

Fall 11-21-2023

Navigating Sense of Home: Migration experiences of Home and Community

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Navigating Sense of Home: Migration experiences of Home and Community

A Thesis

Presented in

Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

By

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[03.18.2022]

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Acknowledgements

Completing any advanced piece of academic work requires a village to complete. Without the support of my “village” completing this piece of work would have been impossible. The first person I wish to thank is my wife Dr Sara Camilleri whose understanding, guidance, patience and unwavering support saw me through the various peaks and troughs of this piece of work.

I would also like to thank my brother Mark for his support in this endeavor. A special mention goes to my parents-in-law John and Sandra who have adopted me into their family and have fully taken on the mantle given to them by my parents by giving me love and support far above and beyond the normal call of duty. I would also like to thank my friends who have all been granted PhDs in counselling honoris causa for the unending support they have given me. Jean, Peter, Andrew, Miguel, Matthew and Kirsten, from the bottom of my heart I thank you. A very special thank you goes to my mentor, colleague, and friend Helena whose insights and support helped made this work better.

Finally, I would also like to thank my thesis committee Dn Dr. Joseph R. Ferrari and Dr Jerry Cleland. Dr Cleland’s support helped refine and further polish this work.

Lastly, I would like to thank my thesis chair and advisor Dn Dr. Joseph R. Ferrari for his steadfast advocacy that was required to see the project through as well as for the academic support, sharp editing and quick turnarounds that have made this project possible and that has helped me grow professionally.

Biography

Andrew Camilleri (he/him) was born in Pieta`, Malta, January 5th, 1988. Andrew graduated from University of Malta, Malta and received his Bachelor of Laws degree in Law with a minor in Philosophy. He subsequently received a Doctorate in Laws at the University of Malta, Malta and obtained a Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

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Introduction

Migration has been one of the predominant features in the history of humanity. However, the last few decades have seen an unprecedented level of migration facilitated by conflict, globalization, speedier travel and the internet which has resulted in more knowledge about the country of destination and a diminishing need to rupture contact with the country of departure (Itzigsohn & Saucedo, 2002). Migrants move quickly and cultures are not the self-contained bubbles they once were, due to what has been termed remote acculturation (Ferguson & Bornstein, 2012). Migrants form large networks through which they connect cultures, send remittances to their countries of origin and move back and forth between these countries.

Patterns may be observed in migration trends wherein migrants tend to leave less economically developed countries and move to wealthier countries (Dmitry et al., 2016). Wealth may take multiple forms in this instance including more peaceful and more tolerant countries, countries with better educational opportunities as well financially richer countries. In countries of reception debates shifted with migration being perceived as net negative transaction, particularly when economies slow down (Birman & Bray, 2017). This change in perception led to an increase in more restrictive and discriminative laws and practices that offer few legal opportunities for migrants to exist and live within the receiving country (Birman & Bray, 2017).

Adding to the hostile reception in receiving countries, migrants experience significant stresses when transitioning to find a sense of belonging from one country to another, particularly when the nature of migration is forced (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Language barriers, currency differences, different foods, written and unwritten

rules of conduct as well as different climates all contribute to make the acculturative process difficult and stressful (Jackson & Bauder, 2014).

Finding socially just ways to promote the integration of newcomers within society is imperative within any state or nation, however this has traditionally been a difficult inconsistent process with mixed results. Community psychology, with its roots in social justice and its ability to navigate difficult discourses dealing with intersectional issues, has an opportunity to provide new understandings as well as insights that can be translated into solutions (Birman & Bray, 2017).

This thesis will contribute to the literature on migration by examining comprehensively the constructs of psychological home, neighborhood attachment, sense of community and resilience within the migratory context. Using an archival dataset collected by researchers from the University of Genoa who collected data on a migrant and non-migrant sample, the aim of this thesis is to understand the relationship between psychological home, neighborhood attachment, sense of community and resilience within the migratory context. Such knowledge will be important in providing insights to advance the field of community psychology by shedding light on the acculturative processes that occur when migrants attempt to navigate life in the receiving country, as well as opening up new avenues for discussion on how receiving states can support at systemic and structural levels the integration and subsequent wellbeing of migrants.

Migration to the United States

Migration in the United States has gone through at least four different phases, with some arguing that post-2016 the United States is entering its fifth migration phase (Levesque & DeWaard, 2021). Understanding these changes and evolution in

migratory patterns allows migration research to be appropriately situated and creates context-sensitive findings that are paramount within this field of research.

The first phase of migration to the US was predominantly comprised of ‘old immigrants’ from the United Kingdom and north-western Europe (until 1880), while the second phase was comprised of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe (1880-1920) (Zolberg, 2006). The third phase of migration within the United States (1920-1960) saw a demographic shift with the majority of the population being in the United States as opposed to being immigrants, because of political shifts towards nativism (Levesque & DeWaard, 2021). Despite the shifts towards nativism, immigration still occurred throughout this phase. However instead of the European and Asian migrant labor that had characterized previous phases, the creation of the Bracero program which allowed millions of Mexicans to enter and work legally in the United States (Lee, 2006).

The fourth phase of migration within the United States (1965-2016) saw the end of the quota system and a large increase in undocumented migration to the United States (Levesque & DeWaard, 2021). The introduction of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act which until present still remains the backbone of immigration policy in the United States, consolidated preferences to applicant who had US relatives who could sponsor their application or who had skills in demand by US employers (Levesque & DeWaard, 2021). This period also saw a shift with the national origins of migrants being predominantly from Asia and Latin America as opposed to Europe (Massey et al., 2016).

As can be seen above the typical profile of a migrant in the United States has changed over time. From migrants of European descent, since 1992, the number of

migrants who are Mexican-born has surpassed those born in Europe (Passel et al., 2012). As a result of the increase in flows and settlement, the Mexican population reached 12 million in 2008, but declined by 2016 due to a deceleration in outmigration and an increase in return migration (Cohn et al., 2017). As of 2007, a 25% increase in migrants from North Triangle Central America (NTCA) countries such as El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras was registered, particularly since the great recession (Cohn et al., 2017). Organized crime in this region, particularly gangs, has led to an increase of violence and crime which has resulted in significant numbers of persons residing within these areas fleeing to neighboring countries such as the United States (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2016)

Figure 1.

Northern Triangle Map



(EPRS, 2018)

Within the United States 15.6 million migrants from Mexico and NTCA were registered with 12.6 million from Mexico and 3 million from the NTCA (940,000 from Guatemala, 630,000 from Honduras and 1.4 million from El Salvador (Masferrer et al., 2020). With limited legal options available, the phenomenon of undocumented migrants remains a significant issue with an estimated 11 million undocumented migrants currently living in the US (Levesque & DeWaard, 2021). Given the prominence of migration in mainstream discourses occurring within US society,

coupled with the high influx of migrants to the United States, research on migration and integration is of great importance and requires continuous inquiry to inform policy as patterns continue to evolve.

Presently among new migrant arrivals, persons from Asia are the most numerous migrant groups and predictions indicate that migration from Mexico will continue to decrease in the long term while sub-Saharan Africa, India and China are likely to contribute more migrants to the United States (Hanson & McIntosh, 2016).

Migration to the Italian context

Like many subjects of inquiry within community psychology, migration research requires a keen understanding of the migratory context within which the research occurs. Contextualizing findings of migration related research with appropriate sensitivity benefits from a historical understanding of the evolution of migratory patterns. It also informs the ways within which policies, laws, community organizations and public discourse have shifted over time. In this section I will be contextualizing the evolution of migration within Italy.

Migration to Italy has been dubbed as one of the most “relevant and divisive [subjects]...for Italy over the last decades.” (Ceccorulli, 2021 pp. 119). Historically the relationship between Italy and migration generally followed the pattern of emigration with large numbers of Italian migrants migrating towards America and other European States such as Belgium and Germany, while within Italy itself internal migration to northern regions such as Milan and Turin from more impoverished southern regions were commonplace throughout the 20th century (Ceccorulli, 2021).

Migration to Italy was not completely absent but was not a predominant feature in national discourse, until the economic boom of the 1950s brought in a

number of migrants who were lured by the economic prospects of the country (Einaudi, 2007)). The increasing migration flows were mostly ignored until the 1980s when attempts to introduce comprehensive legislation on immigration were unsuccessful, which created contrasting problems with the real need for migrants to sustain the economy but without adequate legal channels of migration being provided (Ceccorulli, 2021). Einaudi (2007, p.51) claims that until the early 2000's immigration within Italy was "without politics" implying that it had not yet entered into mainstream political discourse.

