviews, participants believed that many people are still experiencing these issues in the workplace in Australia

*People are concerned about racism and discrimination in the workplace and schools. It is a major issue affecting young people from the South Sudanese or African communities. It is like many young people face bullying at school: South Sudanese young people all faced all bullying and racism in Australia. It is part of*

*community life now. People with black skins are easily victimised by racists.*  
**(Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)**

In addition.

*There are racism and discrimination in the workplace; this is still an issue in Australia. I have faced this in different ways. I remember at my work, I was told by one guy, "Hi mate, you should not wear black cloth because you are black". This is an example of how racist people behave. When I reported him, he claimed that he was talking about a safety issue and he refused to attend a meeting with me. He claimed that migrants and refugee people "should learn our ways".* (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)

Participants believed that people some of them have encountered different types of discrimination at work or in the community.

*Racism and discrimination are high in employment. People from the African community or with dark skins are more likely to be discriminated in employment. For example, you can be told straight when you are looking for work that you have no local experience. How would someone get local experience when you are not given a chance to voluntarily work with the company?* (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)

In addition

*Racism is one of the issues blocking people from getting employment in Australia. You can easily be rejected, or your application can be rejected because the foreign name does not belong to Australian society. It is easy to blend into American society because there are many more black people in America. Australia has a bad history of black people being treated as unsuccessful in terms of community, bringing up the next generation, leadership ambitions and so forth. Anglo people in America*

*cannot see black people in a racial way because Americans have got used to all black populations. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that issues of racism and discrimination in organisations existed because some senior managers bring their personal interests in terms of racist behaviours and attitudes. They suggested that some organisations should consider tightening up some of their policies in order to address discrimination and racist behaviours.

*Sometimes racism and discrimination in the workforce is not the organisation, it is a personal interest of those who have racist behaviours or attitudes learnt from other groups. I think the organisation needs to tighten up its policy to ensure that those who hold senior positions should not bring their racist behaviour into the workplace. Organisations should integrate a positive culture and cultural understanding to ensure that people from different cultures are given the opportunity to work [there]. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that some of their community members who managed to graduate from universities and colleges were not able to get jobs according to their qualifications.

*We have graduates among our South Sudanese community who graduated from Australian universities, yet they have no jobs. Sometimes we don't know why people don't get jobs related to their studies, or sometimes we feel like asking the state government why they invest in our youth by accepting them at universities, but in the end, they seldom get jobs in the state sector. This is an important matter [that] needs to be discussed with the government to find ways of helping us. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition

*There is racism in Australia, we hear this word lots; you make some mistake, there are people who say, "Go back to where you come from". There was a time I*

*applied for a job and I was invited for an interview. The guy who was conducting the interview, saw me and got my resume out, called my name and asked me, “Are you sure this is your resume?”. I replied “Yes”. He said lots of young people from your South Sudanese or African communities cannot work because they are lazy and they don’t have experience. I felt upset and left because it was not a good start for someone looking for work to be asked questions like that in the interview.*

**(Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)**

Participants believed that some casual conversations could be annoying and upsetting because of an ignorance questions.

*Racism comes when people ask you during an interview or even when you are just socialising with people . . . “Where did you come from?”, and if you say you come from South Sudan or Sudan, the next question is, “Where did you learn English?” These kinds of questions are annoying because people just prejudge that you have no English and you are not supposed to be here meeting me. I think the image of the South Sudanese community has been badly portrayed by the media because of young people. However, young people are young people everywhere; it doesn’t matter whether you are a young person from America, Africa or Australia. They still have issues of young people. It is not fair when the whole community has been judged and labelled as bad because of a few people who are struggling with social issues. I feel that is racism and discrimination because I would like to be judged as an individual and not as the community, I come from.* **(Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)**

Participants believed that people who face discrimination in the workplace or in public are often left in vulnerable position and confused about what to do in such a situation. They believed that some have no power or knowledge to protect themselves from people who treat them unfairly. They tend to carry a feeling of rejection or being unwelcome in the workplace or in school with them.

*I was abused by a drunken customer in public who said, “Go back to where you come from. You are not needed here. This is my country. My grandfather fought for this country to keep black people away from this country.” I ignored her because she was drunk, but one my colleagues did not like the way this particular customer [was] behaving. There was general discomfort from people who were listening to what she is saying. She was later asked to leave. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participant believed that people from refugee backgrounds, like the South Sudanese, need support and empowerment in the workplace to know their rights and know how to fight discrimination and racism. Lack of empowerment is an issue. Empowerment helps members of the community to stand up for their rights and to challenge those who are racist in public places.

*One of my colleagues used to undermine my work and treated me badly. She always brought her personal issues from home and behaved aggressively towards me. I tried putting up with her behaviour, ignoring her aggression and discrimination until I stood up for myself. She realised I was going to report issues to the manager. She became friendly to me and worked with me in a respectful way. This came after I confronted her and told her she didn’t need to talk to me like this and she needed to respect me as I respected her as a colleague. I said that should she continue in the same way, I would resign and there would be an investigation. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants stated they have experienced being put down in the workplace by their colleagues.

*Nobody appreciates being talked down to and it is a big thing in African communities when someone puts you down; you have to fight being talked down. It is bad; it is better to be lashed because talking down can always affect you psychologically and can be there in your mind for a long time, while lashing is a pain for a short time and [you] get over it when the pain finishes. Therefore, there*

*is racism in Australia. It is about being honest here; some people cannot be honest by denying that there is racism. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

As numerous narratives of how participants described racism and discrimination in the employment, as disempowerment and disheartened feelings when people experienced, some participants acknowledged that not all people are racist in the workplace. They believed that only a few people who cause problems to minority groups or people with different cultural backgrounds. They believed also that there are wonderful people who work with refugees and the South Sudanese community and who are not racist, but always want to support people from refugee backgrounds.

#### **7.4.Part 3: Participation in sport**

Sport is a powerful tool for engaging young people in any community. When South Sudanese people arrived in Australia, some had no idea if they would play or see some of their generations playing in the Australian Football League (AFL). Many of South Sudanese people and parents knew about sport was soccer, basketball, and running. However, it was not too long before some young South Sudanese entered the sporting arena and showed their skills.

Over the past few years, the following players from the South Sudanese community joined the AFL with help from their Australian friends who saw their sporting talent and ability. These players include Majak Daw who plays for North Melbourne, and Aliir Aliir who plays for the Sydney Swans. Other young players followed, such as Gach Nyuon who was drafted by the Essendon Bombers, Reuben William of the Brisbane Lions, and Mabior Chol of the Richmond Tigers.

There is no doubt that the settlement of these young people had been very different from those young people in the South Sudanese community who have not been involved in sport. This raise hopes within the community that more of its young men will join the

AFL. During interviews, participants who play sport stated that sport has assisted them to settle better and to integrate into the Australian community.

*Sport has assisted me to integrate and settle better because when I came to Australia things were very different until I joined sport. I had no friends before, but now I have a lot of Australian friends and that helps me to settle better and relax. People have supported me in terms of sport and I feel good because of that. I love sport as something that I want to do for a career as I don't want to finish with sport. Seeing good people supporting me makes me feel good and I play better.*

**(Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)**

Participants noticed the progress made by some of their community members in participation in sport. They believed that it is only a matter of time; many young people in their community will eventually become AFL players because of the benefits they have seen through those who are involved in sport. They also stated that some young people in their community are already very talented in athletics and in basketball.

*We have a few young South Sudanese that play Australian football at the moment and it is only a matter of time until we have more young people from the African communities in Australian football. My young brother plays both Australian football and basketball at the moment.* **(Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)**

Participants believed that participation in sport assisted young people from the South Sudanese community as they were going through settlement challenges.

*I played lots of sports – soccer, martial arts and gymnastics – which made me a sporty person; every day I play sport. Talking about sport, it has helped me as a person in many ways. It is not just about going there to get fit and healthy, it is more than that for me* **(Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)**

In addition.

*I see sport as an important activity for young people because I have seen the benefits of sport as a person from a refugee background that had no such connections. I was involved in basketball as a young person and became a coach for young people because I know the benefit of sport as an individual. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants who were involved stated that sport assisted them to define themselves and focus for their future directions.

*Sport assisted me to define myself because sport is very vocal and I was not a vocal person, but I became vocal through sport – basketball now. Sport has put my personality together; you know what I mean: I am now myself. I believe young people with a refugee background can benefit lots if they participate in sports programs. South Sudanese are very athletic people naturally, and what they really need to do is focus a little bit while engaging in sport. I know lots of South Sudanese young people in Australia who now play basketball, which helps them stay off the streets and away from other problems. (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

These preceding narratives demonstrated the benefits of sport for the South Sudanese community, especially social benefits including playing with friends, teammates, and meeting new friends. Those who play or engage in sport make friends, which enhances the positive feelings of belonging to a group or team (social capital). Similarly, active participation in physical activities can come with health benefits, be fun and provide other rewarding benefits (physical capital). People who play sport can achieve different levels of skills and knowledge in the sport field (cultural capital). Finally, those who are involved in sport can develop self-confidence and self-esteem through gaining a sense of achievement (psychological capital). These capitals are discussed in the followings sections.

#### **7.4.1. Physical capital**

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis, Bourdieu (1986) refers to physical capital as a production of the social formation, which individuals develop through participation in the field of sport. Participation in sport assists people to develop their bodies and acquiring physical capital is convertible into different forms of capital. All participants of this study believed that young people in their community who did not engage in sport are more likely have issues, including health issues. They also believed that young people in their community had physical power and the ability to compete at high levels of sport.

*African young people and their communities have physical power and ability to become involved with sport (**Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia**)*

Participants see sport as a great vehicle for fitness and health. They believed that the reason why some people run or walk in the morning and evening is to get fit and gain good health through exercise.

*I used to play basketball when I was at school. What I do now is running and walking every morning just to keep healthy and fit. I believe physical exercise is so important for me and of course to people who want to keep their fitness and health. I think sport is good and there are a lot of physical benefits as well as psychological benefits from engaging in a sport. I believe the South Sudanese young people can benefit a lot, as well as the community and families seeing their sons and daughters playing at any level of sport. (**Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia**)*

Getting fit and healthy are associates of physical capital and many people work hard to secure these benefits. Some participants believed that the benefits of sport were fitness, health, and friendship or connection with people, which helped them in many ways.

*Sport helped me to remain fit and healthy as well as helping me to connect with people whom I built a friendship with. When I came to Australia, I started to play*

*basketball, although I was not good at it at first. I chose to play basketball because I'm tall and my basketball coach recommended that I join this sport. I was a bit unsure of myself at first, but eventually I became a dominant player in the team. I really enjoy this and I have built many friendships through sport. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Being physically active and healthy are associated with physical capital and these can be acquired through participation in sport. All participants reported that participation in sport is good for health benefits and social benefits.

*Sport is a good thing that helps people health-wise, engages people by bringing them together and enjoying their time. You could also see some politicians running or going to sporting events because sport is good for everybody. I think our people should engage in sport, young people and grownups, because it keeps them active and we can also contribute to Australian society because we are very athletic when it comes to sport. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that participation in sport assisted some people to have something to do daily as part of their lives. Many people do sport for reasons like physical fitness and for career reasons.

*Those who engage in sport have many benefits because sport keeps them active. Sport becomes one of the important tasks in their daily routine. Sport helps you personally because you remain physically fit and healthy. You also have a fresh mind when you play. I think young people can benefit a lot if they are engaged in sport. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition.

*Sport is very important for young people and adults, physically, mentally and even career-wise. When I started playing basketball, I was not intending to do it as a career, but my main goal was fit, healthy and to encourage other young people who*

*were isolated to do something meaningful (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants reported that those who play basketball and access similar benefits, such as physical, psychological and social benefits.

*I play basketball and my brother plays basketball too. We like sport because there are many benefits when it comes to sport, physically and psychologically. First, we know many friends through sport. We hang out together and socialise after and before games. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.2. Psychological capital**

Psychological capital is the powerful combination of resilience, hope, optimism, and confidence to approach daily issues without fearing consequences. This assists individuals or community groups to cope with demanding or difficult situations. The most common way of describing psychological capital for people from refugee backgrounds is resilience: the resilience to cope with displacement, loss, settlement issues and the resilience to hope for a better life in the future. These individuals and families are more resilient psychologically as they have endured enormous challenges and struggles in their journeys as refugees.

However, it is important to acknowledge some level of trauma due to hardship and events that refugees like the South Sudanese have experienced or witnessed. Thus, being a refugee can include long periods of suffering before reaching a destination they may call their new home. Many refugees face desperate challenges when running from their country and in refugee camps. When they have resettled, traumatic experiences often remain unaddressed, which makes settlement more difficult. These are the experiences of many people in the South Sudanese community, if not all of them.

*Settlement is challenging, [and] often adds to the previous challenges of conflict as many of these families and individuals came from conflict with no healing*

*[process]. In some cases, they are extremely disadvantaged compared to normal, mainstream families. Some have no skills or financial capacity to rent a house; they may choose to rely on public housing, which is not enough for large families of six to seven children. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Psychological stress and trauma are part of the common issues experienced by some members within the South Sudanese community. The levels of resilience for people from the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds were varied. Some of them acknowledged their ability to manage stress, but others were acutely aware of their limitations. Some participants discussed mental health issues where some people break down, as they were not able to achieve their goals and expectations, such as getting employment.

*In recent years, there have been many who had mental breakdowns because of unemployment issues. They tried to look for work, but when they failed to get employment, they faced stress and mental breakdown. I have so many friends and relatives who have faced these [issues] seriously, as they see themselves not worthy after completing school but remain unemployed. (Participant 9, 30-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Participant believed that confusion and lack of connection with the right people to assist can cause high levels of frustration and stress in the new environment during the settlement journey. They also suggested that those community members who were struggling with settlement and mental health issues to seek help as a way of addressing those issues, including social issues.

*People need to seek help if they are confused and have nothing to engage with. Don't stay with confusion and mental health issues . . . it is important to seek advice that can help you. There are many people outside who are willing to be honest or help people to move on with their lives by providing advice. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that participation in sport teaches people some exceptional skills, such as resilience, confidence, hope, and courage to compete with an aim to win. These skills add to the fun and joyful aspects of sport. All these come with positive feelings and courage to do more in sport.

*You must have a certain mind-set when you are playing sport because anything can happen to you, which can destroy your play. You can hear some racist comments directed at you when you are doing well in the field. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Remaining positive and motivated are associated with the psychological capital acquired through participation in sport. Some participants saw sporting opportunity as a tool that helped them to focus on their studies by learning challenges and hardworking skills.

*It has helped me in my studies; it is about challenging myself and not to give up. My course is not an easy one; it can be stressful and challenging sometimes. However, I have learnt sportsmanship where I treat everything as a challenge and do not give up. For example, the way I look at my assignment is like when I am doing push-ups. If I can do 10 push-ups today, I will do more push-ups tomorrow; this is the same way I do my assignments. One might be difficult today, but I look at it and say, well, the next assignment may be easy; I cannot give up [on] doing this assignment today. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Having hope during a difficult time and being able to avoid becoming involved in something that may cause problems for the future are attributes of psychological capital. Participants believed that sport is something that can assist young people in their community to get out of trouble and gain positive thinking. They believed that young people who participate in sport have no time for consuming alcohol or getting involved in crime.

*I wanted those South Sudanese young people who were on the streets to get out of trouble, because sport can help to engage them actively, so they have no time for consuming alcohol or doing other things that are no good. I know sport has helped*

*me to focus on my schoolwork because I know what I was doing when I joined basketball. I was able to think positively and focus on my work because I know that I am going to play when I finish my schoolwork. I had no time for other things except schoolwork and sport. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

In addition

*Playing sport also helps you to be healthy and fit; when you exercise, you are improving your lifestyle and that is a huge benefit of engaging in sport. Also, it helps you avoid some of the unhealthy things such as drugs and alcohol because you become aware of your body's needs. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that experiencing social isolation is heart-breaking for some people and can lead to serious mental health problems if there is no support put in place.

*Sport can break social isolation, which can lead to depression, and depression is a bad thing for those who are not engaged in social activities. You don't need to be the best player to engage [in] sport; you can still come and play for fun. What you get from sport is not just physical fitness or a healthy lifestyle; it connects you with people outside your community or family. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.3. Cultural capital**

There are a number of skills that people can learn through participating in sport which help them in other activities, such as at the workplace and in socially engaging. Skills such as teamwork, commitment, and personal organisation are some of the skills learnt from engaging in sport. These skills are transferable when one learns or adapts them well. Participants who plays sport stated that they have gained some skills through participation in sport which assisted them during their settlement in Australia.

