Exploring Community Resilience, Social Capital and Adversity Activated Development in the Context of Urban Refugee Communities in New Delhi, India.

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A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD in Refugee Care

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11th February 2024

Abstract

This thesis examines the integration and resilience of urban refugees in New Delhi, India, through the lens of social capital, community resilience, and adversity-activated development (AAD). Amidst the global urban refugee crisis, the significance of understanding the nuanced experiences of refugees in urban settings has never been more critical. The prevailing narrative in existing literature often highlights the adversities faced by refugees, including trauma, loss, and displacement. This research seeks to broaden that perspective by uncovering the multifaceted realities of refugees and asylum-seekers, focusing on both the challenges and the opportunities that shape their experiences.

Identifying a gap in current academic discourse, this study asks: How do social capital community resilience and adversity activated development contribute to the integration and empowerment of urban refugees? Furthermore, it explores how adversity can activate development, leading to personal and communal growth despite significant challenges.

Employing a qualitative methodology, this investigation draws on in-depth interviews with 8 refugees in New Delhi. Through a series of semi-structured interviews with each participant, this research delves into refugee narratives, social dynamics, community engagement, and the emergence of positive developments. A hybrid thematic analysis method was used to interpret the data, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the participants' lived experiences.

The findings reveal that, contrary to being merely reactive of their circumstances, urban refugees in New Delhi actively leverage their social capital and community ties to navigate and overcome obstacles. These social networks and community affiliations emerge as vital resources, facilitating settlement and fostering resilience. Moreover, the concept of adversity-

activated development (AAD) is highlighted as a significant mechanism through which refugees experience personal growth and positive change.

This research contributes to the field by offering a nuanced understanding of community resilience as a dynamic, process-oriented phenomenon. It highlights the essential role of social capital in resilience and examines the transformative potential of adversity. The thesis advocates a need for culturally sensitive, holistic approaches to refugee integration and resilience, emphasising the importance of social capital, community resilience and AAD in crafting cost-effective and impactful interventions and policies specifically in low and middle income countries such as New Delhi, India.

Acknowledgements

Embarking on this PhD journey has been nothing short of an adventure, filled with its highs and lows. It's a path I ventured onto with ambition and curiosity, but one I could never have navigated alone. The unwavering support, invaluable guidance, and encouragement I received from a constellation of individuals were the highlight of my journey, for which I am profoundly grateful.

Foremost among my guides was my supervisor, Renos Papadopoulos. Renos, your insightful guidance and steadfast support were instrumental in shaping both the trajectory of my research and my growth as an academic. Your patience and expertise provided a ground for my ideas to take root and flourish. For the times you stuck with me, despite my shortcomings and learning curves, I am eternally thankful.

Professor Zibi, your friendly guidance and nurturing approach have significantly contributed to my academic journey. Your encouragement was a critical source of motivation.

To my parents, who laid the foundations upon which I stand today, Dad, your philosophical insights and practical wisdom have been my guiding voice. Your support and love have been unwavering, shaping me into the individual I am. Mum, your unconditional love and care have been my sanctuary, offering solace and strength throughout this journey. The opportunities and support you both provided have been the greatest gifts of all. My most loving and supportive Grandmother who's love and care is unparalleled, thank you, Amachi.

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Acronyms

AAD	Adversity Activated Development
AALCO	Asian African Legal Consultative Organisation
ANDSF	Afghan National Defence and Security Forces
CAA	Citizenship Amendment Act
CR	Community Resilience
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
KDWS	The Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LMIC	Low- and Middle-Income Country
LTV	Long-Term Visa
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network
NCVO	National Council for Voluntary Organisations
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PTG	Post-Traumatic Growth
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
TA	Thematic Analysis
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission

1. Introduction

This thesis offers an intricate and comprehensive exploration into the dynamics of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development (AAD) within the unique context of urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India. In doing so, it considers the growing population of refugees arriving and settling in urban environments, and recognises the unique adversities faced by refugee communities in this context, often living alongside other urban poor, and faced with poverty, lack of access to basic services, and social marginalisation. The combination of these factors makes the exploration of resilience and social capital and the crucial roles these play in the lives of urban refugees as they navigate new environments, particularly important.

The focus on New Delhi for this study, which has been a destination for numerous refugee populations over several decades, is deeply representative of two refugee migration trends. Firstly, among the many millions of refugees fleeing their countries from conflict and persecution, a majority (roughly 60%) now live in urban environments (Muggah & Abdenur, 2018). Like other migrant populations, this is driven by the desire to seek out better services, access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities (Buscher, 2011; Campbell, 2005; Jacobsen, 2006, Page 6). Many also choose cities like New Delhi to evade the risks of a camp-based model and improve the probability of resettlement in a third country. Secondly, as is well known, a majority of the world's refugees (roughly 75%) continue to live in low and middle-income countries (UNHCR - The UN Refugee Agency, n.d.). Taken together, this suggests that nearly half of the World's refugees (roughly 45%) currently live developing urban environments, which are already stretched thin in terms of resources and infrastructure.

Many of the basic challenges faced by refugee populations in New Delhi, ranging from poverty, overcrowding, inadequate access to infrastructure, high rates of unemployment, etc. are therefore representative. And while these might be caused by a range of factors (legality, restriction to labour markets, language barriers, subjective fees, discrimination, and more) and addressed through various coping mechanisms (positive and negative) the resulting stresses on refugee communities in developing urban environments is immense. In this context, the bustling urban landscape of New Delhi, with its diverse population and complex socio-economic challenges, provides not just a rich, but broadly representative backdrop for this study.

1.1. Research Questions and Tripartite Research Framework

As is implicit in the title, this thesis explores the intricate concepts of community resilience, social capital, and Adversity Activated development among participants. Importantly, however, rather than investigating these concepts in isolation, as is often the case, this research makes a contribution through the development of a framework that emphasises their interconnectedness and the ways in which they mutually shape the experiences of urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India.

The groundwork for this approach, as in any academic enquiry, lies in the formulation of 4 research questions. These were developed through an exhaustive review of relevant literature, through which key ideas were identified within each conceptual area and further grounded within the policy context of refugees in India. Acknowledging the interplay among these themes, initial drafts of the questions were tailored to probe these multifaceted dynamics. Subsequent revisions, steered by a deeper examination of literature gaps, consultations with

supervisors, and considerations towards certain unique aspects of New Delhi's socio-political landscape, culminated in the following 4 questions:

1) In what ways do urban refugees in New Delhi, India, access and utilise different forms of social capital?

2) How does the availability of social capital contribute to the resilience of the urban refugee community in New Delhi, and what dynamics define the interplay between these two concepts?

3) To what extent is adversity activated development (AAD) evident among urban refugees in New Delhi, and in what forms does it manifest?

4) In the context of low- and middle-income urban areas like New Delhi, India, how applicable are the concepts of social capital, community resilience, and AAD, and how might they inform the development of interventions aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of urban refugees?

This selection of three distinct concepts, while ambitious, allowed this thesis to merge consider their relationality within a single framework, serving to both challenge and expand upon significant gaps in existing scholarship and to apply these theoretical constructs to real, yet underexplored, contexts. Further, and importantly, given the topic of discussion, namely the distinctive adversities encountered by urban refugees in New Delhi, these research questions are not merely academic, but encapsulate the lived realities of these individuals within the complex socio-political tapestry of the city.

While substantiated in the detailed literature review, to guide reader, a brief overview of the these 3 concepts, and how each is considered, unpacked and applied in this thesis, is noted in the following paragraphs, before examining the overall structure of this thesis.

1.1.1. *Community Resilience*

Community resilience is a central concept in the research, and can broadly be conceptualised as a process linking adaptive capacities such as economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence. According to Norris et al (2008), community resilience is a process that encompasses 4 types of adaptive capacities, compiled from a wide range of literatures, predominantly focusing on developmental psychology, mental health, disaster management, and socio-economic development.

In the exploration of this definition, among many others, in the literature review, this thesis offers a multifaceted perspective. It considers the origin of resilience more broadly, analysing the varying multidisciplinary perspectives (including in ecology and social ecology) that have contributed to the concept and shedding light on the complex interplay between individual, community, and societal factors that contribute to resilience. It attempts to reconcile these competing understandings within a framework suitable for this particular study.

For example, drawing on the work of Ungar to clarify the relationality between individual resilience and community resilience as a reciprocal one (Ungar, 2011, p. 43). If a large number of people in a community manifest resilience by accessing resources, it can positively impact the overall performance of the group, and vice versa. This reciprocal relationship is particularly important in the context of refugees and asylum seekers.

This thesis also critically examines the operationalization of the concept, and in the methodology recognises the diverse approaches taken towards measuring community resilience, such as whether to define it as a static or dynamic factor. The outcome of this endeavour recognises, similar to Patel et al (2017), that given the numerous factors often identified as under the umbrella of community resilience (local knowledge, community networks, effective communication, pre- and post-disaster health, leadership, available resources, economic investment, preparedness, mental outlook, etc.) that adopting a unifying definition may be beyond the scope of what is possible or even useful. Instead, the insights provided in this thesis, particularly in the discussions chapter, place a focus on resilience in practice, and understanding holistic interventions that include individuals, families, communities, and society, and leverage the many factors under the resilience umbrella.

1.1.2. *Social Capital*

In a similar vein, this thesis provides an interrogation of the concept of social capital, including possible definitions, history of the concepts use, types of social capital and methods of measuring it. In doing so, this thesis settles on Putnam's (1993) definition of social capital as "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action" (1993, p. 167). Putnam (2001) (among other authors) explores social capital through the dimensions of bonding, bridging, and linking capital.

Each of these dimensions is examined in greater depth and applied to the refugee context within a more detailed literature review. However in short, i) bonding describes relationships among network members who share social identities and other similar attributes (ethnicity, post-migration settlement location, trust, loyalty, etc.), ii) bridging refers to connections between

individuals who are dissimilar with respect to social identity (i.e. between groups), and iii) linking refers to relationships that connect individuals or groups with institutions, organisations, or individuals in positions of power or authority (Claridge, 2018). As is examined, each of these dimensions play a key role in supporting political inclusion, facilitating social cohesion, and reducing individual and community isolation.

Naturally, a focus of this thesis is the relevance of social capital as a framework for understanding among refugee communities, e.g. through the importance of social networks and community groups. Social networks provide access to both financial and non-financial resources, such as loans and household help, and also provide a sense of belonging and support, which can be crucial in the resettlement process (Karimi, 2020). Social networks also provide access to information and job opportunities, playing a critical role in securing employment for refugees (Krishnakumar & Katsui, 2015, p. 139).

However, beyond this, an additional key focus of this thesis vis-à-vis social capital, is its relationship to the concept of community resilience. This builds on substantial existing literature, including extensively in the field of disaster response. There have been many approaches towards linking social capital and community resilience, with definitions ranging from the aggregate of actual or potential resources (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21) to the ways in which trust, social bonds, and norms of reciprocity benefit society (Helliwell & Putnam, p. 53).

1.1.3. Adversity Activated Development (AAD)

Finally, this thesis pays significant attention towards the concept of adversity activated development (AAD) which adds an additional but necessary analytical layer to this thesis' research framework. AAD, provides a transformative approach towards the recognition that

adversity can stimulate growth and development within both individuals and communities, and has particularly relevance to the context of refugee communities. Crucially, it is not based on a trauma model but rather on the adversity itself, differentiating between being exposed to adversity and being traumatised (Papadopoulos, 2007; 2009).

To do so, this thesis draws on the 'Adversity Grid', a seminal framework developed by Papadopoulos, in order to examine into the multifaceted nature of adversity, recognizing that while the refugee experience is replete with challenges, it also presents opportunities for growth (Papadopoulos, 2007). The grid stresses that adversity doesn't merely result in trauma; it can also catalyse positive transformations. This grid serves as a tool to delineate both the negative and positive facets of adversity, offering a holistic perspective on the experiences of individuals and communities, especially in the intricate contexts of displacement, migration, and trauma (Papadopoulos, 2006).

Through its application of the adversity grid, this thesis provides insights into the presence of AAD, demonstrating how refugees are not merely surviving their circumstances but are actively finding ways to thrive and contribute positively to their communities; using adversity as a positive catalyst. Participants' personal experiences reveal that AAD involves character qualities, accomplishments, meaning-making, and positive changes, such as empathy, self-awareness, thankfulness, courage, flexibility, patience, resilience, and improved coping skills (Papadopoulos, 2007). These traits have helped them deal with challenges they face as refugees and have been reported in other studies as crucial factors in helping refugees adjust to new environments (Fazel et al., 2012).

AAD provides a distinctive viewpoint and significantly advances the ideas of social capital and community resilience in the context of urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India. It emphasises the potential for collective growth, as refugees adapt to new environments and build new social networks and resources (Field et al., 2020). This is examined through various specific examples among thesis participants, e.g. including, for example, how AAD can contribute to social and political activism among refugees, furthering personal and collective growth and development (Shepherd et al., 2020).

1.1.4.   Concluding Thoughts

For each of its 3 foundational concepts, this thesis offers an opportunity to unpack their origins, competing definitions, and inter-relationality, all with the perspective of developing a unified tripartite framework. Through a qualitative and empathetic methodological approach, tailored to encapsulate the research framework's complexity, identifying the interplay between these concepts offers a multifaceted perspective that enriches our understanding of how communities adapt, thrive, and contribute positively to their surroundings. In doing so, this thesis posits that the exploration of urban refugee experiences should not be framed around survival, but rather about thriving, adapting, and contributing positively to their new environment.

In conclusion, this thesis hopes to serve as a contribution to the field, not only for its in-depth exploration of each concept but for its unique approach towards combining them under a unified framework. In doing so, it hopes to pave the way for future research that offers a more nuanced understanding of the complex realities of urban refugee communities and their collective well-being. The findings of this thesis establish meaningful insights on the lived experiences of refugees during both pre- and post-migration. Finally, and importantly, given rising rates of displacement and risks of funding reduction, it identifies practical implications

of its findings, in order to inform future interventions and policies to be more culturally appropriate and holistic.

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

As noted from the previous section, this thesis begins with an introduction to set the stage for the entire research journey. It sets the context of urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India, highlights the research questions set, and provides an overview of each foundational concept within the tripartite framework that has been developed.

Chapter 2, the Literature Review, serves as the foundation for the research. This section is not merely a summary of existing literature but a critical examination of origins, key concepts, theories, and previous studies related to community resilience, social capital and adversity activated development. In addition, it examines their inter-relationality, including complementarity and discrepancies, to strengthen the eventual adoption of a tripartite framework that interlinks these. Beyond this, it also provides important background information of the growing trend of urbanisation within refugee communities and historical and legal specificities of India as a host nation. Throughout, this section identifies gaps in the literature, articulating the research questions and objectives as opportunities to fill them, while setting the stage for the empirical study.

Following the literature review, Chapter 3 presents the Research Design and Methodology. This part is meticulously crafted to include detailed descriptions of the research design, setting, demographics of the sample, and the standard interview protocol. It outlines the ethical requirements and data analysis methods, ensuring transparency and rigor in the research process. It also provides an in-depth look at the methods used to analyze the data and the ethical

considerations that guided the research. It includes a summary of the techniques employed and the ethical principles adhered to throughout the study. A synopsis on research design and interview protocols, offers a comprehensive overview, including the setting, demographics of the sample, and the standard interview protocol.

Chapters 4 and 5 (Findings and Discussions, respectively), is where the research comes to life. Chapter 4, Findings, presents the results of the research, detailing the insights and patterns that emerged from the data. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the results, highlighting the key takeaways and their implications. The findings are not presented in isolation but are connected to the broader themes and context of the research. Chapter 5, the Discussion, builds on the findings, offering a critical interpretation and analysis. It connects the results to the existing literature, providing a thoughtful reflection on the significance and contributions of the research. This section offers an exploration of the research themes, weaving together the empirical findings with theoretical insights.

This thesis concludes with a synthesis of the research, summarizing the key insights and their implications for theory and practice. It reflects on the contributions of the study to the field of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development, particularly in the context of urban refugee communities. The conclusion also outlines potential directions for future research, emphasizing the need for continued exploration and understanding.

Throughout this thesis, the structure facilitates a coherent and progressive exploration of the research questions. It guides the reader through a logical sequence of thought, from the foundational literature review to the detailed research design, and eventually insights from findings and their relevance within existing literature in the discussion. This is tied together in

the conclusion, highlighting the importance of the study. The organisation of this thesis is designed to enhance the clarity and depth of the research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introductory Literature Review

2.1.1. The Global Context of Refugee Experiences

Refugees and asylum seekers, along with their families, are being uprooted in vast numbers annually. This mass displacement, as McKenzie et al (2016) articulate, stems from humanitarian crises, war, unstable political environments, and ethnic, tribal, or religious violence. The multi-dimensional impacts of such forced migrations have been extensively explored in academic literature. Works by Silove et al (1998), Fazel et al (2005), and Porter and Haslam (2005) examine the psychological, emotional, socio-economic, and environmental challenges faced by refugees. Furthermore, Haaken and O'Neill (2013) emphasise that exposure to war, violence, and displacement profoundly impairs the physical and mental health of refugees, significantly influencing their daily life engagement.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides a crucial framework for understanding the global refugee crisis. As of June 2023, the UNHCR reported a staggering 110 million individuals worldwide were forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, and events severely disrupting public order (UNHCR UK, n.d.) Alarmingly, more than 1 in every 73 people globally now find themselves in situations of forced displacement. Notably, the majority of these individuals, nearly 90%, are hosted in low- and middle-income countries.

2.1.2. Urban Refugees

In the past two decades, the subject of urban refugees has employed an increasingly significant place on the global refugee policy agenda (Crisp. J, 2017). As one can tell urban refugee

experiences are multifaceted and diverse. Their study has expanded in the recent years as researchers recognized that the challenges refugees face are different in an urban environment. Attention to the experiences of urban refugee populations has also grown within the non-governmental and international organisational communities (Kobia & Cranfield, 2009).

Refugees often join the urban metropolitan cities like Nairobi, Johannesburg, New Delhi and Cairo. Often, they will arrive in cities which are already stretched too thin in terms on resources and infrastructure. Like many other internal migrants, refugees often gravitate towards urban settings, motivated by the prospect of better livelihood opportunities, and seeking out better services such as access to healthcare, education and employment opportunities (Buscher, 2011; Campbell, 2005; Jacobsen, 2006).

