Powerhouse Radio Show: Finding solutions to resettlement challenges through a pilot radio project.

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Introduction

The Powerhouse Radio Show pilot project involved young people from refugee backgrounds[1] in media and radio production workshops to investigate solutions to the challenges of their resettlement. It drew on established research that places community radio as an important cultural resource and utilised the UniCast internet radio station, based at the University of South Australia. The Powerhouse Radio Show consisted of eight radio shows broadcast on UniCast over a four week period which were also made available via podcast on a WordPress blog. Seven of these programs were one-hour episodes and a two-hour live edition was presented as a "grand finale". A Facebook page and Soundcloud account were also used to promote and disseminate the radio series content.

This was an Action Research Project. This approach involves testing ideas in practice as a means of improving social, economic or environmental conditions and increasing knowledge. Eight young people of refugee experience, aged between 18 and 24 years, participated in the project. It should be noted that, while the number of participants was small, this was considered to be a success given the short time period allowed for recruitment and implementation of the pilot. With a timeframe of just over four months from recruitment to final report submission, the generic problems associated with 'cold-recruiting' young people of refugee experience were exacerbated.

This working paper focuses on how engagement in media production, through a community radio project, can assist in the settlement experiences of young people of refugee background. It draws mostly on the final stage interviews of the project, along with observations made during the participatory action research process. The findings of this pilot research project suggest this radio project assisted the participants to feel more confident in their (English) communication skills, and gave them a sense of being heard in the community, while exposing them to a diverse group of people and a new

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[1] The researchers acknowledge the differences between the labels refugee, asylum seeker, migrant, displaced person, and person of refugee background. The issues being discussed apply to people who fall under any and all of the above descriptors, and for simplicity's sake the term 'refugee' will be mostly used as a general descriptor.

set of practical skills. As a preliminary finding, this suggests that participation in community radio can have a beneficial effect on a young person's settlement experience, in line with Ager and Strang's (2008) perceptions of what constitutes 'successful' resettlement.

About the project

The Powerhouse Radio Show pilot project involved young people of refugee experience in media and radio production workshops to investigate solutions to the challenges of their resettlement. It utilised the UniCast internet radio station, based in the School of Communication, International Studies and Languages at the Magill campus of the University of South Australia. The main output of the project was an eight part radio series, called the Powerhouse Radio Show (P-HRS) broadcast in November and early December, 2015, and podcast via the Powerhouse Radio Blog on WordPress. Social media presence was also established on Facebook and Soundcloud.

The project drew on established research that places community radio as an important cultural resource (Meadows et al 2007) and tests this claim against the experiences of marginalised communities with unique communication needs, who are yet to be given rigorous academic attention within the Australian media studies context. It was conducted as a Participatory Action Research pilot project designed for UniCast and involved young people of refugee experience in both the development of the project and the production of radio, using the cross disciplinary expertise of the research team.

Community radio can play an important role in assisting an inclusive approach to build a strong multicultural community (Steen 2013, p.3). In Australia, community radio is recognised as a key cultural resource that meets its expected outcomes in "contributing to social gain" (Meadows and Foxwell-Norton 2011, p.98). While there are other avenues for newly arrived refugees to engage in media production and access media that cater to their needs, radio is still a popular choice. For example, Ang et al (2006) found 87% of a focus group made up of young people of ethnic background in Australia listened to radio. One fifth said they couldn't live without radio. Ang et al (2006) recommend that connections should be made through media that are individual and interpersonal, and encourage participatory programming about meaningful issues across all platforms, including radio. Community radio

is ideally positioned to respond to this recommendation and other complex needs of refugees, and while some may already have access to local media, this media often do not address the specific needs of refugees.

The National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasting Council (2011) acknowledges there are specific settlement concerns relating to practical support, community development, trauma recovery and other complex needs of refugees. This is compounded for younger people with refugee backgrounds who share many of the challenges of other migrant youth, compounded by the fact that their migration was forced rather than chosen, and that they arrive in Australia with past experiences of violence, loss and, for some, the survival of torture (Gifford, Correa-Velez and Sampson 2009). This research project uses community radio as a means to address the important problem of how to best assist the resettlement of young people from refugee communities in Australia.