*When I arrived in Australia, I fell in love with basketball; this engagement helped me to connect with many people. I still play both basketball and soccer. I represented my high school in basketball. I have benefited a lot because when I play sport I always feel that I have learned some new tricks. I have met many friends through sport including my best friend who has a Chinese background. We became best friends because we play together and sometimes talk about sport. I learnt a bit about his culture, he learnt about my culture, and we respect each other as best mates. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participation in sport assists people such as the South Sudanese to learn skills such as cooperation, teamwork, commitment, and discipline. These skills are attributes of cultural capital obtained through sport.

*I used to play soccer and our friends played better because there was a lot of cooperation, teamwork, commitment and discipline in their team. We learned from those experiences that I need to be committed, get organised, manage my time and be able to work with others. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that sport provides some opportunities to build cultural capital through participation and young people can meet others from different cultures and learn from them.

*I met some of my friends through sport and we learned from each other. You can also learn lots about different cultures from friends as part of your social network rather than your own community members, because sport is very multicultural and you can meet people and build friendships with different people from different cultures. These friends are very inspiring in many ways because they tell you their stories, and how they manage some challenging issues. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that there are some tough skills which people can learn through engaging in sport. These skills included collaboration with other people or teammates, leadership and time management; important skills for anybody, but more important for young people as learners.

*Sport can help you lots and you learn about leadership and teamwork skills. You can also learn lots from other players and build friendships. I have met and learned from many players who played basketball in America. Any sport can help you to define yourself and your goal if you work hard for it. In my case, basketball has helped me lots. You can build your network and friendships through sport. Sport has helped me as a young boy who came to Australia early; I have been around different races, different cultures and spent much time learning about other people and not doing much about myself and where I want to be in the future (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that participation in sport assisted them to gain a sense of belonging and identity as a sportsman.

*Being in basketball has opened me up as a sportsman now, compared to the time I was not engaged actively in sport. I learned about teamwork because basketball is not like tennis where you play by yourself. It is something that requires teamwork and skills to work in a team. Sport helped me gain a sense of belonging and to find my identity as a sportsman. I find that I have a sense of being recognised in my team because of my skills and hard work in the team. For my height now, I see that I am not tall for nothing, but tall to contribute to the team and the community, as I would like to be a role model to other young people in sport. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participation in sport teaches young people to learn some technical skills that they can be proud of amongst their peers. All participants who play basketball believed that they learned some manoeuvring skills and rules of sport. They also believed that learning the rules of sport and following those rules does assist people in the long term in their lives.

*Basketball is fun when you put the skill into practice. For example, dribble and manoeuvring in the field are fun. Basketball helped me to learn skills and rules in a sport, which is great for me (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participant believed that learning to work hard and take responsibility for what you are doing are positive skills and attributes to cultural capital.

*I come from a family where people viewed sport as a discipline that teaches people a lot of responsibilities and hard work. My mum played sport too. We love sport and I think young people can benefit lots from sport instead of loitering on the streets and causing problems due to lack of activities. Sport teaches you to be disciplined and it is something constructive for young people. I think sport is a great activity that can assist young people to integrate by meeting many other young people from different communities. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants who were involved in sport believed that sport helped them to learn things they may not have learned at home if they were not involved in sport. They believed that learning sport rules and regulations were positive things that players can use in life.

*I have learnt things in sport, things you cannot learn at home. You learn them when you participate or engage in sport. Sport can really help people to integrate successfully and know each other well. Sport can help young people to settle better. When I came to Australia, I had no friends because I didn't know many people, but I decided to engage in school sports, which helped me to connect with many friends. I got my first job through a friend whom I met through sport. We discussed work-related issues and I told him I wanted to work. Straight away, he advised me to submit my resume to him because he knew his manager was looking to employ someone. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.4. Social capital**

Sport is one of the ways in which people with no network can access social capital. A lack of social capital can be problematic for some people because it may lead to social isolation and mental health issues. Participation in sport can assist people from refugee backgrounds like the South Sudanese community members to make new friends and learn from the host community, while the latter can learn from refugees when they find a common interest through sport. People may play different types of sport based on their cultural background and the availability of local resources and support. During interviews, participants described the social benefits of sport as community cohesion because of the social connections sport brings to the community, citing the example of the World Cup and the community spirit derived from this event.

*Sport contributes lots in term of building a community. A good example is the World Cup sporting event, which is celebrated by many different cultures. It unites people and brings lots of enjoyment to young people and fans of the sport. Sport can bring people from different backgrounds together and I think if those in the South Sudanese community engage in sport, others will get used to them and the issue of racism in sport will diminish. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Many people do enjoy community events that bring people together and celebrate common interests. Sport is one of the events that bring people together in the community to watch players and enjoy socialising with friends and family members. All participants believed that when people come together for sport, they enjoy being together, regardless of their different backgrounds.

*Sport helps young people from refugee groups to gain a sense of belonging and participation. I know a group of young people who play sport – soccer at the moment – and it helped them to form their own small community and enjoy their time together. To me, sport plays an important role in assisting young people to integrate with other community groups because players from different communities*

*can come together and play sport together. (Participant 9, 30-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants who involved in sport stated that the benefit of sport for them was connection with the right people in sports clubs.

*The benefit of sport for me has been going around meeting other people from my community and beyond. I meet a lot of friends through sport and people who care about my sporting career, which is Australian footy. I also have many friends in the South Sudanese community who care for me because I play sport and they know me around Australia. I was supported and encouraged by one of the sporting legends; he helped me to join up and meet people with goodwill and encouragement. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

In addition

*I am a great fan of sport; I play netball with girls of my age. We work hard for our team as players and learn lots as a team from our coach. The benefits of sport [are] many; when you play sport, you meet people, network with them and become friends. We always meet on Saturdays and sometimes after school to discuss sports plans and the skills we need in order to be the best players. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Being new in the team and in the country required some support by people who are willing to assist and facilitate connection. A 23-year-old male stated that his coach connected him with the team and that helped him to connect quickly in Australia.

*When you join the team, there is always a person who can connect with you. There is always a person with whom your personalities click and this person has to be a coach. When I started, my coach was so supportive in introducing me to the team, and I quickly made friends within the team. All my friends in the team were so good for me; they always supported me and encouraged me to be myself when I am*

*playing. I see myself now as a better player in the team. Having a network of friends is very important because you can help each other when one of you needs help. Friends always protect each other from unfriendly groups. I remember the time when I was a kid; we protected ourselves from other unfriendly groups or kids who were against us, for some unknown reason. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants who play sport believed that people who participate in sport at a high level become famous through their roles in sport. Participants gave an example of one of their community members who plays basketball in America.

*When you become a successful athlete, you can always go to different places, meet different people and become well known. I am thinking here about the South Sudanese basketball player, Luol Deng. He is well known now in the community and is respected because of his achievements in sport. If you become successful in sport, you can also help your community by establishing sport. I heard that Luol Deng has established his basketball academy in South Sudan to help that community. This is just one example of what sport can do. (Participant 5, 20-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

A lack of engagement in some activities for young people can be problematic. Some young people can become involved in crime because there is nothing important for them to do. Participants believed that sport was good for the young people in their community because it kept them away from trouble. They stated that those young people who did not participate in fruitful activities, such as sport, were more likely to be caught up in crime.

*Young people from the South Sudanese community become disenfranchised because they do not engage in fruitful activities like sport. We know that if young people don't have anything to do, they can go out and do something against the law. I was involved in organising sporting activities for young people and basketball is my area of interest and skills with which I helped other young people who want to play. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

In any society, people who have sustainable networks and relationships where they live and work support each other in different ways. People who have moved as refugees to another country often have little or no network, as they lose their connections when they leave for resettlement. Social capital is about relationships and networks among people, where they live, and where they work. Many people from the South Sudanese community clearly have had trouble in making connections during their settlement period. Participants were able to share both positive and negative settlement experiences. They acknowledged that positive settlement experiences can be achieved through social networks and support from the host community. It is essential that some of the small things that people take for granted can be recognised in order for good-spirited people to continue helping those refugees who are in need of their help. For example, teaching someone to cook rice can make a big difference.

*The settlement is quite different from person to person based on network and support that you get when you arrive in Australia. My settlement experience was good compared to some people who were struggling with settlement issues. My friends helped me to settle better; I learned how to cook which was something I hadn't learnt when I was in Africa because the boys were not allowed to be in the kitchen as part of the South Sudanese culture. (**Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 9 years in Australia**)*

Participation in community network in any society brings some positive outcomes to individuals in community. Some participants in the South Sudanese community were well aware of the importance of engaging in helpful activities as a way of accessing social capital.

*People can settle well when they put their minds to positive activities such as sport, work and school. Nothing could prevent you from settling better when you have such connections. Finding something that can help you here and beyond is very important for South Sudanese people, and doing something is very crucial for your settlement and general wellbeing. I am spending my time on such things. My*

*involvement in sport will help me to achieve my goals. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.1. Economic capital**

Participation in sport may bring financial rewards, particularly for those who reach a high level of sport. For example, some sports clubs have the financial capacity to pay their athletes when they are playing in professional sport. Participants who played sport stated that they had secured some financial benefits through participation in sport.

*I get financial benefits through sport because the club pays me and this helped me to get to the games. I had no worries about transport or things that I want to buy for training. Therefore, financial benefits in sport are so helpful. You don't have to be stressed when you have money, no worries about how I am going to get there, and whether I have money for the train and so on. I play VFL in Victoria, but I know there are some other South Sudanese who play sport in Australia, and these guys are really enjoying their time playing, meeting new friends and other supporters who like [to watch] their games. My dream is to make it to AFL level and for young South Sudanese people [to] see me and join in. I want to be like Majak Daw and Aliir Aliir. Majak plays for North Melbourne and Aliir plays for the Sydney Swans. This is a good thing for the community and for them too. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that connecting with the right people through sport has helped some people to get work.

*I got my job through a sporting connection. My friend who played with me asked me to submit my resume. Within a few days, I was interviewed and I got the job because my friend had already discussed it with his manager, as he knew me well and believed in me: that I could do that job. I believe in sport because it challenges you and takes you to the next level. My sportsmanship assisted me to connect with many important people who come to games. I remember when I qualified for our*

*soccer league; many important people came and talked to me. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.2. Gaps in sport for the refugee community**

There is a clear gap for people from refugee backgrounds in the general sporting community. One of the many issues holding back such people from engaging in sport is lack of connection with sports clubs. It is clear from the previous narratives that they see or know the benefits of sport, but they have no idea where to begin when they want to join.

*In terms of sport, I think the South Sudanese community needs to work hard to address their issues and engage young people in sport. I think parents are not supporting their young people to engage in sport. This is a two-way street; clubs need to do their part in welcoming newly arrived or young people from multicultural community groups in their clubs. Racist preconceptions are barriers to the engagement of young people in sport. People refuse to engage in clubs because of a preconception they will be rejected. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

The lack of connection with clubs and support from the community as well as local organisations has been identified as something that is holding young people back from engaging in sport, particularly those from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese community. Participants expressed their concerns and wanted more support in order to engage their community members and young people in sport.

*I think clubs need to be open to welcome these young people from multicultural community groups and to be given a chance to try their best. If they don't perform well, the clubs have the right to refuse. Parents also need to support their young people to engage in sports programs. (Participant 16, 28-year-old female, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that lack of engagement and connection is a problem in their community of South Sudanese. They believed that their community members needed to engage in sport in order to have connection with other people beyond their South Sudanese community.

*I think people need to be engaged in productive activities such as sport, work, and music and dance programs to help them get away from psychological stress and isolation. The community needs to stand up for itself and get involved in local activities to help them settle better. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

Lack of resources is a problem for the South Sudanese community when it comes to participation in sport. Because of the lack of resources to support young people to participate in sport. Some participants stated that government organisations and non-governmental organisations should support their community members to participate in sporting activities.

*We need . . . support from agencies or the government to engage us in sport. Once we get in, we can show our skills and talents. We need to encourage our young people and introduce the sport to them without discouraging attitudes. I would like to see more South Sudanese young people actively engage in sport and work hard as good players in order to show their positive aspects and skills in sport. (Participant 13, 39-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition.

*Sport brings a community together and I want to see African or South Sudanese parents bring their children into the Australian Football League. There are lots of African young people with talent in sport; they can do well in sport. I want my South Sudanese people to participate in sport; we will not go back. This is our country; our contribution and participation are important. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

### **7.4.3. Sport as a settlement strategy for refugees**

While not the only settlement strategy, sport is one of the many strategies that can assist people from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese group, to secure some connection with mainstream community members. The findings from participants show that participation in sport assists people to connect with other people beyond their local community groups. Benefits of sport were discussed in different forms of capital. All participants believed that sport is good in controlling their young people who have nothing to engage in, and their participation in sport can lead to integration.

*Sport is so good in controlling young people and engaging them in terms of settlement services and integration. I know many young people who play basketball and soccer from the South Sudanese community: some play for pleasure and some take sport seriously as their career. I know some friends and family friends [who] went to America because of basketball. They are attending a basketball college there to become professional players. Basketball is very strong in America, but I want our young people to be supported here to become better basketball players instead of going to America. (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants who involved in sport believed their participation in sport gave them something they always enjoyed, as well as keeping them busy as young people during their settlement journey.

*I used to play volleyball and I enjoy meeting all my friends that played sport with me. We would talk about sport and different issues as friends. But now I have brothers who play sport, and that has helped lots through their settlement. I also know some other young people from the South Sudanese community who are doing well because they have chosen to engage in sport. I strongly believe that sport is good for young people and is a good activity to engage newly arrived young people from refugee backgrounds. My brothers play sport every weekend and attend*

*weeknight training. It keeps them very busy and they all enjoy their time in sporting activities. One of my brothers plays rugby and he wants it to be his career. We are all supporting him in the family because sport keeps him busy and away from his wrong friends who are having some issues with drinking. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

In addition.

*Sport has helped me to see things from different angles rather than seeing things from a one-sided view. It has taught me to remain calm, and to take time to challenge myself in a discipline. Sport also helped me to connect with the community, to meet and socialise with friends. Sometimes I may not understand what I am doing, but I can check with friends and talk with them and I learn or get some clarity from them. This is a good way of using your social network and friendships from sport. The friendships you make in sport are the friends who very often you see more than your family. This is really, because you regularly meet them through sport, play with them and spend time with them. (Participant 4, 24-year-old male, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants also acknowledged the fact settlement issues are very broad and that sport was not the only way of addressing settlement issues in Australia. However, it was good for those South Sudanese who had already decided to be involved in different types of sport.

*I am not suggesting that sport is the only way to settle better in Australia; there are many other positive activities that people need to be involved in to make their settlement easier and better. I know many young people and friends from the South Sudanese community who play soccer and basketball. I and other South Sudanese Australians who play footy want people to come, join us, and love footy. I love footy so much now, but not when I started. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants provided some reasons for why they believed that sport assisted with settlement issues.

*Our young people should engage in sport to keep them away from problems such as drinking alcohol and using drugs. If they engage in sporting activities, they will not have time to think about negative things that put their lives in challenging situations. (Participant 19, 27-year-old female, 11 years in Australia)*

In addition.

*People need to engage in activities that are good for their health and future. I do see some good young people engaging actively in sport such as basketball. These young people have no time for thinking or engaging in negative activities that have no benefit for their future. I would encourage South Sudanese people to look for work if they are doing studies and engage in sport to help them break social isolation. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that sport helps young people by keeping them occupied and away from things that may distract them from their future direction.

*My cousin plays basketball and all the family are very proud of him. He does not have any time to think or spend with some of his peers who are not actively engaged in sport. I believe sport is a great thing that helps people to interact and learn lots from each other, and so become friends. (Participant 8, 25-year-old female, 14 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that they have seen an improvement with South Sudanese emerging basketball players being active in their local community. The South Sudanese basketball at Sunshine attracted many boys to play during weekends. This in turn has brought an observed improvement in the community, although some also want girls to play and not be left out.

*I have seen young boys from the South Sudanese community engage well in sport, which helped them in many ways, such as keeping them busy and off the streets. The only issue for me is that I want to see girls engage in sport and not only boys, because sport assists in creating networks and through networks people can get jobs (**Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia**)*

In addition.