This urban preference also reflects the perceived ease of finding work, although not all urban refugees manage to thrive economically. Many find employment in the informal sector, particularly in nations that have not implemented the 1951 Convention rights relating to the status of refugees or denied refugees legal employment (Landau & Jacobsen, 1999; Sommers, 1999; Macchiavello, 2004). The informal sector often subjects them to exploitation, including unfair wages and unsafe working conditions, which go unreported due to fear of detection and deportation.

These refugees face a dual challenge: the informal economy's low wages and lack of regulation hinder their ability to support their families, while the threat of exploitation looms large. To counter this, some refugees opt for entrepreneurship, leveraging their skills from their home countries (Campbell, 2005; Grabska, 2006; Jacobsen, 2004 & 2006; Landau & Jacobsen; Lindstrom, 2005; Sommers, 1999). Child labour is also a distressing reality, particularly among

Afghan refugees in Pakistan, driven by poverty and societal pressures (Women's Commission for Women and Children).

Access to credit is a significant barrier for refugees seeking self-employment (Bailey, 2004). However, they often find employment through co-national communities, drawing upon social capital for support and financial services (Banki, 2013; Horst, 2021; Jacobsen, 2006; Landau, 2014). Transnational networks and remittances also play a crucial role in supporting their economic activities (Campbell, 2005; Crisp et al., 2017; Grabska, 2006; Landau & Jacobsen, 2004; Landau, 2014).

Host countries and cities, meanwhile, face their own set of challenges with large refugee influxes. Many attempt to restrict refugees to camps or settlements, with urban refugees receiving limited assistance. These concerns span economic, institutional, financial, security, and public opinion dimensions (Hovil, 2007; Jacobsen, 2006; Kritikos, 2000). The socio-economic impact of refugees on urban infrastructure is considerable, as seen in Kenya's shift from a welcoming to a restrictive policy as refugee numbers increased (Campbell, 2006). Security concerns also prompt encampment policies (Bailey, 2004; Crisp, 2009; Grabska, 2006). Public opinion, often xenophobic towards refugees, influences government policies (Campbell, 2005 & 2006; Bailey, 2004). Lastly, the issue of responsibility sharing is prominent, with host countries feeling neglected by the international community in refugee management (Sommers, 2001).

The situation of refugees in urban areas is marked by a complex array of challenges. On one hand, these individuals face precarious conditions within informal economies, characterised by exploitative labour practices and socio-economic instability. This struggle for livelihood is

often exacerbated by the limited support and occasionally adverse perceptions in host countries. On the other hand, these host nations present economic prospects, the potential for self-sufficiency, and the freedom to decide where and how to reside. Notwithstanding this fact, considerably less resources are allocated to aid urban refugees compared to those residing in camps. The global community has been sluggish in comprehending the distinct requirements of displaced individuals in urban settings versus camp environments (Kobia & Cranfield, 2009).

Addressing these multifaceted issues necessitates comprehensive policies that harmonise refugee welfare with host country interests. Effective strategies should integrate refugees into urban economies respectfully and sustainably, while also considering the socio-economic and security implications for host nations. Fundamental to this approach is the role of international support and cooperation, ensuring a balanced coexistence and mutual prosperity for both refugees and host communities.

2.1.3. *Mental Health and Refugees*

Refugees face particularly alarming risks for mental illness due to the often-traumatising experiences pre-migration, such as war, murder, torture, and rape; coupled with the often-overwhelming environmental stressors during resettlement (Goodkind et al., 2014). The scholarly landscape reveals a disconcerting prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression among refugees, which starkly exceeds that in host country populations (Abbott, 2016; de Arellano & Danielson, 2008; Kirmayer et al., 2010). This elevated incidence is further corroborated by Porter and Haslam's (2005) meta-review, which

identified a more pronounced mental health impairment in refugees from the former Yugoslavia compared to non-refugees from the same region.

The refugee experience typically presents 3 chief sets of phases: premigration, migration and postmigration resettlement (Kirmayer, 2009, 2011). These involve moving from one socio-economic system to another, changes in interpersonal ties and the rebuilding of social networks, and moving into an unknown host culture (Bhugra, 2004; Kirmayer et al., 2011). As such, each transition is linked with various risks and exposures to adversity.

The premigration period often disrupts social roles and networks. During migration, refugees and asylum seekers can experience protracted indecision about their refugee status as well as situations that expose them to abuse and exploitation (Silove et al., 2000). A strong example is of asylum seekers who end up in refugee camps with limited and minimal resources, and end up being subject to widespread violence and discrimination. In some countries, asylum seekers are kept in detention centres with harsh conditions, which can lead to a feeling of helplessness (Silove et al., 2007).

When those seeking asylum enter the host country there are a different set of issues they face. Initially they may have a sense of relief in terms of leaving a country with conflict but can quickly feel demoralised when individuals and families face obstacles related to policies and uncertainty of status and structural barriers in their host countries. These feelings can then be aggravated by instances of racism and discrimination (Cook et. al, 2009; Kirmayer, 2009). Keeping the context of India in mind, many refugees encounter difficulties with language, livelihood, education, and accommodation. A lot of these are due to the not having their credentials recognised and India's poor legal framework for refugees. Research suggests that

some of the main areas of postmigration stress includes identity loss, discrimination, social alienation, and economic strain (Porter, 2007; Porter & Haslam, 2005).

It is important to consider the various intersectional factors that affect different groups. For example, language proficiency tends to have a more significant impact on men's employment opportunities, which in turn can influence their mental health (Takeuchi et al., 2007).

Importantly, however, within this literature, an paradox persists: the prevalence rates of PTSD symptoms among refugee populations exhibit a staggering range (from negligible to near totality) as reported by Steel (2009). This variability, as yet unresolved in the academic dialogue (Bogic et al., 2012), suggests an intricate interplay of factors, including the degree and nature of exposure to traumatic events and the quality of resettlement conditions, which appear to influence mental health outcomes in a dose-dependent and temporally complex manner (Fazel et al., 2005; Nickerson et al., 2018; Silove et al., 2017).

The impact of post-migration factors on mental health is increasingly recognised as profound, where socio-economic challenges and the stresses inherent in the asylum-seeking process exert significant influence (Li et al., 2016). Evidence from Médecins Sans Frontières (2016) emphasises the complex interdependencies between mental health and variables such as gender, vulnerability status, and the cumulative burden of trauma experienced before, during, and after migration.

Amidst these findings, a critical question arises: What is the precise nature of the trauma affecting refugees? Cross-sectional epidemiological studies blur the lines between trauma symptoms stemming from current contextual stressors and those indicative of a diagnosable

mental disorder, based on psychiatric criteria that localise mental health at the individual level (Silove et al., 2017). This medicalisation of trauma, with its emphasis on past 'traumatic' events, risks obscuring the continuum of interpersonal, political, and social violence that refugees continue to face, including significant post-migration factors which may be equally, if not more, traumatic (Maier & Straub, 2011; Silove et al., 1998; Weissbecker et al., 2018).

Moreover, such a narrow focus on trauma risks essentializing refugee experiences as static narratives of victimisation, shifting the discourse away from political engagement with structural causations of trauma towards therapeutic interventions (Pratt et al., 2015). This perspective often overlooks the complex socio-political realities and daily experiences of refugees within host countries (Watters, 2001; Silove et al., 2000). Wenzel and Droždek (2018) argue that an overemphasis on vulnerability could potentially overshadow the resilience and agency of refugees, failing to represent the diversity and heterogeneity of refugee experiences.

The conventional psychological research narrative has been predominantly problem-centric, fixated on the vulnerabilities and pathologies stemming from the arduous journey of immigrant and refugee adaptation. Such a pathologizing lens, while insightful, offers a myopic view of the migrant experience, overshadowing the resilience and potential for success that characterises many immigrant and refugee stories.

Instead, as will be teased out later, there exists an imperative for a paradigm shift towards resilience, emphasising resources, strengths, and competencies that undergird successful adaptation and integration (Ungar, 2008). A socio-ecological perspective on resilience illuminates the dynamic interrelations within socio-ecological systems, positing that individuals and their environments are not isolated agents of change. Rather, they are

participants in reciprocal processes wherein environments proffer critical resources that individuals can harness (Ungar, 2011).

This observation bears significant importance of later discussions under community resilience and adversity activated development in subsequent chapters of the literature review.

2.2. The Refugee Context in India

Refugees are defined and protected in international law. The 1951 Refugee Convention is a key legal document and defines a refugee as: "Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion." (UNHCR, 2011).

The foundational treaties in international refugee law are the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, neither of which India is a signatory to. The UNHCR Fact Sheet (2023) indicates that India provides asylum and support to around 213,000 refugees, with many residing in Delhi. Yet, the true number of refugees in India is likely higher due to ongoing regional conflicts, porous borders, and the high mobility within South Asia, compounded by the lack of a domestic or regional legal framework for refugees. Consequently, refugees in India are treated under the Foreigners Act of 1946 and the Citizenship Act of 1955 as foreigners, requiring valid identity documents to avoid being classified as illegal immigrants and facing possible deportation.

India's commitment to the principle of non-refoulement, despite not being a party to the Refugee Convention or Protocol, is affirmed through its ratification of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which advocates for the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries. This commitment reflects a recognition of the humanitarian principles at the heart of refugee protection, even as the nation grapples with the complexities of hosting a large refugee population without a formal legal framework for their status recognition.

India, historically receptive to those fleeing conflict and natural disasters, often becomes a haven for internally and externally displaced people who settle in its urban areas. Consequently, protection and development opportunities for de facto refugees in India are inconsistent and often unpredictable. These opportunities are generally limited to individuals who either meet specific policy criteria set by the government or are formally recognized as refugees by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This means that many refugees who do not fit these categories may find it difficult to access essential services and support, leading to disparities in their ability to integrate and thrive in the country.

Recent academic and policy literature has started scrutinising the disparities in protection for different refugee groups in India, focusing particularly on urban environments and urbanisation as factors exacerbating vulnerabilities (Crisp, 2017; Ghosh, 2016; Dasgupta, 2016). There has been a global shift in humanitarian policy since the early 21st century, moving away from camp-based solutions to refugee crises (UNHCR, 2013b). However, there are still substantial gaps in our understanding, especially regarding particularly vulnerable groups in urban India, like the stateless Rohingya and non-Muslim Afghan refugees. Current research lacks in-depth qualitative data that captures the daily struggles and aspirations of urban refugees in Indian cities.

It also accepted the Bangkok Principles on the Status and Treatment of Refugees in 1966 (AALCO, 1966), although this is not legally binding. Furthermore, the Indian Constitution's Article 21, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty, has been interpreted in some cases to encompass the right to asylum or non-refoulement, as evidenced in legal precedents like Al Qutaifi v. Union of India (1999) and the Supreme Court's defence of the Chakma refugees from Bangladesh in NHRC v. State of Arunachal Pradesh (1996). However, the absence of a specific refugee protection framework leaves the status of refugees in India largely dependent on the country's "tolerance and goodwill" (Sen, 2003).

2.2.1. The Ambiguity of 'Refugee' and 'Migrant' Status in India

In India, the concepts of 'insider' and 'outsider' have evolved into complex constructs, both institutionally and among refugees themselves (Field et al., 2017). Official bodies grapple with the task of defining who qualifies as a refugee, determining their settlement locations, and their entitlements. Refugees, in turn, navigate these imposed categories, attempting to position themselves within these definitions. As Ghosh (2016) notes in his analysis, the lack of legal frameworks in India often leads to a conflation of migrants, refugees, illegal settlers, and stateless persons into indistinct categories. This ambiguity in status has had tangible consequences, such as the mistreatment of Rohingya refugees by police authorities, who, misidentifying them as 'illegal Bengali migrants', have subjected them to harassment and imprisonment (Velath & Chopra, 2015).

This fluidity in status allows the Indian state to oscillate between welcoming gestures and exclusionary practices. For instance, while the UN High Commissioner for Refugees praised India's refugee policy in 2013 (UNHCR, 2013a), the government has also engaged in selective Long-Term Visa (LTV) issuance to different Afghan refugee groups and initiatives to "identify,

arrest and deport" Rohingya Muslim 'migrants' (Jaini, 4 April 2017). Sarbani Sen (2003) suggests that this ad hoc approach to refugee issues is politically expedient for the Government of India, especially in the context of its bilateral relations with the refugees' countries of origin.

Furthermore, the discourse around refugees and migrants extends into the realm of political rhetoric, especially within Hindu nationalist narratives. The term 'infiltration' is often used in these circles to describe the presence of Muslim migrants (who may also be de facto refugees) in India. Historical political campaigns, such as the BJP's 1993 leadership campaign, have focused on ending Bangladeshi 'infiltration' (Gillan, 2002). Similarly, Ashok Singhal, a leader of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, frequently spoke of political destabilisation caused by Muslim 'infiltrators' from Pakistan and Bangladesh, linking them to terrorist activities and secessionist movements (Singhal, as cited in Rath, 2016, p. 126).

According to Prakash (2016), the economically disadvantaged are often perceived as contributing to urban disorder and strain, intensifying challenges within city environments. Markers such as poverty, religion, and ethnicity serve to reinforce each other, creating a web of factors that contribute to urban exclusion. Baviskar (2003) describes this web as a system designed to exploit public fears about the degradation of urban infrastructure and the scarcity of essential resources, distinguishing 'insiders' who are afforded urban services and security from 'outsiders' who are not.

These views are enduring, as noted by Crisp (2017). Sanyal (2012) highlights that refugees are commonly viewed with suspicion and mistrust, regarded as likely to engage in criminal behaviour or, in less severe cases, viewed as economic strains. The blurring of 'refugee' and 'migrant' statuses, particularly when 'migrant' is synonymous with criminal or terrorist

'infiltrator' (especially in the context of Muslims), reinforces broader associations of refugees with illegality, economic burden, and political destabilisation. Such perceptions further entrench the divide between the 'in-group' and 'out-group', translating into experiences of marginalisation for refugees in India.

Keeping the aforementioned in mind, the context will now be explored more in the following:

1) Refugees and asylum seekers and the legal framework

2) Refugee risk, protection, and durable solutions

3) Refugees' wellbeing, social services, livelihoods, and Self reliance

2.2.2. *Refugees and asylum seekers and the legal framework*

India has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Protocol and lacks domestic legislation for refugee status, leaving the term "refugee" undefined legally or administratively (Janmyr, 2021). The country does not have a uniform refugee protection framework but continues to offer asylum to many, relying on UNHCR to conduct refugee status determinations (UNHCR, 2011). Despite holding a UNHCR refugee card, individuals are not assured of residence, education, healthcare, or protection support from the Indian Government, indicating an implicit administrative hierarchy within the legal system.

However, it is clear that decisions towards refugee groups in India take other (non-stated) factors into account (including political motivations) when observing the legal system.

Firstly, recognition is exclusively based on nationality, The Indian government provides prima facie recognition only to two specific refugee groups: Tibetans and Sri Lankan Tamils. This

recognition is rooted in various factors. For Tibetans, the reasons include India's historical and religious connections with Buddhism, which originated in India, and geopolitical considerations, particularly the adversarial relationship with China during the initial influx of Tibetan refugees. For Sri Lankan Tamils, the recognition stems from historic ethnic ties and the political dynamics of the region.

Refugees recognised by the Indian government are entitled to a range of services and permissions. This includes a comprehensive briefing upon arrival, vulnerability assessment, referral to relevant bodies, a government-approved refugee certificate (renewable annually), one-year work permits, and the freedom to move in and out of the country. Despite these provisions, the situation for refugees in India is complex due to the lack of a formal refugee framework and varying treatment across different groups.

Secondly, The second layer of refugee recognition in India pertains to those classified as 'mandated' refugees, primarily under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s supervision. This group includes refugees from Afghanistan, Myanmar, and smaller numbers from countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, and Syria. Mandated refugees are involved in various UNHCR programmes related to education, livelihoods, and protection. After undergoing refugee status determination, they may receive a refugee certificate, which could enable them to apply for a long-term visa (LTV) in India, though the final decision on visa issuance rests with the Indian government.

However, obtaining this refugee certificate and LTV does not guarantee easy integration into Indian society. Many mandated refugees, such as Afghan Christians, face challenges in

receiving LTVs. Even with these documents, refugees often struggle to find employment and housing. Employers and landlords frequently do not recognise refugee cards as valid identification, preferring other forms of officially recognised documentation. Landlords often perceive refugees as high-risk renters due to uncertain documentation or exploit them due to their vulnerable status. This situation leaves many refugees with limited options, often resorting to informal employment to sustain themselves.

The Indian government's approach to these refugees has been inconsistent. For example, the Supreme Court of India in April 2021 refused to stay the deportation of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, despite potential threats to their lives if deported. Conversely, the Manipur High Court recognised non-refoulement (the principle of not returning refugees to countries where they face danger) as part of the right to life and liberty under the Indian Constitution, allowing Myanmar nationals fleeing the recent military coup to register with the UNHCR. This inconsistency highlights the lack of a concrete legal framework in India for refugees, making their status and rights precarious and subject to change (Kaul, 2022; Majumdar, 2021).

Thirdly, in India, the final grouping of refugees is evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with permission to remain contingent on specific government-approved reasons, such as education enrolment or marriage to a local. Hindu refugees from Pakistan and Bangladesh typically fall into this category. They are often seen as migrants rather than refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution. This three-tiered administrative system of refugees leads to variable levels of protection and assistance, as well as disparities in their ability to secure jobs, education, and housing.

Regarding legislative developments, on December 18, 2015, three bills were introduced to the Lok Sabha: the Asylum Bill 2015, the National Asylum Bill 2015, and the Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Bill 2015. These bills, though not yet enacted, signify a growing dialogue in India around forced migration and asylum issues. However, at the moment, India lacks specific legislation governing refugees, leading to ad hoc decisions on their status and treatment (Bang, 2012).

India's approach to refugees, including those from countries like Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda, has historically been bilateral and conforms generally to international instruments on the subject, despite the lack of a formal refugee statute. Notably, India has provided refuge to significant numbers of Afghan refugees, predominantly Hindus and Sikhs, and even granted citizenship to some of them in 2015 (Vijayaraghavan, 2020). Additionally, India has been a destination for many Bangladeshi Hindus and Chakma Buddhists who fled persecution (International Journal of Law Management & Humanities, 2021).

India's refugee policy is influenced by various factors, including national security concerns. While India does provide refuge, the absence of a specific refugee law means that all refugees are treated under the general laws applicable to all foreigners. This situation often leads to complexities in the enforcement of laws regarding refugees, balancing humanitarian needs with security considerations (India's Refugee Policy, n.d.).