After political scandals that weakened the main political parties, new political actors entered the political scene, particularly far right parties. These groups portrayed the migration situation through the lens of a host country, and spurring fears about immigration (Ceccorulli, 2021). The shift in perception regarding migration coincided with greater attention from the media and in public debates which moved in cycles of fear, aided by the continuous state of electoral campaign due to the precarious Italian parliamentary system (Diamanti, 2017; Pogliano 2014; Musarò & Parmiggiani, 2014; Furia, 2016). Within debates the term used for migrants is frequently 'clandestini' (meaning someone who is clandestine in the Italian language) which originally had a more neutral orientation but has over the last few years taken a highly pejorative meaning (Cecorulli, 2021).

Economic downturn and terrorist events in many European cities have also prompted strong debates between humanitarian and communitarian discussions (Panebianco, 2016), particularly in light of migrants adhering to the Muslim religion, with noted political scientist Giovanni Sartori questioning the possibility for integration for migrants from theocratic cultures (Sartori, 2000). Different processes of securitization and criminalization of migration have had their effects mitigated by

two parties, namely trade unions and especially the religious communities (Ceccorulli, 2021). The latter have played an important role in challenging some of the most ingrained stereotypes on migration, namely as invaders or terrorists (Ceccorulli, 2021).

Migration within Italy is also intertwined with one of Italy's most pernicious structural issues, the mafia organizations. Migration provides multiple opportunities for the mafia to increase revenue, including from human trafficking, exploitation of labor and the possibility of providing cheaper services to migrant centers and pocketing the profit (Capellazzo, 2017). Additionally new and booming markets have emerged with regards to the transportation of migrants (Fontana, 2020). Aided by criminalization of legal methods of transport for migrants and restrictive immigration policies, criminal networks have fully exploited and monetized the lack of alternatives migrants face with regards to transportation, making migrant transportation a highly profitable enterprise (Fontana, 2020)

Adding to these unique factors is the role of Italy within the European Union. With the Dublin III regulation the European Union effectively mandated that states forming part of the European Union's external border had sole responsibility to process and host asylum seekers and irregular migrants that entered its borders, without any mechanism for burden sharing with states without an external border (Capellazzo, 2017). Such a situation adds additional pressure on Italy and other countries with external borders, particularly in the Mediterranean to deal with migration (Capellazzo, 2017).

At the end of 2016, 5 million immigrants were registered in Italy which are estimated to be 10% of the population (IDOS, 2017). While public opinion holds that

most of the migrants are Muslim, in fact around 54% are estimated to be Christian (La Stampa, 2017). Migration arrivals have had peaks and troughs in the last decade within Italy with low arrivals in 2010 (4,500) but compensated for the years after the Arab Spring with number reaching almost 65,000 migrants in 2011 (Central Mediterranean Route, n.d.). For the years 2014-2017 inflows were above 150,000 per year (Central Mediterranean Route, n.d.). The years 2018 and 2019 drastically decreased in migrants, which Ceccorulli (2021) linked to greater cooperation with Libya. The typical immigrant who enters Italy is generally over the age of 18 years but there has been a growing trend where minors who migrate are unaccompanied (Rania et al., 2018) The number of unaccompanied minors generally hovered under 15,000 but saw a peak in 2016 when 25,846 minors arrived in Italy (Dipartimento per le libertà civili e l'immigrazione, 2017).

Outlooks on the future of migration in Italy indicate that with an ageing native-born population (around 30%) a constant influx of foreign-born persons will likely lead to 33% of the population being foreign-born by 2065 (IDOS, 2017). Such a shift will clearly test Italy's ability to integrate migrants into the local context. Current incapability to properly step up to the demands of its role as Mediterranean peninsula with a European hard border and an increasingly radicalized internal debate on the issue without proper integration mechanisms does not inspire much hope for comprehensive and broadly acceptable solutions (Ceccorulli, 2021). However, it provides ample opportunities for community psychology to analyze the situation and propose systemic solutions that would further social justice, whilst acknowledging the multiple and at times competing realities of diverse stakeholders.

Migration from an Ecological, Community Psychology Perspective

Within the field of psychology interest in migration and acculturation has increased significantly (Sheikh & Anderson, 2018; Ward, 2020). While migration has traditionally been studied from the viewpoint of individuals throughout psychology (Birman & Bray, 2017), community psychology adopts a broader view looking at the systems of oppression and structural injustices which permeate the migrant experience (Birman & Bray, 2017). Examples of such structural injustices include; additional discrimination on the workplace, lack of opportunities to access services given to natives, and inability to access the legal system (Saleem et. al, 2020).

Community psychology offers a broader perspective than traditional psychology by focusing less on individual deficit to the field of migration. It also brings different epistemologies and research tools to understand and capture the migrant experience (Birman & Bray, 2017). Moving beyond pure positivism, community psychology seeks to understand the migrant experience in broader conceptualizations and borrows comfortably from the social constructivist tradition which uniquely values the experience of the individual and the community they live in (Tebes, 2005, Trickett, 2009).

Additionally, the central value of social justice within community psychology ensures that key works are not merely theoretic but are oriented towards providing tangible solutions within communities that provide opportunities for empowerment (Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky, 2007). Community psychology looks at the process of acculturation and incorporation which delves into the process of re-settling once the transitory experience has occurred, both from the perspective of the migrant and the host community (Berry, 2006, Dinh & Bond, 2008). Others within the field have looked into the immediate relationship that migrants have with their neighboring

community/ies and the surrounding neighborhood (Schnittker, 2002, Miller et. al, 2009, Portes & Rumbaut, 2006)

Increased sensitivity to intersectionalities that occur between different migrants and migrant communities such as class, gender, sexual orientation and disability status are also a key insight that community psychology offers (Birman and Bray, 2017). Finally, the field of community psychology does not stop at merely “knowing” but provides a framework for action-research that allows for productive coalitions and partnerships with community members, social organizations, and policymakers (Perkins et al., 2011).

Throughout this thesis I will be adopting a community psychology approach to look at the physical and psychological processes migrants undertake to navigate their new immediate surroundings from their house to their neighborhood and community. Analyzing psychological home provides insights into the process of navigating between public and private spaces for migrants, while utilizing the constructs of sense of community and neighborhood attachment looks at the more social and public aspects of navigating life in their new communities. Once the relationships between these constructs have been understood I intend to look at how the interrelationship between these constructs affects resilience by looking at both migrant and Italian data to get a better comparative view. The impact of these constructs on resilience is of great importance to understand and propose ways in which integration can be fostered through the promotion of resilience.

Psychological Home: A Community Psychology Perspective

The concept of home resists easy definition because of its wide set of meaning and associations (Moore, 2000). Different considerations are required when tackling

the issue of home, these range from legal ways of discussing a person's place of domicile, to a person's body as the home for their subjective self, *psychological home* or even as a religious sense (Aspinall, 2008; Sigmon et al., 2002; Ferrari et al., 2006). This can be seen in contexts beset with violence and neglect such as situations where girls run away from their homes. In their study into the phenomena as to why girls run away from their home Peled and Cohavi (2009) found that whenever the girls talked about their home, it was rarely the physical space that was mentioned but rather “home seemed to consist of the psychological meanings it held for the girls, as expressed through their relationships with family members” (p 742).

Another key dimension of the conceptual space defined as home is the ability to manipulate the physical environment to create comfort (Ferrari, et al., 2006; Rogers & Hart, 2021) and provide security and self-identification (Mallett, 2004). The display of possessions is of particular importance within the home construct as manifestations of people’s identities (Cristoforetti et al., 2011; Jacobs & Malpas, 2013), status (Gosling, 2009; Gosling et al., 2002; Perez et al., 2013) and expressions of their individualized home cultures (Leith, 2005; Mallett, 2004; Shenk et al., 2004). The importance of possessions in the home construct is further highlighted when the relationship with such is problematic and results in clutter, which has been shown to have a negative impact on well-being and might have a cultural component (Ferrari & Roster, 2018; Ferrari et al., 2018, Ferrari et al., 2018a; Crum & Ferrari, 2019; Roster et al., 2016) Clutter seems to negate the positive impact that psychological home has on wellbeing (Roster et al., 2016). In Crum and Ferrari (2019) clutter has been shown to moderate the relationship between psychological home and life satisfaction. It indicated that the more clutter present in the home the less positive psychological impact a home may have on occupants’ wellbeing. Indecision was also found to be

related clutter presenting interesting relationships between personality level variables and contextual variables which requires further exploration (Ferrari et. al, 2018, Ferrari et. al 2018a).