*I used to play sport at school but not anymore; my brother still plays sport and he loves it because it has engaged him very well and kept him away from other destructive activities. (**Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia**)*

Participants who were involved in sport believed that sport was not just about playing with registered clubs. It was also about self-care and general wellbeing as people enjoy sport.

*Sport is important to me for reasons including health and psychological wellbeing because it provides opportunities for networking, meeting people who can be useful in terms of support and learning opportunities. My first job, which I got at a Safeway market, was because of a girl I went to school with, and whose sister used to work there and she played netball with us. She helped me to get the job. Anything that creates a network is helpful for people in many ways. (**Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia**)*

#### **7.4.4. Problematic aspects of sports participation**

When it comes to participation in sport for people from refugee backgrounds such as the South Sudanese community, there are problems to facing them. Some of these problems including fear of unknown groups, and a lack of financial resources to support those who want to participate. In addition, some parents lack understanding of the importance of sport, as they have not engaged in sport before. Participants believed that lack of support from parents, and an understanding and commitment to support young people to remain in sport was still a problem with some parents.

*Lack of support from parents and the community is a major barrier for many people to engage in sport. Young people, especially from refugee and migrant backgrounds, need lots of support and encouragement to get confidence. Those who are not engaged in sport are like people who are not employed. They have nothing to engage them socially and are more likely to be depressed or engage in drinking. (Participant 15, 28-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

In addition

*There is not enough support in the community for people who play sport. Parents don't support their children to participate in sport and this is a big issue preventing us from being fully involved in sport. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that young people in the South Sudanese community would like to participate in sport, but their parents at times refused to allow them to participate.

*I wanted to play sport, but my mother always said "no". The only person who used to support me was my uncle who was very young at the time and knew lots about sport. He always argued with my mum that sport is good for her as a young person growing up. My mum, later on, put her case to me: "Okay, you can only play a sport if you find your way to the game and training; I will not be with you, drive you around to play sports all the time." She also added another condition that she would not pay the fees or for transport. Later I got a job for my sport, but I was also able to do housework, cleaning and washing dishes to keep my mum. Sport is two-way; it needs commitment from young players. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that the lack of support was linked to cultural attitudes, as some parents preferred their young people to do domestic duties at home. Some young people needed to remain at home to look after siblings, which meant that their time to participate in sport was often taken away from them.

*With lack of support from parents and cultural attitudes about sport, some parents keep their young people doing domestic duties, which deny them the chance to engage in productive activities such as sport. The problem with some parents in the South Sudanese community is they never participated in sport and some of them don't even know what sport is or its benefits. Sport is a new thing for those parents who never engaged in sport and it is hard for them to understand and allow their children to participate. For example, when I was growing up, I wanted to be engaged actively in sport, but my mum wouldn't let me because she has no understanding of sport. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

In addition:

*I used to play a lot of sport and my mother disagreed with me all the time because she believes in education not sport. I had started playing soccer in Africa and I played in many soccer competitions or leagues. (Participant 5, 27-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that traveling to the sport locations was another problem that held young people back from participating in sport. Some South Sudanese parents were not able to drive young people to sport locations. Single parents also struggled to manage their children if they had a number of children in the family without support from other people.

*A lack of support from both parents to help young people travel to games was another issue. The disadvantage of single parenting seems to be holding some young people back from sport because their parent is busy with many other settlement issues. Some participants also mentioned financial obstacles as a reason as to why parents were not taking their young people to sports programs. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

In addition to Transportation barriers for young people to attend sporting venues

*There is a lack of support from parents; some are single parents looking after a number of children. They find that they do everything for them, particularly those who want to engage in sport, but are often left out because of lack [of] support from their families. One of the barriers to sport is finance. Some [parents] are not able to pay the club fees. The young people from refugee backgrounds and their parents have no work. It is hard for them to pay fees including transport to training. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

A lack of finance is one problem for South Sudanese parents. Participants believed that financial issues held some parents back, making them unable to support their young people in engaging in sport. At times, the cost was unbearable, as many parents depended on social security income through lack of employment.

*The financial issue is another problem holding our community back from participating in sport. Many people are not working and they cannot afford to pay the fees for clubs or gyms, so people cannot be bothered when they know that it is costing them money they don't have. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

#### **7.4.5. Racism and discrimination in Sport**

The issue of racism and discrimination in sport is something many clubs and associations are recognising as a problem. The recognition began when serious debates were directed to club associations about their role in addressing racism in sport. The racism experienced by the indigenous former AFL player Adam Goodes, and Majak Daw, a North Melbourne footballer and member of the South Sudanese community, has raised the level of awareness on how deep the issue of racism runs in sport, particularly how racism can affect people of colour on sport fields in Australia. During interviews, participants provided examples of their friends who encountered some racist behaviour in sport.

*I have a friend who used to play basketball and he got into a fight with another player who called him a "black bastard". My friend got suspended for two months*

*and the person who called him a black bastard was not punished. (Participant 14, 23-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

People from the South Sudanese community who were involved in AFL have experienced negative language or abuse in sport. A player on the field may ignore the racist language, but the language could affect their supporters and other young people thinking of participating. A 21-year-old male who plays AFL at a junior level with the aim of reaching senior levels of the AFL told of his experience.

*I have been called a name that was not good in or [off] the field, but I just ignored them and kept playing because I was doing well and they knew that I was good and that was a reason for them to call me bad names. In sport, people can say things to you and if you react negatively and hit someone because of it, you will get suspended and delay your progress as a player while probably the name-caller may not lose anything. However, you will lose your game or [delay your] progress because you are focusing too much on negative things. (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

In addition

*I have seen indigenous black Australians being treated negatively in sport. People like Adam Goodes have been called [names] in a racist way while they were playing. This confirms that racism still exists in Australia. Some people hold negative thoughts in their minds, but they cannot say it openly as a matter of law. Australia is a multicultural society and racism cannot be allowed to destroy this beautiful nation. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that racism will take time to go away in Australia. They believed that it reached to the level which it does not bother some of them anymore in the sport fields.

*I think there is racism, [pause] and racism is something that will not go away for a while yet in Australia. It has been there for years and I have encountered lots of*

*racism in Australia. I have reached the point where it does not bother me when I am dealing with angry people. I just brush it off and play my sport or do what I have to do. Racism is not about the South Sudanese or Sudanese: it applies to many other cultures, although Australia is a multicultural society. Still, people like me have experienced racism and discrimination. We need to think about the history of black people in Australia, which is not that good at all, but I think people should not react because our reactions can give racist people an opportunity to get what they want. I think you must not react to racists; they are not equal to you and that is why they are racist. There is something missing in their lives, which is why they play the racist card. You should not react to it at all. (Participant 3, 20-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that some sport associations were not open enough to support people from refugee backgrounds. They believed that a lack of engagement and racism were factors that made people from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese, choose not to participate in sport.

*There are a few issues with sport clubs; they lack engagement with people from refugee or African backgrounds. Their talents are often played down and that is racism and discrimination. There is a need for strong advocacy to promote more engagement of young people from refugee community groups to participate in sport. I remember when I tried to engage in modelling; I was told by the agency worker that they don't work with dark-skinned people because it is hard to get jobs at the end [after graduation] with them. People don't take them for modelling shows. (Participant 11, 28-year-old female, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants recognised the work done in the sporting industry to reduce racism and discrimination. They believed that the government was working hard to reduce the issue, but still more work was needed to promote the positive image of sport in order to attract back those who were deterred by racist behaviour.

*There are some problems in sport, although the government is trying hard to prevent racism in public areas like sport. Still, young people from refugee and*

*migrant backgrounds find it a bit difficult to engage in clubs because they find [it] hard to fit in [with] the big sports clubs. Sport needs to be promoted in a way that can attract young people from those backgrounds. Racist behaviour has deterred young people from participating in sports and this is a problem that needs to be addressed. (Participant 1, 24-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Some participants believed that some of their players in the South Sudanese community were assisted by their friends and coaches from the mainstream community who were aware of the challenges in sport when it comes to racism and discrimination.

*I was prepared by my best friend who advised me: "When you are in the game you must know that there will people who will say things to you, make you react and that is part of their strategy to destroy you or your game." I asked him what I could do to manage such a situation. He said: "If you are playing in the field and you know that you are doing well, do not listen to what they are saying to you. You keep playing well to beat them by seeing you do well in the field, and that is the best option for you to ensure that you hurt them by scoring goals or doing well. When you keep doing well or doing good things, you can hurt people who are racist to you by beating them. Some of them will give up and say, "Wow, this kid is doing well by ignoring negative aspects and does well in the field'." (Participant 10, 21-year-old male, 8 years in Australia)*

Participants believed that Australia is a multicultural nation with many people from cultural backgrounds, and that South Sudanese people should be allowed to participate in sport without facing some problems.

*We are a multicultural nation: I love multiculturalism. We should be allowed to engage in sport actively as part of this society without problems. It does not matter where you come from. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

## 7.5. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed a wide range of issues including settlement experiences, participation in employment and sport. It has provided in-depth detail about the settlement experiences of participants and their families and friends by allowing participants to share their settlement stories and experiences as presented in the preceding narratives. Both positive and difficult experiences during the settlement journey have been clearly identified, ranging from difficulties to being in a new place without sufficient support and connection, to the positive experiences of available opportunities, such as education and freedom. The results arising from the interviews can be summarised as follows:

**Settlement experiences:** There was strong agreement that dealing with settlement issues required certain levels of skills and different forms of capital. For example, psychological capital is important for refugees to cope with settlement pressures, which include other issues such as racism and discrimination, as well as family breakdowns due to social and cultural change.

**Participation in employment:** Engagement in employment was seen as a potential source of economic capital, which assists people from refugee backgrounds to overcome settlement challenges surrounding them and their families. Employment was also a great source of cultural capital as work provides the opportunity for refugees to gain workplace experiences beneficial for their future work and for understanding workplace culture.

On the other hand, a number of participants noted that a lack of employment had made things move from bad to worse. This was, in part, because refugees originally came with expectations of wanting to re-establish themselves after many years in war-torn areas and refugee camps. When they were processed through UNHCR, some hoped to enter the workforce to support their families financially, both in Australia and overseas, by sponsoring their relatives to join them. Some want to work and put their children in private schools. Some want to work to buy their own home as they are now in a stable country.

The barriers encountered through a lack of English were frequently identified as quite formidable. Other barriers included limited labour skills, lack of education, and

racism and discrimination due to some reasons such as being an African or refugee backgrounds.

**Participation in sport:** As part of engaging young people from refugee backgrounds towards settling better, sport can help to assimilate them into the mainstream community and build connections with others. Engaging in sports assists young people (in particular) to enhance social capital because it has a role in helping youth to integrate and break down social isolation. It is also a great source of connection and social interaction with the mainstream community. Sport also helps young people to enhance their psychological capital through gaining confidence and resilience skills from training and coaches. Thus, the benefits to refugee community groups in engaging in sport have been identified in this study through participant narratives. Some challenges were raised as issues of concern, such as lack of finances to access sport, lack of connection with sporting clubs, fear of getting involved with unknown groups, racism and discrimination, and lack of support from parents and organisations.

## **Chapter 8 : Discussion and study contribution to existing knowledge**

### **8.1 Introduction**

Chapter 7 presented the findings from the qualitative study. These findings are case examples of settlement issues narrated by participants for the South Sudanese community in Melbourne. This chapter provides an integrated discussion of both qualitative and quantitative findings about the settlement experiences of South Sudanese people in Melbourne, using the different forms of capital as a conceptual framework.

The results conclusively show that settling in a new place without a connection to important activities, such as employment and sport, can be distressing for anyone, not least for those with a low level of English who are trying to fit into a highly competitive English-speaking country such as Australia. This case study has found many settlement challenges facing South Sudanese people in Melbourne, with one of the most significant challenges being a failure to engage in productive activities. Considerable number of refugee families from South Sudan have fallen apart as they navigate from traditional values of togetherness as one unit to individualistic life. Young people seem to be taking their own direction and some have found themselves in very difficult situations, including homelessness without family support (Abur 2012). The findings of this case study also confirmed that difficult issues for South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds are an extension of conflict and hardship in refugee camps to the final stage of post-settlement experiences in their new country. These experiences can be extended to similar experiences for other refugees in Australia, particularly refugees with African backgrounds.

### **8.2 Empirical findings of refugee settlement**

As some of the empirical findings have been signalled in the introduction of this chapter, this study also confirms the complex challenges of the South Sudanese community's settlement found in the existing literature. The thesis theorised that the situation of refugee settlement is very complex and infinite due to political and social issues encountered by refugees (please refer for the existing literature to Chapter 3 and to

complex issues in the qualitative findings in Chapter 7). The empirical findings show that refugee settlement and issues are at many levels, including psychological issues, because of traumatic experiences of conflict, displacement, and resettlement and, finally, settlement experiences. Similarly, the empirical findings of this thesis are consistent with challenges of settlement for refugees in many areas, including barriers to participation in employment and sport. For example, quantitative findings revealed that 99 (40.7%) of the South Sudanese respondents were not involved in sport. Similarly, almost 40% of participants indicated that they were unemployed or looking for work. In addition, a considerable proportion – 38.3% – revealed that they were employed only part-time. Of part-time workers, 48.4% were females and 51.6% males. Of unemployed people, 43.8% were young people aged between 18–24 years.

First, the empirical findings increased understanding of social and other issues of inequality faced by South Sudanese or other refugees in barriers to participation in employment and sport, particularly for those who want to participate but encounter various capital barriers. Second, the findings of this study assert the importance of different forms of capital in assisting refugees during their settlement periods. Third, the findings demonstrate the importance and usefulness of using mixed methods (i.e. both quantitative and qualitative) research to investigate complex issues of refugee settlement, such as benefits of participation in employment and sport.

These empirical qualitative findings have answered the main research question of: “How do employment and sport participation affect the settlement process, and how do the benefits of employment and sport participation deliver different forms of capital that enable the South Sudanese community to effectively move through the settlement process in Melbourne, Australia?” Findings from both the survey and interviews have shown the importance of accumulative capital for refugees in their settlement journey, which can be acquired through participation in employment and sport. The benefits of accumulative capital can assist refugees to eliminate settlement challenges based on levels of participation in employment and sport.

The results suggest that participation in sport plays a significant role in easing the settlement process for refugees by enhancing their social connections and thus breaking social isolation and relieving psychological distress because of settlement confusion and

idleness. The findings of this study generally agree with the existing literature on sport. There is a consistency in the findings in the literature and from participants' views that participation in sport and recreation has an important role to play in assisting young people from refugee backgrounds with the settlement and integration process. Young people from refugee backgrounds are more likely to benefit from targeted programs through sport to facilitate settlement as well as promoting health and wellbeing (Olliff 2007).

Findings confirmed that employment (economic and social capital) brings financial benefits for refugee families and individuals, and this assists them with other settlement challenges, as well as facilitating successful integration into the mainstream community. These financial benefits assist refugee parents to pay for activities for their young people to participate in the mainstream community's activities, and to pay rent, buy food and other necessities. Young people who are ready to work are more likely to have their energies and potential channelled well by engaging in the workforce as well as benefiting from employment through earning income and having positive experiences. Similarly, participation in sport provides physical, social, psychological, cultural, and (potentially) economic benefits (or accumulated capital).

On the other hand, however, the difficulties of gaining employment and breaking down barriers to participation in sport were equally observed and articulated as settlement challenges by participants during interviews, as well as in the survey findings. Although there was uniform agreement on the benefits of participation in employment and sport, the effects of unemployment and lack of engagement in sport were critical issues. Young people who are not involved in activities that engage them are more likely to be at risk of social isolation, involvement in negative activities such as crime and binge drinking. Also, those who are unemployed but continue to look unsuccessfully for work are likely to suffer from a high level of psychological stress.

### **8.3 Settlement experiences**

Findings confirmed that the settlement experiences of the South Sudanese community were very complex and challenging in many ways for both families and individuals. There were also very positive views in term of the rapid acceptance into the

community and quick progress in education, as many appeared to be largely engaged in education in Australia if they were not able to work.