Without dedicated refugee legislation, the rights and status of refugees in India remain uncertain and dependent on ad hoc policies that may vary with different government administrations. This situation demonstrates the need for India to establish a more consistent

and transparent approach to refugee protection and asylum, aligning with its international obligations and providing clearer guidelines for both refugees and law enforcement agencies.

2.2.3. *Refugee Protection, Risk, and Durable Solutions*

Mandated refugees in India face significant challenges despite being theoretically eligible to apply for jobs, rent accommodations, and enjoy freedom of movement. Their difficulties are compounded by employers and landlords often not recognising UNHCR-issued refugee cards, preferring official government-issued identification (Field et al., 2017; 2019). As a result, refugees and asylum seekers frequently live in substandard conditions, facing exploitation and limited access to formal employment opportunities. Women and children within these communities are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence and inadequate child protection measures (Field et al., 2017; 2019).

For durable solutions, the UNHCR proposes voluntary repatriation, local integration in the first asylum country, or resettlement in a third country. These solutions aim to end the distress of refugees and their reliance on international protection and humanitarian assistance. Despite these proposed solutions, refugees in India continue to face significant obstacles due to the lack of a domestic legal framework and national policy on refugees (Birla, 2023).

Recent discussions within India's legal and human rights communities indicate a need for the country to adhere to the 1951 Refugee Convention to address and mitigate discrimination against refugees. This change in legislation would ensure stronger protections and could provide a more robust framework for addressing refugee claims and rights within the Indian judiciary system (Shankar, 2024).

In the context of refugee assistance programs like those in New Delhi, the UNHCR advocates for self-reliance, especially in prolonged refugee situations where India's non-signatory status to the Refugee Convention prolongs reliance on humanitarian aid. The UNHCR's framework for durable solutions aims to alleviate the protracted plight of refugees and asylum seekers by providing:

1) **Voluntary Repatriation**: Refugees return to their home country when conditions permit a safe and dignified return.

2) **Local Integration**: Refugees are legally integrated into the host country, gaining rights and becoming self-reliant.

3) **Resettlement**: Refugees relocate to a third country willing to admit them and provide long-term solutions.

These solutions strive to end the distress of refugees, remove the need for international protection, and reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance (Black & Koser, 1999).

Voluntary Repatriation

The "4Rs" approach (Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation, and Reconstruction) advocated by the High Commissioner, seeks to harmonise humanitarian and development efforts to prevent mass departures and enable sustainable returns (Lippmann & Malik, 2004). In practice, such as with the Chin refugees from Myanmar in India, this strategy faces challenges. Returnees often struggle to access livelihoods, social services, and property, particularly in conflict zones or areas with sluggish economic recovery. As such, the spectrum of individuals requiring support encompasses not only recent returnees but also those from previous years who continue to face reintegration hurdles (UNHCR, September 2008).

Refugees often remain in their countries of asylum, reliant on aid, due to ongoing risks in their home countries or in the hope of resettlement to a third country (Field et al., 2019). In 2021, UNHCR data indicated a stark decline in repatriation, with only 32 refugees returning, underscoring the trend away from return to homelands. Chimni (2004) suggests that effective repatriation should consider the root causes of displacement and prioritise dialogue, cautioning against forced integration or superficial reconciliation efforts. The principle of voluntary repatriation, a cornerstone of refugee safety, is sometimes compromised, raising concerns about the well-being of individuals forced to return (Barnett et al., 2000).

In India, the complexities of voluntary repatriation are clearly seen in the experiences of Sri Lankan Tamils, Chakmas, and particularly the Chin refugees. The Chins, with a substantial community in New Delhi, have been subject to repatriation pressures, especially after Myanmar's political opening in 2010. However, this pressure is part of a larger regional pattern affecting various refugee groups, such as those in Thailand, the Rohingya in India and Bangladesh, and other ethnic minorities seeking asylum. UNHCR and international agencies often drive these repatriation efforts, even when the peace process in Myanmar remains fragile and uncertain, reflecting the broader geopolitical dynamics at play (McConnachie, 2022).

Despite not being bound by the refugee convention, India's stance towards the Chin refugees, primarily Christian, was historically one of benign neglect, offering minimal support without enforcing repatriation (Mathur, 2023). In a notable move, UNHCR independently declared the cessation of international protection for the Chin, a decision not directly influenced by Indian or Malaysian policies (Yee, 2019; McConnachie, 2022). This cessation was later retracted by

UNHCR on 14th March 2019, recognising the continuing challenges in Myanmar and responding to advocacy from the Chin and wider civil society (UNHCR, 2019).

The literature on repatriation underscores the necessity of a comprehensive approach that prioritises the well-being of refugees. Repatriation without consideration of refugees' needs can be as distressing or even more as the initial displacement. Bradley (2013; 2014) suggests that effective repatriation programs should facilitate societal reintegration, including land restitution, to promote lasting peace and stability. Access to resources, security, and information are critical for the success of these programs.

Local Integration

One of UNHCR's three durable solutions is local integration. It is a solution where refugees are offered permanent asylum and integration into the host society by the host government. As set out in international refugee conventions, local integration refers to the granting of full and permanent asylum, membership, and residency status, by the host government. The process of incorporating refugees involves legal, economic, social, and cultural aspects, ultimately leading to the granting of citizenship (Kibreab, 1989, p. 469). Local integration is considered successful when refugees and asylum seekers can gain citizenship in their host country. Considering the research until now, it is clear that refugees and asylum seekers are unable to get naturalisation or citizen of any kind in India. Even though the Government of India, does not support local integration. There is informal level of integration which is widespread.

Refugees in New Delhi navigate an informal level of integration within a context influenced by religious, safety, and political factors. They often settle in urban neighbourhoods already

inhabited by their communities, fostering daily interactions with locals. This interaction leads to a form of de facto integration, a concept described by Jacobson (2001) where refugees, not facing immediate physical danger or expulsion and able to access essential services and livelihoods, become woven into the fabric of the host community, blurring the lines between them and local residents.

The degree of this integration varies, influenced by the refugees' length of stay, local community support, and aid from local governments. The UNHCR, the Government of India, local NGOs, and the host population each play pivotal roles in facilitating this process. The effectiveness of local integration reflects the collective efforts and interests of these varied groups. Table 1 below gives a glimpse into the various groups that are involved in local integration and their interests.

Table 1. GROUPS INVOLVED IN LOCAL INTEGRATION AND THEIR INTERESTS	
Key Group	**Interests**
Donors	Ensuring effective use of relief funds; supporting voluntary repatriation; safeguarding the rights of refugees; promoting post-conflict reconstruction in the sending country; advancing regional security and economic interests.
UNHCR	Protecting and advocating for the rights of refugees; maximising the impact of funds; facilitating voluntary repatriation; supporting post-conflict reconstruction; sustaining presence in host country.
NGOs (e.g. Bosco)	Protecting the rights of refugees; ensuring effective use of resources; supporting post-conflict reconstruction; promoting community integration; fostering collaboration with other organisations.
Government of India	Advancing national security; promoting local economic development; minimising the impact on community resources and environment; fostering positive relationships with the sending country; supporting repatriation.

Local Population in New Delhi	Ensuring community security; minimising the impact on community resources and environment; promoting local economic development; facilitating access to refugee assistance.
Refugees in New Delhi	Ensuring personal security; advocating for basic rights such as freedom of movement and education; achieving economic sustainability; promoting safe and voluntary return to homeland; (Possibly) engaging in political processes to shape the future of their homeland.

Table 1- Groups involved in local integration and their interests

One must not forget the religious and cultural sentiment is high in India in the current political climate and hence, Muslim refugees are far less integrated that other religions. This was amplified during the passing of the CAA and NRC. The Bill states:

"Under the existing provisions of the Act, persons belonging to the minority communities, such as Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who have either entered into India without valid travel documents or the validity of their documents has expired are regarded as illegal migrants and hence ineligible to apply for Indian citizenship. It is proposed to make them eligible for applying for Indian citizenship." (Citizen Amendment Bill, 2016).

India's Citizenship Amendment Bill introduces religious criteria for citizenship, excluding Muslims, and affecting groups like the Rohingya who face pejorative labeling by the BJP (Chatterjee, 2019). The bill alters the path to citizenship, impacting Muslim migrants in South Asia (Raj, 2020). The situation spotlights India's absence of refugee law, with actions against Rohingyas mirroring rising nationalism (Chapparban, 2020). The NRC and CAA politicise citizenship and risk rendering Muslims stateless, countering the secular constitution and sparking protests (Chatterjee, 2019).

<u>Resettlement</u>

When returning home or remaining in the country of asylum is difficult or impossible, refugees can sometimes be granted lawful admission to a third safe country where they can enjoy permanent residence. This is known as resettlement. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States have established resettlement programmes with a set number of places for UNHCR submissions each year (UNHCR protection handbook). Resettlement is an option that can be made available to a number of refugees. For instance, refugees whose human rights are not respected or are at risk of being violated can be considered for resettlement. For instance, individuals who are at risk of being refouled, or who are at risk of facing physical violence including sexual abuse can be resettled. Survivors of violence and torture can also be considered for resettlement. Women, children and the elderly whose specific needs cannot be addressed (Field et al., 2019).

According to the May 2022 UNHCR factsheet, there were 600 refugees who were resettles to a third country. Resettlement is usually a viable option for less than 1% of the refugee population that is in India. The criteria for the resettlement solution sometimes hinders refugees to be self-reliant as they feel this would decrease their chances of being considered for resettlement (Godhawat, 2017).

2.2.4. *Refugee wellbeing, social services, livelihoods, and self-reliance*

Refugees often endure severe hardships, including the destruction of their homes, uprooting of their families, and loss of loved ones. Relocation doesn't end their distress; in new countries, they confront cultural and language barriers (Warr, 2010), disruptions in education, and feelings of alienation. Epidemiological research shows an increased prevalence of

psychopathology among refugees and asylum seekers (Porter & Haslam, 2005). Adding to the traumatic experiences in their country of origin, they face various challenges, stressors, and adversities in the host country (Laban, 2015).

The refugee crisis is marked by a confluence of needs (nourishment, shelter, healthcare, and access to legal and educational services). Amidst these challenges, it is critical to acknowledge refugees' potential for resilience and agency. Papadopoulos' theory of adversity activated development (AAD) argues that adversities, rather than solely causing harm, can also initiate personal growth and development. His 'Adversity Grid' provides a sophisticated tool for understanding and assisting refugees, focusing on their inherent strengths and the possibility of positive outcomes from adverse situations (Papadopoulos, 1997, 2002, 2021).

In refugee aid, recognising the impact of religious and cultural contexts is vital. Often, refugees are forced to flee due to religious persecution, making it critical to incorporate their faith and cultural heritage into support strategies. Secular humanitarian agencies now increasingly recognise the early and ongoing contributions of faith-based organisations in responding to refugee crises. The UNHCR acknowledges the value of these organisations in offering continued support and care to displaced individuals.

> *"As active members of civil society, faith actors and their organisations can leverage significant social, physical and spiritual assets for the benefit of those UNHCR serves." (UNHCR, 2013a: 8-9; Ferris, 2005: 311-312).*

In New Delhi, faith-based organisations like The Khalsa Diwan Welfare Society (KDWS), established in 1992 by Afghan Hindu and Sikh refugees, play a pivotal role in supporting their community. KDWS aids Hindu and Sikh Afghans escaping persecution and prioritises

educational access for refugee children, alongside facilitating their refugee processes, including documentation and long-term visa applications, with funding from community donations. Additionally, the Afghan church, bolstered by the Delhi Bible Fellowship, has been instrumental in providing Christian refugees with both a place of worship and continued support, contributing to their spiritual and social well-being (Farooquee, 2013; Field et al., 2017).

These partnerships demonstrate the significance of a holistic approach in humanitarian responses, which considers the religious and cultural contexts of displaced individuals. As faith-based groups and secular agencies collaborate, they create a more robust framework for refugee support that honours their dignity and beliefs, while providing a comprehensive network of aid. The involvement of these groups in strategic planning for refugee protection is now recognised as a critical component of effective refugee policy and practice.

Faith-based organisations are pivotal in the humanitarian landscape, yet inclusivity remains crucial. Political and gender dynamics often influence these groups, with a tendency towards male-dominated leadership, potentially side-lining women's participation (Norris, 2020). In New Delhi, Christian Afghans seeking privacy tend to distance themselves from Muslim-dominated areas, reflecting the complexities of religious diversity (Field et al., 2017). The distinct nature of these organisations can pose challenges in aligning with international aid agencies.

Nonetheless, the autonomy of refugees to self-organise contributes significantly to their sense of urban self-reliance and community well-being (Gladden, 2012). Recognising the role of

faith in displacement could enhance the approach of secular organisations, enriching the understanding of refugee well-being beyond economic self-reliance.

In response to fiscal constraints in the late 1990s, UNHCR India shifted from costly aid like subsistence allowances towards sustainable self-reliance for urban refugees, a move that drew initial criticism (Field et al., 2019; Crisp and Morand, 2015). The 1997 urban refugee policy, updated in 2009, refined support strategies to promote autonomy and ease integration into city life (UNHCR, 1997; UNHCR, 2009).

The UNHCR's 'Comprehensive Policy on Urban Refugees' from 1997, which fostered self-reliance among Delhi's refugees, evolved from a version that faced scrutiny to an updated 2009 policy better attuned to urban refugees' needs (UNHCR, 1997; UNHCR, 2009). Despite early criticism, the revised policy continued to support refugees' independence through work opportunities, reflecting an advanced grasp of their potential and the intricacies of urban assimilation (UNHCR, 2009).

UNHCR's livelihood initiatives in Delhi, partnering with entities like Don Bosco and ACCESS, aim to cultivate self-reliance among refugees through skills training and vocational education, strategically located near refugee dwellings to enhance accessibility (UNHCR). ACCESS extends this support to job placements and entrepreneurial ventures, potentially transforming employment prospects for refugees.

However, the path to self-sufficiency is fraught with hurdles, including restricted access to formal employment, job attrition, and variable interest in training programs, all of which remain significant challenges. Some refugees, leveraging language skills, venture into

translation services, a niche but complex field with its unique risks and ethical dilemmas (Field et al., 2019). These realities highlight the complexity of refugee integration and the need for tailored approaches to their employment and economic integration.

UNHCR's self-reliance programs in Delhi emphasise livelihood and employment, but these aren't always directly attainable for refugees lacking formal status and documentation. This often precludes them from formal employment and financial services like banking, pushing them into the informal sector where exploitation and insecurity are common. Language barriers compound these challenges, leading to low-wage, unstable jobs in areas like construction or small eateries (Hunter, 2009). This situation creates a paradox where refugees are expected to achieve autonomy without the rights or resources even locals find challenging to secure, prompting a re-evaluation of how self-reliance is defined and facilitated in this context. As Papadopoulos (2007) states:

> *"it is important to remember the obvious fact that becoming a refugee is not a psychological phenomenon per se; rather, it is exclusively a socio-political one, with psychological implications" (Papadopoulos, 2007, p. 301).*

Refugee wellbeing is a dynamic interplay of factors necessitating the development of culturally sensitive mental health services for marginalised groups. Refugees, having faced persecution and forced migration, often experience psychological disturbances both pre- and post-resettlement, presenting distinct challenges to health professionals compared to other populations (Murray et al., 2010). Their traumatic experiences require comprehensive care post-resettlement, including psychological, educational, financial, and social support, demanding an integrated approach that aligns with diverse cultural backgrounds (Murray & Marx, 2013).

Evaluating mental health and educational interventions for refugees is crucial to assess their effectiveness in alleviating trauma symptoms and enhancing overall wellbeing. This research will review such interventions and aims to deepen the understanding of community resilience and social capital among urban refugees in New Delhi, India.

2.3. Literature Review of Community Resilience

The forthcoming chapter seeks to anchor the concept of community resilience within the refugee experience, addressing the varied stages from pre- to post-migration and their associated psycho-social and socio-political dimensions. As asserted by Papadopoulos (2007) the refugee phenomenon is embedded within a socio-political context with psychological ramifications, necessitating an individual's navigation through multiple layers of experience simultaneously.

This exploration begins with a dissection of the concept of resilience, tracing its evolution from a primarily Western, individualistic interpretation to a recognition of the necessity for community-centric and culturally diverse perspectives (Ungar, 2007). The academic discourse has expanded to include strategies of resilience that are culturally appropriate and protective, not only for individuals but also for communities, against stigmatisation and violence, as evidenced by community-led interventions (Frounfelker et al., 2020).

Building on the foundational work by Ungar (2007), the discourse shifts from a Western-centric view of resilience to embrace more inclusive, global perspectives that resonate with the diverse cultural and community experiences of refugees. This inclusive perspective aligns with contemporary research that emphasises the importance of community-initiated protective strategies in the face of adversities, recognising the cultural capital inherent in refugee communities as a pivotal element of resilience (Tippens, 2019).

The following analysis aims to construct a nuanced and analytical narrative around community resilience, highlighting its foundational role in the refugee journey and advocating for a more

integrative and inclusive approach to resilience-building that is sensitive to the diverse realities of the refugee experience.

2.3.1. *Conceptualising the Origin of Resilience*

Resilience in psychology is recognized as a dynamic process that enables positive adaptation in the face of adversity or trauma, despite its conceptual debate reflecting its broad application across disciplines. This concept, originally from mathematics and physics to describe materials' ability to regain their shape after stress, evolved in ecology to denote ecosystems' capacity to survive and rebound from environmental disturbances. This interdisciplinary progression—from physical and ecological to psycho-social resilience—highlights its adaptability and critical role in various contexts, particularly in supporting individuals' psychological well-being in adverse conditions (Norris et al., 2008; Robinson and Carson, 2015; Kokorsch, 2023).

The 'first wave' of resilience research identified traits that aid individuals in coping with adversities, focusing on both inherent and external characteristics that facilitate endurance and recovery from challenges. This foundational phase, particularly within child developmental psychopathology and adolescent studies, viewed resilience as an amalgamation of protective factors such as psychological hardiness, coping strategies, self-efficacy, optimism, adaptability, and humour (Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1979, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1982; Hunter & Chandler, 1999).

The discourse then expanded to survivors of catastrophic events, with research on individuals who persevered through the Holocaust (Baron et al., 1996) adding to the narrative that resilience is underpinned by psychological endurance, biological factors like cognitive ability and social support. However, the notion of resilience was not constrained to these attributes

alone, as the literature consistently revisited the gamut of characteristics previously delineated. While empirical studies have substantiated the correlation between constructs such as hope, coping skills, self-efficacy, and resilience (Gillespie et al., 2007), the quest for a universal set of resilience traits applicable to all individuals remained elusive.