Building on these themes the seminal work in this field was conducted by Sigmon et al., (2002). These researchers acknowledged the abundance of literature that discussed both the more physical dimension and the more ethereal aspects of home but found a lacuna with regards to the process in which a house (a physical structure) transforms into something more (a home). Sigmon et al., (2002) adopted a more limited definition of psychological home which relates closely to a psychological process that surrounds a physical space. In fact, they differentiate between the more social dimensions of home by stating:

Conversely, psychological home relates to how an individual expresses self-identity in relation to a physical environment. Psychological home also demonstrates an individual's need to develop an identity independent from the social community, as well as to establish a safe refuge from the group or to lay claim to a portion of geographic identity. (pp 31)

Psychological Home, Sense of Community and Place Attachment: Similar yet Distinct Concepts

The concepts of psychological home, sense of community, and neighborhood attachment attempt to measure and define phenomena with a significant degree of overlap. Delineating the differences between the constructs is imperative to understand not only their statistical relationship but how they relate at a more theoretical level.

Currently only one paper undertakes the difficult task of defining and separating the three concepts, namely Sigmon et al., (2002). These authors differentiated between a sense of community and psychological by positing that while sense of community, whether organized by locale or by interest, seems to relate to the need of individuals to relate to a larger social context, psychological home relates to a need for an individual to relate to a physical environment in order to express self-identity. Furthermore, psychological home relates to the individuals' need to separate themselves from their communities, at least temporarily which has a marked impact on their wellbeing.

When dealing with the literature on place attachment Sigmon et al. (2002) noted that place has been recorded to have a number of definitions and need not be necessarily a tangible geographic location on the map. Places such as cyberspace, or parks and even natural landmarks have all evoked feeling within individuals that bear psychological inquiry.

Locating psychological home within place attachment Sigmon et al (2002) posit that Psychological Home relates to the psychological relationship an individual has to a particular location, in this instance their house, thereby locating psychological home as a sub-type of place. Psychological home therefore seems to differ from sense of community in that the concept of psychological home refers to the more private aspect of an individual's wellbeing as they create a separate psychological and physical space in the home, while psychological home is a more granular subset of the concept of place attachment.

Despite the conceptual difficulties involved in limiting the definitions of these three concepts, namely psychological home, sense of community and neighborhood

attachment, Sigmon et al. (2002) do well to provide them with less expansive definitions because doing so provides a number of benefits. The first benefit is that when persons unfamiliar with the subject approach research in the field, they may be tempted to use common parlance definitions which may be fuzzy and over-reach into one another. Providing conceptual clarity even if at times this becomes a somewhat arbitrary exercise, provides the student of this field a good basis to engage with the subject. For the more proficient researcher the benefits of restricted as opposed to broader definitions is that statistical analysis is more conceptually clear when variables are neatly defined and measure more clearly defined domains of lived experience.

Naturally one can argue the opposite approach that by engaging in such an arbitrary exercise in defining and limiting the scope of lived experiences which are difficult to neatly define and contain, one is missing out from the “richness” of the lived experience. However, this critique has at its basis a deeper epistemological and ontological argument which would relate how one ought to capture and define the complicated and contradictory lived experiences of human beings. Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Measuring Psychological Home

Sigmon et al. (2002) identify five domains namely 1.) the cognitive which deals with the meaning and beliefs of home, 2.) the affective which deals with feelings of security, attachment and familiarity, 3.) the behavioral which deals with actions such as construction and manipulation of the home environment, 4.) the manifestation and functional components which deals with how much energy and resources are expended to make the space more home-like, and 5.) the functional

component which consists of the benefits or liabilities that the home space provides. The five domains were used subsequently as the basis for a psychometric scale entitled Psychological Home (Sigmon et al., 2002).

Scores on this scale were positively correlated with scores on the psychological well-being sub-scale of the Mental Health Index as developed by Veit and Ware (1983) and negatively correlated with scores on the psychological distress subscale, and Negative Affect of the Mental Health index (Sigmon et al., 2002).

Subsequently, Cicognani (2011) carried out the only major and published study on an Italian sample of adults corroborating previous results by Sigmon et al., (2002). In the Italian study Cicognani (2011) found that women develop a stronger attachment and identification with the home than men. Gonzalez (2005) posits that different gender roles that are found within different cultures might create conflicting sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within the psychological home. Feminist scholars are cautious of these findings claiming that the idealization of the psychological home can sometimes obscure the fact that the home can be the locus of harm, fear and exploitation (Alhuzail, 2018). With regards to age, within the Italian sample a positive but weak correlation was found with age indicating that the relationship with home increases with age (Cicognani, 2011). Results concerning the nature of housing was as expected, Psychological Home was higher among house owners, who have greater freedom to modify the house as they wish (Cicognani, 2011). A positive relationship was also found between Psychological Home and Residential Attachment as well with scores on these Italian Sense of Community scale (Cicognani, 2011).

The Psychological Home construct is not without its critics who claim that Sigmon et al.'s (2002) conceptualization of modifying a house or at least some form of physical space continue to perpetuate negative stereotypes who do not define home necessarily as a physical building such as nomadic cultures (Aspinall, 2008).

The link between a psychological home and wellbeing makes the construct psychological home of great interest to community psychology which seeks to understand the role of the environment on the wellbeing of individuals (Gattino, et al, 2013). Community psychology frequently employs bottom-up theories using ecological approaches that attempt to take into account contextual and environmental variables that impact life satisfaction and wellbeing (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Consequently, any phenomenon (such as psychological home) that purports to increase health and well-being through contextual factors is of interest to community psychologists (Gattino et al., 2013). This is especially the case when the groups being discussed forms part of traditionally marginalized identities such as migrants who migration experience can make the more prone to experience stressful life events (Crum & Ferrari, 2019).

Psychological Home in the Migratory Context

Within the migratory context the sense of psychological home takes on a new dimension of importance. Migration, especially forced migration may lead to the unchosen loss of home, culture, family and status leaving migrants confused and purposeless (Alcock, 2003). Creating and nurturing spaces and opportunities to help migrants transition from their previous home to a new home which does not necessarily abandon the previous one but helps migrants adjust to the new context is of paramount importance for migrants' wellbeing (Alcock, 2003). This is of particular

importance when migrants are captured by a feeling of exile wherein, they neither belong to the country of origin nor to the country of destination (Amit & Bar Lev, 2015)

Understanding the dynamics of how a migrant individual interacts with their immediate environment and physical resources may provide greater insights into what contributes to migrant's wellbeing, life satisfaction and greater resilience.

Psychological Sense of Community: A Contributor to Wider Acceptance for Migrants

Another construct that will be used in this thesis will be *psychological sense of community*. Sense of community can be defined as the experience of community as perceived by a group of people while psychological sense of community relates to the experience of community as perceived by individuals (Bess et al., 2002). Traditionally in ecological psychology, psychological sense of community is the most frequent measure used and has been defined by Sarason (1974, p.1 as cited in Nowell & Boyd, 2010) as “the sense that one was part of a readily available, mutually supportive network of relationships”

Psychological sense of community initially comprised of two aspects, namely the relational which focused more on the quality of human relationships and the territorial which focused on the neighborhood, town and city (Gusfield, 1975 as cited in McMillan & Chavis, 1986). These conceptualizations formed the basis of the framework for McMillan and Chavis' (1986) four-component model of sense of community. The framework includes membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection and has been the primary framework underlying much of the research on psychological sense of community

(McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Developments within the field indicate that individuals do not merely inhabit one community but are more likely to experience numerous communities with the subsequent psychological sense of communities (Brodsky & Marx, 2001). The communities can either be nested into one another in the form of sub-communities and macro-communities, such as neighborhood and national communities, but may also present instances of complete separation from one another (Brodsky & Marx, 2001).

Various studies have noted that psychological sense of community can be correlated with better mental health outcomes and greater participation in one's community (Cicognani et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2008; Mak et al., 2009; Stanley et al., 2010; Speer et al., 2013; Talò et al., 2014). A similar correlation has also been noted when one studies the relationship between psychological sense of community and with quality of life (Rollero & De Piccoli, 2010; Gattino et al., 2013; Tartaglia, 2013).

The positive association between psychological sense of community and well-being appears to hold validity cross-culturally among numerous contexts including in the US, Italy and China and in different sized communities (Davidson & Cotter, 1991; Ditchman et al., 2017; Hilbrecht et al., 2017; Mak et al., 2009; Moscato et al., 2014; Ng & Fisher, 2016; Obst & Tham, 2009; Prezza et al., 2001; Prezza & Costantini, 1998; Ramos et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2018, Stewart & Townley, 2020).