Findings suggest that when it comes to understanding settlement issues, some people often take the settlement experience for granted – yet it is a process that is full of challenges and fears of the unknown or unforeseen things. Settlement issues and experiences include employment difficulties that undermine physical and mental health, as well as limiting the ability to access support services in mainstream society. Adjusting to a new culture with an aim of securing full participation in the new society and rearing children or teenagers in a new culture that is different to the parents' own upbringing are the pressing social issues facing the South Sudanese people. Some have difficult experiences of a new system, and lack of fluency in English impedes wellbeing in the settlement, as they must rely solely on other people to assist them within their community, as well as outside of their own community.

Findings suggest that the South Sudanese community has experienced a high prevalence of disengaged young people and vulnerable families who experience issues of family breakdown, social isolation, financial hardship, homelessness, poor health, drug and alcohol abuse, gambling problems, and unemployment. This community has also experienced some difficulties in areas such as participation in employment and participation in sport, as well as parenting in a new culture, and social isolation and discrimination. These challenges are confirmed in several studies that explicitly look at the settlement issues of the African/Sudanese offspring of those from refugee backgrounds (see Abur & Spaaij 2016; Atem 2011; Lejukole 2008; Major et al. 2013; Mamer 2010; Marlowe 2010, 2011b; Marlowe, Harris & Lyons 2014). For example, Major et al. (2013) suggested that African refugees have experienced greater settlement challenges than other migrants in Australia. This study of the South Sudanese community acknowledges that settlement issues cannot be resolved overnight, particularly when there are not enough support services for young people, families, and individuals who are looking for participation in employment and the wider community.

## **8.4 Gaps in settlement**

Findings from this study indicate that people from refugee backgrounds, particularly the South Sudanese community, remain vulnerable when it comes to employment and participation in organised sporting activities due to a lack of connections with the right people and services. Connections can lead to many other benefits, including empowering individuals and families to address settlement issues autonomously. The findings assert that the South Sudanese community can benefit from active engagement in sport and employment as part of the strategy to overcome settlement challenges. The benefits of employment and sport participation are greater and more cost effective for refugees by learning the English language and breaking social isolation. These findings of the South Sudanese study also relate to international research findings, which indicated that gaps exist in refugee settlement. These gaps in refugee settlement are embedded in a lack of different forms of capital, as well as a lack of effective leadership and advocacy to champion different forms of activities, which can assist refugees to obtain accumulative capital (Andriani & Christoforou 2016).

The findings of this study show that having strong connections and networks of good friends can help members of refugee community groups participate in employment, which assists in dealing with socioeconomic problems and other family issues. The study also revealed that different forms of capital facilitate the integration of South Sudanese community members in wider Australian communities by accessing important services such as employment and sports programs. Therefore, settlement for refugee communities can only be successful when there is a strong social connection between refugee groups and local community groups. Through social connections and alliances with open-minded people in the wider community, it is likely that there will be assistance in either providing jobs and/or connecting refugees to the right people who donate time to provide relevant ‘self-help’ information and mentoring. Those who are already actively involved in sport, such as players who wish to continue developing their social connections, can assist the community in building cultural and social capital.

These findings confirm the Whittaker and Holland-Smith (2014) study, which found that social capital, is an important element not only for the volunteer accessing the field or social structure that regulates voluntary opportunities, particularly where

volunteer recruitment is found to be exclusive, but also in providing the individual with opportunities to build or develop such capital. The findings in this suggest that, the idea that sports volunteerism can contribute to the acquisition of social capital and hence personal development is one that needs to be strongly promoted by central and local policymakers. Thus, it is vital that refugee community groups are helped to connect to local services and people. Creating such relationships is profoundly important to their settlement outcomes. This South Sudanese community study also shows that conflict and tension between locals and refugees when refugee families are settled in a particular area can be reduced through better policy and promotion. For instance, there is a need for public meetings to inform the local community, which is then more likely to accept refugee families in their neighbourhood centres, schools, and workplaces without discrimination or negative stereotyping.

Similarly, the study found gaps between the understanding of refugee community members and the Australian government's settlement policy in relation to settlement timeframes. According to the government's settlement policy, refugee community groups are expected to address their settlement issues and settle within five years (see DIAC 2012). This means that only refugee families that have been in Australia for less than five years are eligible for settlement support services. However, refugee community groups have high levels of need that require ongoing support throughout their settlement journey until they feel they are able to help themselves. Australian mainstream society also lacks an understanding of the complexity of settlement issues. That complexity is well understood by refugee community groups because of experiences incurred by families and individuals.

This thesis suggests that some of the barriers facing refugee families and individuals are due to lack of engagement in community activities. In order to assist these refugees, there is a critical need for engagement of both the local community and refugees as a matter of policy. This includes a need for discussion where local sports clubs and associations become involved and learn how to assist people from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate more in sport. In addition, some ways should be found to engage those clubs and associations to work with refugee community groups, such as the South Sudanese, to promote and support such participation and cultural tolerance. A

similar discussion needs to be promoted in the workplace with employers as to how they can engage or assist refugees to participate in employment equally with their native-born counterparts without experiencing ongoing difficulties.

### **8.5 Impacts of social change on Gender role, family dynamics and youth**

The qualitative findings presented in Chapter 7 in family dynamics, gender, and youth issues show that South Sudanese families are facing numerous challenges of social change in their families. These social changes include the change of responsibilities in family, between wife and husband, and the dynamic relationship between young people and their parents, as there are problems in the parenting practices of South Sudanese people clashing with western parenting notions. Findings suggest that many men have lost their family responsibilities in Australia and this has caused problems in relationships, leading to high levels of separation and divorce in the community. Women have taken responsibilities of caring for children on their own, and this leads to another layer of problems, as many youths become rebellious against their families and involved in criminal activities. This is widely reported in the media, such as the activities of the so-called ‘Apex Gang’ in Melbourne (Crane 2016). Findings suggest that parents have been challenged by youth issues and general rearing of their children in a new culture. Their traditional ways of rearing children and dealing with youth issues has been challenged by the laws of their new country.

These social changes are part of the settlement journey that affects South Sudanese families and individuals. Social change often starts the day people arrive in Australia for resettlement. The structural system clashes with the culture people bring with them from overseas. For example, South Sudanese culture differs from Australian culture: ways of managing family issues, relationship between wife and husband, responsibility on who makes critical decisions in the family and why – these are just some examples of where the role of men and women are very distinct according to South Sudanese culture. According to the traditional arrangement, women and girls have responsibilities for domestic chores, such as cooking, cleaning, working on small farms, collecting water and firewood, as well as caring for children. Men and boys have responsibilities for protection, and decision-making when it comes to social and political

issues for community and families. They are also responsible for cattle grazing, hunting for food, fishing, and farming. These distinctive roles do not exist in Australia for many South Sudanese families. Women have more power when it comes to decision-making in Australia because the caring responsibility for children is with women and is based on how the government supports families. Men have no decision when it comes to financial decisions in the family except when the man is working, when he can then be independent and free to make financial decisions.

These social changes relating to families and youth in the South Sudanese community are also confirmed in some previous research with the South Sudanese community (see Abur 2012; Atem 2011; Marlowe 2010, 2011; Tipping 2011). There is frequently an incongruity between different generations' awareness of their new environment and differences in their expectations of how young people should negotiate the settlement landscape. This causes significant family conflict and possible family breakdown because of disagreement in the new environment. There are also individual conflicts due to dissatisfaction with life (Lewig, Arney & Salveron 2010, Gifford & McDonald-Wilmsen 2009). This PhD study confirms that the reality of arriving in Australia does not mean the end of refugees' pressing needs related to settlement issues. Issues concerning family conflict emerge post-arrival in Australia because of unemployment, including family breakdown. Intergenerational conflicts emerge, and social isolation, cultural clashes and feelings of alienation, loss, despair and hopelessness for the future become a reality for some people.

## **8.6 Social and psychological impact of unemployment**

*Unemployment is of concern for many South Sudanese and other refugees with an African background. If you are working, one can make sense of Australia and enjoy Australia as a beautiful place with no problems. However, when one is unemployed, you really see a bad part of Australia and you begin clashing [sic] your head all the time and think lots about yourself and your family. (Participant 20, 19-year-old female, 9 years in Australia)*

The findings of this study confirmed that a lack of employment among many people within the South Sudanese community is causing many social problems, including

disengagement and hopelessness among youth, but also among more mature refugees who are looking for jobs. The community firmly believes that such members have nothing to do and are usually viewed as troublemakers. When they find something positive to do, their problems often reduce quickly because they are doing something effective, which enhances their life. There are many unidentified mental health issues in the refugee community caused by long-term unemployment. Some participants spoke of unemployment being the major problem holding them back, because they could not afford to buy things without thinking about their family. Some people came to Australia with a dream that they would find jobs to support themselves and their family. This included establishing themselves by getting paid work, buying a family home, buying cars, sponsoring family members who remain overseas and taking holidays. When a migrant realises that this dream is not possible, it affects individuals and families, which can lead to mental health problems.

There is a clear link between unemployment and social breakdown in a community where there is a high level of unemployment (Cullen 1999, Dieckhoff & Gash 2012). Social and psychological effects of unemployment were found to have negative consequences on the lives of those who are not working (Cullen 1999). The impacts of unemployment are costly in any society, but particularly in communities where people are struggling with poverty and many other issues, such as instability due to transition from suburb to suburb or from city to city. Unemployment effects can land heavily on families and individuals as they are transitioning. Consequences include psychological effects such as increasing mental health problems, drinking and drug problems, family violence, child neglect and abuse, and engaging in criminal activity (Cullen 1999, Dieckhoff and Gash 2012).

The number of families separated or divorced has increased in the South Sudanese community because males who are traditionally considered the head of family are unemployed and cannot provide for their families (Abur & Spaaij 2016). The correlation between unemployment and family conflict and violence (Fisher 2013). Findings of this PhD study suggest that some women in the South Sudanese community have views that men who are not working spend many hours away from home socialising with friends, and therefore have no income to contribute to the family budget. This causes tension in

many families, as some men are more likely to respond violently towards their partners due to frustration.

Findings confirm that lack of accumulative capital has been a big issue for the South Sudanese community, particularly with an absence of economic capital in a challenging period of settlement. With lack of economic capital, unemployed people face financial difficulties with their families, as they are not able to financially support family members on simple issues. Lack of support may lead to family and intergenerational conflict. It also causes serious conflicts between a wife and a husband who is not working. They cannot afford to pay tuition for their children or for outings. The lack of employment in refugee community groups has been well documented in the literature (see Cholewinski 2010; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006).

The findings of this study demonstrate that these issues have occurred within the South Sudanese community in Australia. The results also show that employment is a key player for better settlement for individuals and their families. Without work, things can go ‘haywire’ very easily in families and in the community. Unemployment is often related to poor health for various reasons. Firstly, it often leads to material deprivation and poverty by reducing income and other benefits that a person had prior to their present unemployment situation. Secondly, losing a job is stressful and lowers one’s self-esteem, disrupts daily routine and increases anxiety. Thirdly, unemployment increases the likelihood of turning to unhealthy coping behaviours, such as resorting to substance use and abuse (Dieckhoff & Gash 2012).

The reasons for unemployed individuals lacking social participation, unemployment reduced social participation as it is a common attribute to economic and psychological distress. Not only do the unemployed experience a sharp drop in income, but they also experience psychological stress as a result of losing their work-based identity. This psychological distress is compounded by negative attitudes surrounding unemployment (Dieckhoff & Gash 2012). Unemployment is not only immediately distressing for adults, but is also likely to have long-term consequences for their children’s future participation in education and employment.

## 8.7 Social capital

*Sport has taken [up] my time, mainly to socialise and meet other people in the community. It is good to meet people from different communities through sport. We used to encourage each other, as young people that, you know, sport is better for us than what is happening on the streets. This later became a theme in influencing others to join us. (Participant 6, 27-year-old male, 11 years in Australia)*

The social benefits of participation in employment and sport as presented in Chapter 7 demonstrated the importance of social capital in participation in both employment and sport. The findings show that participation in employment and sport assists people from South Sudanese refugee backgrounds to meet new friends. It also assists with breaking social isolation and stopping negative thinking, as well as reducing alcohol consumption. Such participation gives people who have no social networks a sense of community and belonging, as long as they are made to feel welcome in employment and sport.

The general idea of social capital is embedded in social relationships: trusting, cooperating, helping, and connecting. This involves reciprocity and respecting relationships with an aim of generating a positive impact on individuals, families, and society. Social capital can help to reduce living costs and facilitate a collective sense of community and caring. The interview findings suggest that young people involved in sport have no time to engage in activities that may be problematic for the community; for example, many young people from refugee backgrounds drink alcohol in parks as a way of socialising with friends. These groups have often encountered challenges with authorities, such as police, as well as their own family members becoming unhappy with that behaviour. Therefore, many in the South Sudanese community are very concerned about the future of their young people as they become more disenfranchised due to lack of engagement in productive activities such as employment and sport.

The benefits of social capital theory are well documented in research. For example, research on community sport and diversity suggests that community sport is an important setting where people are socialised into positive norms around race, gender, and the ability to develop significant skills and engage with others from different backgrounds

(Abur 2016, Spaaij et al. 2014). Similarly, Stevens (2010) suggested that social capital can come through a combination of labour and socialisation roles. People who are working in an office often have social interaction during lunch breaks or in meetings while they are carrying out their designated work. Field (2003) also found that people are often connected through a series of networks and they tend to share common values. These networks are organised resources that form social capital and other types of capital. People who participate in sport and employment benefit from their networks based on common interests. Young South Sudanese people engaged in sport, for instance, gain special connections through that activity. They also form their special groups of networks through which they take care of each other.

Therefore, sport provides a place for socialisation for young people who have nothing better to do and who may be looking for activities to engage in. Sport also assists in building a sense of community for parents, volunteers, coaches, and spectators. In some communities with an ethnic cleansing/conflict history, sport is a powerful tool in bringing people together to play peaceful matches or games. Such a strategy often sends a powerful message to those communities in conflict when they see their young people playing in a friendly manner for the benefit of community social harmony and peace (Abur 2016).

Participants noted their experiences in refugee camps on how sport has assisted them to remain positive in hard situations, such as the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, as well as many other refugee camps worldwide. Sport is excellent for young refugees as it assists them to improve their resilience and create a sense of autonomy and independence, which are useful for work and life skills. Therefore, this study suggests promoting participation in sport for the refugee community as a way of supporting diversity in Australia. Refugee community groups can benefit from inclusion, just as mainstream Australian communities can benefit from promoting inclusive communities by working holistically with refugee and migrant community groups.

## **8.8 Economic capital**

*Well, the benefits of employment for me are money and engage[ing] with my team at work. I like working in a team and meeting people, socialising and networking*

*with them is the benefit that I like most. (Participant 12, 22-year-old female, 11 years in Australia).*

This study shows that economic capital plays an important role in facilitating good settlement outcomes for the South Sudanese community. Findings from participants who were employed acknowledged that employment not only provided them with incomes, but also generally helped with connections during settlement. Even though most were employed only part-time with low incomes compared to the non-refugee population, they acknowledged that they were better off than their colleagues who were not employed. The findings demonstrate that there is no doubt that employment assists individuals and families to settle successfully because of financial benefits in South Sudanese community.

Findings reveal that many South Sudanese with refugee backgrounds want to join the workforce as soon as possible in order to support their family, both within Australia and overseas. They may have faced financial pressure to provide financial support to their relatives and friends who are still in refugee camps with little food who continue to face other difficulties, identified earlier, which include sickness and lack of medication. Therefore, the benefits of employment to these people from refugee backgrounds include starting a positive life in peace and happiness, once they can support themselves and family members. Employment also provides them with social connections and provides a sense of contributing to Australian society through paying taxes and serving customers or the community. The benefits go beyond financial benefits for the South Sudanese community.

The findings of this study demonstrate that economic capital assists integration, as it helps those who are employed to settle better due to the financial benefits of employment. The findings add to the existing theory about economic capital (Bourdieu 1986; Shilling 2003). Employment is an indicator of economic capital whose benefits cannot be isolated from other capital or dimensions. Economic capital contributes to social capital because of the social aspects of employment in communities and social practices within the workforce. They are linked to social, psychological, and cultural capital. People who are employed receive social and cultural benefits from meeting friends through work, developing knowledge through employment by engaging in training and meetings within the organisation where policies and other work-related tasks

are discussed. Therefore, employment is an important source of connection and improving knowledge. It is seen as meaningful and essential and, through work, people use their talents, strengths, and abilities to serve others. Work can be a joyous element of life as the main point of contribution to their society, which also adds to their human dignity.