This initial foray into resilience paved the way for a pivotal shift in research focus. Moving beyond merely cataloguing resilient traits, the 'second wave' of inquiry began to explore the genesis of these attributes, examining the mechanisms through which such qualities are developed and nurtured (Earvolino-Ramirez, 2007; Richardson, 2002). This transition marked a significant evolution in the field, directing scholarly efforts towards understanding the processes that foster resilience, thereby enriching the conceptual understanding of this complex construct.

The 'second wave' of resilience research posits resilience as a dynamic and iterative process characterised by the cyclic pattern of disruption (adversity) and positive reintegration (adaptation). This perspective advanced the understanding of resilience beyond static traits, viewing it instead as a fluid process whereby individuals harness resources to navigate and surmount challenges (Gillespie et al., 2007; Rutter, 1999). It suggests resilience can be cultivated, implying potential for education and training in resilience-building techniques (Gillespie et al., 2007; Hamilton et al., 2006).

Empirical research supports this dynamic model, demonstrating that targeted educational interventions can yield quantifiable enhancements in resilience-related competencies such as self-efficacy and adaptability (Jackson et al., 2007; Waite & Richardson, 2004). Cognitive transformation techniques and personal growth practices have been shown to increase these

attributes, contributing to an individual's overall resilience (Bandura, 1994; Tebes et al., 2004). Nonetheless, this process-oriented conceptualisation does not inherently account for the intrinsic motivation or the underlying drivers that propel individuals to actively engage in resilience-building activities (Waite & Richardson, 2004). This gap in understanding calls for further exploration into the psychosocial catalysts that initiate and sustain the active pursuit of resilience.

The 'third wave' of resilience research reframes the concept as a core element of human nature, a proactive force essential for motivation and personal development. According to this perspective, resilience emerges from a combination of inherent strength and external support, encompassing more than just recovery from difficulties, it is a source of ongoing personal growth and well-being (Richardson, 2002; Waite & Richardson, 2004). Butler (1997) sees resilience as a synergy of one's innate qualities and the surrounding support system, suggesting that its development is a relational process dependent on a nurturing environment as well as individual traits.

Werner and Smith (1982) initially defined resilience by personal traits conducive to overcoming adversity, but later viewed it as a natural, self-regulating mechanism fundamental to human nature. Complementing this, Masten (2001) describes resilience as 'ordinary magic,' an inherent and accessible part of human development that manifests in the ability of individuals, families, and communities to adapt and persevere through challenges. This metaphor highlights the idea that resilience is an extraordinary part of the normal human experience, woven into the fabric of everyday life.

These concepts converge on resilience as a fundamental human resource that enables positive responses to adversity, strengthened by outside support. Richardson's resilience metatheory (2002) integrates Eastern and Western thought, seeing resilience as a dynamic, spiritual 'chi' within everyone, driving the journey from survival to self-actualisation.

This metatheory shifts the view of resilience from a mere trait to an inner spirit accessible to all, envisioning personal resilience development as an inner awakening to one's latent strength, a process deeply embedded in the human spirit (Richardson, 2002; Waite & Richardson, 2004). The accompanying diagram traces the evolution of resilience from a trait-based concept to a complex interplay between natural capacities and external contributions.

Table 2. CONCEPTUALISATION OF RESILIENCE LITERATURE				
Wave of Resilience	**Conceptualisation of Resilience**	**Studies**	**Characteristics**	**Implications**
First Wave	Resilience is identified as a set of characteristics (e.g, hardiness, coping, self-efficacy, optimism) that help individuals cope with and recover from adversity.	Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1979, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1982; Wagnild & Young, 1993; Baron et al., 1996	Resilience encompasses both psychological protective factors and biological factors like social support, aiding adaptation to adversity.	Identification of protective factors
Second Wave	Resilience is recognised as a dynamic process involving disruption (adversity) and positive reintegration (adaptation), which individuals can learn or be taught.	Bandura, 1994; Gillespie et al., 2007; Hamilton et al., 2006; Jacelon, 1997; Jackson et al., 2007; Luther & Cicchetti, 2000; Rutter, 1999; Tebes et al., 2004	Cognitive transformative processes result in increased resilience. Education and purpose-specific processes are key to fostering this adaptability.	Focus on learning and adaptation mechanisms
Third Wave	Resilience is conceptualised as an innate energy or life force, a self-righting mechanism within individuals that drives from survival to self-actualisation.	Butler, 1997; Masten, 2001; Waite & Richardson, 2004; Werner & Smith, 1982	Resilience is an internal resource, spirit, or 'chi' that enables positive stress responses. The resilience metatheory integrates interdisciplinary insights, suggesting resilience is universally accessible and drives personal growth and transformation.	Emphasis on intrinsic motivation and self-actualisation

Table 2 - Conceptualisation of resilience literature

Resilience, viewed as an innate strength, enables individuals to effectively manage and grow from stressors, fostering a state of equilibrium and lessening future stress vulnerability (Connor, 2006; Lightsey, 2006; Jackson et al., 2007). This process allows for a reinterpretation of stressful experiences, assigning them new, constructive meanings (Tebes et al., 2004).

The 'third wave' of resilience research, integrating the ecological resilience model by Ungar (2013), emphasises the interplay between personal adaptability and environmental support. It is this wave's comprehensive view (considering resilience a result of both individual traits and community factors) that is pertinent to the urban refugees in New Delhi, reflecting Kirmayer et al.'s (2009) findings.

This wave's holistic perspective, recognising resilience as a product of community support and societal infrastructure, is particularly relevant to urban refugees. It implies that personal resilience is amplified by community resources, which is paramount for refugees in New Delhi facing challenges. Richardson's (2002) focus on community's role in nurturing resilience reinforces the idea that the social support network is integral to resilience, guiding both this research and potential policy interventions for refugee support.

The evolution of resilience as a concept has been informed by various fields, emphasising the collective capacity to overcome challenges (Adger, 2000; Brown & Westaway, 2011; Maclean et al., 2017). The shift from individual to community resilience underscores the role of social networks in maintaining well-being amidst adversity, integrating personal resilience with community support (Pooley et al., 2012; Buikstra et al., 2010; Khan et al., 2018).

Ungar (2006) challenges the Western-centric view of resilience, which may not fully capture the essence of resilience in varied cultural contexts. This critique highlights the need for research that encompasses a broader range of cultural understandings and expressions of resilience, particularly within non-Western and marginalised communities (Ungar, 2004, 2005, 2006; Boyden & Mann, 2005).

The resilience narrative has shifted from being a predominantly Western, individualistic concept to one that encompasses community and cultural dynamics (Ungar, 2004, 2005, 2006). Earlier notions of resilience have been expanded upon to include collective and culturally varied forms of resilience. This holistic view recognises the importance of social and cultural influences in shaping resilience, moving beyond an isolated understanding to one that sees it as interwoven with environmental and communal factors (Pooley et al., 2012; Buikstra et al., 2010; Khan et al., 2018).

Current research calls for an inclusive framework that explores resilience across cultures and societies. It aims to highlight the diverse strategies of resilience among non-Western and marginalised groups, thereby offering a richer, more globally representative understanding of the concept. This expanded view informs not only academic debates but also the creation of culturally attuned support mechanisms and policies, crucial in addressing global challenges of displacement and adversity.

2.3.2. *Resilience and Refugees*

Psychological resilience refers to one's ability to recover from adversity while preserving mental well-being. Ungar (2008, 2012) views this as both an individual's adaptability and the

community's support role. Masten (2018) and Luthar et al (2000) echo this adaptability, highlighting the potential for growth amidst challenges.

Social capital's role, defined as the benefits of social networks (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009), is critical to resilience, with community support bolstering individual resilience (Bottrell, 2009; Kirmayer et al., 2011). Furthermore, adversity activated development suggests that challenges can enhance personal development and future resilience (Papadopoulos, 2021; Hoppe, 2009). Illustrating resilience's dynamic nature. As eloquently put by Ungar (2008);

> *"In the context of exposure to significant adversity, whether psychological, environmental, or both, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to health-sustaining resources, including opportunities to experience feelings of well-being, and a condition of the individual's family, community, and culture to provide these health resources and experiences in culturally meaningful ways" (Ungar, 2008, p. 225).*

Cultural values are pivotal in shaping resilience, guiding the perception and management of adversity (Panter-Brick, 2012). Theron & Liebenberg (2015) discuss how cultural norms dictate coping mechanisms, while Linz (2020) notes global diversity in adversity responses.

Western resilience theories often emphasise personal coping (Ungar et al., 2007), contrasting with Japan's community-centric resilience and the US's self-reliance (Kaye-Kauderer, 2019). Palestinian resilience intertwines with 'samud', perseverance and land attachment (Nguyen-Gillham, 2008). These variations demonstrate the necessity for a resilience framework

inclusive of cultural variances, considering community social capital's role in individual resilience (Kirmayer et al., 2011).

Refugees face a range of challenges that can have a significant impact on their mental health and well-being. These challenges include forced displacement, trauma, and discrimination, among others (UNHCR, 2018a). Despite these challenges, many refugees are able to demonstrate individual resilience, the ability to adapt and cope in the face of adversity. Individual resilience is an important concept, particularly for refugees, as it has been shown to be associated with better mental health outcomes and improved social functioning (Fazel et al., 2012; Miller & Rasmussen, 2017).

Miller and Rasmussen (2017) view resilience as an individual's capacity to recover from challenges while maintaining well-being, a trait particularly relevant for refugees facing ongoing stress and trauma. Despite significant mental health challenges, many refugees demonstrate a profound ability to cope and adapt.

Research highlights the variability in resilience among refugees, shaped by different coping strategies and factors (Dryden-Peterson 2006; Jacobsen, 2005; Grabska, 2006). Social support, as shown in studies by Cruwys et al (2016) and Schweitzer et al (2011), is vital for resilience, offering a sense of community and connection in new environments. Slewa-Younan et al (2017) found social support crucial for Iraqi and Afghan refugees in Australia, mitigating the effects of trauma and depression.

Family cohesion is key to resilience among refugees, offering emotional support, practical help, and security (Miller & Rasmussen, 2017). Cultural identity and community involvement

also bolster resilience by providing continuity and facilitating engagement with new environments (Cruwys et al., 2016; Schweitzer et al., 2011). However, not all refugees can harness this resilience due to pre- and post-migration expereiences, discrimination (Porter & Haslam, 2005; Silove et al., 2017), and systemic barriers that restrict access to resources (Tachtler, et al., 2018).

Individual resilience is deeply interconnected with community resilience, and this connection is crucial in contexts of displacement. Papadopoulos (2008) articulates that resilience is not solely an individual trait but also a property of communities. This dual nature of resilience means that an individual's capacity to deal with adversity contributes to and is supported by the community's overall resilience. In this interdependent relationship, individuals draw strength from and, in turn, reinforce the resilience of their community.

Social capital plays a pivotal role in this dynamic, embodying the trust, support, and cohesion found within social networks which bolster both individual and collective resilience (Putnam, 2000; Ungar, 2011; Papadopoulos, 2008). This concept becomes particularly salient in the refugee context, where the exchange of resources and support within a community can be life-sustaining. Papadopoulos (2007) further expands on the notion of resilience with his concept of adversity activated development, proposing that adversity can serve as a catalyst for personal growth and evolution. This perspective reframes challenges as opportunities for strengthening self-efficacy and developing new skills, thereby enabling refugees and asylum seekers to transform their experiences into positive personal development (Bonanno, 2004).

Social networks and community support are critical in enhancing individual resilience among refugees and asylum seekers in the face of adversity. For instance, studies have shown that

strong social support networks within the community contribute to positive mental health outcomes and adaptive coping strategies among refugees (Papadopoulos, 2008; Betancourt, Abdi, Ito, Lilienthal, & Agalab, 2017). Community-based organisations and culturally sensitive services also play a vital role in fostering individual resilience by providing practical assistance, advocacy, and a sense of belonging.

The recognition of community, culture, and society as protective factors is essential in understanding and promoting individual resilience within the refugee experience. As Papadopoulos (2008) emphasises, "Understanding the influence of culture and society on resilience has practical implications for service provision and interventions" (p. 108). By acknowledging and valuing the unique strengths and resources within the refugee community, interventions and policies can be tailored to support individual resilience and foster community resilience.

While individual and community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development are valuable concepts in understanding the resilience of refugees and asylum seekers, it is important to critically analyse these variables within the specific context of India.

Firstly, individual resilience must be examined through a community and cultural lens to account for the unique experiences, beliefs, and values of refugees and asylum seekers in India. Community and cultural factors shape individuals' perception of adversity, their coping strategies, and the availability of social support. Therefore, it is essential to consider the cultural context when assessing and promoting individual resilience among refugees.

Secondly, the concept of social capital should be examined with a nuanced understanding of power dynamics and social inequalities. While social networks and community support are crucial resources, it is important to recognise that access to social capital may be influenced by factors such as gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Addressing social inequalities and promoting inclusive social networks are essential for equitable distribution of social capital and fostering resilience among all members of the refugee community.

Thirdly, while social capital and community support are considered essential for fostering individual resilience among refugees and asylum seekers, it is important to critically examine the limitations and potential challenges associated with relying solely on these factors. This can result in certain individuals or groups having limited access to supportive networks and resources, undermining their ability to develop and maintain resilience.

Despite the variations in the definition of resilience, research has consistently shown that it is critical for promoting mental health and well-being, especially in the context of forced displacement and other adverse experiences. Effective interventions should take a holistic approach that addresses individual, familial, and community-level factors, and should focus on promoting resilience as a dynamic process that involves ongoing adaptation and learning (Ungar, 2012).

2.3.3. Community Resilience

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has identified strengthening community resilience as an important strategy to improve refugees' individual and collective well-being (UNHCR, n.d, 2018b; see also International Alert, 2015). As the number of refugees increases globally there has been up and coming research aiming at increasing individual and community

resilience. An example would be Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network have focused on increasing women's, children's, and families' resilience (NCTSN, 2007; WRC, 2016).

Wider community ideology can affect refugees in many ways. Some resilient functions in family or community may also affect individual refugees beyond their own conscious awareness of their impact (Papadopoulos, 2013). Community and cultural contexts are not theoretical concepts but matter a great deal. They are vital in forming meaning systems of each individual. The collective meaning is inclined to influence the individuals value system more than they are aware of (Papadopoulos, 2012)

One of the challenges in community resilience is the conceptual opacity of 'community' itself. A community could be delineated regarding a common identity or shared culture (Kirmayer et al., 2013; Ungar, 2011), physical and geographical areas (Bonanno et al., 2015; Kirmayer et al., 2013). Communities are vibrant and shifting social worlds that include those formed on the basis of mutual interests and geography (Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2008). Communities are dynamic and hence require researchers to be careful in what measure, assessments and interventions they choose to enhance their health and wellbeing (Zautra, Hall, & Murray, 2011). Hence, community can be defined as a dynamic group with shared identity and culture formed on the basis of common grounds such as mutual interests, proximity and culture.

The concept of community resilience can be understood as ''(1) the actions taken by the community to absorb the shock of a crisis; and (2) the resources available to help a community act as a 'collective unit''' (Nuwayhid et. all, 2011, p. 508). This idea has many variations, yet central to its utility in the health and social sciences is the focus on a community's strengths

rather than weaknesses. Researchers have raised the question of ''why, despite significant exposure to war, individuals and families achieve emotional adjustment and social functioning'' (Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010, p. 71). Identifying how and why certain individuals and communities achieve and adjust amidst displacement and war helps to better contextualise social dynamics within groups.

Norris et al (2008) prevalent model presents community resilience as a set of network adaptive capacities (economic development, social capital, cultural competence, and information and communication) which function together to reinforce personal abilities to handle adversity and prepare for short-term disaster readiness. Kirmayer et al (2009) model differs as it is particularly focused on refugee populations under long-term occupation (Aboriginal Canadians), which rely on different components and resources to maintain resilient communities and lifestyles over long periods of time. Community resilience is a powerful concept because it draws attention to the sociocultural components that are beneficial and increase community members' capacity to work and live together under adverse situations (Darychuka & Jackson, 2015).

Research related to refugees' resilience tends to conceptualise resilience as protective factors (Carlson, Cacciatore, & Klimek, 2012). Communities that display higher levels of resilience are better able to endure shocks (Norris et al., 2008) and to gather resources that encourage well-being (Kimhi & Shamai, 2004). Kimhi and Shamai (2004) identified three directions commuted resilient takes in the literature:

1) *Resistance:* Resistance relates to a community's efforts to withstand a disaster and its consequences. It can be understood in terms of the degree of disruption that can be

accommodated without the community undergoing long-term change (E.g. Forced displacement). A resilient community can withstand considerable disruption before undergoing any lasting change.

2) *Recovery:* Recovery relates to a community's ability to 'pull through' the disaster (Adger, 2000; Kimhi & Shamai, 2004) A resilient community returns to its pre- disaster state more quickly than a community that is less resilient.

3) *Creativity:* A community may be transformed by adversity, developing new modes of functioning that take it along a new path. A resilient community possesses the ability to adjust to unfamiliar situations and establish new institutions and practices that uphold its core principles (Kimhi & Shamai, 2004; Kirmayer et. al, 2009). The ability of a social system to maintain a constant process of creating and recreating, so that the community not only responds to adversity, but in doing so, reaches a higher level of functioning (Kulig, 1996; Kulig & Hanson, 1996).

Another important aspect would be to consider that the term community is conceptually impervious. Kirmayer (2009), defined community as "groups of people linked by a common identity, geography, commitment, interest, or concern" (p.65). Many other scholars define community in many other ways such as 'religious communities' (Lyytinen & Kullenberg, 2013). While conducting the research the author would also explore the meaning of community for the participants themselves to get an understanding of what a community means to them.

The concept of community resilience, well-explored by Paton & Johnston (2001) and FEMA (2011b), extends beyond the mere ability of a community to recover from disasters. It also

encompasses the capacity of communities and societies to adapt to a myriad of changes, be they environmental, social, economic, or political (Adger, 2000; Maclean, Cuthill, & Ross, 2014). This adaptability is increasingly mirrored in the policy and practice frameworks that aim to bolster community robustness and sustainability (Wilson, 2014; Varheim, 2017).

Berkes and Ross (2013) have offered a comprehensive framework for understanding community resilience, which they see as having roots in both ecology and social ecology, the latter drawing from the field of developmental psychology. This dual perspective incorporates insights from a spectrum of social science disciplines, promoting a multidisciplinary synthesis of resilience that has practical implications for disaster preparedness and community development (Varheim, 2017).