Methodology

Ethical issue may arise with the selection of methodology for research projects that engage young people of refugee background, because an instrument choice for one cultural group may not be the best choice for another (Ellis at al., 2007, p.463). Therefore the importance of considering the mixed methods approach has been suggested (Ellis et al., 2007, p.463). This pilot project engaged in Participatory Action Research (PAR), a method that involves testing ideas in practice as a means of improving social, economic or environmental conditions and increasing knowledge. It requires close collaboration between practitioners and researchers and is particularly valuable as a means of exploring new media initiatives (Hearn et al 2009). The research project gathered data through a number of distinct approaches, mainly:

- Ethnographic participant observations and reflection notes taken during and after the workshops
- Individual semi-structured interviews with participants to be conducted towards the end of the research project.
- Content analysis of the media broadcast as a result of the workshops
- Audio recordings produced during the training project not intended for broadcast
- Survey of participants' satisfaction of project conducted at completion.

In essence, these data collection methods focus on collecting what Wang (2013) has coined 'thick data', which provides the story that humanises quantitative data. The concept of thick data stems as a response to the importance that tends to be attached to 'big data.' Big data is quantitative information that is produced through analysis of large data sets. Although large quantities of information can be generated through this process, more is needed to reveal and/or bridge knowledge gaps, and this can be provided through thick data. Thick data, produced within the realm of ethnography, provides context and connection and counteracts the notion that qualitative data is "small data".

There are a number of discrete stages within the methodology of this particular research project that deserve attention. These involve recruitment, delivery and assessment. Each will be discussed separately below.

Stage One - Engaging through 'cold' recruitment.

There are a number of barriers to recruitment for people of refugee background, when they are considered as a research group. Selection of subjects could be negatively impacted because researchers usually utilise community members to help with recruitment. Refugees may be discouraged from participating if they see that a community member belongs to a particular religion or clan (Ellis et al, 2007, p.464) and 'using research assistants from the same country or area as the respondent risks transgressing political, social, or economic fault lines of which the researcher may not be aware of' (Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015, p.717). To address this, the project approached a wide range of community groups and social media platforms to call for interested participants. Hard copy and electronic flyers were used by a wide range of support organisations to promote the research project to potential participants. A strong social media presence was also generated to promote the project and recruit participants using UniSA Facebook pages, online student noticeboards and through UniCast's social media platforms, as well as on-air (UniCast) and by posting flyers on university campuses.

Initially, 18 people responded to recruitment notices. Of these 18, one was over the age requirements of the project, while two were under 18 years of age and therefore also ineligible. An information session was held on Thursday 10th September, 4.30pm at UniSA, City West campus – this session was intended to provide an opportunity for potential

participants to meet the researchers and discuss details within the Project Information Sheet, Consent Form and any concerns or questions the young people might have. The way in which refugee and asylum seekers are approached for participation in research is important to consider, as this may affect their interpretation of the risks and benefits of the research, as underestimating the risks, or thinking that there may be more benefits than there actually are, could have 'serious ethical implications' (Block, Riggs and Haslam, 2013, p.28). However, only two interested participants attended this session – both of whom continued their interest in the project.

Six participants committed to continuing with the project and formed the core team for the radio series. In addition, two other participants opted to take part in an "intensive" version of the workshop series in November (near the end of the project) as they were very interested in learning the skills and being part of the radio show, but were concerned it would interfere with their end of high school year studies. This individually tailored approach was deemed necessary to maximise participant numbers and provide pathways to actual participation. Of the eight participants there are five women and three men. Three of the women are current students at UniSA, and one man was studying for a diploma at Strategix College.

A total of eight participants is considered a satisfactory result. During an early meeting to discuss recruitment with staff from the Australian Refugee Association (ARA, there were concerns expressed regarding the short time-frame for recruitment, as past experience has proven to ARA that it can take 6 months to "cold recruit" young refugees into community projects. Young people, especially those with stronger English, are very time-poor, as they often need to help their family, as interpreters or with other commitments. When considering this research project in particular, the participants were comprised of a highly civically engaged cohort who volunteered for a variety of different community organisations (for example, three of the participants made inter-state trips during the project timeframe as part of their volunteer commitments) in addition to study and/or work and family commitments.