Similarly positive correlations have been observed when looking at life satisfaction and psychological sense of community. This was found to be the case in Italy (Prezza et al., 2001; Prezza & Costantini, 1998); China (Mak et al., 2009; Ng &

Fisher, 2016; Zhang et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2018); Nebraska, US (Ramos et al., 2017); and for migrants in Italy (Moscato et al., 2014,).

When dealing with the relationship between external environments and active aging and wellbeing in older adults, Au and colleagues (2020) have found that psychological sense of community has a mediative effect. This is in line with other literature on the subject (Bess et al., 2002; Nowell & Boyd, 2010; Gardner, 2011).

Neighborhood Attachment: An Important Factor for Migrant Integration

Neighborhood attachment is often associated with aspects of living within a neighborhood, which comprises the physical connection to the residential area environment (Abass & Tucker, 2018, Arnberger & Eder, 2012; Bonaiuto et al., 2003) and the social connection to the people that live within the area (LaGrange & Yau, 2020) Fornara and colleagues (2010, pp 174) define neighborhood attachment as the construct “which encompasses feelings, bonds, thoughts, and behavioral intentions that people develop over time with reference to their socio-physical environment.”

Fornara and colleagues (2010) indicate that several demographic categories of people are more likely to have a stronger sense of neighborhood attachment. These include among others the elderly, persons with lower-income, persons whose mobility is restricted and persons who have been residing in the neighborhood for a long period of time (Bonaiuto et al., 1999, Comstock et al., 2010; Raymond et. al, 2010), as well as residents of neighborhoods with small populations (Lewicka, 2005). Vorkin and Riese (2001) also note that one of the impacts of high neighborhood attachment is that communities are more likely to refuse environmental modifications that will have large impacts.

Determining whether neighborhood attachment predicts greater prosocial behavior has led to contradictory results (Abass & Tucker, 2018). Bonaiuto and colleagues (2003) have observed that neighborhood attachment predicts greater social interaction, however Lewicka (2010) contends that it is actually good neighborly relationships that are predictors for neighborhood attachment. While the literature has not yet definitively clarified which variable predicts the other, it is clear that there is some form of relationship between both.

Abass and Tucker (2018) suggest two other factors that impact neighborhood attachment, namely whether the neighborhood has appealing physical features and the perception of residential area (Bonaiuto et al., 1999). The former has been shown to contribute to a propagation of social ties (Anton & Lawrence, 2014).

Neighborhood attachment is diminished when emotional and physical ties are negative (Riger & Lavrakas, 1981). Design of the neighborhood also has significant impacts on neighborhood attachment (Abass & Tucker, 2018). Neighborhoods that contain spaces that encourage social contact, have abundant green spaces and pedestrian areas, as well as have amenities within walking distance have had a positive impact on neighborhood attachment (Lund, 2002; Rogers & Sukolratanamete, 2009, Brookfield, 2017). Neighborhood attachment is considered an important construct in community psychology because both seek to understand the relationship between the individual and their environment (Sundstrom et al., 1996).

Resilience, from a Community Psychology Perspective

Resilience from a psychological perspective has been defined by several authors as the ability to recover (Sisto et. al, 2019) but varying definitions of

resilience and multiple modalities for assessment have made resilience a difficult concept to discuss within psychological discourses.

Literature on resilience is divided into three schools of thought (Sisto et al., 2019). The first school of thought holds that resilience is an intrinsic characteristic within the personality of an individual which could be successfully measured and used to predict to a high degree of certainty how they would react in adverse circumstances (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Miller, 1988; Connor & Davidson, 2003). The second school of thought holds that resilience should be understood as a dynamic process that depends on the actions an individual takes in react to adverse external circumstances (Grinker & Spiegel, 1963, Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). A third school of thought proposes that resilience can be seen as both a genetic issue but also as well involving processes and circumstances external to the individual (Richardson et al., 1990, 2002)

Within the second school of thought which sees resilience as the product of processes engaged in by the individual, the literature initially focused on the risk factors that could preclude an individual from turning difficulties into advantage (Grinker & Spiegel, 1963). However, research by Werner and Smith (1992) recognized that close to a third of persons developed positive coping mechanisms despite being exposed to significant risk factors. Subsequently, the focus of inquiry shifted from the factors that might expose persons to risk of lack of resilience to the protective factors that promote resilience (Masten 2001; Antonovsky, 1996).

Within the migratory context, resilience has been reported as dependent on several factors (Babatunde-Sowole et al., 2016; Manetti et al., 2017). Language barriers, isolation, acculturation and marginalization policies all contribute as

significant stressors in the lives of migrants (Kirmayer et. al 2011) whereas education, social ties and support, community organizations, and culturally responsive policies contributed as resources to the well-being of migrants (Castro & Murray, 2010). At each ecological level these factors influence the dynamic process of adjustment to a new environment (Castro & Murray, 2010).

Understanding better how constructs such as sense of community, neighborhood attachment and psychological home influence the psychological resilience of migrants is an important task for community psychologists as it contributes towards greater understanding of the relationship migrants have to their environment and what can be done promote empowerment and dismantle systemic structures of discrimination.

Length of Stay within Host Country: integration or further seclusion?

Discussing the literature on length of stay for migrant trajectories requires an initial clarification that is important when dealing with the subject. The element of time is used in migrant trajectories in two ways. The first is to denote the length of time spent within the host country at the time of the survey, therefore taking a past time orientation to understand current migrant behavior (Mosbah et. al, 2020). The second is the desired intention of staying within the host country, which therefore takes a future orientation and looks at current conditions and events to try and tease out a relationship with a future event (di Belgiojoso, 2016). In this work the former shall be explored and used as a variable to conduct statistical analysis.

Length of stay within migrant trajectories has multiple impacts including social, psychological and physical dimensions. Literature on the last dimension, the physical dimension, indicates a pattern in which migrants enter into a country with a

certain higher level of health and over the period of time spent in the host country experience a decreasing level of physical health. This has been the case in Norway (Diaz et Al., 2015 Syse et al., 2018), and Australia (Ulman & Abernethy, 1975), and for Arab women in the United States (Jaber et Al., 2003). Prolonged stays also contributed to increased abuse of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and other narcotics (Sordo et al., 2015; Reiss, 2015).

The decrease in health outcomes is offset for longer-stay immigrants by greater access to health care, with literature indicating that longer stays meant greater access to healthcare possibilities (LeBrun, 2012; Cruz et al., 2009; Straiton et al., 2014; Tutu et al., 2017). While the literature in this field has often pointed out that immigrants are not a monolith, with differing cultures, countries of departures, reasons for migration, it has at times fallen short to provide sociological explanations as to the reason for the decreasing health. Given that these studies are mostly undertaken within the health field, this hesitancy is understandable but studying the impacts of acculturative stresses, prejudice and ordinary and extraordinary difficulties faced within migrant trajectories in host countries is important to give a more holistic understanding of the subject.

Looking at the social and psychological dimensions within the length of stay construct, literature indicates that longer stays are generally indicative of greater adaptation to the host country and greater familiarity with the social setting (Miglietta & Tartaglia, 2009). This was also found to be the case within Greece where the longer the stay, the more immigrants tended to participate within Greek society (Besevegis & Pavlopoulos, 2008), within Belgium where longer stays were associated with greater socio-economic adaption (Grigoryev & Berry, 2017) and Australia (Sonderregger & Barret, 2004).

Despite this trend Miglietta and Tartaglia (2009) caution that length of stay alone without further acculturative strategies such as learning the host language (see also Martinovic et. al, 2009) and greater host media consumption is not sufficient for further integration. Besevegis & Pavlopoulos (2008) also issue a similar note of caution and indicate that greater integration requires serious policy attempts to create a more positive space for immigrants. This was corroborated in study undertaken by Aycicegi-Dinn and Caldwell-Harris (2011) that tested whether Turkish migrants to the United States would become more individualistic the longer the period of residence within the United States. Aycicegi-Dinn and Caldwell-Harris (2010) found that Turkish immigrants did not adopt in a statically significant manner individualistic views, thereby rejecting an automatically assimilationist idea of migrant trajectory.

Length of Stay and Psychological Home

Literature on the relationship between length of stay and psychological home is sparse, with significant gaps needing to be addressed. Two studies that relate to these variables are found within Spain and Italy. For instance, within the Spanish migration context, length of residence and severance of economic ties with the home country were seen as important factors within homeownership decisions (Vono de-Vilhena & Bayona-Carrasco, 2012). While the study did not look at psychological home per se, the decision to purchase a house in the host country can be seen as an important manifestation of the desire to invest in psychological home.