The willingness and readiness of the South Sudanese community to work has also raised doubts about the negative perceptions in relation to refugees being not ready to work (Abur & Spaaij 2016). The points of view expressed in the interviews are that community members have been looking for employment to contribute to their families and Australia by becoming taxpayers. Findings of this PhD study demonstrates that refugees are ready to work, but it is difficult to find employment, and this adds further stress for job seekers. They describe social security payments as not being enough for families, particularly for those also concerned about their relatives and friends in refugee camps. Getting employment for people from refugee backgrounds is not an easy process. This makes their unemployment rate higher compared to the general host community. The challenges of unemployment for refugee community groups in Australia have been well documented in the literature (see Abdelkerim & Grace 2012; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2006, 2007; Correa-Velez, Barnett & Gifford 2015). Findings of this PhD study confirm that lack of employment reduces the level of participation for refugees in activities that incur some fee payment. As stated earlier, particularly for the unemployed in the South Sudanese community, its members often cannot afford to pay for social events or for their young people to participate in sport.

## **8.9 Psychological capital**

*Employment is powerful in the sense that it allows you to participate in society and contribute to your wellbeing as you count yourself that you are part of the community and feeling that, you are included in society. It is motivating in many ways. (Participant 18, 30-year-old female, 15 years in Australia)*

The findings from this study show that psychological capital is found in both employment and sport. When a refugee is employed, the level of financial stress is reduced dramatically. This also helps to reduce some issues within the family, perhaps

not to zero, but to some reasonable level of care and harmony. This study also shows that young people from refugee backgrounds who become involved in sport activities gain psychological capital by learning confidence and communication skills through their coaches and other team members.

The study theorised that the benefits of participation in both sport and employment aid increasing levels of psychological capital. Social and psychological capital can be converted into other forms of capital, which can assist refugees to build a new life. This adds to the existing theory about psychological capital, which is about one's ability to cope and contribute in activities such as work, study, or playing sport (see Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio 2007, Luthans et al. 2007). Psychological capital or resilience is the capacity of individuals to access resources that enhance their wellbeing, and the capacity of their physical and social ecologies to make those resources available in meaningful ways (Ungar 2010).

The settlement situation of the South Sudanese community/refugee community groups is challenging, but their ability to cope and capacity to overcome hardships is profound and deep-seated. They continue on their life journey as they seek solutions or better settlement outcomes in their new country. There is often a high level of psychological resilience among refugees, given the experiences and challenges they have undergone before resettlement and during settlement. Many things have happened to them as refugees, which have been described in the literature as difficult situations (see Chapter 3 about refugees and settlement). Findings of this PhD study confirm that settlement of refugees and psychological capital, coping with unemployment requires carrying a lot of resilience, or surviving high levels of racism and discrimination, both good examples of resilience for the South Sudanese community in Melbourne. Also, parents who deal with parenting pressures in a new culture and find new ways to manage their children's needs and expectations is another good example of resilience. As Bourdieu (1986) stated, capitals are resources and can be converted. Psychological capital is one of the resources that assist people in sustaining their wellbeing and their capacity to remain calm and culturally meaningful in difficult situations (see Luthans & Youssef 2004; Luthans et al. 2007; Ungar 2010, 2011).

## **8.10 Cultural capital**

Being in a new environment where the culture is different to one's own cultural background and cultural knowledge requires commitment and determination to learn about the new culture and its systems. The findings of this study show that participation in employment and sport provides opportunities to gain cultural capital. Participants revealed that this cultural capital can be gained through work, accessing work experiences, meeting new people in the workplace, learning teamwork skills and cooperation, and even learning about leadership skills and other responsibilities. The findings also revealed that these skills can be learned or obtained through participation in sport.

At the same time, this study shows the difficulties facing people from the South Sudanese community in both employment and education because of the low level of English proficiency. However, some participants who have achieved an acceptable level of English proficiency – because they have completed their studies in Australia – also see the problem of unemployment as going beyond English proficiency. They believe that there are systemic issues in the workforce in Australia due to certain negative attitudes when it comes to employment of people with African backgrounds. They also believe that people who are ready to work or learn can be assisted to obtain work-related skills by providing specialist-training programs. Both negative and positive experiences carry a huge weight of learning, which builds into cultural capital. Again, Bourdieu (1986) described capital as resources. Therefore, cultural capital is a set of behaviours, preferences, values, attitudes, and other activities of the mind and body that are linked to social class. Cultural capital is often acquired through learning, allows people to reach a higher position in society, and is closely linked to economic and social capital.

The findings of this study on cultural capital support the existing theories of Bourdieu (1986). All participants in this study described benefits of learning (education) eloquently in Chapter 7. They described learning opportunities as one of the good outcomes for their settlement. The benefits of engaging in learning (education) for the South Sudanese community/refugee community groups include knowledge, better health, and employment outcomes. For example, a higher level of education is correlated with other social determinants of health, such as the level of income, employment security,

and working conditions. Many have an appetite and willingness to learn new things in their new country of resettlement. Through cultural capital and education, willing citizens have more opportunities to benefit from new training opportunities if their employment situation suddenly changes. Furthermore, education facilitates the possibility for civic activities and engagement in the political process. In other words, people attain a better understanding of the world, and they become more capable of seeing and influence societal factors that shape their own health.

Cultural capital is relevant to the discussion of refugee settlement in terms of language and learning the language (O'Connor 2014). A higher degree of language proficiency is a valuable form of cultural capital for refugees. For example, a good level of English, both written and spoken, often places a person in an advantageous position and can easily lead to participation in the workforce, compared to those with poor English skills and difficult accents.

Lack of cultural capital places refugees at the level of ‘severely disadvantaged’ in Australia, increasing the deficit language about ‘refugee’ from service providers’ perspectives by describing refugees as people with traumatic life experiences who cannot work (Major et al. 2013). Language deficiency has been one of the problems refugees face, including in education where students from refugee backgrounds may be described as people with learning difficulties, illiterate, and lacking in skills and work experience. Cultural capital provides people with a level of confidence, self-esteem, positive attitudes to contribution, and a good impression to apply for higher levels of employment. However, O'Connor (2014) acknowledged the cultural knowledge and experience that comes with people from refugee backgrounds, where refugees bring a large amount of cultural capital from their home countries, but such assets often do not convert well in the countries of their resettlement.

## **8.11 Physical capital**

*It is very important for a refugee community to be engaged in sporting activities for health, fitness and general exercise. (Participant 2, 25-year-old male, 10 years in Australia)*

The findings of this study show that physical activities, such as sport, bring social and health benefits for participants. Playing sport is but one of many physical activities and often provides physical capital which is good for health, fitness, and psychological wellbeing. The findings also demonstrate that the South Sudanese community sees participation in sport as largely of benefit for young people. Their families or the community at large gain a sense of happiness when they see young people doing well by participating in sport. Findings suggest that those young people who choose to engage in sport have no time to become involved in negative activities. Participation in sport assists young people from refugee backgrounds to connect with the mainstream community. Participation improves their quality of life and helps them gain mutual benefits with other community groups. It creates opportunities for engaging in social events and encourages broader connections with other groups. It empowers young people to remain confident, as they learn more skills, as well as challenge themselves to take responsibility for their wellbeing and possible careers in sport.

These findings of physical capital in this study correlate with existing theories about the benefits of participation in sport (see Bourdieu 1991; Chau 2007; Marivoet 2014; Olliff 2008; Shilling 2003). This PhD study has added contributions about the role of sport in assisting people from refugee backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese community, to settle better through provision of resources, which they can access through participation in sport. This study has found that it is not only physical capital that people gain from participating in sport: other forms of capital can also be accessed. Several studies agreed with these findings that participation in exercise and fitness comes with health and wellbeing benefits, as well as others, including building a network of friends and connections (Abur 2016, Stewart et al. 2013). Findings of this PhD study suggest that young people from the South Sudanese community who participate in basketball, soccer, and Australian Rules football, for example, have gained wider social connections, psychological resilience, confidence, and employment opportunities. People who engage in community sport activities receive enhanced benefits of being physically healthy and fit. Physical capital assisted some participants to challenge their own behaviours, which led to change. A positive change of behaviour is good for the community's economy and for the individual's health, social, and physical condition.

The findings of this study have established a conceptual agreement with the following key research in the field of refugee settlement and participation in sport. Spaaij et al. (2014) found that sport plays a significant role in the everyday lives of many young people from refugee backgrounds, because sport provides a setting in which they can express themselves, and construct and perform social identities. Participation in sport as an activity that assists people to learn life skills through promoting tolerance, respect for others, cooperation, loyalty, and friendships as the most valuable and ethical principles of sport (Chau 2007, Marivoet 2014). Participation in sport comes with many benefits, including improved self-esteem, self-confidence, community identity, and greater community cohesion, pride, and sense of ownership, reducing participation in antisocial behaviour, such as crime and social isolation (Abur 2016, Chau 2007).

The findings of this PhD study demonstrate that South Sudanese community members who participated in sport are in better positions in terms of overcoming their settlement challenges compared to those who are not involved in sport. Findings have also confirmed that the physical capital obtained by South Sudanese members involved in sport was convertible to psychological capital, social capital, cultural capital, and economic capital. For instance, some participants in this study revealed that their participation in sport led to employment opportunities, which is economic capital. Participants also argued that their participation in sport had not only improved physical health and fitness, but also linked them to mainstream community members with whom they had no connection before their involvement in sport. They described sport as the vehicle that assisted young people to stay away from trouble due to the many leadership and mentoring skills that young people could obtain from their coaches.

The study also revealed some problematic issues in sport for people from refugee backgrounds, including racism and discriminatory attitudes in sport, fear of unknown groups of people, and a lack of parental engagement and responsibility in supporting their young people to engage in sport, including a lack of financial resources for people from refugee backgrounds to pay for sport requirements, such as registration fees and location access fees.

## 8.12 Convertibility and impact of accumulative capitals

*Those from refugee community groups who have worked can get financial benefit and integrate easily because of the people they meet in workplaces. They can also participate in leisure activities such as sport. (Participant 17, 25-year-old female, 12 years in Australia)*

Bourdieu (1986) argues that capitals are resources and each capital is convertible. This PhD study confirmed that different forms of capital are resources that can assist people from refugee backgrounds to overcome some of their settlement challenges. This case study of the South Sudanese community from refugee backgrounds shows that social, cultural, economic, psychological, and physical capital have influenced and can influence the settlement of refugees within their host society (please see Chapter 7 findings). These findings show that acquiring the different forms of capital has positive outcomes, which assist people to gain more knowledge and resources to address outstanding challenges. All participants revealed that participation in employment and in sport assisted them to make friends, and learn new ways of doing things. For instance, making friends through employment was a great way of building social capital by meeting people who possibly may remain friends.

Therefore, findings of this study conclude that people from refugee backgrounds can benefit from the five forms of capital identified (explained above and in Chapter 4). These capitals are interrelated in many ways and impact heavily on settlement outcomes of refugees, such as the South Sudanese community. The benefit of economic capital can influence social, psychological, cultural, and physical capital. Looking through the social and psychological lens, social participation of refugees in community activities such as sport enhances cultural and physical capital while at the same time building psychological resilience by learning confidence, and through sport building skills in socialising with players and community members who are spectators or supporters. Thus, the overarching challenges of refugee settlement can be addressed by assisting them to participate in employment and sport. Findings in this thesis has demonstrated that both participation in employment and in sport provide benefits for all five forms of capital.

When refugees are well supported and engaged in employment and sport activities, it helps them to settle well and integrate into mainstream society. Securing meaningful and sustainable employment is an important part of successful settlement for people from refugee backgrounds. Participants in this study saw employment as a powerful contributor to their psychological wellbeing. Having employment with a good income is a powerful means to maintain the family unit. Employment is powerful in the sense that it allows people to participate in society and contribute to the community, and enhances their own wellbeing.

### **8.13 Barriers to participation in sport and employment**

Findings of this PhD research has also revealed a number of barriers to participation for South Sudanese community. These include barriers to participation in sport and employment for South Sudanese people with refugee backgrounds compared to their counterparts in the broader Australian community. Lack of social connection, inability to pay fees for sports clubs and for transport to events, a lack of parental awareness of the physical benefits of participating in sport, and other demanding settlement issues such as attending appointments, lack of confidence to approach clubs and other services, fear of unknown people, fear of racism and discrimination, demanding cultural issues, limited language and skills issues when it comes to employment, and a lack of networks in the workforce. These barriers are challenging and holding South Sudanese refugees back from participating in sport and employment.

The findings from this study have demonstrated that people in the South Sudanese community want to work and engage more broadly with mainstream communities to show that they are part of Australian society. However, the reality is that they do not have the ability or skills to navigate these barriers mentioned above without support to help them overcome challenges. The findings suggest that while there are some cultural barriers in relation to engaging in sport, employment is a generic issue, which is important for better settlement outcomes. In particular, cultural issues exist between young people and their parents, and this can cause intergenerational conflict. The findings of this PhD study show that settlement issues of young people are slightly different to issues parents are concerned. Parents are much more concerned about employment, education for

children, parenting children in the new culture, housing issues, family dynamics due to social changes, and racism and discrimination experienced either by them or their children in schools and other public places.

Findings reveal that young people would like to have wider experiences by wanting to go out more and socialise, their goals of socialisation are limited in terms of choice about where to go and who they can meet, as well as by parental willingness to allow a young person to go out their own. These barriers and challenges of young people are confirmed in the existing literature on field refugee settlement. Young people from refugee backgrounds often have to deal with complex and demanding settlement issues (Olliff 2008). Some may not know how to play or how to access existing sport. Some are discouraged by aggressive behaviours and the culture of sport when they are new in Australia. There are often aggressive behaviours in sport, which can be perceived as threats (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Olliff 2008). The culture of sport in Australia can be difficult for newly arrived young refugees because of the regular consumption of alcohol after/during games, swearing, sledging, or aggressive competition. To young people who are unfamiliar with the cultural nuances of sporting environments, such behaviour may not only be culturally inappropriate, but also may be perceived as insulting and/or threatening.

However, this study of the South Sudanese community suggests that their participation in sport has shed some positive light on the community. People who disengage from the community do so because of language and cultural barriers, as well as lack of social networks, but those who engage in sport have found a way to break down cultural barriers and social isolation. Racism and discrimination in sport, as well as other areas in Australian society, act as a deterrent for the South Sudanese refugee community. Many South Sudanese in Australia believe that racism and discrimination are holding them back from integrating into mainstream activities such as sport. This belief was found to be a general issue facing many refugees while settling in Australia (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Marjoribanks, et al 2010, Olliff 2008).

The findings of this PhD research show that racism and discrimination have been holding people back from employment, particularly for those who have completed their studies in Australia, who are still being discriminated against in the workforce for some

reasons not understood by the participants. People who have encountered or experienced any form of discrimination develop low levels of wellbeing, self-esteem and life satisfaction, or worse, actual anxiety or stress. Racism could traumatisate, hurt, humiliate, enrage, confuse, and ultimately prevent optimal growth and functioning of individuals and communities (Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Fozdar & Torezani 2008). This also leads to physical, psychological and social dysfunction. Racism and discrimination are acts of prejudice and can be manifested through lack of respect, suspicion, depreciation, scapegoating, and dehumanising people. Victims internalise racism when they are stigmatised and realise discrimination and racist behaviours (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Baker-Lewton, et al 2017, Fozdar & Torezani 2008). This can lead to resignation, helplessness, and hopelessness. The South Sudanese community members have experienced these issues in participation in employment and participation in sport. Possibly, other refugee groups might have experienced similar issues as well. Discrimination occurs when an individual is adversely excluded from employment opportunities on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, age, nationality, or other factors, such as political opinion or ethnicity, acts that are not lawful in many countries including Australia (Abur & Spaaij 2016, Siddiquee & Faroqi 2010).