Stage Two - Training and workshops

During two induction sessions, participants were introduced to the radio studio and conducted interviews with each other to begin learning how the use the studio panel, microphones and recording software. Participants demonstrated a significantly high level of ease during this

activity and encouraged each other to speak frankly and openly about themselves (despite the fact that only two of the participants were known to each, and including those participants who have not chosen to continue). Participants were very quick to encourage each other to share their stories and on a number of occasions complimented the talents of their peers.

An icebreaker activity also introduced students to the voice recorders, where they recorded themselves telling the rest of the group a story about themselves based on a picture they chose to facilitate this narrative. There were a few common points of interest across the group, mostly strongly a love and involvement with music.

In the third workshop, participants were given further instructions on how to operate the recording equipment (portable H1 Zoom Recorders) to achieve a high quality recording. To practice this skill they were set the task of interviewing each other about the ideas they had for the radio show and how the success of the project could be measured (an activity that led to the development of a participatory impact measurement tool). Following the interviews, the participants were instructed on how to transfer the audio files from the H1 recorder to a USB or computer drive.

In the fourth workshop, participants were introduced to the concept of the Radio Clock that can be used to assist in planning an hour of broadcasting, to build a radio program. The schedule was decided for the radio series. Based on discussions in the previous week, it was agreed that each participant would have final responsibility for one episode each and that there would be a 'final' live program that would involve all of the participants. Each program would be one hour in duration, and be pre-recorded during the Monday workshop time – most radio shows on UniCast are pre-recorded using specialised software in the studio. This schedule needed to be re-organised on occasion to suit the availability of individual participants. As producer of their show, each participant would be responsible for hosting the program (although they were more than welcome to involve other participants if they chose), selecting the music, recording the program and producing other spoken word content. It was agreed that some participants may share content and this happened on occasion.

Finally, there was a discussion regarding the choice of music available to the radio producers. It was decided that any musical style was to be allowed, however, the group established a policy against any music that promotes hatred, bullying or violence of any kind towards any group or person. Swearing would be permissible if it is in context and a language warning given before the song is played (as is the general UniCast policy).

In the fifth workshop, participants listened to a number of radio segments, including vox pops, events coverage, features and interviews, with the intention of exposing the participants to variety of radio styles they may like to consider producing for the radio series. Editing skills were also a focus, using the free software Audacity. In the final workshop before the radio series began, the participants in attendance recorded a promotional spot, written by one of the participants - a lively conversational piece of radio with which the participants expressed great satisfaction. After this final workshop, the radio series went into production.

Stage Three – Broadcasting the Powerhouse Radio Show series

The Powerhouse Radio Show consisted of eight radio shows broadcast on UniCast over a four week period which were also made available via podcast on a WordPress blog. Seven of these programs were one-hour episodes and a two-hour live edition was presented as a "grand finale". A Facebook page and Soundcloud account were also used to promote and disseminate the radio series content[2].

Participants placed a heavy focus on covering issues relating to refugee, migrant and humanitarian issues. This is not surprising given the background experiences of the young people involved, and their collective volunteer engagement with community organisations and services that work in these areas. It is interesting to note that, in choosing the name for the radio series, and composing blurbs by which to describe Powerhouse Radio Show to the wider public, there was no mention of the refugee experiences of the participants. This was not an explicit decision made by the group in any of the workshop sessions but rather suggests that the participants were motivated to address refugee issues in the public sphere, but did feel the need to place their own experiences to the forefront of the discussion. It is apparent that the participants identified more strongly as young people, as opposed to 'young people of refugee background', an act that may be described as speaking out against stigmatised identity.