In addition, within the Italian migration context, Boccagni and colleagues (2021) indicate that within the first few years of migration the concept of home is more closely linked to relationships and social standing. Within a decade or so, the process of psychological home is more likely to emerge, with a more private and

limited understanding of home occurring (Boccagni et. al, 2021). The conclusions of the study are interesting in that a more social conception of home within the community seems to precede more private conceptions of home, akin to the concept of psychological home.

Taken together, these few studies suggest that length of stay alone within a host country is not enough to determine psychological home but other factors such as relationship to the country of origin will affect such a relationship. Additionally, throughout the migration experience, psychological home may go through different phases with initially migrants seeking a stronger attachment to their community and in later phases valuing more highly the more private dimensions of psychological home.

Length of Stay, Sense of Community and Neighborhood Attachment;

Does one come at the cost of another?

In similar stead to Boccagni (2015) but on a larger scale, Liu and colleagues (2012) indicate that immigrants, particularly newer generations of migrants, are more likely to have greater social ties that span more diverse geographical locations than attachments to closer-knit geographic networks. This seems to indicate that length of stay particularly in poorer neighborhoods (Wu, 2012) will more likely promote a sense of community rather than neighborhood attachment.

Additionally, research by Maya-Jariego & Armitage (2007) indicates that while length of stay does indeed diminish a sense of community with the home country context, it does not automatically register an increase in sense of community in the new host community.

In conclusion, length of stay may facilitate, in the presence of other factors, greater integration and access to services and resources within the host country. While this may be interpreted as overlapping with particular facets of resilience, the literature has not yet investigated definitively the relationship between these two variables.

Study Rationale

The gap identified between psychological home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment in the migratory experience will be explored as related to the migratory experience to Italy. The constructs psychological home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment, will be analyzed within an Italian context particularly as they relate to resilience. Previous research looked at the relationship between psychological home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment within Italian persons (Cicognani, 2011). However, the role that these constructs play within the lives of immigrants, especially their impact on resilience has not yet been studied within Italy.

It is expected that the present study will provide new understanding into migrants' experiences as they navigate life within the receiving country. Understanding the impact of length of stay on these constructs and whether these will in turn promote resilience, will address important gaps in the literature relating to these constructs as well as the migratory experience. Additionally, the present study will provide new insights on the acculturation experience of migrants which is a primary area of inquiry for community psychology. This study may provide additional information for community-based recommendations that may be used by community

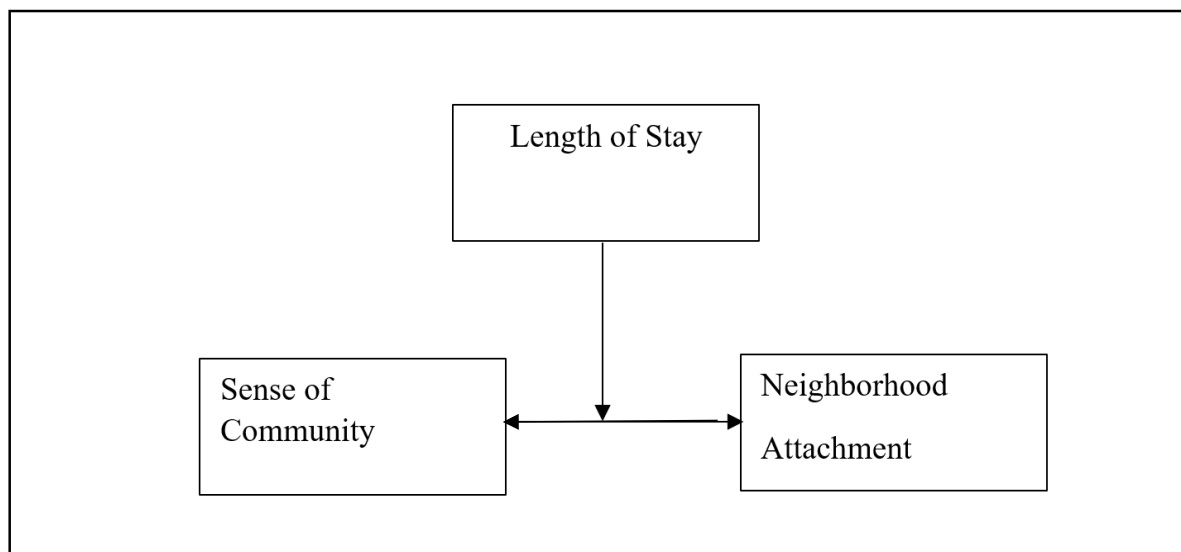
organizations and governmental agencies to create policies ensuring a socially just reception experience that promotes the wellbeing of migrants and empowers them.

Hypotheses

1. *Length of stay will positively predict psychological sense of home in migrants.*
2. *In the case of migrants, neighborhood attachment positively predicts sense of community.*
3. *In the case of migrants, length of stay will moderate positively sense of community and neighborhood attachment.*

Figure 2.

Moderation analysis to determine the moderating relationship of length of stay with sense of community and neighborhood attachment.



Research Questions:

1. *What demographic factors most strongly predicts psychological sense of home for migrants?*
2. *Which of the following variables: psychological home, sense of community, and neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in migrants?*

3. *Which of the following variables: psychological sense of home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in Italians?*

Method

Participants

The data utilized for this thesis were archival, collected by researchers from the University of Genoa in collaboration with DePaul University (Romoli et al., 2021a; Romoli et al., 2021b). Participants were 206 adults (M age = 35.17, SD = 13.65) residing in Italy (133 women; 71 men, 2 persons did not specify their gender identity and were removed from the sample. Within the total sample, two further groups were utilized for further analysis, namely the migrant group and the Italians group. Table 1 presents a profile of the participants in both.

Migrant sample. The migrant sample is comprised of 130 first generation migrant adults, (82 women, 48 men; M age = 36.39, SD = 12.8).

Migrants claimed they came from 31 different global countries. Most respondents self-identified as Albanian ($n=53$), Ecuadorian ($n=14$), Romanian ($n=23$), or Peruvian ($n=10$). Among respondents, the mean number of years residing in Italy was 16 years (SD = 8.28). Migrant participants were single ($n=62$) or married/cohabitating ($n=56$) and were in full or part-time employed ($n=75$), , while many respondents ($n=49$) claimed they had children. The majority ($n=113$) currently lived in a city with more than 10,000 inhabitants. For further information refer to Table 1.

Migrant respondents frequently reported they either owned their current dwelling (67) or rented (61).

Table 1

Percentage of Demographic Factors

	Migrant	Italians		Migrant	Italians	
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Dwelling Type</i>			
	Male	36.2	31.6	Apartment	88.5	71.1
	Female	62.3	68.4	Single-Family House	9.2	19.7
	Other	1.5		Multi-Family House	0.8	9.2
<i>Marital Status</i>			<i>Home Ownership</i>			
	Single	47.7	51.3	University Residence	1.5	0
	Married or Cohabiting	43.1	40.8	Owner	51.5	71.1
	Separated or Divorced	7.7	5.2	Renter	46.9	28.9
	Widower	1.5	2.6	Living free of charge	1.5	
<i>Employment Status</i>			<i>Dwelling Time</i>			
	Full-time or part-time worker	57.7	57.9	Less than a year	10.8	11.8
	Unemployed	16.2	2.6	1-5 years	31.5	26.3
	Student	25.4	31.6	5-10 years	29.2	11.8
	Retired	0.8	7.9	10 < years	28.5	50
<i>Education Status</i>			<i>Cohabitation</i>			
	Secondary School or lower	17.7	7.9	Alone	5.4	9.2
	Professional Qualification	11.5	7.9	With Partner	20.8	17.1
	High School Diploma	27.7	36.8	With Children	8.5	3.9
	Degree or Higher	48.5	44.8	With Family and/or Extended Family	59.2	61.8
	Other	1.5	2.6	With Friends	6.2	7.9

Note. n = 206 (130 for migrant sample, 76 for Italian sample).

Italian Sample. Italian respondents comprised 76 participants (52 women, 24 men) (M age= 36.52, SD = 14.97). They were mostly single ($n=39$) or married/cohabiting ($n=31$), mostly full or part-time employed ($n=44$) while a minority of participants ($n=26$) claimed they had children. For further information refer to Table 1.

Psychometric Scales

For the present study, four scales and additional socio-demographic information were used.