Further expanding on this, Norris et al (2008) and Abeling et al (2019) conceptualise community resilience not as a static outcome but as an ongoing adaptive process. This process-oriented view recognises that the strength of a community lies in its ability to engage in a set of adaptive capacities that shape positive functioning post-disturbance. Thus, resilience is not just about bouncing back but also about the ability to adapt and transform in response to changing circumstances.

Wilson (2014) identifies social, economic, and environmental capital as integral 'key resilience drivers' for community resilience. He suggests that the interplay and balance among these capitals, rather than the individual elements, are crucial for resilience. Well-developed communities across all 3 capitals demonstrate robust resilience. Those with only 2 developed capitals show moderate resilience, and communities lacking in one or all capitals exhibit weak resilience and high vulnerability (Adger, 2000). Wilson warns against prioritising economic

growth at the expense of social and environmental well-being, as it can lead to broader community vulnerability despite financial gains for some. This interconnectedness means that a disruption in one capital can trigger a 'ripple effect', undermining resilience across all areas (Wilson, 2013).

Figure 1:   **ECONOMIC, SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**
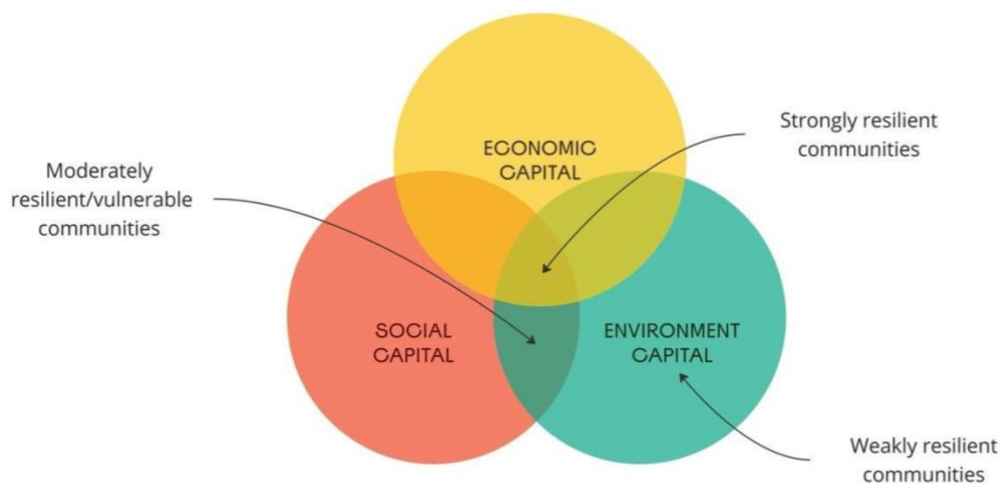
Source: Wilson 2012, 24 after Folke 2006

Figure 1 - Economic, Social & Environmental Capital and community resilience

Norris et al (2008) contend that adaptability should be prioritised over stability in community resilience, prompting a reevaluation of community development strategies towards creating environments that not only withstand adversities but also derive growth from them. This perspective suggests communities should be dynamic and progressive, capable of positive transformation amidst continuous change.

The practical implementation of these theories highlights that conceptualizing community resilience transcends academic discourse, urging tangible, integrative approaches in community planning and development. As suggested by Norris et al. (2008) community resilience is a process that integrate 4 elements; adaptive development, social capital,

information and communication, and community competence, all aligned towards the broader aim of community adaptation. This framework is informed by diverse literature, including developmental psychology, mental health, disaster management, and other research areas, as synthesised by Varheim (2017), providing a comprehensive model for understanding and fostering resilient communities.

Ntontis et al., (2018) also investigated how community resilience was presented in 28 UK guidance documents published between 2006 and 2016, presentation that some documents measured community resilience to be the lack of illness, the opposite of susceptibility, a static and unchanging element, or, in a circular way, both a cause and an outcome. Other documents circumvented generalisations and recognised specific cognitive, behavioural, psychological, and relational elements. Ntontis et al., came to the conclusion that putting the ideas into policy and practice could be more successful if they were based on a process-based approach that clearly targets specific elements that can help communities cope and heal. Other researchers have made similar points, and they agree that the focus should be on how to build community resilience in real life instead of arguing about what the term means (Fazey et al., 2018).

There are vast reviews of what resilience is in resilience literature, their conclusions usually tend to be negotiated by the different definitions of resilience that are used. It also depends on the factors studied and the range of psychological issues that resilience influences (Cicchetti, 2013; Masten, 2014). Successful adaptation to abnormally high adversity has been attributed to a variety of biological, psychological, relational, and socio-cultural factors, some of which respond better to clinical interventions (Hobfoll, 2011; Cicchetti, 2013).

Ungar (2015) argued that given the multiple dimensions of resilience and the processes associated with them, the likelihood of individuals resisting accumulating stressors is not just a measure of their individual invulnerability. Resilience is instead, predicted by both their individual capacities as well as their social and physical ecologies to facilitate their coping in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2011; Ungar 2015).

Almedom (2013) also states that resilience development depends on self-organization and self-governance, which cannot be taught (Furedi, 2008) but can be improved and helped by policy and practice interventions. Seeing resilience as a process avoids reifying the concept and using it as a static element, allowing for a holistic and systemic approach (Berry et al., 2018) by investigating a variety of psychosocial processes that can support effective functioning and 'bounce back' after a disaster.

One can also explore that the relationship between individual resilience and community resilience is a reciprocal one (Ungar, 2011). If a large number of people in a community are able to manifest resilience by accessing the resources around them, it can have a positive impact of the overall performance of the group, similarly, if the overall community manifests resilience by accessing resources available to them, it may promote resilient outcomes in individual members (Kirmayer et. al, 2009; Ungar 2011). This reciprocal relationship in important specifically in the context of refugees and asylum seekers. As seen in the literature, it is not unusual for research on individual and community resilience to focus on similar constructs.

That being said, the participation of individuals and organisations that reflect the composition of a community contribute to its resilience (Pefferbaum, Pfefferbaum & Horn, 2015).

Engagement plans should recognise and enrol diverse minority populations as well as those in the majority. Marginalised individuals and groups may have alternative acuities of the appropriate characteristics and responsibilities that support a community's structure and operations, may have different needs and assets, and may bring new insight and drive to community development (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Resilience measures should focus on strengthening constituent relationships and encouraging community groups and members to act in the community's best interest.

Kirmayer and colleagues (2013) suggest that *"resilience is a "clustered" phenomenon that is not randomly distributed among individuals in a society or community but occurs in groups of people located in a web of meaningful relationships"* (p. 72). It is also important to be aware of the fact that much of the literature provides an overly optimistic view and keep in mind that resilience depends on the nature of the resources that are available and relevant to the community's resilience. This could depend on varying factors such as scale and structure of the community, other social and cultural factors and the relationships with other institutions.

Omata (2012) discusses the added burden on refugees in Ghana's Buduburam community. These newcomers, who already struggled to get resources, were stressed by communal resource sharing demands. This study questioned whether community-based support networks alone can measure community resilience. Despite the importance of social network for refugees, migrants' in post-migration urban settings are spread thin (Madhavan and Landau, 2011, p. 480). This represents a valid concern, recognising that community resilience cannot and should not be seen as an alternative to more important forms of support and recognition at the national legal and welfare level.

A moderately contemporary critique of resilience research is the scarcity of attention paid to the interaction between culture and resilience (Panter-Brick, 2015). Culture can be defined as "a system of shared meanings, institutions and practices" (Kirmayer & Ban, 2013, p. 98). Advocates of culturally cognisant models of resilience discuss that culture is pertinent to resilience on individual, family and community levels (Kirmayer et al., 2009). Culture apprises the objectives of resilience; in addition, values, beliefs and practices establish the variety of prospects available to communities to access determinants of resilience, such as concrete resources and social supports (Kirmayer et al., 2009; Panter-Brick, 2015; Ungar, 2015).

Patel et al (2017) steered a systematic literature review of 80 papers that contained definitions of community resilience. They recognised the central elements that emerge across the definitions, which contain the local knowledge of communities, community networks and relationships, effective communication, pre- and post-disaster health, leadership, the available resources, economic investment, preparedness, and mental outlook in the face of adversity.

Patel et al (2017) thoroughly examined 80 studies on community resilience definitions and found the following elements present across all the studies; *indigenous knowledge of communities, community networks and connections, efficient communication, health before and after disasters, leadership, accessible resources, economic investment, readiness, and mental resilience in difficult situations*.

The authors conclude by saying that it might be suitable *'to abandon the search for a single, precise definition of community resilience'* (p. 10), and, in its place, indicate that it might be best for academics, practitioners, and policymakers, *'to be explicit as to the particular elements of resilience they are focusing on in their research or interventions'* (p. 11), since*, 'all-encompassing definitions may be too complex to apply at the local level'* (p. 10).

As seen above, there is ample literature to show that a dominant theme in community resilience is recovery from adverse events (Cox, 2021). Recovery from the said adversity is only one aspect of resilience. Kimhi and Shamai (2004) identified three dimensions which are resistance, recovery and creativity. Brown (2016) identified that there are three different change processes that take place, regaining stability after a shock; adapting to variability and uncertainty; and positive transformation. Which is why resilience is a larger umbrella concept of progress and development in a setting. Norris et al (2008) suggests that community resilience comprises series of adaptive capacities (economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence). These include access and availability of resources, social support, a sense of community, attachment to a certain place, participation of the people and collective action.

It's safe to say that while community resilience has its origins in western discourse, with an initial focus on resistance relating to a community's efforts to withstand a disaster and its consequences (Kirmayer et al., 2011). As such, it often lacks sensitivity to community and cultural factors that contextualise how resilience is defined by different populations and how it is manifested in everyday practices (Ungar, 2004, 2010).

For the purpose of this research, community resilience can be defined as the community's ability to regain stability after adverse situations, adapt with the changing environment, and transformational change depending on their capacity of coping with the stress. Hereby, this dissertation aims to provide an ethnographically embedded insight into the intricacies of refugee communities in India and the social capital available to them. It will contribute to

understandings of how refugees themselves utilise the social capital available to them and to access resilience-promoting resources.

2.3.4. *Measuring Community Resilience*

It is easy to see why and how the idea of resilience is useful. Populations face a complex and variety of risks; improving their ability to withstand and endure these 'shocks' requires a similarly complex and multidisciplinary approach (Patel et al., 2020). Allocating resources towards pre-event resilience building is a more efficient approach compared to prioritising emergency response, given the cost and consequences of disasters could be significantly reduced.

Having a clear definition of community resilience is foundational to measuring community resilience; as Cutter (2016) reminds us, when discussing resilience, it is important to ask, 'resilience to what and resilience for whom?'. Important to recognise that there are inequalities within communities just like there are between communities. This raises issues of measurement. Resilience does not have a universally agreed-upon definition. The notion of resilience has its roots in several areas and disciplines, leading to varying approaches and conceptualizations by different researchers, organisations, and agencies (Alexander, 2013). As indicated by the numerous review articles of resilience, there are many varied interpretations of resilience and of community resilience.

Nevertheless, some similarities may be identified. Patel et al (2017) conducted a thorough examination of the existing literature on community resilience and identified three main categories into which definitions may be generally classified; (1) *The ongoing ability of a community affected by disaster to change and adapt.* This concept is exemplified in the works

of Lemyre et al (2005), Norris et al (2008), and Castleden et al (2011) (2) *Resilience as an absence of adverse effects, or the ability of a community to maintain stable functioning after a disaster* (exemplified by Bonanno (2004) and Gibson (2010)); and (3) *Resilience as a broad collection of recovery and response-related abilities within a community,* exemplified by the UK Cabinet Office report on community resilience (2010) and Coles and Buckle (2004). These dimensions of resilience reflect various social processes, which shape adversity, exposure to it, capacity and vulnerability. As such, tackling these risks also requires engage the social processes creating them (Wisner et al., 2004).

Like resilience, community is also a topic which has various definitions and dimensions. In the context of a disaster, for example, community most often refers to a geographic location and group of people, based on proximity (Cutter, 2019). While a geographical location is an important dimension of community it does not capture the broader non-geographical dimensions of community, from ethnicities dispersed across locations or epistemic communities that centre on specific religious, or socioeconomic strata that share similar risks and resilience capacities (Clark-Ginsberg et al., 2020). Furthermore, it conceals specific variations that can exist within communities, such as conflicts, inequalities, or hierarchies that create unequal levels of resilience among community members. This challenges the very concept of 'community' itself (Titz et. al. 2018).

The process of measuring community resilience requires translating the concepts of community and community resilience into quantifiable measures that address several measurement requirements, namely; reliability, utility, validity, cost effectiveness, and ease of use (Cutter, 2016; Cutter, 2019). Validity is if a measure measures what it claims. Reliability is if repeated measurements yield similar findings. Utility is whether outcomes can be used for aims. Cost

effectiveness and usability show if outcomes are worth time and money. Validity, dependability, usefulness, cost effectiveness, and simplicity of use should be maximised, but each has trade-offs. For instance, a highly valid measure or set of measures often requires high levels of data collection and analysis, reducing cost effectiveness and ease of use.

Pfefferbaum, Pfefferbaum and Horn (2015), conducted a literature search of community resilience interventions. They reviewed 6 interventions across different organisations and elaborated on the parameters. The assessment-based, action-oriented interventions reviewed provide a variety of tools, templates, guidelines, worksheets, examples, and/or information sources for conducting community assessments. The mention foundational characteristics which are:

1) *Definition and Attributes of Community Resilience:* Community resilience interventions rely on implicit, if not explicit, meanings of community resilience, with some interventions identifying attributes of resilient communities. Interventions identify attributes or characteristics of resilient communities. The CCCR CR Manual (Colussi, 2000) addresses 4 interrelated dimensions of resilience (core community components): people, organisations, resources, and community process which consists of approaches and structures for organising and using resources.

2) *Hazards:* Interventions differ with respect to the hazards addressed, here it is assumed that hazard can be interchanged with 'context'. Hence, interventions and assessments should be based on the context of the community such as, disaster related, postmigration resettlement, promoting economic development etc.

3) *Type of Community:* As mentioned in the above literature as well, the types of community can change the assessment or intervention. It can be based on ethnic groups to geographical based on size.

4) *Asset Focused:* Asset-based community development enhances community resilience by recognising, connecting, and using the abilities, resources, and competencies of individuals and their localities. Asset-based approaches may provide a valuable alternative to conventional needs-driven approaches. The latter has faced criticism for promoting dependence on externally imported services and resources rather than generating them locally, and for cultivating a mindset among community members that regards them as consumers rather than producers (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

5) *Ethics:* Assessments and intervention should be ethical in design and grounded on the basis of autonomy of the community and its individuals. Specially, when implementing interventions.

There is currently no standard of practice for measuring community resilience that addresses the necessary measurement requirements (validity, reliability, sensitivity, utility, and cost effectiveness and ease of use). Measurement tools can be qualitative or quantitative, participatory or expert led, inductive or deductive, top-down or bottom-up, and use primary or secondary data.

Every approach has its benefits and limitations. For example, qualitative measurements are excellent at capturing people's complex resilience experiences, actions, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings however they frequently use lower sample numbers and may struggle to make broad

case comparisons. In contrast, quantitative metrics may be acquired from existing databases and allow extensive case comparisons, however they may not capture the complexity of individual experiences. Participatory techniques may engage communities and motivate action by delivering locally meaningful measurements however, these techniques may not meet the requirements and expectations of all stakeholders, and they may be executed differently among communities (Patel et al., 2017; Clark-Ginsberg, 2017).

In theory, communities that have extensive social networks and social support systems should exhibit a high degree of community resilience. However, drawing this conclusion necessitates a significant assumption, as there has been limited empirical research investigating the correlation between the level of social support at an individual level and the resilience of the community. In an innovative paper on "the strength of weak ties," Granovetter (1973) argued that extensive externally focused weak ties are more important in terms of finding livelihood, monetary gains and societal status than deep internally focused strong ties. This further enhances the work of Bourdieu (1986) who postulated the significance of individual-level networks as factors of economic success and well-being (Kirmayer et al., 2009).

The consequence is that interventions may need to consider and address a full range of possible manifestations of community resilience. So that, for example, intra-community social cohesion is through supporting in increasing in-group social support and social networks, is complemented by interventions that improve linkages for people outside the community, as this allows for communal empowerment and influence on wider society (Kirmayer et al., 2009).

2.4. Literature Review of Social Capital

2.4.1. Social Capital

Shifting the debate from collective definitions of resilience as labelling good outcomes towards a more process-based perspective requires a closer look into its constituent elements. Research regarding social capital occupies noticeable positions in the literature regarding migration and urbanisation and is gaining popularity in political discourse (Madhavan & Landau, 2011). Social capital emerges as an important variable in most theories related to community resilience. Putnam (1993) defines social capital as 'features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action' (1993, p. 167).

Social capital is a broad term that is used to define aspects of social networks. Broadly it refers to the extent to which individuals can access the resources within a community (Cox & Perry, 2011). Social capital is the most used variable to predict community resilience (Bonanno et al., 2015). Bourdieu's (1986, p 51) conception of social capital remains the groundwork for many recent researchers. For Bourdieu:

> *"Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, or in other words, to membership in a group, which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital." (Bourdieu, 1986, p 51)*

Social capital can be called the glue that binds communities together and makes them into communities (Putnam, 2000; Putnam, 2007; Varheim 2017). In contrast to Bordieu (1986) or Coleman (1988), Putnam doesn't limit social capital as a resource for individuals, he describes it as a combined occurrence within a community.

The notion of social capital first came about with relations to urban and suburban communities and it then was extended to neighbourhoods, villages and other social organisations. Social capital can be described as the degree to which a community's resources (physical, symbolic, financial, human, or natural) are reinvested in social relations (Kirmayer et al., 2013). Numerous studies have suggested that communities with high levels of social capital have lower suicide rates, lower overall mortality and longer life expectancy (Berkman & Kawachi, 2000).

Social capital has various dimensions. Numerous researchers formulate three main forms of social capital; bonding, bridging and linking social capital (Mignone & O'Neil (2005a; Kawachi, 2006; Poortinga, 2012). These are summarised in the points below and subsequently explored in greater detail under this section.

1) ***Bonding:*** Bonding capital describes relationships among network members who share social identities and other similar attributes (Kawachi, 2006). In other words, the intra-community connections. For e.g, Ethinicity, post migration settle location, trust, loyalty and other similar attributes.