Stage Four – Final interviews and participatory impact measurement survey

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[2] Radio content can be explored at https://phrsblog.wordpress.com

Before embarking upon a research project, a stumbling block that may been encountered is the lack of understanding and value of research, regarded by the group being studied. People of refugee background do not always necessarily see the importance of gathering information by means of research and in turn may hold a distrust of those conducting research (Halabi, 2005, p.270). Refugees may be unfamiliar with research and its processes and because of the human rights abuses they may have experienced, there are risks that the notion of voluntary participation may be misunderstood (Ellis et al., 2007, p.466). However, a lack of understanding and value of research perceived by refugee groups may be overcome and its value appreciated, if research findings are shared within communities, (Ellis at al., 2007, p.463).

Given this, the most 'formal' element of the research project – the individual in-depth, semi-structured interview - was conducted as the final phase. Research with refugee communities has found that a formal research interview may be seen as something very similar to an interview discussing participants' legal status and so they may not view this as something voluntary and may think that by taking part it will improve their situation (Ellis et al., 2007, p.466). 'The fear factor is a key player for the participants in a research. Their priorities, naturally, have become not to be harmed rather than provide accurate information' (Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015, p.719) and 'often refugees lose their trust in the midst of their suffering and are prone to not disclose the truth' (Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015, p.717). By conducting the interviews at the end of the project, it was hoped that a level of trust had already been established with the researchers, that would overcome any enhanced levels of stress that may be induced by a formal interview process.

Interviews were conducted in the final weeks of the project, and always at some time after each participant's radio show had been broadcast. They were all conducted by the same researcher at a time and place convenient to each participant, transcribed, and analysed using discourse analysis (Wetherell 2015) in order to identify common themes across the experiences of the participants and their involvement in the project. To make sense of the collected data, the research draws on poststructuralism which recognises the world as discursively constructed and lends itself to an understanding of the participants' subjective experiences.

An online survey was also disseminated that acted as an impact assessment tool. This survey was designed based on performance indicators generated throughout the project. It is

important to recognise that any measurements of success of participatory action research projects should be developed in consultation with those involved in the project. To do otherwise would be in opposition to the spirit of participatory research methodology. This research recognises the recommendations of AMARC (2007) to employ participatory monitoring and evaluation processes. To achieve this, as mentioned above, participants' discussions around measuring the success of the project, held in its first weeks, were analysed using discourse analysis to identify interpretative repertoires used by the participants to articulate notions of success. These constructions of success were then developed into a set of key indicators measured via the online survey.

Findings and discussion

Participatory radio and personal development

Ager and Strang (2008) identify elements central to perceptions of what constitutes 'successful' resettlement organised around four central themes: achievement across the sectors of health, education, employment and housing; assumptions and practice regarding rights and citizenship; processes of social connections between and within groups within the community; and structural barriers to issues related to culture language and the local environment. Two of these themes resonate particularly strong with the findings of this project – language and social connections.

The project participants were at various stages of settlement in Australia – participants had lived in Australia on average for just over five years, however this ranged from 14 months to 10 years across the participants. All identified as young people of refugee experience, and all but one described themselves as at least 'some-what' settled.

The participants identified a number of barriers they faced when first arriving in Australia, including loneliness, disconnection, not knowing how to access services, having troubles making friends and struggles with clashes of culture. However, the most common factor by far was the language barrier, with all but one participant mentioning this as a major settlement concern. This resonates with Ager and Strang's (2008) perceptions of what constitutes 'successful' resettlement. The following quotes are representative of the group:

> … arriving in South Australia, firstly it was very, it was lonely, I was really lonely, we didn't know anyone here, it was just me and my family. So that feeling of not knowing anyone, not being able to speak the language, there was definitely a cultural language barrier and … just being able to fit in with the people.

> … well the big challenge for myself is the language because when I got here I could barely speak English and it was very hard for me to be involved with young people because when I got here I was 17 years old and then it was really hard for me because I needed friends and I wasn't connected to my own community.

Even for those participants who were comfortable with their English language acquisition, accents also acted as a barrier to resettlement.

> I'm different and even though I've been here since I was nine, I've still got that accent, so it doesn't make me feel the same.

> Socially I used to be really shy to talk to more people because I thought they will laugh at me, because I got laughed at a couple of times in class. That was partly because of my accent … So I wasn't confident enough and because of that I limited myself to the kind of friends that I had.