Italian psychological home. All participants completed the Italian translated version of the 8-item unidimensional *Psychological Home* scale, created originally by Sigmon et al. (2002)(see Appendix A). This scale assessed the subjective experience of the home, and was translated into Italian by Cicognani (2011). This scale included response alternatives on a Likert-type scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 7 = “strongly agree”). Sample items were “*I add personal touches to the place where I live.*” and “*I get a sense of security from having a place of my own.*” In the initial validation study, the authors Sigmon et al. (1998) found a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.85 (M = 47.93, SD = 7.21)

Italian sense of community scale. To measure feelings of belonging to the residential community, participants also completed the 18-item unidimensional *Italian Sense of Community Scale* by Prezza, Costantini, Chiarolanza, and Di Marco (1999)(see Appendix B). The scale, based on the theory by McMillan and Chavis (1986) as a reference frame operationalized sense of community as a single factor, at the subjective and macro levels.

Response alternatives ranged from 1 = “strongly agree” to 4 = “strongly disagree”. Sample items were “*I feel like I belong to this town*”; “*When I'm traveling, I'm proud to tell others where I live*”. From the validation study (Prezza et al., 2001) the scale has been shown to have a satisfactory internal coherence (Cronbach's alpha= 0.82) ($M=49.35$, $SD=6.42$).

Neighborhood attachment scale. To measure participants' bonding relationships with the residential context, the 6-item Italian version of the *Neighborhood Attachment Scale*, developed based on a scale created and validated in Italy by Fornara et. al (2010), was be used (see Appendix C). Response alternatives ranged from 0 (= “completely disagree”) to 6 (= “completely agree”). Sample items were “*This is the ideal neighborhood to live in*” to “*I would not willingly leave this neighborhood for another*”. The authors (Fornara et al., 2010) found a Cronbach alpha of 0.92 ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.58$)

Italian Resilience Scale. A translated and validated version of the Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale (1990) by Girtler et al. (2010) was used to assess the levels of resilience in participants (see Appendix D). The response scale ranged from 1 = “completely disagree” to 7 = “completely agree.” The 24-item scale is made up of 7 components, namely: meaningfulness (7 items), self-reliance (6 items), perseverance (3 items), existential aloneness (3 items), equanimity a (2 items) and equanimity b (2 items), and a final category which is termed “unassigned” (1 item). From the validation study (Girtler et al., 2010) internal consistency was evaluated at Cronbach alpha (0.84) ($M = 126.6$, $SD = 17.4$).

Socio-demographic. Participants also provided the following information: gender, age, education level, employment, marital status, having children, , country of origin, and time lived in Italy (see Appendix E). Additionally, the *current house characteristics* of respondents was requested. The information asked included the type of house, whether the house is owned or rented, years spent in the dwelling, and cohabitation (see Appendix E).

Procedure

An online survey was administered using the application ‘survio.com’ by researchers from the University of Genoa. The researchers shared the survey with embassies within Italy and migrant NGO’s who in turn shared the survey on the social media. Additionally, the researchers approached migrants within their communities with whom they had previous contact and utilizing the snowball technique were introduced to further individuals in the migrant community. Completing the questionnaire took about 20 minutes for all scales (presented in counter-balanced order, to control for order effects) which were followed up by the socio-demographic and housing characteristic items.

Data collection took place from May 2020 to December 2020. An explanation of the objectives and the voluntary nature of the study was provided in written form, and informed consent was obtained by having respondents complete a consent form asking their eligibility with regards to age (required to be 18 years or older). Participants remained anonymous; and the forced answering option was used on every question.

Expected Results

Preliminary Analysis

The mean, standard deviation, reliability and co-efficient alpha were presented for each scale. Additionally, the mean and standard deviation for each overall variable score for both migrants and Italians were presented. A post hoc power analysis was conducted using the software package, GPower (Faul and Erdfelder, 1992). The sample size of 130 and 76 (for the migrant and Italian condition respectively) was used for the statistical power analyses and a 3-predictor variable linear regression equation was used as a baseline. The recommended effect sizes used for this assessment were as follows: small ($f^2 = .02$), medium ($f^2 = .15$), and large ($f^2 = .35$) (Cohen, 1977). The alpha level used for this analysis was $p < .05$. The post hoc analyses revealed the statistical power for Italians was .14 for detecting a small effect, whereas the power exceeded .80 for the detection of a moderate to large effect size. This indicates that there was adequate power (i.e., power $> .80$) at the moderate to large effect size level, but less than adequate statistical power at the small effect size level. With regards to the migrant condition the post hoc analyses revealed the statistical power was .23 for detecting a small effect, whereas the power was .96 for the detection of a moderate to large effect size. Similar to the Italian condition, this indicates that there was an adequate power at the moderate to large effect size level, but less than adequate statistical power at the small effect size level.

Primary Analysis: Hypotheses

1. *Length of stay will predict higher scores for psychological sense of home in migrants.*
2. *For migrants only, higher neighborhood attachment predicts higher sense of community.*
3. *For migrants only, length of stay will moderate positively sense of community and neighborhood attachment.*

Research Questions:

4. *What demographic factors most strongly predict psychological home for migrants?*
5. *Which of the following variables: psychological home, sense of community, or neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in migrants?*
6. *Which of the following variables: psychological sense of home, sense of community or neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in Italians?*

Results

Preliminary Analysis

All project analyses used SPSS (Version 27; IBM). Zero-order correlations indicated that psychological home was significantly related to the other three variables. Table 1 shows the mean sum score (and standard deviation) for each of the self-report measures. Values along the diagonal are coefficient Alpha, while values below the diagonal are zero order correlates.

Table 2.*Mean Scores and Zero-order between Self-reported Scales*

	<i>M (SD)</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Psychological home	44.04 (8.88)	[.819]	-	-	-
2. Neighborhood Attachment	24.23 (7.60)	.487**	[.887]	-	-
3. Sense of Community	50.70 (8.55)	.460**	.702**	[.881]	-
4. Resilience	128.06 (17.16)	.422**	-.218*	.313**	[.892]

N = 206 * *p* = .002 ***p* < .001

Note Value in parenthesis is standard deviation. Values along the diagonal in brackets is coefficient alpha with the present total sample. Value below the diagonal is zero order correlates.

Primary Analysis

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: *Length of stay will predict higher scores for psychological sense of home.*

To evaluate the first hypothesis, a simple linear regression predicted Italian psychological home based on length of stay within Italy. A significant regression equation was found, $F(1, 85) = 5.512, p = .016$, with an R^2 of .061. Participants predicted psychological home scores were equal to $38.994 + 0.334$ (years of residing within Italy) for each year of stay within Italy for migrants. Psychological home scores increased 0.334 for each year

spent in Italy for migrants. All assumptions for a linear regression were satisfied with one outlier removed. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported.

Table 3.

Regression Analysis Length of Stay predicting Psychological Home for migrants

	B	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1. (Constant)	38.99	-	15.35	.000
2. Length of Stay	0.33	.247	2.35	.021

(*n*=206) Note R^2 adjusted = 0.061

Hypothesis 2: *For migrants only, higher neighborhood attachment will predict higher sense of community.*

To evaluate the second hypothesis a simple linear regression was calculated to predict Italian sense of community based on neighborhood attachment scores. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1, 127) = 135.106, p < .000$) with an R^2 of .515. Participants predicted Italian sense of community scores were equal to $31.368 + 0.810$ (score of neighborhood attachment) for each score of neighborhood attachment. Italian sense of community scores increased 0.810 for each score of neighborhood attachment. All assumptions for a linear regression were satisfied with one outlier removed. Therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

Table 4.*Regression Neighborhood Attachment predicting Sense of Community for migrants*

	B	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	31.368	-	18.01	.000
Neighborhood Attachment	.810	.718	11.62	.000

(*n*=206) Note R^2 adjusted = 0.515

Hypothesis 3: *For migrants only, length of stay will moderate sense of community and neighborhood attachment.*

To evaluate the third hypothesis, a moderation analysis using PROCESS Macro for SPSS (Version 3.0; Hayes, 2012) was carried out. For the moderation analysis length of stay was used as the moderator while sense of community scale was the predictor variable, and neighborhood attachment as the outcome variable. The moderation analysis could not be carried out since it did not satisfy the assumption of multicollinearity.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: *What demographic factors most strongly predict psychological sense of home for migrants?*

To evaluate the first research question, a stepwise regression analysis used demographic variables (Gender, Age, Education, Employment, Marital status, Sons or daughters, length of stay, type of house, housing tenure, time

living in the house, persons lived with) as independent variables and psychological home as the dependent variable for migrants. Table 5 shows the result of the regression. As noted from the table, the stepwise regression analysis showed that full time employment ($\beta = .368 p < .001$) and length of stay ($\beta = .227 p = .024$) predicted psychological home in migrants. The other factors were found not be statistically significant. All assumptions of multiple regressions were satisfied.