2) ***Bridging:*** Bridging capital refer to connections between individuals who are dissimilar with respect to social identity (Kawachi, 2006). It can also be known as inter-community connections. For e.g, connections between a refugee community and a surrounding or larger society.

3) ***Linking:*** Linking capital is termed as connections who interact across explicit power and authority gradients in society. In more general terms relationship between communities and government institutions and other official bodies. For e.g, the connections of the community with the existing government body or international institutions.

The closest analogy of social capital and community resilience is drawn on the basis of disaster resilience. Disaster scholars have used social capital to understand the trajectory of individuals (based on what resources are accessed through social networks) as well as communities (based on levels of trust, collective action, and other public goods). Social networks provide financial (e.g, loans and gifts for property repair) and nonfinancial resources (e.g, search and rescue, debris removal, child-care during recovery, emotional support, sheltering, and information). Isolated individuals with few social ties are less likely to be rescued, seek medical help, take preventative action such as evacuate, and receive assistance from others, such as shelter (Dynes, 2005, 2006)

Notably, conventional disaster management placed much emphasis on tangible resources. However, there is currently a demand to consider the social facets of community resilience, which include community networks, relationships, and particularly the interaction between communities and authorities (Aldunce, Beilin, Handmer, & Howden, 2014). In their seminal 2008 study, Norris and colleagues delineate four primary categories of interconnected resources that influence community resilience, namely economic development, social capital, information and communication, and community competence (see Norris et al., 2008 for an extensive discussion). As is explained, social capital is the most widely used concept in contemporary theory and practice for community resilience.

Various methodologies have been employed to examine the concept of social capital in the context of community resilience (Shreve & Fordham, 2019). Social capital refers to the "combined tangible and intangible assets that are associated with having a stable network of formal or informal interactions based on mutual familiarity and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.21). The term has also been used by other researchers to describe the ways that norms of reciprocity, trust, and social bonds that arise from dense social networks can benefit society (Helliwell & Putnam, 2004; Putnam, 1993, 1995). These benefits include enhancing communities' ability to deal with unexpected incidents (Aldrich, 2017; Aldrich & Meyer, 2014), decreasing opportunism and promoting social interaction and collective action (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000), enhancing happiness and wellbeing during times of crisis (Helliwell, Huang, & Wang, 2014), and fostering a stronger sense of community, place attachment, and active participation (Norris et al., 2008).

Disaster-affected communities are typically marked by a spirit of resilience and inventiveness, which has been linked to the strength of social capital ingrained in preexisting networks and interpersonal relationships (Dynes, 2006). Robust social capital has shown to be an important asset for affected communities' response, recuperation, and long-term planning. For instance, Dynes (2006) proposes that citizens' knowledge and resources from the community can be used to build skills that will be helpful in responding to catastrophes in the future, which can increase people's awareness of their responsibilities to the community. In a similar vein, higher levels of social capital, measured by perceptions of justice and community trust, have been linked to higher levels of preparedness for disasters (Reininger et al., 2013).

With regard to disaster response, Aldrich (2017) demonstrated how various forms of social capital aided in coordinated action and widespread mobilisation during the 2010–11 Christchurch earthquake sequence in New Zealand's aftershock. According to Aldrich's (2017) argument, pre-existing networks and trust can encourage people to take mitigation measures and improve mutual assistance and social support among neighbours when social and material resources are unavailable. Due to better resource distribution and residents' greater desire to assist those in need, communities with stronger prior networks can recover more quickly and effectively, however, lack of connections with more affluent groups outside the affected area can negatively affect the presence of resources (Elliott, Haney, & Sams-Abiodun, 2010).

Networks of communities of diverse socioeconomic status can provide the people more affected with information and resources in the aftermath (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). There are cases in which low-income communities but with high levels of connectedness resulted in impressively rapid recovery from flooding due to the enhanced allocation of resources and coordination (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009). Social capital can also help communities stay together. This is because people with strong ties to their communities and dense social networks are more likely to rebuild their homes and less likely to move (Aldrich, 2017). Social capital is positively related to better mental health after disasters (Wind, Fordham, & Komproe, 2011). Given its value, social capital has been incorporated in documents on community resilience, such as the Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience (Cabinet Office, 2011). Similarly, a report on the effects of climate change, including flooding, on wellbeing, states that the levels of social capital can help understand communities' response and are a key factor of resilience (Twigger-Ross et al., 2015). On the contrary, communities with lower levels of social capital are likely to be more severely affected (Lindley et al., 2011)

and more prone to trauma (NATO Joint Medical Committee, 2009). From the above it becomes apparent that the concept has diffused within the realms of public policy.

2.4.2. *Types of Social Capital*

<u>Bonding Social Capital</u>

The first and most common form of social network available to disaster-affected individuals is *bonding social capital* (Norris et al., 2002). Bonding social capital is a type of social capital that represents connections within a group or community characterised by a high degree of similarity in demographics, attitudes, and available information and resources. Bonding social capital bonds exist between "people like us", being "together" and usually having a strong close relationship (Claridge, 2018). Examples include family members, close friends, and neighbours. Bonding social capital is characterised as strong relationships (Marlowe, 2011) that develop due to the similarity between people's ethnic background and interests, typically include family and friends, material, and emotional support, it is more blinkered and protective. Bonding social capital refers to dense networks of relationships between most if not all members. Individuals belonging to the network are connected to each other because they know each other and exchange opinions frequently. Through community activities, community networks fragmented by wars and conflict can slowly build up again. The formation of refugee communities often counter exclusion of refugees in society, maintains their culture while expressing solidarity, and provides an organised front for participation in the wider society activities (Zetter et. al, 2006). Connecting with people of similar ethnic groups also contributes to integration by increasing health and well-being and providing employment opportunities (Lamba, 2003).

Higher levels of bonding social capital can translate into greater levels of trust and more widely shared norms among residents. Nakagawa and Shaw's (2004) study of the Gujarat and Kobe earthquakes uncovered that communities with high trust, norms, participation, and networks were able to more quickly recover from disaster. Even though the communities differed in cultural and economic characteristics, communities with higher social capital and community leadership showed the highest satisfaction with community rebuilding and quickest recovery.

Bonding social capital tends to have some negative outcomes due to its narrow and tight structures. This can raise conflict and exclusion. The Christian Afghan community in New Delhi provide an example of this, as it can become exclusive and provide services to only those in the community, thereby excluding Muslim Afghans. Although studies have found that bonding has little to no negative effect on economic development, growth and employment (Claridge, 2018)

Bridging Social Capital

Bridging social capital is a type of social capital, describes the connections that bring people together across divisions. Usually, what divides society are race, class, or religion. These are associations that "bridge" between them community, group, or organisation. It is based on the founding of a system of looser connections with other groups within civil society (Edwards 2010) and therefore relates to diversity (NCVO 2010).

Bridging social capital is developed through networking as refugees participate in activities in the broader community, it can also be possible through religious activities, festivities, employment or education and training courses (Harris & Young, 2010). Through dialogue

within and between communities, collective norms, values and governance processes can emerge (Dale, 2005), while Zetter et al (2006) notes that refugees attempt to rebuild relationships and support systems as a way of establishing a meaningful life in the host country whilst maintaining their identity. Ager & Strang (2008) see bridging social capital as being formed through friendly neighbourhood meets that add to refugees feeling secure. Similarly, religious institutions provide a space and voice for refugee communities (Live, 2008; Field, 2017) and provide essential emotional and social support. An example of bridging social capital here would be integration of Somali, Afghan, Rohingya refugees along with the local populations at the Mosque for Friday prayers.

Bridging social capital has been shown to provide similar benefits in disaster contexts as it does in daily life, i.e. opportunities and information to access novel resources that assist in long-term recovery (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010; Adler and Kwon, 2002). Connections to local NGOs, social organisations and institutions provide both support through institutional channels as well as informal ties to individuals who they might not have access to through bonding social capital e.g, friendships between women from different refugee groups through their children in school (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014). Since, bridging social capital spans across social boundaries it tends to increase tolerance and acceptances of different groups, values, and beliefs due to inter group contact (Paxton, 2002).

Bridging social capital allows separate groups to share and exchange information, ideas and innovation and builds consensus among the groups representing diverse interests. Overlapping networks may make accessible the resources and opportunities which exist in one network to a member of another (Stone and Hughes, 2002). The bridging form of social capital operated as a social emollient and has probability to work as social influence, to help one 'get ahead'

(Putnam, 2000); it is mostly inclusive and consists of thin trust in light and ever-changing networks (Widén-Wulff et al., 2008)

Linking Social Capital

Linking social capital is a type of social capital that outlines norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting across formal or institutionalised power or authority gradients in society (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004). These relationships are described as 'vertical' and the key feature is differences in social position or power. An example could be relationships between a community-based organisation and government or other funders (Claridge, 2018).

Linking social capital refers to the associations refugees and refugee groups have to state structures and international institutions, and therefore relates to power and authority (Pittaway et al., 2009; NCVO, 2010). This can be through accessing state services or through advocacy activities aimed at influencing government policy. Through a series of relationships at this level, refugees can gain access to power, resources, and greater opportunities to participate meaningfully in civil society. Linking social capital may be viewed as an extension of bridging social capital.

Linking social capital involves social interactions with those in authority that can be used to access resources or power (Stone and Hughes, 2002). Linking social capital has many indirect community benefits such as connecting government officials with the people who provide knowledge and skills to perform their jobs (Jordan, 2015). An example of this could be when Chin refugees were asked to voluntarily repatriate, they made use of their linking social capital

with UNCHR and started a dialogue with them. This eventually led to the cessation verdict being lifted. It is important for refugees to have that association with those in positions of power and authority.

Linking social capital develops over time, involving both shared values regarding service provision and long-term, trusting relationships. Creating new trusting ties across power relationships requires time and, often, brokers (Schneider, 2009). In Delhi, the implementing partners, NGOs can become brokers of linking social capital. Internationally speaking, often funders recognise the importance of the established linking social capital and continue to fund NGOs that have good relationships with the wider local community (Claridge, 2018).

Needless to say, it is important to have a suitable balance of all types of social capital. Onyx et al (2007) recognised that communities with high levels of all forms of social capital are more able to mobilise in the face of adversity and less likely to have negative outcomes. Let us also not forget the highly contextual nature of social capital.

Whitley and Mckenzie (2005) offer a criticism saying that the research between social capital and mental health is still in its nascent stages. They suggest that social capital may not always be beneficial for mental health, and provide the example of a cohesive community may be dependent on homogeneity and compliance to social customs. While a valid observation, it is also important to identify the many dimensions of social capital and it is also equally important to consider the benefits and drawbacks of the social capital for the different individuals and sections of the community. Therefore, it is important to understand that while social capital may be positive for some members it could also be harsh for others.

The refugee predicament and experience creates a unique context for social capital, because of the specific effect of the migration journey on social support, networks and values as trust and social reciprocity. Conflict and displacement disrupt social networks and disperse families and communities, while trauma can disintegrate existing social bonds, cohesive elements, and values, may lead to high levels of doubt and distrust of outsiders or authorities (Grabska, 2006; Hinchey, 2010; McMichael and Manderson, 2004). The work of Ignacio Martin-Baro (in Mitchell and Correa-Velez, 2010) pinpoints how extended war standardises these ruptured affiliations. Networks broken in this way are not easily rebuilt which results in lack of community support structures which in turn adds to social isolation, mental and emotional distress (McMichael and Manderson, 2004 , p. 89).

It is also important to note that while social capital functions as a communal resource for refugee communities' post-migration, it also has an individualistic factor that controls to what degree is an individual is able to employ and take advantage the social capital available in their community. This is recognised by Stone and Hughes, who note that 'although social capital is not the property of an individual, social capital can nonetheless be thought of as a resource available to either individuals or groups' (Stone and Hughes, 2002, p.7). To ignore this individualistic element negates the heterogeneity and differences in communities and social groups, instead assuming an even-handedness in which all members of a community are able to access social resources equally.

Social networks play a dominant role in supporting community resilience under adversity by providing a platform for implementation and cooperation of community living, secular and religious (Helton & Keller, 2010). Research highlights similar examples among Somali refugees in Australia, and Afghani refugees in Pakistan where Islam offers a meaningful

framework of practice and ideology that sustains women during the hardships of exile (Allabadi, 2008, p. 192) and through emotional distress (Mowafi, 2011).

Figure 2: **GENERAL DIMENSIONS SOCIAL CAPITAL**
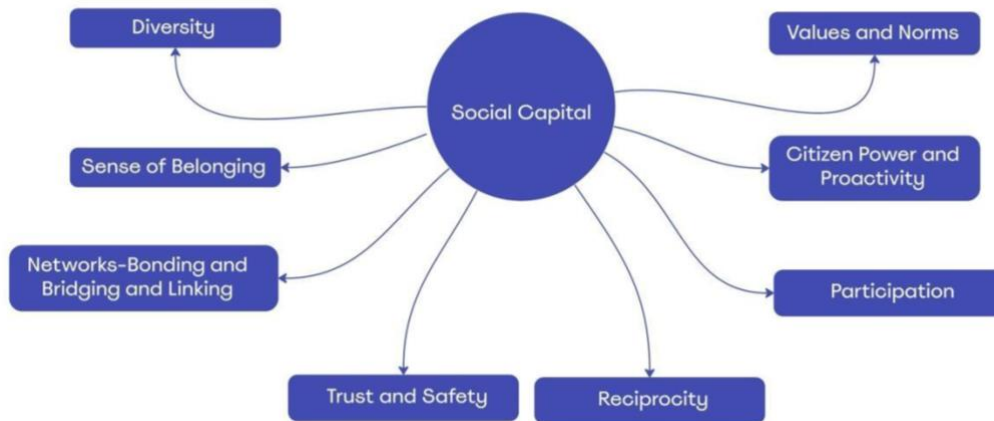
Figure 2 - General Dimensions social capital

Source: Researcher Summation of Different Ideas

Despite the clear benefits of social networks for community resilience in extreme events, there are limitations associated with this approach as well. In research conducted in flood affected communities in Australia they found that found that while social capital reduced social problems under normal circumstances in both affected and unaffected communities, contrary to the literature, there was no added effect of social capital in further reducing social problems specifically in post-flood environments. These authors then suggest that, while social capital might have played an important role in bouncing back, its effect can be limited compared to the financial assistance provided by disaster relief initiatives and well-resourced systems of governance. This can then also be traced to the importance of economic development (Norris et al. 2008) for community resilience. It also refers to the levels of the economic resources available to them as well as the equity in their distribution.

A second criticism in the social capital research is particularly relevant to the refugee experience. It relates to the possibility of overemphasising communities as sites of cohesion, unity, and cooperation, minimising obscurer aspects of community including conflict, xenophobia, exploitation and exclusion (McMichael and Manderson, 2004; Amisi, 2006; Zetter et. al, 2006). This unclear side of community has often led to people becoming refugees in the first place and regenerates risks they face in search for safety. Several authors highlight the risks associated with high levels of bonding capital in such cases, whereby overly developed bonding capital can contribute to the exclusion of minority communities, rather than fostering social networks and well-being. In post-migration, this can undermine bridging capital, by creating narrow-minded and sequestered communities. An additional concern relates to the level of social obligation placed on individuals in small communities by other community members, including on and by community leaders. In this regard, Strang and Ager identify that additional work is required to 'understand more fully both the obligations as well as the benefits of social bonds for refugee integration' (Strang and Ager, 2010, p. 597).

A fourth limitation of social capital-based community resilience approaches concerns the definition of 'community' itself. Usually, communities are identified as entities within specific established geographical boundaries (Norris et al., 2008). The Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience (Cabinet Office, 2011), for example, addresses 4 types of communities namely 'geographical communities,', 'communities of interest', 'communities of supporters', and 'communities of circumstance'. The first 3 are types of pre-existing communities and are those mainly considered by the framework. 'Communities of circumstance' appear in the document as 'created when groups of people are affected by the same incident, such as a train crash. These groups of individuals are unlikely to have the same

interests or come from the same geographical area but may form a community in the aftermath of an event.' (Cabinet Office, 2011, p. 12). These seem to operate over and above any geographical or pre-existing social borders and include people who have been affected in a similar way (Drury, Brown, González, & Miranda, 2016; Drury, Cocking, & Reicher, 2009b, 2009a), and also appear as 'communities of sufferers' (Fritz, 1961/1996), as 'therapeutic communities' (Coates, 2010; Fritz, 1961/1996), and as 'altruistic communities' (Barton, 1969). However, due to its reliance on social capital, the Cabinet Office Framework is unable to consider the processes that lead to the emergence and operation of such communities and how they can be incorporated in policy and practice, eventually dismissing emergent groups and spontaneous solidarity as a source of community resilience.

Hence, it is safe to say that Social capital, which broadly refers to the degree to which individuals can access embedded assets within a community (Cox & Perry, 2011), is the most utilised variable to predict community resilience (Bonanno et al., 2015). That being said community resilience and social capital have many models and it is unlikely that a single model will be applicable across all communities.

2.4.3. *Measuring Social Capital*

Fukuyama (2001, p. 12) states, 'one of the greatest weaknesses of the social capital concept is the absence of consensus on how to measure it'. Inceed, researcher have come up with multiple ways to measure social capital and there are various discourses on ways of gauging it through objective measures. One of the ways is 'general trust' as an aspect of social capital (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014). An example would be surveys commonly assessing the levels of agreement with statements such as "most people can be trusted" or "most people are honest (Putnam, 2000, p. 91). Hence, questions such as 'what level of trust do you have in those who live near you?" are

one way to gauge social capital (Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004). This conforms with the existing literature about the dimensions of social capital which extend to resources within the community and in relation to certain groups such an organisations that work with the community as well as the governmental bodies. This set of proxies can be said to have been built on the attitudinal and cognitive aspects of community resilience (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014).

Another measurement method looks instead at the behavioural manifestations of social capital in daily life. So for example, one could ask questions regarding how safe in their neighbourhood, how many time they volunteered in the organisations that help the community and NGOs and the number of known neighbours (Aldrich & Meyer, 2014). Researchers could also ask about the depth of their social networks such as how many friends and contacts do they have, how many of them would they discuss their problems and issues with. Hence, with questions like this one can assess the behavioural manifestation of social capital. There as also examples of surveys such as the National Social Capital Benchmark Community Survey from Harvard University (2000, 2006) is the largest and most commonly used survey of social capital.