As demonstrated by the quote above, language and accent barriers led to shyness and disconnection, which again inhibited successful settlement experiences.

It is evident, however, that all of the participants have found ways to engage with their communities, despite facing these barriers. Every participant was an active volunteer, often for multiple organisations including the Migrant Resource Centre SA, Welcome to Australia and the Smith Family. Participants also recounted many positive stories based on their experiences with community groups assisting in their initial settlement experiences. For example:

> They provide with case management … where they work hand in hand with you … anything to do with your whole person, you're actually their focus. So they help you in terms of settling, they help you in terms of getting to be informed.

Social circles were facilitated in a number of different ways, including through churches and mosques, school and university life as well as friends and family. According to Brough,

Gorman, Ramirez & Westoby (2003, p. 203) young refugees use a variety of strategies to deal with resettlement, for example, becoming involved in sport, listening to music and participating in community activities and the 'community hub' nature of community radio in Australia, particularly evident in ethnic community radio, is well-placed to enable many of these processes needed to promote healthy settlement (Meadows and Foxwell-Norton 2011, p.102).

Given the significance of language and accent as barriers to initial settlement, it was a positive finding that the participants broadly identified 'confidence' and 'voice' to be major benefits from participating in the project. Confidence, communication skills, improved speaking skills and being provided with a voice to address community issues were all inter-related themes dominant in participants' responses.

When asked what skills participants thought had been developed by the project, three of the participants specifically cited 'confidence' as a priority, while all of the participants indirectly referred to this as a benefit of the project. This increased confidence was developed, not only for those who felt troubled by their levels of confidence, but those who already were comfortable with public speaking.

> You can see the difference … how we started … and where we are now, there's a huge difference and we are all, I can say we are all confident to speak to studio equipment and resources and yeah we are very external so that we can go out … to do some interviews and some research, that's a success.

> Well I've been interviewing people, getting interviewed myself, having to use the microphone, I guess I could say I feel more confident, and so it's boosted my confidence. I'm really shy so coming to this … and meeting new people, people whom I've never met before, definitely increased my confidence and my skills.

It is important to note that while the participants were generally concerned with their language skills and how this affected their ability to settle in Australia, there was common agreement that involvement in the radio project gave them confidence to speak in public, or to an audience. Increased confidence assisted participants to feel as though they had a voice in the community, and to address issues within the community.

Speaking to hear your own voice was really hard. I find it a little silly because I was thinking people definitely would laugh at me but, no, it was not the case … I could actually learn that you go on to love your voice and broadcasting something that you have in your mind, you want to share with people out there.

I never thought of talking to the whole world … I just couldn't imagine being listened to by the whole world, … listening to my stories and whatever presented there.

Participants also said the radio project enhanced their communication skills.

It helped me because I personally – I sometimes I'm shy like I don't do – communicate too much with the people that I don't know … it helped me to do that … it helped me (understand) how to communicate and how to get involved in a project.

A second benefit cited by the majority of participants was the value that came from working as a diverse team. Participants said they benefited from working with each other, and were very supportive of each-others' work, during the workshops, during broadcasts (sending messages of encouragement via social media) and in the final interviews. This resonates with one of the most relevant themes identified by the *Community Media Matters* report (Meadows et al 2007) - that ethnic broadcasting strengthens integration by creating and maintaining social life, community spirit and connections between members of the community. There was a strong sense of team-work and of solidarity evident between the participants.

I think it was because of the team that we had, we were so compatible and connected to each other … it was a great team. That made it a success.

I think for me the highlight of this project, for me is seeing people … coming up with amazing radio shows … just seeing the dedication of the group members and how supportive everyone was, like everyone would show up to support each other.

The value of the team is also indicated in the results of the participant key indicators of success, measured via the online survey at the end of the project. The group were more

satisfied with the achievements of the group as a whole, than of each individual's own achievements.