### **8.14 Gender related barriers to participation in employment and sport in South Sudanese community**

There are specific gender issues when it comes to participation barriers in both employment and sport in South Sudanese community. This study of the South Sudanese community revealed that males are more likely to participate in both sport and employment than females. Some reasons for this are related to cultural perception and understanding. Traditionally, as discussed in Chapter 2, boys are expected to be engaged in more physical activities than girls, while girls are expected to participate more in domestic tasks, such as helping mothers to cook and to care for younger siblings in the family (see Section 8.5 of this chapter and Section 2.4 of this thesis about cultural expectations). Findings of this PhD research reveal that the barriers to participation for girls in sport were parents, as parents were not willing to allow their girls to participate in sport. The South Sudanese community's local sport association of basketball, known as Longhorn, is clearly dominated by young boys, some of whom are aiming to join

American basketball colleges. Only a few girls are part of this program, and they are not expected to participate at a high level of the sport with boys. This cultural expectation is also being questioned within the South Sudanese community in Australia in areas such as cooking, and sharing other domestic duties in the house with male residents.

Similar barriers are applied to employment, as some of the South Sudanese men travel from Melbourne to the countryside of Victoria to look for factory work or fruit picking in Sharpton and Colac, to mention just two locations. In the meantime, girls and mothers remain in Melbourne to look after young children if there are children in the family. This just an example of how a cultural expectation can limit the wider participation of gender in both employment and sport.

However, findings of this PhD research show that there is little development in the South Sudanese community in allowing girls to participate in sport. Two female players from the South Sudanese community in Australia have raised hope in the community that more South Sudanese women will be involved in sport in years to come. Mary Daw, a sister to Majak Daw who plays for North Melbourne, was drafted to play for the new AFL Female Diversity Championships competition in 2017. Susan Chuot is also a South Sudanese girl who plays both soccer and AFL Female Diversity Championships in Australia. These two young female players have motivated their community, particularly young girls, to participate in sport.

### **8.15 Similarities and differences in survey and interview findings**

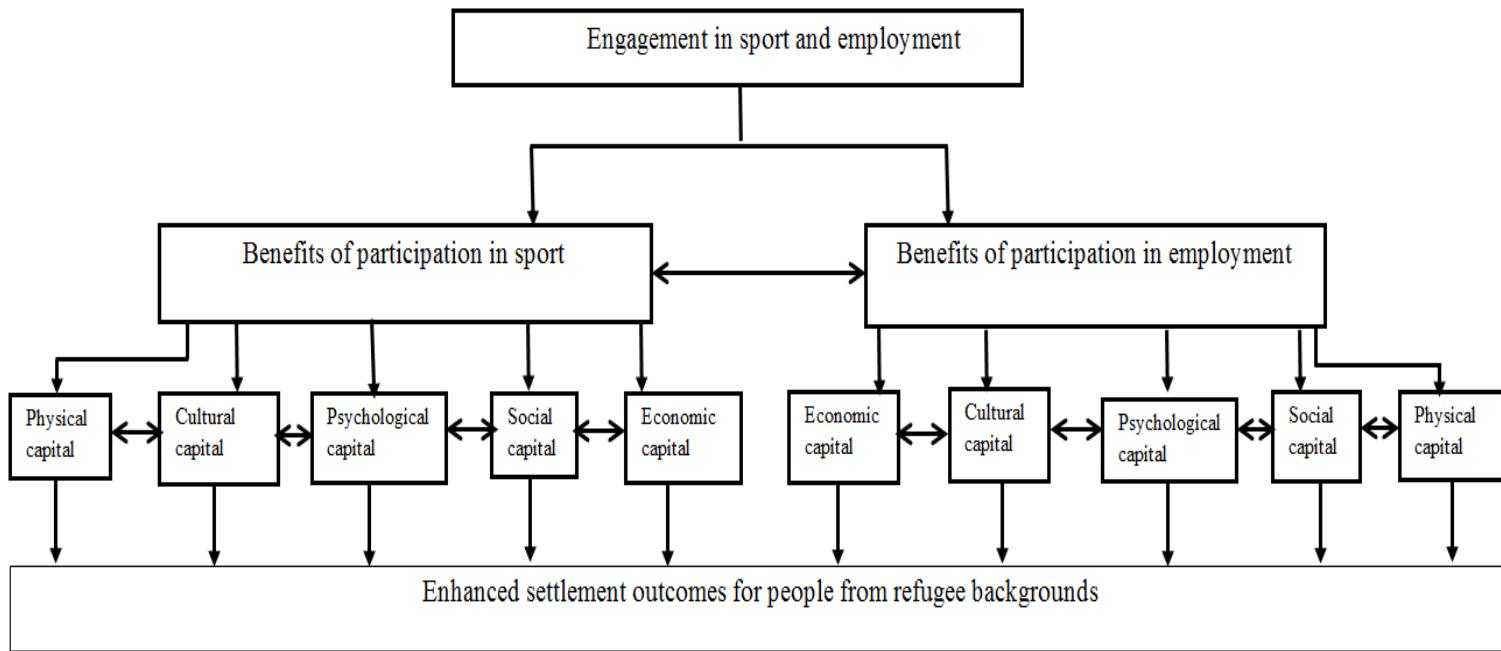
The leading difference between survey and interview findings is that the survey findings provide an overview of statistical data about the South Sudanese population in Melbourne, whereas the interview findings provide in-depth narrative experiences of participants on social issues, which are relevant to the community in terms of participation in sport and employment, as well as general settlement experiences. In the survey results, respondents rated sport highly as a physical capital, while employment scored highly as both economic and psychological capital.

All participants believed that sport was good for young people as it gave them autonomy and confidence as well as diverting them from ‘negative’ activities, such as

abuse of alcohol and other substances, and from anti-social behaviour. All participants viewed employment as an activity for adults who were ready to work in order to obtain income for their families and themselves. In addition, there was a belief that factory workers could gain physical capital because of the high level of physical work involved. All participants believed that those who were employed gained social capital through participating in different professional and social networks. Sport also provided social capital by increasing networking both inside and outside the team. Thus, the benefits of sport ranged across all forms of capital. Most participants believed that those who engaged in sport at a high level could earn income, and some also gained employment as a result of being involved in sport. Some participants obtained employment by using their sporting connections to meet potential employers. This is just one way in which participation in sport helps refugees. Some also believed that sport was important for health and wellbeing as well as an effective strategy for keeping young people off the streets. Findings of this PhD research reveal that the South Sudanese community has some understanding about the general definition of sport as an activity in which people may choose to be involved as participants, but some may also include involvement in a supporting role such as a coach, official, administrator, or volunteer. Participation in sport could include involvement in organising formal or informal physical activities by association with sporting organisations, with the aim of enjoyment, skills development, personal health, and social benefits.

In contrast, findings of this PhD research show that employment as an important activity that provided income for individuals and families, and had a stronger influence on positive settlement outcomes for the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds who are looking for ways to re-establish themselves. Findings also suggest that for South Sudanese people to settle better in Australia, they need connection, positive engagement in employment and sport with support from organisations, by putting positive policies in place in both employment and sport sectors so that people from refugee backgrounds increase their participation, and enhance sense of belonging in Australian society. As the benefits of accumulated capital have been previously discussed in Chapter 4 (i.e. the theoretical framework of this study), the engagement model for refugees in sport and employment has been visualised as a way forward to overcome settlement challenges through participation and social connectivity. This model of refugee

engagement is illustrated in Figure 8.1, and demonstrates how participation in paid work and sport can assist the settlement process by enabling refugees to build their stocks of personal capital, and thus more effectively integrate into the broader community.



**Figure 8:12: Model of engagement for refugees in sport and employment**



This model of refugee engagement with sport and employment highlights the critical importance of personal capital as a tool for enhancing the settlement experiences of refugees. While it prioritises social capital, it also asserts that social capital is just one of a number of resources that can be used to build a better life in new and complex societies. In addition, unlike most other models of refugee engagement, it also provides space for sport participation, and the health, fitness, and confidence-building outcomes that follow from this expression of physicality. At the same time, the model is incomplete, since it does not include space for the arts – including painting, sculpture, drama, and music making – which are also powerful tools for building capital and integrating new settlers into the host society. As such, these different forms of capital can therefore be used to establish more complex models of engagement, which further explore social and structural issues in fruitful ways. While participation in employment and in sport is not the only way in which the accumulation of capital is fostered, they are major contributors to an individual’s personal stock of capitals, and facilitate individuals’ capacity to productively participate in the wider society.

In this case, this study recommends a further exploration of South Sudanese refugee experiences using a conceptual framework of field and habitus as way of understanding their settlement journey. Bourdieu’s concept of the field – or social field – is frequently referred to as “an objectively defined position defined by its relationship with other positions” (Bourdieu 1996, p. 231). This means that the field is a place to belong to, or a home with boundaries and oppositions. Thus, a field is a “network of relations between individuals and institutions competitively engaged in the dynamics of capital production, pursuit, consumption, and/or accumulation” (Bourdieu 1996, p. 44). This points to the fact that everything people do and produce comes with all experiences, and all human behaviours are situated within a specific setting or field. The idea of the field also helps in explaining power differences in relation to individual, family and community power (Grusendorf 2016). The field can be a hospital, a government bureaucracy, sporting stadium, or religious organisation on one hand, or a doctor’s surgery, community sport club, or local church on the other. The social field is simultaneously ubiquitous and changing, and while every space has many common structures and processes, they are never the same.

Habitus is a system of dispositions and understandings, and acquired schemes of perception, thought and action (Bourdieu, 1990). Habitus thus represents structured ways of thinking that lead an individual to act in a reactionary or reflexive manner (Grusendorf 2016). The best way to understand Bourdieu's concept of habitus is to consider the image of an actor (Margolis 1999). In this way, habitus may be understood as a way of life, a life to live, and a role to be performed (Grusendorf 2016). Bourdieu's model of social relations seems, at first glance, to be inert and rigid but, when more fully interrogated, can be used to shed new light on a vast array of research problems. Most fundamentally, and in the Bourdieu tradition, it encourages researchers to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach to their projects, and to tackle the problems they have identified from a number of perspectives. Therefore, this PhD study, encourage future researchers in field of refugees' study to consider making use of habitus and field as a way of exploring refugees' issues in social context.

### **8.16 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the findings of this PhD thesis from empirical and theoretical analyses of settlement issues. The empirical findings from both the survey and interviews are that different forms of capital are beneficial for refugees in the South Sudanese community. In addition, one form of capital can be converted to another, as they are interconnected. For instance, cultural capital can lead to economic capital when people acquire sufficient skills and language to compete for employment. Social capital can lead to economic capital when refugees connect with the right people; they are more likely to gain employment from their social networks with people who support and guide them. People from refugee backgrounds can access these benefits through participation in employment and sport as well as in education. Such participants have wider connections, which help them to resolve some of their settlement issues. The findings in this PhD research emphasise that improved social connections are a great source of support for the family, as well as for employment and other social activities, which can promote integration into the mainstream community. Employment and sport are strategies to assist refugee groups to connect with the mainstream and assist them in integrating successfully.

However, the findings of this PhD have also pointed out settlement challenges, including barriers to participation by South Sudanese with refugee backgrounds. Failure to participate in employment and/or sport makes life more difficult for the South Sudanese people. A lack of social connection often sets them back as their former social networks were disrupted by displacement and forced migration. This lack of social networks for South Sudanese refugees in a new country, causes many setbacks in addition to financial pressures due to unemployment. Other settlement problems or social issues facing the South Sudanese community include family breakdown, discrimination, and disengagement of young people who may, as a consequence, become aggressive towards adopting a new culture, which is confronting to their parents. These issues are part of the social challenges and settlement pressures on families and young people due to lack of support and connection to appropriate services.

The subsequent concluding chapter answers the ‘so what?’ question by discussing key empirical findings, policy implications and directions for future research in the area of refugee settlement, with a particular focus on the South Sudanese community in Australia.

## **Chapter 9 : Conclusions and Policy Implications**

### **9.1.Introduction**

This chapter draws together the conclusions of this thesis and answers the ‘so what?’ question by discussing empirical findings, policy implications and recommendations. It brings the findings together around a central focus, which is the core research question of: “How do employment and sport participation affect the settlement process, and how the benefits of employment and sport participation do deliver different forms of capital that enable the South Sudanese community to effectively move through the settlement process in Melbourne, Australia?”

This question has been answered systematically through a combination of survey and interview data. Major settlement issues for refugees, particularly for the South Sudanese community, have been discussed at both the micro and macro levels. The recommendations and future policy directions are based on the findings of this PhD research. The key finding, which frames the remainder of this chapter, is that access to different forms of capital can enhance resettled refugees’ abilities to experience successful settlement in their new country. In every case, participants indicated that having different forms of capital enables them to have attain more positive and certain settlement outcomes. Specifically, respondents reported how participation in employment and sport enhanced their capital accumulation processes.

In research context, it is one thing to expose a clear and strong set of findings, but it is another thing to translate them into a workable arrangement of policy recommendations. The recommendations from the findings are proposed as a way forward to support people from the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds in order to achieve successful settlement outcomes in Australia. In other words, these recommendations are constructed as tools for policymakers, service providers, and individual community members who work in a voluntary capacity with the South Sudanese community and with other people from refugee backgrounds.

The themes that emerged in this PhD study are developed into both generic and specific recommendations. Generic recommendations concern broad policy directions for

the South Sudanese community, support services for families, youth support, and managing cultural expectations. Specific recommendations regarding participation in employment and sport are also formulated, including participants' concerns with issues of discrimination and racism in the areas of employment and sport. Finally, recommendations are made to include areas over which responses have not shown consensus; these areas may require further research and analysis.

## **9.2. So what?**

The findings of this PhD thesis assert that the settlement issues for South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds is a critical matter for both family and individual levels. Both Family and individual are affected by settlement challenges in Australia. Therefore, the findings of this PhD study reveal that people from refugee backgrounds require support from local communities to make them feel welcome and to address social issues, as well as support from appropriate agencies to facilitate the process and direction for settlement. The current settlement support services for the South Sudanese community and families are inadequate in many ways. As findings show, inadequate financial resources make it hard to enable connection to the mainstream community and family services. Further, one would argue, the nature of the services does not capture the main issues at the core of a transitioning community.

Findings show that social issues for the South Sudanese community in Melbourne range from wider issues involving unresolved traumatic experiences to daily struggles with domestic issues, such as parenting and unemployment, and lack of participation in meaningful activities, such as sport. The findings also suggest that participation in meaningful activities for these people, particularly youths, can be used to encourage youths and deter them from anti-social behaviour.

Settlement issues can only be addressed well when there is goodwill to engage individuals and families in activities that connect them with mainstream services, which go beyond existing settlement services. The findings in this PhD study demonstrate that participation in employment and sport assists refugees to enhance different forms of capital. For instance, employment has a crucial role in assisting them to improve connections with their new society and, of course, earn income for their families.

Employment is helpful for refugees, not only for financial gain, but also for identity, learning, and connection. Sport is one of many potentially powerful strategies to engage young people in pro-social activities, alongside employment for those who are work-ready. Sport fosters social connections for young people from refugee backgrounds, even if they themselves may not be refugees. Its power lies in bringing together people from different backgrounds. Sport can link them to resources and give them a sense of belonging. Sport not only generates health benefits through direct participation in physical activity but, through that participation, a platform for communication and social interaction. Participation in sport is thus powerful in motivating and inspiring individuals and their community to engage in ways that paid work cannot. These findings thus conclusively demonstrate that both sport and employment provide refugees with the social, cultural, economic, psychological, and physical capital that can significantly enhance the settlement process. With this proposition – and the findings that go with it – front and centre, this PhD thesis presented the following recommendations for South Sudanese refugee settlement in Melbourne.

### **9.3.Families and support services**

The pressing issues facing South Sudanese community in Australia have been discussed generally in the settlement context, including the family unit, in this study. Family issues include financial pressure in parenting children in a new culture, as well as accommodation. Accommodation for large families is a pressing issue for the South Sudanese community in Australia. Some members tend to live in small, single houses when they arrive in Australia, although standard housing is not enough for a family of six to seven children or more: they have to opt for available accommodation in a three-to-four-bedroom house. Therefore, this study outlines some recommendations from a policy perspective.

**Recommendation and policy direction:** The first recommendation is for specialised support services for South Sudanese families to assist them with social matters, parenting issues, accommodation and other settlement related issues such awareness of their legal rights. This can be done in a number of ways, including establishing funding for South Sudanese workers to support vulnerable families with children and connect them with

services that may be attuned to assisting such transitioning and adapting families and individuals without experiencing extreme difficulties. These support services should be realised in the policy, and policymakers should work on formulating policies that can assist people from the South Sudanese community and other refugees to participate in the realisation of such diversity aware services. This PhD study show that the lack of interaction and contact with neighbours is quite common among families from the South Sudanese community as non-English speaking community. Some people do have some fears of unknown response or unwelcome in neighbour centres, especially families with children.