Going beyond the cognitive and behavioural, researchers have tried to measure social capital through other ways such as experimental methods via laboratory experiments (Cardenas & Carpenter, 2003) and field-experiments take advantage of undertaking experiments out in the field (Levitt & List, 2009). The cognitive dimension refers to the intellectual part and aspects such as shared language and shared goals and vision. Each dimension interacts with the other, for instance shared language can induce feelings of familiarity and trust (Karahanna and Preston, 2015), and each represents some aspect of structure and some aspect of individual action (Coleman, 1990).

Putnam (2000), on the other hand, looked more at the relationship side of social capital. He delineated the various classifications of social capital as it evolves. His main distinctions were between bridging and bonding social capital. The concept of "Briding social capital" is formed on the basis of "weak ties" (Granovetter, 1973), which are weak links between people from various racial, national, and occupational backgrounds (Zinnbauer, 2007). These weak ties, generally make it easier to give "new" knowledge and non-emotional support (Granovetter, 1992) which includes things like tolerance, getting involved in the community, and meeting new people. Bridging social capital provides limited emotional support (Atfield et. al, 2007; Ellison et al., 2007), however as the name suggests are essential in bridging new relationships with groups outside of one's immediate surrounding.

Bonding social capital shows how close family and close friends are connected through strong bonds (Zinnbauer, 2007). These kinds of networks are common among groups of people who are similar and have close relationships (Helliwell and Putnam, 2004). Trust and practical support are two types of bonding social capital (Appel et al., 2014). Maintaining relationships with old social networks after moving away from them for life-changing events like moving or getting a new job is an example of maintained social capital (Ellison et al., 2007). People often value the relationships they already have because it can be hard for them to make new ones (Ellison et al., 2007). One main reason for these kinds of relationships is to offer emotional support (Ellison et al., 2007).

The most popular definition of social capital used in the health sciences originates with Putnam as mentioned above, which emphasises the role of relationships, networks, trust, and norms. This definition arose out of empirical studies of the performance of regional government in

Italy (Putnam, 1993). A crucial theme of Putnam's work is that although social capital is frequently measured by collecting data at the individual level, its effect is collective and communal, thus, making it a qualitatively altered concept from social support. For instance, everyone who lives in a community with a lot of trust and civic engagement can benefit from it, even those who are wary of others and don't do much for the community. This is because everyone will be less likely to become a victim of crime and have access to a full social safety net in times of need, no matter how much they contribute to social capital. So, there is a compound relationship between how social capital works at the individual and group levels. This raises important questions about measurement, which is another important topic of debate in social capital study (Kirmayer et al. 2009).

Empirical studies in public health sector use the concept of social capital around the varying levels of trust, community/individual networks and community participation (Kirmayer et al., 2009). This exceeds usual social network/social support theory, which wholly focusses on an individual's social relationships as a variable of interest. Instead of concentrating on the characteristics of individuals, it concentrates on the role of group values and norm. These values and norms, in turn, can be understood of as characteristics of culture that impact both individual and collective identity.

While there is already a significant body of literature on social capital and how to measure it, there is work needed on how social capital interacts with other forms of capital and how they can contribute to community resilience or disaster resilience and how well these different measures predict recovery and wellbeing.

2.5. Literature Review of Adversity Activated Development

2.5.1. Adversity Activated Development

Recent studies describe the processes of growth following exposure to extreme adverse conditions (Cicchetti et al., 2000). These recent studies differ from those on resilience and highlight the development of something previously absent, rather than a bouncing back to a previous functioning state, as it appears when discussing the concept of resilience.

Papadopoulos' work on resilience, particularly through the development of the 'Adversity Grid', represents a significant shift in understanding the impact of adversity. He initially termed his framework the 'Trauma Grid', but later revisions led to its current name, the 'Adversity Grid'. This renaming reflects a broader perspective that recognises trauma as only one potential outcome of adversity, amongst many others. By mapping out the entire spectrum of possible impacts of adversity, Papadopoulos aims to restore the complexity that trauma can often obscure.

In his analysis, Papadopoulos differentiates between 3 categories of responses to adversity:

1) *Negative Responses to Adversity:* These are the anticipated effects of adversity, commonly referred to as trauma, including loss, pain, confusion, and psychological or psychiatric damage. These reactions can vary significantly in severity and intensity.

2) *Unchanged Responses to Adversity:* This category acknowledges that not all aspects of a person's life are altered by adversity. It includes both negative and positive personal attributes, behaviours, relationships, and habits that remain constant before and after adversity strikes. Within the unchanged category, Papadopoulos further distinguishes

between negative traits that persist (e.g, suspiciousness, marital conflict) and positive traits, which he associates with resilience. The latter includes qualities like stability, recovery, tolerance, flexibility or adaptability, and transformational ability.

3) ***Positive Responses to Adversity (AAD):*** Papadopoulos stresses that adversity can also result in positive transformational outcomes. Unlike resilience, which relates to pre-existing strengths that endure through adversity, AAD refers to new positive qualities and strengths that arise as a direct consequence of adversity.

Papadopoulos' conception of AAD is innovative in its recognition of the potential for growth and development triggered by adversity itself. It challenges the more traditional focus on resilience that emphasises bouncing back to a pre-adversity state. Instead, AAD suggests that individuals can emerge from adversity not just unscathed but enhanced, with new capacities and strengths borne from the struggle.

This framework has profound implications for how individuals and communities facing adversity can be understood and supported. It suggests that interventions should not only aim to alleviate the negative effects of adversity but should also identify and foster the development of new strengths that can arise from such challenges.

This is somewhat understood within frameworks of resilience as well as relatively recent literature around the concept of adversity activated development (AAD), which might be understood as 'AAD refers to the positive developments that are a direct result of being exposed to adversity' (Papadopoulous, 2007, p. 306). Despite research indicating extraordinary value

in the concept, challenging traditional interpretations of adversity, it remains under-researched in the wider field.

The Adversity Grid, is not a tool for measurement but rather a conceptual framework designed to broaden the understanding of adversity's impact beyond a singular, negative focus. It is a paradigm that enables practitioners and survivors alike to recognise a spectrum of responses to adversity, rather than being constrained by a singular view that emphasises only the detrimental effects. This framework distinguishes between distress and disorder, allowing for a more nuanced processing of adverse events, reactions, and their lasting impacts by reducing the overwhelming nature that often dominates the experiences of those involved.

The Grid plays a crucial role in restoring the complexity that adversity might have compromised. It eschews oversimplifications and generalisations that are rampant in the face of trauma, challenging the narrative that survivors are merely victims encapsulated by their suffering. Instead, it posits survivors as multifaceted individuals, reinstating their human dignity and countering any inclination towards a victim identity. This approach fosters a genuine empowerment that originates not from external validation or idealised goals but from the recognition and validation of the survivors' inherent strengths and achievements.

Importantly, the Adversity Grid also extends its scope to encompass the familial, communal, and societal responses to adversity, acknowledging that these collective entities experience 'trauma' differently from individuals. Papadopoulos warns against the hasty application of psychiatric disorders to groups, which cannot be diagnosed in the same way as individuals. The Grid, therefore, serves as a reminder of the methodological and ethical considerations necessary when discussing collective trauma. By doing so, it provides a comprehensive

understanding of the adversity impact that aligns with the actual experiences and coping mechanisms of families, communities, and broader societal structures, rather than imposing individualised psychological frameworks upon them.

2.5.2. *Differentiating Adversity Activated Development*

As in the exploration of resilience following adverse experiences, 2 key concepts emerge: Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) and adversity activated development (AAD). Both PTG and AAD investigate the potential for positive change after facing significant challenges. However, there are distinct nuances that differentiate the two.

PTG, as conceptualised by Tedeschi and Calhoun, focuses on personal growth after extremely traumatic events. It implies that an individual can experience a level of psychological functioning higher than the baseline after such events, moving beyond mere survival or coping mechanisms. PTG is rooted in the field of positive psychology, emphasizing the enhancement of well-being and the acknowledgement of loss and devastation while still progressing forward (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996; 2004; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006; Baker et al., 2008; Seligman, 2011; Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013).

On the other hand, Papadopoulos' AAD does not start from the assumption of trauma but rather from adversity, which is a broader term encompassing various challenges that may not qualify as traumatic per se. AAD suggests that exposure to adversity can lead to the development of new strengths and transformative aspects that were not present before the adverse event. The approach separates the impacts of adversity into 3 categories: negative responses, unchanged responses, and positive responses, with AAD falling into the latter as new strengths that arise specifically because of adversity, compared to resilience which refers to pre-existing strengths

that persist through adversity (Papadopoulos, 2007; 2015; 2019; Papadopoulos & Gionakis, 2018).

The conceptualization of PTG suggests a dichotomy where growth and stress symptoms may coexist, with the potential for growth occurring alongside or even because of stress. Tedeschi and Calhoun's (2006) work indicates that PTG can act as a form of adaptation that surpasses previous levels of functioning, a transformative process that may emerge in the wake of forced migration and extreme life disruptions. The PTGI and related research imply that PTG can manifest relatively quickly after the stressful event and may potentially prevent PTSD if experienced soon enough (Baker et al., 2008; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

In contrast, AAD is posited by Papadopoulos as a multifaceted outcome of adversity, emphasizing that adversity can lead to a broad spectrum of impacts, including beneficial ones. AAD considers the complexity of individuals' responses to adversity, seeking to avoid oversimplifications that reduce individuals to a single dimension of trauma survivors. Instead, AAD recognises the various ways individuals interact with and are affected by their adverse circumstances, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging and supporting the full range of these experiences.

While PTG and AAD share the recognition that positive change can occur following adversity or trauma, AAD takes a broader view and does not limit the discussion to the context of trauma or post-trauma. It encompasses a wider array of responses and allows for positive development during adversity, not only after its cessation. The distinction between PTG's 'growth' and AAD's 'development' underscores the different emphases of the 2 approaches: PTG's growth

suggests a rebound to a new, higher level of functioning, while AAD's development points to an ongoing transformative process, potentially even in the midst of ongoing adversity.

Both PTG and AAD offer valuable frameworks for understanding the complex ways individuals and communities respond to and grow from challenging experiences. Their integration into research and practice provides a comprehensive view of the transformative potential inherent in adversity and trauma, highlighting the importance of a nuanced approach to fostering resilience and well-being.

In his 2013-paper Ungar, demonstrates this limitation by highlighting the clear impact environmental and external factors may have on an individual's resilience through the use of 3 principles. Firstly, he points out that resilience and in the case of AAD, is not just an individual construct as much as it is a calibre of the environment and its capacity to facilitate growth i.e. 'nurture trumps nature'. Secondly, within different populations resilience looks similar as well as dissimilar predicting positive growth receptive to individual, contextual and cultural variation (differential impact). Lastly, the impact that any single factor has on resilience differs by the amount of risk exposure, with the mechanisms that protect against the impact of adversity showing contextual and cultural specificity for particular individuals (cultural variation).

Aristotle's concepts on happiness and wellbeing offer a predominantly useful difference between two central aspects of wellbeing: the *hedonistic*, which involves the range of affective coping; and the *eudemonic*, which is related to the success in attaining positive attributes through mastery, self-acceptance, positive social relations, purpose in life, and growth. The fundamentals that need to be met in relation to adversity for sustainability and growth are those

that reflect eudemonic dimensions of wellbeing. Many people are able to sustain their sense of purpose, lead meaningful lives and engage in valuable social networks around them in the face of adversity. They exhibit resilience and persist without displaying noticeable evidence of the stressor's impact. This phenomenon of "ordinary magic" exemplifies the concept of sustainability and the ability of many individuals to flourish despite facing adversity (Bonanno, 2004; Masten, 2001, p. 227). Individuals may encounter a minor decline in performance or persist in pursuing personal objectives and reasons that provide significance to their lives, with minimal or no effect on their overall physical and mental health. This may also involve individuals maintaining a state of positive emotions and acknowledging the beneficial impact of pleasurable components of overall well-being, even in the face of challenging circumstances.

The existing research on resilience and AAD provides a solid foundation, yet a more extensive exploration could offer richer insights into the nuances of adversity-related development. Overall, traditional psychological research on resilience does not sufficiently investigate the role of socio-political contexts, history, and culture in its analyses, which is crucial in the case of refugee women and men (Eggerman & Panter-Brick, 2010). The intention here is not to take aware from the existing perspectives in the field of refugee care. It is simply to recognise that individuals are not alone, and determinants of resilience exist across community, culture and other environmental factors, influencing the outcome of individuals in both positive and negative ways (Ungar, 2008).

Refugees frequently find their identities reshaped by the collective traumatic experiences that precipitate their displacement. As a result, their new identities often become intertwined with, and defined by, this shared adversity (Wise, 2004). Government employees, service providers, and scholars have all been guilty of reducing groups of refugees to a single category and in so

doing ignoring their individual life histories, reasons for leaving, and personal objectives and needs (Daniel & Knudsen, 1995). Furthermore, simplistically characterising refugees as "persons in need" (Gold, 1993) can have substantial adverse significance. Socially composed expectations of refugee inactiveness and dependence generate foundations and procedures that can discourage refugees from regaining control of their lives. Zetter (1999) argues that the idea of refugee is created around the notion of asylum and refuge and leads to the belief that refugees have left behind or lost the personal capacity and support systems required for self-sufficiency. As a result, both settlement services and research come to view refugees in a dependent role, characterised primarily by need and helplessness (Mazur, 1988).

Psychology has a great deal to offer refugees as long as there is a clear understanding of the complexities involved. These complexities include the way in which the refugee predicament is constructed by the wider society and by the systemic interconnections between mental health systems and refugees. If these connections are not properly understood, there is a danger that mental health professionals may unwittingly fall into a position that fails to distinguish the various overlapping epistemologies involved and may end up pathologizing human suffering (Papadopoulos, 2013).

This research will therefore explore relationships between the concepts of community resilience, social capital and adversity activated development and the practical implications this may have within the context of refugee communities residing in LMICs, using India as the example. In order to understand community resilience, the research will be based on the framework of social capital. It rests on the assumption that community resilience needs resilience resources which are based on social capital, such as relations with community members, cultural contexts, religious groups, peer and friend groups and relations within the

family (Earnest et al., 2015). Social capital can be broadly defined as the extent to which individuals can utilise assets within a community (Cox & Perry, 2011). It is the most used variable to predict community resilience (Binanni et al., 2015).

It also will explore the concept of community resilience and adversity activated development from the perspective of service users in the field. The proposed research is thus important, timely and worthwhile, dealing with highly current issues arising from the number of refugees and asylum seekers arriving in India and not having a refugee protection framework. Moreover, considering India's current socio-political scenario this study is required to look into the well-being of refugees and seek understanding how community resilience and AAD can be harnessed to ensure more effective support.

3. Research Design and Methodology

Building on the gaps identified in the preceding literature review, this chapter delineates the methodological framework adopted for this doctoral research. As Bickman and Rog (2009) assert, the social researcher has an array of methodologies at their disposal, and the onus lies in judiciously selecting a method that aligns with the study's objectives. Following Grant and Osanloo (2014), this research is grounded in a theoretical framework that guides and supports the investigative process.

The following section offers a comprehensive overview of the methodological choices that underpin this study, elucidating the context and underlying rationale. Furthermore, this segment establishes the epistemological and ontological stances that the research espouses, pivotal in shaping the interpretive lens through which data is scrutinised.

A qualitative research method through thematic analysis approach has been chosen, informed by the research aims and tailored to probe the intricacies of social capital, community resilience, and adversity activated development among urban refugees in New Delhi, India. This approach facilitates an in-depth exploration of the nuanced experiences and perceptions of the study's participants, thereby yielding rich, contextually embedded insights.

3.1. Research Questions

The formulation of research questions is a pivotal step in any academic inquiry. It not only provides direction to the study but also lays the foundation upon which the entire research is built. In the context of this thesis, the research questions identified serve as a guide for the exploration of the experiences and challenges faced by urban refugees in New Delhi, India.

Developing accurate research questions in this study is a particularly significant hurdle, given the unique challenges faced by urban refugees, a demographic that is often overshadowed by their counterparts in refugee camps. These questions are not just academic exercises; they are embodied in the real life experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, a city with a complex socio-political landscape. By focusing on various forms of social capital and community resilience, the research questions aim to shed light on the resources and strategies that are crucial for refugees as they navigate life in this bustling metropolis.

Given the importance of these research questions, the process of formulating them was both iterative and rigorous. It began with a comprehensive review of the 3 concepts central to this thesis: social capital, community resilience, and adversity activated development, as outlined in the literature review. Through this review, key issues and challenges related to each concept were identified and contextualised to India. Recognising the inter-relationality among these concepts, initial drafts of the research questions were developed to explore these complex dynamics. These questions underwent several rounds of reframing and reforming, guided by gaps in the existing literature and the unique socio-political landscape of New Delhi. Finally, the questions were validated through consultations with the PhD Supervisor.

The outcome of this process is the 4 main research questions provided below, with the aim to have a balance of both exploratory and validating avenues of investigation:

1) In what ways do urban refugees in New Delhi, India, access and utilise different forms of social capital?

2) How does the availability of social capital contribute to the resilience of the urban refugee community in New Delhi, and what dynamics define the interplay between these 2 concepts?

3) To what extent is adversity activated development (AAD) evident among urban refugees in New Delhi, and in what forms does it manifest?

4) In the context of low- and middle-income urban areas like New Delhi, India, how applicable are the concepts of social capital, community resilience, and AAD, and how might they inform the development of interventions aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of urban refugees?

Before delving into their specifics, it is crucial to understand the dual nature of these questions, a driving rationale behind their selection.

1) *Availability of Social Capital Among Urban Refugees:* This question seeks to understand the networks, relationships, and trust that urban refugees foster in their new environment. It aims to uncover the resources they tap into and the support systems they rely on to navigate their daily challenges.

2) *Interplay of Social Capital and Community Resilience:* Building on the first question, this inquiry considers into the dynamics between social capital and community resilience, and evidence of these interlinkages among the refugee community in New Delhi.

3) ***Presence of Adversity Activated Development:*** This question introduces a fresh perspective, examining whether challenges and adversities can act as catalysts for growth and development among urban refugees. It seeks to identify signs of positive transformation amidst trials.

4) ***Relevance in LMIC/Urban Contexts:*** Rooted in practicality, this question evaluates the applicability of the theoretical constructs in real-world settings. It also probes into how these insights can be used to design effective interventions for urban refugees.

In short, the selection of research questions for this thesis was finalised with the intention of coalescing into a unified framework designed to both verify and address significant limitations in existing literature and apply these theoretical constructs to real, underexplored, and critically important social contexts.