Ewart (2012) found making connections outside one's own ethnic group is important in assisting with social integration for ethnic minorities, and that ethnic audiences value community radio because it allows them to negotiate their participation in the broader social and political life of Australia. Other recent research by Kwong (2012, p.1) into Asian community radio demonstrates how such broadcasting "assists this demographic in socializing with people of various ethnicities and encourages them to feel a sense of belonging", in line with the community radio sector's aims of fostering multiculturalism. Hudson et al (2007) found community radio was a source of participation and involvement in diverse communities.

This was certainly the case for the participants in this project, who said they welcomed the diversity of the group.

> The best experience for me was to have new friends there and, because the … people who were attending radio were from different backgrounds, (so) I've had a little bit of experience about how people are in different parts of the world. Especially in Asia and Africa and the Europe side.

> It did really help a lot, it's not always (easy) to get along with people and it's a good thing that you have to listen to what they say and try and understand it all before making any judgement because usually, when you look at people you straight away say 'oh I don't think I can get along with that person because they're different groups from me and I look different and they look different and they're from different place'. But it's not always (like) that … so far that I know they have never made any judgement over me … but they get to know us and they always provided help.

> I could say it helped me a lot to be in touch with people and get to know a lot and get to understand how individually people from different backgrounds can bring ideas to the radio and how especially it is because you get to learn a lot from their culture … because I never had any friends from Africa or let's say from Australia. I have been having a lot of great experience here so I'm glad that I did this project.

One final benefit cited by the majority of participants related to practical skills acquisition. Only two of the participants had any prior experience in radio and for the majority it was the first time they had used recording equipment and editing software. Participants also included interviewing as part of their newly acquired skills set.

> I do have skills that I developed especially when it comes to using equipment … learning about them is the difficult part; when you try doing something new … for radio, I actually had no idea how … using the recorder for taking interview.

> I have never touched a recorder before, I know how to use a recorder and I've never done an interview with anyone else. I've been interviewed but I've never done an interview. So this is the second skill that I have improved or that I have gained and especially talking in a live show, being live on the radio show. That's another skill and almost the luckiest.

Community radio and experiences of settlement

Community media are known for their non-profit nature, independence, and their ability to engage everyday people in their production and are otherwise known as grassroots, radical, alternative, or citizens' media (Rodriguez 2001, Downing 2001, Atton 2002). Community media exists in as many different publishing platforms as does its mainstream counterparts, including the platform of radio. However, briefly looking at ethnic media more broadly, the findings are aligned. Riggins (1992) demonstrates how ethnic minority media help minorities integrate into wider society while fostering ethnic cohesion. According to Lewis (2008) alternative media more broadly plays an important role in social cohesion and citizenship, particularly for refugee, minority ethnic and migrant communities.

Community radio - as a sub-sector of the broader umbrella of community media - is part of an international movement of non-commercial broadcasting. The radio stations and organisations that represent this sector are eclectic, and content, management structures, staffing and financial sources may all vary depending on the country of origin, and especially on the legislative requirements that govern broadcasting in that country. According to the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), stations can be owned by

not-for-profit groups, cooperatives, student groups, universities, churches or governments, among other entities (AMARC, 2015). Besides the label 'community', other terms used to describe these stations include cooperative, public, rural, educational, student and citizens' radio.

UniCast, while not an officially licensed community radio broadcaster under the rigid definitions of the *Broadcasting Services Act*, can certainly be classed as a form of community media. In addition, the radio series P-HRS itself is produced and presented almost completely by young people of refugee background. While they received technical support and training from university staff, the participants were responsible for all areas of program production. This began with choosing the name of the radio series, writing promotional material to be used on social media, and writing and recording a promotional spot for radio and then progressed to choosing topics, identifying interview talent, organizing and conducting interviews, editing, selecting music and finally producing and presenting each radio episode. Support staff assisted by making formal introductions to some interview talent on the request of participants, and with some editing, again on the request of participants who were time-poor due to exams and other commitments. The high level of involvement of the young people in all areas of radio production for P-HRS qualifies for the show to be referred to as community media, if not an officially licensed community radio station.

Participants were asked about how they perceived the wider benefits of radio for refugee communities, based on their experiences with the pilot project. Generally, participants said that community radio could assist with addressing a number of the issues they recognised as important to the settlement experience. When asked how community radio might assist refugee communities, one common theme arising from the responses was, again, based around that of 'voice'.