Also, lack of employment and engagement in productive activities often causes destructive behaviour and conflict within families. Families who need support from service providers or close relatives sometimes cannot obtain that support in time to rescue the situation. Often, some supports that families could receive from service providers do not meet their needs due to a lack of understanding cultural differences and expectations. Therefore, this PhD study recommends that working with families and individuals from the South Sudanese community requires understanding, listening and empathy, adopting a contextualised approach that is holistic and yet robust enough to be able to attend to individual circumstances. Such approaches and services would necessarily be grounded in social justice, taking citizen meaningful participation not as a privilege but a human right. For example, the connection among family members both within and beyond Australia is fundamentally important to the process of healing and rehabilitation. Supporting families and individuals to have connections with other family members can facilitate emotional and practical support, as well as provide a sense of belonging and identity. Therefore, from policies perspectives, there is a great need to consider some practical services to assist families with reunification services such as managing the application process when a family member applies for the family reunification visa and general case support services.

#### **9.4. Youth and support services**

The findings of this PhD study reveals that South Sudanese families in Melbourne are struggling with demanding and challenging youths' issues. Young people are

becoming the most disadvantaged people – and the most difficult to manage – in the South Sudanese community because of acculturation disorientation and misunderstanding of the right based as well as general community expectations. Many of these young people have become disengaged from their families, community and some of them have entered into criminal activities such as stealing cars and robberies activities. They are not conversant with the complex mix of rights and responsibilities that the Australian social and legal frameworks provide for. At the same time, the young persons may take a fast-paced view of choosing and picking what suits their taste out of their parental background values systems and discard, in many cases, those elements that would be considered the proverbial “baby together with the dirty bathwater”. There is often conflicting information and knowledge which make it hard for young persons to make sensible judgment in their own interests in the long-term beyond immediate gratification. There is also a lack of positive parenting, as many parents are equally disoriented with conflicting cultures and lifestyle. This PhD study shows that cultural differences and lifestyle choices among young people and their parents or carers can be problematic. There are often intergenerational conflicts at the family level which put both parents and young people in more disadvantaged and vulnerable positions. It creates poor communications between young people and parents which affects their emotional attachment on many levels. This also makes some young people to choose to move out from the family home and dropout from school at a young age. Some young people are affected by the social changes within the family, as many families become separated or divorced because of changes.

The instability in a family can affect young peoples' schooling, general wellbeing, employment, and capacity to participate in social activities, which could otherwise help them to adjust to the host society. Some are caught between different cultural expectations in addition to common settlement challenges. Sometimes, cultural connection with family and peer groups is crucial for their socialisation, mental development and health. Some may have witnessed traumatising experiences before arriving in Australia. Such difficulties can sometimes be taken for granted within their community and family, and a young person can end up without appropriate support. This has long-term effects, which can diminish or jeopardise their achievements in education and maintaining employment. Their traumatic experiences, including hardship during settlement, can add to confusion when it comes to making the right choices. Some young people have experienced trauma

within their families or outside of their families. Trauma can sometimes diminish the ability of young people to develop positive goals, get set for life, or develop a normal positive sense of self-care to form healthy relationships with others. Instead, traumatic experiences take them in a different and negative directions, often towards alcohol consumption or other substance abuse.

The findings of this PhD study also shows that young people, particularly those with refugee backgrounds like the South Sudanese young people, require strong social support services, engagement in meaningful activities in order to overcome those barriers. These include obtaining rehabilitation counselling to help them recover from traumatic experiences, as well as from settlement difficulties. They also needed some explicated and well-intended activities to provide them with skills and empowering them to be ready to take up any jobs. This means that involving young people in local networks, sport, and other local training services to support them. This PhD findings recognised the fact that disadvantaged young people are entitled to the support services in order for them to achieve their full potential. Rights-based youth services that recognise young people's strengths, abilities and goals setting can assist these young people from the South Sudanese families to facilitate ways for them to achieve their opportunities. This PhD study similarly suggest that young people from specific cultures, such as the South Sudanese community, would benefit from maintaining their culture and identity.

**Recommendation and policy direction:** This PhD study recommends that young people from the South Sudanese community need support services to assist them to engage effectively and connect with appropriate programs. Such support services or programs can assist in providing connections with Australian community groups, their own community groups to enhance their integration, and to alleviate their settlement challenges and trauma. This study also recommends some programs, such as mentoring, to assist young people and to link them up with leadership and employment opportunities. For example, linking them to the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Australia mentoring program could be a great point of connection.

Similarly, assisting them to obtain volunteering roles within organisations of their choice of career can lead to better connections and outcomes. Supporting young people through homework programs, such as Sudanese Australian Integrated Learning (SAIL),

with good volunteers to assist them with homework and other education issues, can keep young people in schools. Reconnecting these young people – who may have moved away from family – to their cultural heritage is a way of supporting them to understand the importance of their own culture. Therefore, this study recommends for youth support intervention policy and programs for the South Sudanese young people in order to overcome some of their settlement issues and achieve better education outcomes.

### **9.5.Managing cultural expectations**

Findings of this PhD study reveal that living in two different cultures or more can be very confusing if families and individuals are not prepared or educated well enough to deal with cultural confusion. Parents and young people from the South Sudanese community are living in different cultures, which often have clashing values and beliefs. Many families are constantly struggling with the management of cultural values and expectations among children and parents and among parents, husbands, and wives due to acculturation confusion. The cultural issues encountered by both groups require management strategies in order to accommodate both South Sudanese and western culture. This can be achieved through appropriate cultural advice, which can be offered by qualified workers with cultural understanding. Dealing with different cultural expectations is hard for parents who are parenting their children in a new country, as there are many issues relating to cultural practice, and differing expectations emerge quickly.

Findings of this PhD study show that young people tend to learn and adopt Australian cultures and systems more easily than their parents. Young people want to adopt the new culture and ways of life, such as moving to live with friends without parental consent, or choosing to live with a partner without a parental blessing. This can cause enormous conflict between young people and their parents who come from a traditional culture with different expectations of appropriate behaviour. As such, both young people and parents face a range of pressures, which are not the same for non-migrant youth in Australia. These pressures include navigating complex relationships, negotiating and managing family expectations, and meeting cultural obligations and responsibilities within their own community, while trying their best to find their own place in Australian society, and meeting the expectations of their peer groups in

mainstream society. Some parents have high expectations of young people in terms of studying hard, making career choices in demanding areas such as law and science, maintaining a relationship with family members, and caring for family members as part of their responsibilities.

**Recommendation and policy direction:** This study recommends that greater cultural support services be provided to both parents and young people from the South Sudanese community in Australia. This cultural support service can assist both parents and young people to benefit from expert advice in order to manage demanding cultural (local) expectations. This PhD study show that young people cannot meet these expectations unless they have sufficient support from both within their community and their families, as well as from the wider Australian community. This study also suggests that working with young people from the South Sudanese community with refugee backgrounds requires a trusting relationship with their families in order to provide effective support without clashing with family demands and expectations. In this case, there is a great need of culturally appropriate policies from service providers that work with young people and families to assists South Sudanese young people and families in order to achieve better outcome by recognising and legitimising ongoing relationships within family and cultural connections with the community. Family relationships provide young people with a sense of belonging, support in negotiating difficult challenges and transitions, and connections with shared values, culture, and history.

## **9.6. Employment support**

The findings of this PhD study reveal the critical challenges in employment for the South Sudanese community. Accessing employment and become involved in other social and political activities are very important and critical part of social inclusion. These findings show that there was a sense of frustration in community because many people who completed tertiary degrees in Australia were unable to find work in their particular fields of study. Findings also show that the unemployment situation in their community often leaves people with no choice but to consider low-skilled, low-paid jobs in Australia. This issue has affected these people psychologically as well as financially, and this issue needs to be addressed by employers through developing an inclusive approach that can

assist the South Sudanese, in particular, and other refugee community groups to work in order to support their families.

In other words, the South Sudanese refugees miss out in accessing the economic, social, and cultural capital that other people acquire through employment. They also lack psychological capital, as there is often a sense of frustration with their unemployment situation. Lack of inclusion policy is putting minority groups such as the South Sudanese community in disadvantaged position as more people are likely to remain unemployed or under-employed. This study suggests that people in South Sudanese community need some assistance to access employment and training opportunities in order to earn adequate incomes. Findings of this PhD study show that some people in the South Sudanese community have clear goals in wanting to work or undertaking further education as a way of preparing themselves for better settlement as key to successful settlement for refugees

**Recommendation and policy direction:** This study recommends that service providers that work with the South Sudanese community should come up with policies that provide support services for people in this community to access employment equally with other Australians. This PhD study also recommends re-invigorating inclusive policies in some workplaces to eliminate discrimination and racist behaviour. This study shows that most South Sudanese people have no plans to return to where they came from, but they do want to find work, and own their own homes and businesses like many other Australians, and to rebuild their lives from what they have lost through war and migration.

## **9.7. Participation in sport**

Findings of this PhD study reveal that sport has a potential role in supporting young people from the South Sudanese backgrounds to settle well in Australia. Young people do need leisure activities, regardless of their cultural and social backgrounds, to provide them with bonding and socialisation opportunities (social capital). Findings of this study also suggest that sport can facilitate inclusion of the South Sudanese young people and other newly arrived young people, who may otherwise be socially isolated. Sport gives them opportunities to cope with the difficulties of displacement and settlement challenges (psychological capital) as well as to be more active and physically fit (physical capital).

However, findings of this study also show barriers for South Sudanese community, in particular young people to participate in mainstream sport and recreation programs. These barriers include racism and interpersonal discrimination, lack of knowledge about what is required in order to participate, poor language skills, financial issues, lack of transport, and dependency on and expectations of family support. There is also a gap between club associations and refugee community groups like the South Sudanese community when it comes to the general participation of youth in sport. This gap between sporting clubs and refugee community groups can only be reduced by accepting and adopting the diversity within sporting associations at all levels, including management. This study shows that diversity management is not being adopted widely among local sports clubs and this reduces the idea of a moral imperative to cater to people from different backgrounds.

**Recommendation and policy direction:** This study recommends that service providers who work with young people from the South Sudanese community should encourage and advocate for connection in order to assist young people to connect with sporting associations. The findings of this PhD study reveal many benefits in supporting young people to participate in sport in terms of integration, connection, and successful settlement outcomes. Findings also reveal that some sports associations, such as the North Melbourne Football club and the Collingwood Football Club in Melbourne, have shown some great interest in working with young people from multicultural backgrounds, such as the South Sudanese community group. For example, members of the clubs mentioned have presented their interest and willingness to work with the South Sudanese community at community functions.

## **9.8. Future research**

In addition to the policy recommendations outlined in preceding sections, the findings of this PhD study point to a number of areas for future research. The first recommended area for future research is the impact of participation in sport on young people under the age of 18 years. A lack of participation in sport for young people under age of 18 in South Sudanese community may affect their future development in many ways. These include physical health issues, social isolation, and possibly mental health.

The second recommended area for future research is the impact of employment on families from the South Sudanese with refugee backgrounds settling in regional and rural areas. The settlement experiences of refugees in rural and urban areas tend to vary considerably. This study has focused on resettled refugees in an urban setting (Melbourne). Future research on equivalent settlement experiences in regional and rural areas through participation in employment and sport can provide further knowledge, with implications for policy and practice.

The third recommended area for future research is cultural practice in the South Sudanese community, particularly at the family level. There are some important cultural issues and practices within South Sudanese families, which often clash with Australian culture and lifestyle. For example, maintaining cultural beliefs and practice are equally important, as many cultures have positive values, morals, and beliefs that hold families together. The strong cultural connection to South Sudanese people that many participants expressed foregrounds this issue as an area to be explored further through research that compares cultural aspects and practice among the South Sudanese with Australian law, social expectations and practices.

Finally, the influence of social welfare and gender friction within families, which may cause family breakdown, requires further research. Findings of this PhD study reveal certain social welfare and gender issues perceived as problematic for families, but they were beyond the scope of this study. Findings suggest that social welfare or social security payments created conflict within families where men were unemployed and/or not contributing financially. Many women preferred to be single mothers in order to receive welfare support from Centrelink. This frustrated many men and they have relinquished their family roles leaving the fractured family vulnerable to social ills. This is an area of research that requires further investigation in order to understand the consequences of these issues.

## **9.9. Concluding remarks**

This chapter has identified some barriers to the successful settlement of the South Sudanese community in Melbourne and discussed recommendations and future policy directions in relation to the improvement of settlement of this community and, in

particular, issues that result in exclusion in employment and sport. This PhD study found that the settlement experiences of South Sudanese people in Melbourne are often affected by a number of difficulties, such as lack of employment, lack of suitable accommodation, and general lack of social engagement.

The findings reveal that the South Sudanese community/refugees can integrate more effectively into the mainstream community when they are well supported by securing employment and playing sport within the community. Participation in sport and employment can assist them to obtain different forms of capital, which help them to overcome settlement challenges and integrate effectively into the mainstream community. For example, paid employment can assist individuals from refugee backgrounds to support their families financially, educate their children, and pay rent. Their children can also engage in local sporting activities, which increases their chances of participating in networks by making new friends.

Findings of this PhD study also demonstrate that participation in sport has many benefits for disadvantaged communities such as people from refugee backgrounds. Young people who participate in sport can obtain transferable life skills, which increase their employability. Their participation in sport also helps them to connect with community by building friendships and breaking social isolation. Sport can also help reduce stigma and increase self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills, leading to increased employability. Therefore, this thesis has provided recommendations for community and service providers on critical settlement issues, and how these settlement issues can be addressed effectively through sport and employment in order to allow people from refugee backgrounds to participate fully and equitably in programs without difficulties.

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## Appendix A: Ethics Application Approval

From: quest.noreply@vu.edu.au <quest.noreply@vu.edu.au>  
Sent: Wednesday, 6 August 2014 2:10 PM  
To: bob.stewart@vu.edu.au  
Cc: William Abur; Peter.Ochieng@vu.edu.au  
Subject: Quest Ethics Notification - Application Process Finalised - Application Approved

Dear ASPR ROBERT STEWART,

Your ethics application has been formally reviewed and finalised.

- » Application ID: HRE14-136
- » Chief Investigator: ASPR ROBERT STEWART
- » Other Investigators: MR William Abur, DR PETER OCHIENG
- » Application Title: Settlement Strategies for South Sudanese Communities: An Analysis of the Benefits of Workforce Engagement and Sports Participation
- » Form Version: 13-07

The application has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted for two (2) years from the approval date; 07/08/2014.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the Office for Research website at: <http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php>.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded

of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee

Phone: 9919 4781 or 9919 4461

Email: [researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au)

### **Confirmation email about free of charge Counselling**

From: Harriet Speed <Harriet.Speed@vu.edu.au>

Sent: Sunday, 29 June 2014 12:53 PM

To: William Abur

Subject: RE: Request for your Permission

Hi William

I am happy to provide a free of charge counselling service to participants in your study if any wish to seek counselling as a consequence of their involvement in your project. My contact details are:

Ph.: (03) 9919 5412 and email: [Harriet.Speed@vu.edu.au](mailto:Harriet.Speed@vu.edu.au)

Wishing you well with your research.

Regards

Harriet

## **Appendix B Information to participants involved in research**

### **You are invited to participate**

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You are invited to participate in a research project titled: **Settlement Strategies for the South Sudanese Community in Melbourne: An Analysis of Employment and Sport Participation.** This project is being conducted by William Abur, a Ph.D. student at Victoria University, and supervised by Associate Professor Bob Stewart and Dr. Peter Ochieng of the College of Sport and Exercise Science, Victoria University.

### **Project explanation**

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The research aims to explore the ways in which the South Sudanese community engages in sport and employment and to examine the benefits they secure from these two forms of community engagement as well as to understand how these two forms of community engagement can assist the settlement process. It will also use the results of this study to not only contribute to the literature on refugees and migrant settlement, but to also inform policy debates around the areas of employment opportunities, access to sports and active recreation programs, cultural understanding, family, social justice, and overall wellbeing.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

---

Participants will be invited to complete a survey. It will take less than 15 minutes. Participants can also choose to participate in a face-to-face in-depth interview about their engagement in sport and workforce participation. The in-depth face-to-face interview will take 60 minutes and will be audio recorded.