Table 5.

Stepwise Regression Demographic variables predicting Psychological Home for Migrants

	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	37.601	-	17.448	<.001
Gender: Male	-.120	-	-1.23	.223
Gender: Female	.120	-	1.23	.223
Length of Stay	.273	.227	2.306	.024
Age	-.028	-	-.25	.801
Education: Primary School	-.035	-	-.36	.723
Education: Secondary/High School	.059	-	.61	.544
Education: Professional Qualification	.086	-	.89	.377
Education: Diploma Superior School	.100	-	1.03	.305

Education: 3-year degree	-.066	-	-.67	.502
Education: Specialized Degree	-.129	-	-1.31	.193
Education: Other	-.073	-	-.74	.463
Marital Status: Single	-.149	-	-1.50	.137
Marital Status: Cohabiting	.051	-	.52	.602
Marital Status: Married	.091	-	.92	.361
Marital Status: Married away from the family	-.009	-	-.09	.926
Marital Status: Separated	.071	-	.73	.470
Marital Status: Divorced	.088	-	.91	.367
Marital Status: Widower	-.154	-	-1.56	.122
Cohabitation: Alone	.030	-	.30	.762
Cohabitation: with partner	.087	-	.87	.385
Cohabitation: with children	-.001	-	-.02	.988
Cohabitation: with extended family	.066	-	.66	.511
Cohabitation: with friends	-.096	-	-.95	.347
Cohabitation: with parents	.008	-	.08	.935
Cohabitation: with partner and children	-.134	-	-1.39	.167
Dwelling Type: Apartment	-.100	-	-1.02	.310
Dwelling Type: Single Family House	.113	-	1.16	.249

Dwelling Type Multi-Family house	-.007	-	-.08	.941
Dwelling Type: University Residence	.061	-	.62	.537
Dwelling Type: Studio	-.048	-	-.49	.623
Child: no	-.009	-	-.09	.926
Child: yes	.009	-	.09	.926
Employment: full time	7.008	.368	3.743	<.001
Employment: part time	.180	-	1.66	.100
Employment: Unemployed	-.116	-	-1.11	.269
Employment: Student	-.018	-	-.17	.870
Employment: Retired	-.154	-	-1.56	.122
Dwelling time: <1 year	.045	-	0.43	.666
Dwelling time: 1-5 years	-.162	-	-1.64	.105
Dwelling time: 5- 10 years	.056	-	0.57	.569
Dwelling time: >10 years	.080	-	0.78	.435
Housing Tenure: Owner	.017	-	.17	.868
Housing Tenure: Lease	-.029	-	-.29	.776
Housing Tenure: Free use	.052	-	.54	.593

Note R² adjusted = 0.218

Research Question 2: Which of the following variables: psychological sense of home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in migrants?

To evaluate the second research question, a stepwise regression analysis used psychological home, neighborhood attachment and sense of community as independent variables and psychological resilience as the dependent variable for the migrant population was conducted. Table 6 presents the results of the regression. As noted from the table, the stepwise regression analysis showed that only psychological home ($\beta = 0.402$, $p < 0.000$) predicted psychological resilience in migrants. Neighborhood attachment and sense of community was found not be statistically significant, however sense of community approached closely significance. The regression satisfied all assumptions.

Table 6.

Stepwise Regression Psychological Home, Neighborhood Attachment and Sense of Community predicting Resilience in Migrants

	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	96.446	-	13.77	<.001
Sense of Community	.178	-	1.93	.056
Psychological Home	.771	.402	4.96	<.001
Neighborhood Attachment	.017	-	.18	.856

Note R^2 adjusted = .161

Research Question 3: Which of the following variables: psychological sense of home, sense of community and neighborhood attachment most strongly predicts resilience in Italians?

To evaluate the third research question, a stepwise regression analysis used psychological home, neighborhood attachment and sense of community as independent variables and psychological resilience as the dependent variable for the native Italian population was conducted. As noted from Table 7 the stepwise regression analysis showed that only psychological home ($\beta = 0.389, p < 0.001$) predicted psychological resilience in native Italians. Neighborhood attachment and sense of community was found not be statistically significant. The regression satisfied all assumptions.

Table 7.

Stepwise Regression Psychological Home, Neighborhood Attachment and Sense of Community predicting Resilience in Italians

	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	85.714	-	10.07	<.001
Sense of Community	.136	-	1.22	.227
Psychological Home	.872	.389	4.566	<.001
Neighborhood Attachment	.084	-	.705	.483

Note R^2 adjusted = .220

Discussion

The present study examined migrant acculturation trajectories within their host countries; more specifically, within the host country of Italy. Using archival data gathered by researchers from the University of Genoa, this study found that length of stay predicted positive psychological home ratings in migrants. When assessing which demographic variables significantly predicted psychological home, a stepwise regression found that full-time employment and length of stay significantly predicted psychological home (Table 5). Moving from the more private dimension of psychological home and looking how migrants interacted with their broader communities, it was found that neighborhood attachment predicts sense of community (Table 2). However, when assessing whether sense of community and neighborhood attachment was moderated by length of stay, the requirement of multicollinearity was not satisfied. Linking these results to resilience, this study found that for both Italians and migrants neighborhood attachment and sense of community did not significantly predict resilience in a stepwise regression (Tables 6 & 7). The only variable found to predict resilience in both Italians and migrants was psychological home. However in the case of migrants sense of community approached significance.

The first result of this study shows that the construct of psychological home for migrants is not a fixed construct. This is because of

the predictive significance of length of stay indicating that over time, the relationship that migrants have with their house and the psychological processes to make it home changes or typically improves. . It is probable that other variables will mediate and moderate the relationship between time spent in the country and psychological home. **This would account for the low predictive power of length of stay alone.**

One other variable that might moderate or mediate the relationship between length of stay emerges from our study which is employment. Employment provides immigrants to greater access to resources which allow more significant opportunities to choose better houses because of greater affordability and more varied choices for manipulation of the home environment, thereby increasing the behavioral aspect of psychological home (Sigmon et. al, 2002). This is in line with qualitative research done with migrants on psychological home which highlights that long-term employment prospects promote psychological home in male migrants (Cardinali et. al, 2022). Additionally, employment allows migrant to access new networks and to integrate into their communities more easily thereby accessing more local resources.

Within the more public dimension of the migration acculturation trajectory, neighborhood attachment significantly predicted sense of community while a moderation analysis between sense of community and neighborhood attachment did not satisfy the assumption of multicollinearity. A likely explanation for these two results is that the concepts of sense of community and neighborhood attachment have a very high degree of overlap into the construct that they are measuring. Given that both have

items that relate to place attachment as well as to social and community ties, it is likely that they are not significantly different enough to be used to predict each other but should be considered as highly analogous constructs that roughly measure the same phenomenon.

The final aspect of this study confirms the seminal importance of the psychological home concept as it was the only predictor of resilience amongst neighborhood attachment. This result extends not just to migrants but also to the general Italian population within our sample.

Curiously neighborhood attachment and sense of community were not predictors of resilience, although this relationship was close to significance at $p = .056$. One factor in explaining this result lies in the fact that the two constructs do not significantly differ enough between them to be seen as two entirely separate measure of pro-sociality. Nonetheless, even if there is strong overlap between these two concepts as measures of place attachment and pro-social networks, literature seems to indicate that they are highly correlated to similar concepts as resilience such as well-being. A possible interpretation for the deviations in our result lies in the fact that the measure of resilience that was utilized measures more strongly related to internal dimensions of resilience and relying on one's self. Given that sense of community and neighborhood attachment measure more social and communal aspects, the resilience borne out of these constructs was not captured as it related more to processes and networks of persons rather than internal qualities.

Our findings broadly corroborate previous research on psychological home. In Sigmon and colleagues' (2002) findings, psychological home was positively associated with positive mental health and negatively associated with psychological distress. While Sigmon and colleagues (2002) never explicitly correlate psychological home with resilience, the finding of this research shows that overall psychological home has a positive effect on one's life promoting resilience as per the findings of this research and positive mental health.

Our findings differ by finding no predictive value for migrants for the constructs of age, gender, housing tenure and type of housing. This contrasts with Cignonani's (2011) finding for Italians that found that age, gender and greater control over the housing situation was associated with psychological home.

Our most stark divergence from the literature is that while the sense of community and neighborhood attachment are broadly associated with greater wellbeing and community participation (see (Prezza et al., 2001; Prezza & Costantini, 1998 for sense of community and Vorkinn & Riese, 2001; Lewicka, 2005 for neighborhood attachment), our results show that sense of community and neighborhood attachment did not predict resilience.