> I would want them to raise their voices, I'd want them to be connected with media and the world of technology. I would want them to be heard, to be listened to and to be connected to the Australian community.

Participants also saw community radio as a medium that could specifically assist young people of refugee background.

> … community radio is one of the sources that can bring young people out of their home, out of their comfort zone, that they can come in and they can meet other refugees or they can meet people like you guys (the facilitators) and then they will have a chat with you and then they can get more skills and then they will have the chance, or they will get experiences and skills and confidence of speaking to others and asking them various questions.

> Engaging these young people into safe programs and inviting them for interviews and asking them how they're doing. It doesn't cost you anything to invite maybe two young people per week from a refugee background (onto a radio show) and ask them how they're doing. So if they do that and maybe they will tell their friends – friends of friends - how it's going … and make them have a sense of belonging in the community.

The nature of mass culture itself makes it easier for those in power to disseminate their views 'but harder for marginal voices to talk back' (Warner 2002, p.49). P-HRS worked to address this by not only engaging young people of refugee background in the act of producing radio, but also through the participants' choices of content and angle, and the wide range of voices presented which might often not otherwise receive significant airplay or media-space. Roncagliolo (1991) says that alternative media introduce and increase pluralism to communication flows, making communications more democratic. This is certainly the case for P-HRS, which presents unique perspectives of people of refugee background with the potential to greatly enhance the quality of public sphere discussion surrounding related issues. As one participant said:

> In this community radio you always, you can choose any topic that you want … there are some of the misunderstandings that you might have about someone else's religion, about someone else's race or about someone else's community. So this community radio's the place that you can talk about those misunderstandings, you can discuss more and it can go as deep as you want so that you can finish that misunderstanding

The notion of 'having a voice was also connected to overcoming stereotypes, and especially negative media coverage. As the general public has limited knowledge about, exposure to, or significant contact with refugees, they are very dependent on the media to inform them (McKay, Thomas and Kneebone 2011). Despite the media playing an essential role in framing public discourse and policy around refugee/asylum seeker issues, this coverage has become increasingly negative, especially in Western countries and especially over the past 10 to 15 years (Klocker and Dunn 2003). Anderson (2015) conducted a broad survey of the academic literature to identify four major frameworks by which the media discuss asylum seekers – as 'Security Threats', as 'Bogus', as 'Illegal', and as 'Health Threats' - using language such as queue jumpers, illegals, boat people and terrorists (Esses and Medianu 2013, Philo, Briant and Donald 2013, Rowe and O'Brien 2013, McKay, Thomas and Kneebone 2011, Klocker and Dunn 2003, Gale 2004, Lynn and Lea 2003, Pickering 2001). Participants said that community radio was one way that alternative discourses regarding refugee issues could be expressed.

> Showcasing diversity a lot on the radio. Getting different voices and bringing out the best, because what media tend to do is, we focus on (the) negative, bad news sells too good, good news ah who cares. I think being able to change this perspective is by using a platform that encourages people to see the good in a particular group in society, or anyone, I think bring out the good in anyone in society. If radio can portray that, that will help lower the stereotypes that currently exist in our society.

Conclusions

The findings of this pilot research project expand on previous research into ethnic broadcasting, to specifically consider the experiences of young people of refugee experience. It must be recognised, however, that this project was limited due to the small number of participants and the short timeframe within which it needed to be completed. While the initial findings are positive, it would be beneficial to test them against a second action research project that allows for more time during the recruitment phase, as well as a longer broadcast schedule.

Participation in this radio project assisted young people to feel more confident in their (English) communication skills, and gave them a sense of being heard in the community, while exposing them to a diverse group of people and assisting them to develop a new set of practical skills. Participants also recognised community radio more broadly as a positive media outlet with the potential to raise the voices of refugee groups, especially young people, and to overcome stereotypes commonly perpetuated by the mainstream media. These preliminary findings suggest that participation in community radio can have a beneficial effect on a young persons' settlement experience, in line with Ager and Strang's (2008) perceptions of what constitutes 'successful' resettlement.

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