### **What will I gain from participating?**

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Participants will contribute to an emerging body of knowledge relating to their experiences, understanding of the social benefits of refugees engaging in workforce and sports programs. The stories you tell will provide valuable insight and a deeper understanding of settlement strategies that can assist refugee community groups in their settlement journey and integration. The results of this study will also help to shape government's policy and find better ways of delivering settlement services to new generations of refugees and migrants.

### **How will the information I give be used?**

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The information you provide will be treated with integrity and respect. The raw data will be stored in a safe place by the principal investigator, and can only be accessed and used by the investigators involved in the project. Pseudonyms will be used in coding the raw data to ensure confidentiality is protected. The analysed data will contribute to a Ph.D. thesis and journal articles.

### **What are the potential risks of participating in this project?**

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It will be safe participating in this study. We acknowledge that during the course of the questionnaire and/or interview you may recall difficult memories and experiences, which may be potentially distressing. You can inform the researcher, Mr. William Abur whenever you feel uncomfortable with the questionnaire or interview. You could take a short break, or you could fully withdraw from the research program at any time. If you experience any distress, a free counselling session could be arranged for you at the College of Sport and Exercise Science through a clinical registered psychologist Associate Professor Harriet Speed. She can be reached via the Contact Phone (03)99195412. Email: [harriet.speed@vu.edu.au](mailto:harriet.speed@vu.edu.au)

### **How will this project be conducted?**

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The research will be conducted using (1) surveys and (2) face to face recorded interviews.

The survey will be completed by participants. The names and identifying details of the participants will not be disclosed in either the thesis or subsequent journal articles. The survey will be conducted on hard copy and under the real-time guidance of the researcher.

The interviews will be carried out in a place of your choice as long as it is in a public place (library, community centre or café shop). Interview responses will be audio-recorded and then transcribed. The topics of the interviews will be coded for key themes. The information provided by the interview participants will be treated in confidence.

### **Who is conducting the study?**

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The study is being conducted by Mr. William Abur, Associate Professor Bob Stewart and Dr. Peter Ochieng of College of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University.

#### **The Student Researcher is:**

William Abur

A student studying a Ph.D. at Victoria University

Contact: 0434516127 or email: [William.abur@live.vu.edu.au](mailto:William.abur@live.vu.edu.au)

#### **Chief Investigator/ supervisor:**

Associate Professor Bob Stewart of College of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University

Email: [bob.stewart@vu.edu.au](mailto:bob.stewart@vu.edu.au)

Work phone: +61 3 9919 4350

#### **Associate Supervisor:**

Dr. Peter Ochieng

Email: [peter.ochieng@vu.edu.au](mailto:peter.ochieng@vu.edu.au)

Work phone: 61 3 9919 5575

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research

Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email [Researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:Researchethics@vu.edu.au) or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461

## **Appendix C: Consent form for participants involved in research**

### **Information to participants:**

We would like to invite you to be a part of a study: **Settlement Strategies for the South Sudanese Community in Melbourne: An Analysis of Employment and Sport Participation**. The aim of this research is to explore the ways in which the South Sudanese community engages in the workforce and the extent of their engagement in local community sports programs. The study will also examine the benefits they secure from these two forms of community engagement, to understand how these two forms of community engagement can assist the settlement process. The results of this study will not only contribute to the literature on refugees and migrant settlement, but will also inform policy debates around the areas of employment, access to sports and active recreation programs cultural understanding, family, social justice and overall wellbeing.

You are invited to participate in a survey questionnaire and an in-depth face-to-face interview. Alternatively, you can choose to participate in the survey questionnaire only. The survey questionnaire can only take less than 15 minutes while the in-depth interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

The survey will be conducted on hard copy and under the real time guidance of the researcher. Data collected from the survey will be coded using pseudonym names and kept in confidence by the researchers. You are given the opportunity to read and understand the interview questions before agreeing to participate in the study. The interview is straightforward and there are no anticipated risks connected with the interview process.

You are also reminded that the information you provide will be documented and presented in Ph.D. thesis and journal articles without identifying your name and contact details.

Your participation in this project is voluntary, and you are aware of your right to withdraw from the survey and interview at any time if you choose not to continue with the project.

### **CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Certify that I am at least 18 years old\* and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study: **Settlement Strategies for the South Sudanese Community in Melbourne: An Analysis of Employment and Sport Participation** being conducted at Victoria University by William Abur.

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by: (William Abur) and that I freely consent to participate:

1. Survey for approximately 15 minutes.
2. Both an in-depth interview only for approximately 60 minutes and a survey for approximately 15 minutes
3. An in-depth interviewed for approximately 60 minutes

I certify that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time, and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way.

I have been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

Signed: ----- Date -----

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher William Abur 0434516127 or email: [William.abur@live.vu.edu.au](mailto:William.abur@live.vu.edu.au) If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email [Researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:Researchethics@vu.edu.au) or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

**Appendix D: Survey on benefits of employment and sport for South Sudanese Australians from refugee backgrounds**

The aim of this survey is to investigate the role of participation in employment and sport in the settlement of South Sudanese Australians from refugee backgrounds. Participants are invited to tick one cell/box of each of the following questions.

**Demographic information:**

(1). Gender	Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
(2). Age	18-24years <input type="checkbox"/> 25-39years <input type="checkbox"/> 40-64years <input type="checkbox"/>
(3). Years of residency in Australia	2-5 Years <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11 years or more <input type="checkbox"/>
(4). Participation in employment.	I am employed full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
(5). Participation in sport	I am involved in sport on a regular basis (at least three times a week) <input type="checkbox"/> I am involved in sport on a casual basis (less than three times a week) <input type="checkbox"/> I am currently not involved in sport <input type="checkbox"/>

### **Settlement outcomes**

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about your settlement outcomes as a South Sudanese–Australian with a refugee background?

<b>Statement</b>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Employment facilitates better settlement outcomes.	Overall, I have had positive settlement experiences because of my active engagement in employment.					
Social capital facilitates better settlement outcomes.	Overall, my settlement experiences have been positive because of my active engagement in sport.					
Participation in learning connects to employment outcomes	Having English language skills boosted my employability.					
Work skills connect to employment outcomes.	Having access to work-related networks boosted my employability.					
Social capital facilitates a better connection to the sport	Having a social connection boosted my involvement in local community sport.					
Economic capital facilitates a better connection to the sport.	Having a regular income boosted my involvement in local community sport.					

## **Employment**

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about the benefits of employment to you as a South Sudanese –Australian with a refugee background?

<b>Statement</b>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
		1	2	3	4	5
Economic Capital	Employment assisted me and my family to settle better in Australia because of the income it provides.					
Social Capital	Employment helped me to connect with many people in the workplace.					
Cultural capital	Employment assisted me to learn about Australian culture and values.					
Psychological capital	Employment gave me a stable income, which helped me to improve my psychological wellbeing.					
Physical Capital	Employment assisted me to remain physically active and fit.					

## Sport

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements about the benefits of sport to you as a south Sudanese Australian with a refugee background?

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongl y agree</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Social capital	Sport assisted me to connect with many people and improve my integration into the wider community.				
Cultural capital	Sport helped me learn more about Australian culture and values.				
Physical capital	Sport assisted me to improve my physical fitness and health.				
Psychological capital	Sport assisted me to remain positive about myself and improved my psychological wellbeing.				
Economic capital	Sport helped me to obtain paid work.				

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY**

## **Appendix E: The interview guide and questions**

The aim of this interview is to investigate the role of sport and employment in the settlement process of South Sudanese-Australians with a refugee background. You are invited to discuss the following questions with me. The interview will take 60 minutes long (which is one hour) and will be audio recorded, and transcribed into a document. If participant want to take break during interview, it is acceptable to do so by letting the interviewer know.

### **Introduction**

Thank you for accepting my invitation to discuss your settlement experiences. Let us go through some general demographic information and then follow up with questions for the interview.

### **Demographic information:**

1. Gender	Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Age	18-24years <input type="checkbox"/> 25-39years <input type="checkbox"/> 40-64years <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Years of residency in Australia	2-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11 years or more <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Participation in employment	I am employed full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Participation in sport	<p>I am involved in sport on a regular basis (at least three times a week). <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am involved in sport on a casual basis (less than three times a week). <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am currently not involved in sport. <input type="checkbox"/></p>

### **Settlement Experiences**

6. Tell me about your overall early settlement experiences in Melbourne?

7. What was good and what was bad about your settlement experiences?

### **Participation in employment**

Let us now talk more about your work experience, good and not good.

8. What are your experiences of work in Australia if you are working?
9. What are your experiences of unemployment if you are not working?
10. What type of work you have been doing?
11. What do you enjoy about work?
12. What problems or difficulties do you face at work?
13. From your experiences, what are the benefits of work for you in Australia?
14. Do you think engaging in the workforce has increased your financial stability and understanding of the Australia workforce, how and why?
15. What are the overall barriers to employment for you?

### **Participation in Sport**

Let us talk about your sporting experiences, good or not good.

16. Have you engaged in sport during your time in Australia? How and why?
17. What type of sports have you engaged in?
18. What are your experiences of engaging in sport?
19. What do you enjoy about sport?
20. What problems do you face in sport?
21. Do you think engaging in sport has increased your social network? How and why?
22. If you are not involved sport, what are the overall barriers to sport for you?

### **Possible Suggestions for future**

23. What could be done to assist South Sudanese in engaging in employment?
24. What could be done to assist South Sudanese in engaging in sports?

## **Appendix F: Profiles of participants**

This is a summary profile of 20 participants who were interviewed for the qualitative study. There were nine females and eleven males. Each participant has been given a pseudonym for the purpose of confidentiality. The selection process of participants was based on four main categories: Employed and involved in sport; Unemployed, but involved in sport; Employed but not involved in sport, and Unemployed and not involved in sport. Five participants in each category were interviewed. Most had obtained their Australian citizenship, but they may still have a feeling of being refugees, for the reasons appearing below.

<b>Participant Number</b>	<b>Background Description</b>
1	Participant 1 is a 24-year-old single male, born in South Sudan, who migrated to Australia as a refugee because of conflict between South and North Sudan. He has been living in Australia for 8 years. He completed his Year 12 education in Australia and was admitted to TAFE for a Diploma in Business. He is unemployed and does not play sport. He was interviewed for this project on 6 September 2014.
2	Participant 2 is a 25-year-old male who has lived in Australia for 10 years. He came as a refugee with some of his family. He completed Year 12 and is thinking of going to TAFE and then to university. He is employed but does not play sport. He was interviewed on 7 September 2014.
3	Participant 3 is a 20-year-old male living with his family and loves playing basketball. He has been in Australia for 11 years with his family and is currently unemployed. He completed his Year 12 in Australia but spent most of his time playing basketball with his friends. He was interviewed on 9 September 2014.
4	Participant 4 is a 24-year-old male who is currently studying civil engineering at university. He has been in Australia for 9 years. He came to Australia with his uncle's family, but his parents and siblings were left behind in South

	Sudan. He is employed and plays sport. He was interviewed on 12 September 2014.
5	Participant 5 is a 20-year-old male who came to Australia as a refugee with his mother and siblings. He has been in Australia for 10 years and is currently studying at university after completing Year 12. He is employed and plays both basketball and soccer at his local team level. He was interviewed on 12 September 2014.
6	Participant 6 is a 27-year-old male who has been living in Australia for more than 11 years with his parents and siblings. He completed his Year 12 and is currently at university studying a law degree. He is employed part time and is involved in sport, playing and coaching basketball for young Africans. He was interviewed on 13 September 2014.
7	Participant 7 is a 38-year-old male. He has been living in Australia with his wife and children for 10 years. He is employed but does not play sport. However, two of his children do play sport locally. He was interviewed on 13 September 2014.
8	Participant 8 is a 25-year-old female and a mother of a young boy. She has been in Australia for 14 years since coming from a refugee camp with her mother and siblings. She completed Year 12 and is employed in a childcare centre, but does not play sport. She was interviewed on 16 September 2014.
9	Participant 9 is a 30-year-old female. She is single and lives with her mother and siblings. They have been in Australia for 12 years. She is currently studying community development at university. She is unemployed and is not involved in sport. She was interviewed on 15 September 2014.
10	Participant 10 is a 21-year-old male who has been in Australia for 8 years with his siblings. He came with his mother and siblings, but his father was left behind. He completed Year 12 in Australia, is employed in a factory and plays Australia Football ("footy"). He was interviewed on 20 September 2014.
11	Participant 11 is a 28-year-old female. She has been in Australia for more than 11 years with her mother and siblings. She completed a diploma in children's services and is employed in a child-care centre. She is not involved in sports, but believes that it can assist young people from refugee backgrounds to settle

	better through connecting with friends. She was interviewed on 29 September 2014.
12	Participant 12 is a 22-year-old female who came to Australia with her family from a refugee camp after escaping conflict in South Sudan. She has been here for 11 years. She completed Year 12 and is not employed but is involved in sport. She was interviewed on 29 September 2014.
13	Participant 13 is a 39-year-old male who came with his family, wife and children, but left many relatives, including his mother and siblings, in South Sudan. He has been in Australia for 10 years. He is well educated in both English and Arabic, but is not employed. He is involved in sport because of his children: he coaches soccer players for boys under 15 years. He was interviewed on 29 September 2014.
14	Participant 14 is a 23-year-old male. He grew up in a refugee camp and resettled in Australia with his mother and siblings. He has been here for 9 years and has completed both Year 12 and university. He is employed and involved in basketball, which he loves because he is tall, which made him the best player in his team. His brother plays Australian football at junior level. He was interviewed on 4 October 2014.
15	Participant 15 is a 28-year-old male who has been in Australia for 10 years. He left his family (brothers and sisters) in South Sudan. He is not married because he wanted to complete his education first. He is currently studying for an accounting degree. He is unemployed and is not involved in sport. He was interviewed on 5 October 2014.
16	Participant 16 is a 28-year-old female and a mother of three children. She has been in Australia for 10 years. She came with her mother and siblings because she lost her father in the conflict in South Sudan. She is unemployed and is not involved in playing sport. She was interviewed on 10 October 2014.
17	Participant 17 is a 25-year-old female and lives with her mother and siblings. Her father is not with them because they lost him in the Sudanese civil war. She has been in Australia with her family for 12 years. She is employed and studying at the same time. She is not involved in sport, but her brother plays

	basketball and Australian football at the local level. She was interviewed on 10 October 2014.
18	Participant 18 is a 30-year-old female who has been in Australia for over 15 years with her family. She came as a refugee with her parents and siblings. She completed Year 12, went to university and obtained a degree in business management and marketing. She is employed, but not currently involved in sport. However, she used to play volleyball when she was in high school. She was interviewed on 28 October 2014.
19	Participant 19 is a 27-year-old female who has been in Australia for 11 years. She came with her mother and siblings but is currently living independently because of her studies. She is studying arts in university and not employed, but is involved in sport, basketball and running. She was interviewed on 2 November 2014.
20	Participant 20 is a 19-year-old female who has been living in Australia for 9 years with her family. She completed Year 12 and is not employed and not involved in sport. She was interviewed on 13 November 2014.

## **Appendix G: Interview findings and coding process**

As discussed in previous chapters, this study applied a thematic analysis approach in order to analyse the interview data. Thus, 20 interviews were conducted, audio-recorded, transcribed and manually analysed based on the themes. The coding process is based on how many participants raised what issue or agreed with a particular theme. For instance, all 20 participants had clearly articulated the benefits of employment, both financially and as social capital in relation to the connections that can enhance individuals and families' settlement. Most of the following themes were taken from the more dominant words and expressions used by participants during interviews.

### **Settlement experiences**

1. Learning English
2. Racism and discrimination
3. Family dynamics and social change
4. Specific gender issues
5. Specific youth issues
6. Integration and disintegration
7. Social capital
8. Cultural capital
9. Psychological capital
10. Advocacy as a way forward
11. Community willingness to take responsibility

### **Participation in employment**

1. Economic capital: financial benefit of employment
2. Psychological capital
3. Social capital
4. Cultural capital: learning experiences from employment
5. Unemployment, social and psychological impacts
6. Discrimination and racism in employment

### **Participation in sport**

1. Physical capital
2. Psychological capital
3. Cultural capital
4. Social capital
5. Economic capital
6. Gaps in sport for the refugee community
7. Sport as a settlement strategy for refugees
8. Problematic aspects of sports participation
9. Racism and discrimination