Implications for Community Psychology

The implications of this study continue to highlight the importance of the understudied psychological home construct, particularly within community psychology that seeks to examine the link between ecological phenomena and its impact on individuals. For policy makers and community

organizations investing in programming that allows people to develop and cultivate a sense of psychological home is an important way to foster resilience in migrants.

Additionally, given that the results of this study indicate that only employment significantly predicts psychological home, policy makers and community organizations should be encouraged to believe that fostering a sense of psychological home is not some gargantuan task out of the realm of possibility for any except the exceptionally funded. Instead programming with the intended impact of increasing psychological home can start by targeting immediate and direct ways to help migrants make their house a home, even in limited and temporary spaces. With more resources structural issues such as homelessness and better quality of homes can also be targeted to address psychological home.

Another implication of this study is that investment in existing and further programs and programming to help migrants enter into adequately paid jobs with good conditions can also have indirect effects such as promoting psychological home. Migrants who are able to successfully participate within the workforce are able to exert greater financial power within their host country and have greater opportunities at selecting, investing in and customizing their house thereby increasing psychological home. This has the indirect effect of promoting resilience through psychological home but most likely also promotes resilience through greater resources being available to the migrant.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with any study, this research has several limitations. A number of these limitations relate to the data gathering exercise. In this instance the nationality of migrants was not the prime factor during the data collection and a stratified random sampling was not used, leading to a result wherein the nationalities of the migrants do not reflect national immigrant situation in Italy. Migrants do not necessarily have a similar experience throughout their acculturation process and proximity of culture both through geographic and other historical means can impact the migration experience, thereby decreasing generalizability. Another limitation that can be encountered in this research is that the research did not account for the linguistic abilities of the migrants. This can lead to uncertainty whether all the items in the survey were fully understood and responded to in the accurate manner.

A final issue that might have limited generalization to the broader migration experience within Italy is that the data collection effort used a snowball sampling. Given that migrants tend to be an under-served and hard to reach population, this approach is appropriate however it diminishes the generalizability of the finding by making the research susceptible to self-selection bias. In this case, this would take the form of respondents being more engaged with the Italian community given that they were reached through contacts with Italian organizations. Migrants who on the other hand opt for less contact with native institutions might not have been caught by this approach. Utilizing technologies such as smart phone apps is also a potential way forward to add to the repertoire of data-collecting tools available to researchers.

A theoretic limitation of this work is the finding that sense of community and neighborhood attachment were significantly overlapping concepts. This has led to a result in both migrants and Italians that these constructs did not predict resilience. One might interpret this result as a strong indication that these concepts are less important than the literature describes. However, given the overlap such an interpretation must be disputed. While there is certainly room for discussing why such a result did not predict resilience, this does not mean that other measures of pro-sociality, which are less overlapping with the sense of community/neighborhood attachment, will not predict resilience.

The final theoretic limitation was the resilience scale that was chosen focused significantly on personal dimensions of resilience and is more apt at measuring resilience as a personality trait rather than a process. Given a more process-oriented measure of resilience, one which perhaps would have been more tailored to resilience within the migration experience would have been a better measure for the kind of resilience that migrants benefit from.

Future research endeavors have numerous questions that can be looked into as a result of our research. On a more generic level the relationship between length of stay within the host country and psychological home can be explored further. It is likely from our research that employment would be an indirect mediator in the relationship between length of stay and psychological home. Fully articulating the nature of the relationships between these variables will lead to interesting and actionable insights.

A further avenue for future research might include fully investigating the relationship sense of community and neighborhood attachment and try to ascertain whether a hybrid of these two measures can developed to more fully capture the construct in question.

As with any research, this research effort has raised more questions than it has answered. While we have found length of stay and employment predict psychological home, only psychological home predicts resilience. This could be attributable to the internal dimension of resilience captured by the measure used in our research and with the high overlap between sense of community and neighborhood attachment. While future research can articulate the relationship of these variables more clearly, our research endeavor has contributed to confirming the direction of these relationships and highlighting the importance of employment as new factor to be explored, particularly in migrants.

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Appendix A - Psychological Home Scale

What does “home” mean to you? Please read each item below carefully with that focus in mind and indicate your extent of agreement to each (from (1) “Strongly Disagree” to (7) “Strongly Agree”). Please select the response that best describes YOU. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. (Sigmon et al., 2002)

1. I have grown attached to many of the places I have lived.
2. I put a lot of time and effort into making a home my own.
3. I feel more relaxed when I’m at home.
4. I surround myself with things that highlight my personality.
5. I get a sense of security from having a place of my own.
6. I add personal touches to the place where I live.
7. I take pride in the place I live
8. I work at making a place my own.

Appendix B - Sense of Community Scale

Thinking about the neighborhood where you live, please carefully read each statement below and indicate for each phrase its degree of agreement. From (1) “Completely disagree” to (4) “Completely agree”. Please select the answer that best describes the description. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. (Prezza, Costantini, Chiarolanza & Di Marco, 1999)

1. I feel like I belong to this town.
2. I feel safe here.
3. In this town there is the possibility, if I want, to contribute to the politics of the district.
4. If the people here were to organize, they would have good chance of reaching their desired goals.
5. In this town there are local holidays and celebrations that involve most people.
6. The people in this town are polite and well mannered.
7. This is a pretty town.
8. There are few meeting opportunities in this town.
9. I like the house I live in.
10. It would take a lot for me to move away from this town.
11. If I need help, this town has many excellent services to meet my needs.
12. This place gives me opportunities to do many different things.
13. Many people in this town are available to give help if somebody needs it.
14. In this town, there are customs and traditions that I generally respect.
15. It is hard to have positive social relations in this town.
16. When I’m traveling, I’m proud to tell others where I live.
17. I like the area where I live.
18. I don’t like people who live in my area.

Appendix C - Neighborhood Attachment Scale

Thinking about the neighborhood where you live, please read each item below carefully with that focus in mind and indicate your extent of agreement to each (from (0) “Completely Disagree” to (6) “Completely Agree”). Please select the response that best describes YOU. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. (Bonaiuto, Fornara, Aiello and Bonnes, 1999)

1. This is the ideal neighborhood to live.
2. Now this neighborhood is a part of me.
3. There are places in the neighborhood to which I am very emotionally attached.
4. It would be very hard for me to leave this neighborhood.
5. I would willingly leave this neighborhood.
6. I would not willingly leave this neighborhood for another.

Appendix D - Resilience Scale

Put a cross on the number that indicates how much you agree or disagree with the statement, where 1 indicates the maximum disagreement and 7 maximum agreement. (Girtler et al., 2010)

1. When I make plans, I follow through with them.
2. I usually manage one way or another.
3. I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else.
4. Keeping interested in things is important to me.
5. I can be on my own if I have to.
6. I feel proud that I have accomplished things in my life.
7. I usually take things in my stride.
8. I am friends with myself.
9. I feel that I can handle many things at a time.
10. I am determined.
11. I take things one day at a time.
12. I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.
13. I have self-discipline.
14. I keep interested in things.
15. I can usually find something to laugh about.
16. My belief in myself gets me through hard times.
17. In an emergency, I'm somebody people generally can rely on.
18. I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.
19. Sometimes I make myself do things whether I want to or not.
20. My life has meaning.
21. I do not dwell on things that I can't do anything about.
22. When I am in a difficult situation, I can usually find my way out of it.
23. I have enough energy to do what I have to do.
24. It's okay if there are people who don't like me.

Appendix E - Socio-Demographic Information

- 1.1. Gender
- 1.2. How old are you?
- 1.3. What is your level of education?
- 1.4. What is your current employment status?
- 1.5. Marital status:
- 1.6. Do you have sons or daughters?
- If yes, how many?
- How old are they?
- 1.7. Where are you born?
- 1.8. Country of origin:
- 1.9. Reasons for migration
- 1.10. In which year did you arrive in Italy?
- 1.11. Initial intention

Housing

If you think about **the current place** where you are living:

- 1.12. Where do you live (town)?
- 1.13. In which neighborhood?
- 1.14. What are the reasons why you chose this neighborhood?
- 1.15. Type of house: (multiple response)
- 1.16. Housing tenure: (multiple response)
- 1.17. Time living in the current house:
- 1.18. Who do you live with? (multiple response)

If you think about the place where you lived in your **country of origin**:

- 1.19. What was your context of residence? (multiple response)
- 1.20. Where did you live (city)?
- 1.21. Type of house: (multiple response)
- 1.22. Housing tenure: (multiple response)
- 1.23. Who did you live with? (multiple response)