3.2. Epistemological and Ontological Stances

This study on community resilience, social capital, and adversity-activated development (AAD) among urban refugee communities in New Delhi is grounded in a social constructivist epistemology and a relativist ontology. Social constructivism, as articulated by Berger and Luckmann (1966) in *The Social Construction of Reality*, posits that our understanding of the world is not passively absorbed, but actively constructed through social interactions. In this view, knowledge is contingent upon human practices, developed through interaction between individuals and their world, and is thus inherently shaped by cultural, historical, and social contexts. This perspective is crucial for studying refugee communities, as it allows the research to capture the subjective meanings that refugees themselves ascribe to their experiences of adversity, resilience, and social capital.

Building on this, the study also embraces a relativist ontological stance, which asserts that reality is not a fixed or universal construct but rather is multiple, fluid, and context-dependent (Gergen, 1999). Relativism challenges the notion of an objective reality that exists independently of human perception. Instead, it posits that what we understand as "reality" is always interpreted through the lenses of culture, language, and individual experiences. In the context of this study, the relativist ontology recognizes that the experiences of refugees in New Delhi cannot be understood as monolithic or static; rather, they are shaped by a complex interplay of personal, social, and political factors that vary across individuals and groups (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

This approach is particularly pertinent in understanding the lived experiences of urban refugees, whose realities are constructed through the ongoing negotiation of their identities, relationships, and socio-political circumstances. For instance, the way refugees in New Delhi perceive and construct their resilience and social capital is deeply influenced by their interactions with local communities, governmental policies, and the broader socio-economic environment. This constructivist-relativist framework allows the study to explore how refugees navigate these challenges and construct meaning in ways that are unique to their specific contexts (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

3.3. Rationale for Qualitative Research

> *"Research is an endeavour / attempt to discover, develop and verify knowledge. It is an intellectual process that has developed over hundreds of years ever changing in purpose and form and always researching to truth." (J. Francis Rummel)*

Research design and methodology are not merely procedural steps but foundational elements that serve as the backbone of any academic study. In the pursuit of understanding the complexities of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development among urban refugees in New Delhi, the chosen research design and methodology are not simply procedural. They are the scaffolding upon which the study is built, dictating the collection and interpretation of data to validate the research. The design is a structured blueprint for empirical inquiry, and the methodology extends further, incorporating theoretical frameworks that inform the investigation (Gray, 2003; Sileyew, K. J, 2019).

This research takes an exploratory stance, intending to delve into the experiences and perceptions of community service providers, searching for patterns and deeper meanings rather than confirming hypotheses, making qualitative research an apt mode of inquiry (Crotty, 1998). The heart of qualitative research lies in its ability to grasp individual perceptions and narratives (Bryman, 1988; Silverman, 2013), aiming to understand lived experiences as authentically as possible (Ely, 1991).

The qualitative path chosen for this study is due to its strengths in diving into the complexity of social phenomena and its alignment with disciplines that unravel human experiences within their socio-cultural contexts (Flick & Von Kardorff, 2004). The research questions necessitate an in-depth look into the subjective and the socio-contextual intricacies shaping refugee experiences, positioning qualitative methods as the ideal tool for this analysis.

The qualitative approach is inductive, privileging participant voices and yielding rich, contextual insights. It moves away from the confines of quantitative research's hypothetico-deductive model, allowing for emergent, theory-generating discoveries (Berg et al., 2012;

Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The semi-structured interviews, informed by the constructs of AAD, guide the investigation into refugees' growth and resilience amidst adversity, while still leaving room for the emergence of additional themes.

The flexibility inherent in qualitative research benefits the exploration of adaptive strategies and social networks utilised by refugees, accommodating adjustments during the research process and honing in on the phenomena being studied. This methodology ensures findings are firmly rooted in participants' realities, speaking to their experiences in their language (Anderson, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

A commonality in qualitative research is its reliance on textual information, preferring meaning-based analysis over numerical data, which is crucial in capturing the nuanced experiences of refugees (Polkinghorne, 1983). The approach allows for an in-depth exploration of complex subjects, often with a smaller participant group, providing a richer engagement with the research topic (Patton, 2014).

Qualitative research allows the investigator to gain direct contact with and get close to the people and phenomena under study, facilitating a deep understanding of the context and subtleties of the lived experiences of refugees. This approach is characterised by personal engagement, empathic neutrality, and an appreciation for the dynamic systems at play within social structures (Berg et al., 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Merriam, 2009)

3.3.1. Limitations/Weaknesses of Qualitative Research

While there are significant benefits of qualitative research, particularly in the context of this subject area, that does not mean there are not distinct limitations too. While these are picked up in greater depth under the broader methodological limitations sub-chapter, it is worth noting the following. Firstly, this research is aware that the closer association of qualitative research with the researcher's subjectivity naturally presents challenges, related to the researcher's bias impacting the authenticity and reliability of the findings.

Qualitative research also faces potential limitations in terms of generalizability. Due to its focus on depth over breadth, the findings may not be easily applicable to broader populations or different contexts. This is notably a constraint given the cultural specificity of this study, i.e. refugees in New Delhi, India. Additionally, the resource-intensivity, requiring significant time and effort for interviews, transcriptions and thematic analysis has arguably limited the scope of the study.

These limitations were all considered in advance of the methodology's selection; but, with its overall appropriateness for specific research questions and contexts, it was still deemed to be sufficient.

3.3.2. Insider Role

In this study, the researcher assumed a significant insider role, shaped by previous professional The researcher's insider role, established through previous professional engagements with refugee communities in New Delhi, provided critical access and insights into the participants' socio-cultural dynamics. This role, shaped by prior work with organizations like the UNHCR and local NGOs, was particularly valuable in qualitative research focused on sensitive issues

such as resilience, social capital, and adversity-activated development (AAD) (Hellawell, 2006; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

This insider position facilitated the use of purposive sampling, where participants were deliberately selected based on criteria that aligned with the study's objectives. The existing trust and rapport allowed the researcher to recruit individuals who could provide in-depth insights, thus ensuring a sample that was both relevant and reflective of the community's experiences (Patton, 2014; Palinkas et al., 2015).

However, the dual role of service provider and researcher necessitated careful ethical considerations. Reflexivity was crucial in mitigating potential biases, with the researcher maintaining a reflective journal to document personal assumptions and the impact of pre-existing relationships on data collection and analysis. This practice, along with a strong emphasis on informed consent, helped maintain the integrity and ethical standards of the research (Finlay, 2002; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

3.4. Research Design

This section outlines the design and methodology employed to undertake the interviews for this research. The study utilised semi-structured interviews with 8 participants, selected through purposive sampling, to capture nuanced, open-ended responses. The interviews were divided into 3 thematic sessions, namely i) pre-asylum experiences, ii) life in New Delhi, and iii) available resources and positive developments. These sessions were framed around a set of dimensions identified within the literature review of social capital and community resilience, including trust and solidarity, groups and networks, collective action and cooperation,

information and communication, social cohesion and inclusion, and empowerment and political action.

In addition to detailing the interview protocol, this section will discuss the rationale behind the choice of semi-structured interviews and the purposive sampling approach undertaken, including the final sample demographic breakdown. 'Research Design' will also elaborate on the logistical aspects of the interviews, including the setting and the standard interview protocol adopted. This will include discussion on the consent form and information sheet and methods of recording the interviews and storing the interviews.

3.5. Research Method

3.5.1. Thematic Analysis

The qualitative data obtained in the interviews will adopt a qualitative design which is rooted in social constructionist epistemology. The primary method to gather the qualitative data involved semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis (TA) differs from other analytic methods. It is a widely used, highly flexible approach that allows researchers to explore thoroughly, rich and complex accounts of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2022).

Thematic analysis is a family of qualitative social research methods that formalise, to varying degrees, the process of developing themes. Definitions of what constitutes a 'theme' are difficult and depend on the scale of researchers' interest. One attempt is that a theme "represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Thematic analysis is often performed in conjunction with a data collection exercise. Unlike in most quantitative researches where data collection is expected to be completed before analysis is performed, it is common for thematic analysis to start, while data

collection is ongoing and to influence future data collection, informing what questions are asked or determining when sufficient interviews have been carried out (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022).

3.5.2. *Semi-Structured Interview Design*

The selection of semi-structured interviews as the primary method for this qualitative inquiry into the lived experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, India, was informed by the method's capacity for eliciting detailed narratives. These narratives are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences, perceptions, opinions, and knowledge, as Patton (2002) highlights. This approach is particularly pertinent given the dynamic and evolving nature of refugee experiences which are marked by a succession of transitional phases (Papadopoulos, 2001).

Semi-structured interviews provide a structured yet flexible framework that encourages participants to articulate their stories in a manner that is natural and unrestrictive. This conversational approach aligns with the research's humanistic philosophy, allowing for the exploration of themes central to the participants' realities. As Smith and Osborn (2008) observe, this method offers participants the autonomy to shape their responses, thereby ensuring the data reflects the significance and relevance of their experiences.

Moreover, the interactive nature of semi-structured interviews, underscored by Elliott (2005), aligns with the research's recognition of the interviewer's active role in the co-creation of narratives. The interviewer's task extends beyond posing questions to being an attentive listener, adept at stimulating and supporting the interviewee's narrative production (Holstein &

Gubrium, 1995). This interactive engagement ensures that the data collection process is as much about listening and understanding as it is about inquiring.

The adoption of semi-structured interviews, therefore, is not arbitrary but a deliberate choice aimed at capturing the depth, complexity, and nuances of the refugee experience. The method's inherent flexibility allows for the emergence of rich, detailed accounts that are essential for understanding the constructs of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development within the specific context of urban refugees in New Delhi. It offers a balance between providing guidance to explore the research topics and allowing the natural flow of conversation, which Hancock et al (2007) and Brinkmann & Kvale (2014) suggest is key to mobilising and constructing knowledge on the subject matter.

3.5.3. Framework Applied to the Interview Questions

The framework utilised for the interview questions drew on 2 main approaches. Firstly, each interview was divided into three sections to cover different phases of the refugee experience: pre-asylum experiences, life in New Delhi, and available resources and positive developments. This division helped to capture a broad range of experiences relevant to participants' journey. Secondly, the questions within each of these sections were informed by a set of dimensions associated with social capital, community resilience and adversity activated development. These dimensions were identified through a literature review intended to serve as a guide to the questions under each of the three sections, providing a theoretical lens through which to view the responses.

By combining these two approaches, the interview framework was designed to consider the breadth of the refugee experience while keeping the questions specific to the relevant concepts.

An outline of the primary dimensions selected based on the literature review is provided below, noting that these were used to inform the interview questions and were not necessarily used as a rigid structure:

- *Community Participation:* Focuses on the extent and nature of an individual's active involvement in local organisations, clubs, or social groups, which, according to the reviewed literature , serves as a cornerstone for resilience, offering a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Interview questions aim to explore the roles individuals play, their contributions, and the benefits they derive from such participation.

- *Network Diversity:* Investigates the range and variety of an individual's social connections, which offer various forms of support and resources, and collectively act as a social safety net. Questions related to this dimension look into the range and variety of an individual's social connections (age, occupation, and cultural background), including how these networks have evolved over time.

- *Relational Trust:* Probes into the levels of trust individuals have in various relationships, (e.g. community members, local businesses, etc.). Crucially, trust holds social interactions together, and its nuances are particularly revealing of refugee experiences in a new social landscape (i.e. New Delhi). Questions probe into the levels of trust individuals have in various relationships and how these trust levels have evolved, offering insights into social stability.

- *Collaborative Endeavours:* Explores instances where community members have come together to collaborate on projects or respond collectively to crises, implying that

community values and goals are shared and offering a strong indicator of social cohesion. Questions explore instances of collaboration on projects or crisis response, as well as the social norms governing such actions.

- *Information Accessibility:* Examines how individuals obtain information (e.g. information about public services, community resources, etc.) and the role that communities play in supporting this. In contexts of uncertainty, which is particularly true for the refugee experience, being informed is empowering and affects the ability to access services and make decisions. Questions investigate how individuals obtain information, their access to various communication tools and the role of their community in providing an informational ecosystem.

- *Social Harmony:* Investigates community/social divisions, which, where they exist, can either hinder or foster community resilience depending on how they are handled. Questions for this dimension aim to identify these divisions from the participant's perspective, consider how they are managed, and the community mechanisms in place to handle such conflicts.

- *Social Inclusion:* Inclusivity represents a vital component for building resilient communities, wherein if everyone has a seat at the table, the community as a whole can better navigate challenges. Interview questions here aim to uncover the mechanisms that promote or hinder inclusivity in community activities and access to resources. This includes identifying any barriers that marginalised groups might face and the community's efforts to ensure equitable participation.

- ***Personal Agency:*** The notion of agency is frequently observed to be a cornerstone of individual resilience. However, it is not just an isolated trait but arguably a building block that contributes to the resilience of the community as a whole. In refugee communities where resources are scarce or social structures undergo regular change, this sense of agency can be a critical factor in how individuals meet challenges, which in turn fosters a more adaptive and resilient community. Interview questions focus on exploring individuals' sense of well-being and self-efficacy. They aim to gauge the extent to which people feel they can influence events around them, both at a local community level and in broader societal contexts.

- ***Resource Mobilisation:*** The ability to mobilise collective resources effectively represents, in some senses, a litmus test for community resilience. This is of particular importance in refugee settings, where access to resources for a given individual can be limited or unpredictable. Interview questions in this dimension aim to uncover the methods and strategies employed by individuals and groups in the community to pool resources, whether it is for crisis response or long-term communal projects, with a focus on understanding the dynamics that enable or hinder such collective resource mobilisation.

In summary, the interview framework employed in this study was designed to capture multifaceted dimensions of community resilience and social capital, across distinct phases of the refugee experience. These dimensions, emerging from the broader literature review, serve as both a theoretical lens and a practical guide for the interview questions. They allow for a comprehensive exploration of individual experiences while providing a structured means to

analyse broader patterns of social interaction, trust, and resilience, and, therefore, yield insights that are both deeply personal and broadly applicable.

3.5.4. Sampling Strategy

The purposive sampling approach adopted for this study was instrumental in selecting information-rich cases to deeply understand the phenomena under investigation. Purposive sampling, a non-random technique, does not require complex random sampling techniques; instead, participants are selected based on the characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). In qualitative research, this method allows for the in-depth exploration of targeted issues or phenomena by selecting individuals who are especially knowledgeable or experienced (Palinkas et al., 2015).

In the context of this study, participants were meticulously chosen based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives, including recognition as refugees by the UNHCR and the possession of a refugee card, over 18 years of age, and fluency in English or Hindi. The criteria were set to ensure a comprehensive perspective from individuals who have an understanding and lived experiences of the refugee condition in New Delhi, India.

The recruitment process was facilitated by the researcher's established connections from previous work with the UNHCR and local NGOs in New Delhi, India. These connections provided a preliminary list of contacts, which enabled the researcher to reach out and explain the study's objectives both in written forms and through direct communication. Such an approach ensures that participants are well-informed about the study and their anticipated role, thereby granting informed consent (Given, 2008).

Participants were invited to engage in semi-structured interviews lasting 45 to 60 minutes. Anonymity was assured by using pseudonyms, upholding ethical considerations and the confidentiality of the participants' identities.

The rationale behind purposive sampling is to concentrate on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which enables an understanding of the phenomena under study more precisely (Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). This approach was crucial for this research, as it enabled the identification and inclusion of participants whose experiences could shed light on the unique expressions of community resilience, social capital, and adversity-activated development within the diverse urban refugee population in New Delhi.

The Recruitment Process

The selection of participants for this study was meticulously guided by specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure a focused examination of the phenomenon of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development among urban refugees in New Delhi, India. The inclusion criteria were designed to encompass adult individuals who are formally recognised as refugees by the UNHCR and possess a refugee card, signifying their legal status. This study specifically targeted those who were conversant in English or Hindi, to facilitate communication without the need for interpretation services, and were aged over 18 years, ensuring adult perspectives. Additionally, the participants' tenure in Delhi was delimited to a period ranging from 5 to 15 years, aiming to capture experiences from those who have spent a significant amount of time in the urban context of New Delhi.

Conversely, the exclusion criteria were established to maintain the focus and integrity of the data collection process. Individuals who did not speak English or Hindi were excluded to ensure clarity and depth in the narratives collected without the potential loss of nuance in translation. Similarly, those without a refugee card were not considered for this study, as the card itself is a marker of a recognised status that could influence access to resources and support networks. Furthermore, individuals under the age of 18 were excluded to maintain a focus on adult experiences of resilience and adaptation.

This careful delineation of participant criteria ensures that the research captures the narratives from a diverse demographic cross-section, while staying aligned with the pragmatic constraints and ethical considerations of the study. The voices included in this research thus hold the potential to provide insights into the lived experiences of resilience and social capital amidst adversity, which are fundamental to the aims of this inquiry.

Table 3. **PARTICIPANT INCLUSIONARY & EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA**	
Inclusion criteria	**Exclusion criteria**
Speaks English or Hindi	Non-speakers of either English or Hindi
UNHCR-recognised refugees with a refugee card	Without a UNHCR refugee card
Aged 18 or above	Below 18 years old
Residency in New Delhi for 5-15 years	Residency outside the 5-15 year range

Table 3 - Participant inclusionary & exclusionary criteria

Determining the Final Sample Size

The final sample size of 8 participants was determined to be sufficient to meet the research aims, offering a depth of understanding within the practical constraints of this study. This number aligns with qualitative research principles, which prioritise the depth and richness of data over breadth, as noted by Leung (2015) and Malterud et al (2015). The diversity of the sample, encompassing a range of ethnic communities, genders, and age groups, allowed for an in-depth exploration of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development within the urban refugee context in New Delhi. While quantitative research seeks generalisability, the qualitative approach of this study aimed to uncover rich, contextual insights, making the findings intrinsically valuable despite a smaller sample size (Smith et al., 2010). Patton (2002) highlights that sample size is often dictated by the available resources and time, and in this study, the purposive sampling strategy was tailored to these parameters. Consequently, the selected sample is information-rich, providing meaningful insights into the lived experiences of the participants, which is in line with Polkinghorne's (2007) assertion that the validity of qualitative research lies in the authenticity and richness of participant narratives.

The final selection of candidates included 8 refugee participants, as broken down in the table below:

Table 4. **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS**					
Participants	**Age**	**Gender**	**Marital Status**	**Country of Origin**	**Years Spent in India**
Farid Noori	32	M	Unmarried	Afghanistan	7
Naveed Hakimi	26	M	Unmarried	Afghanistan	9
Roya Qadir	38	F	Divorced	Afghanistan	10
Omid Zahir	30	M	Unmarried	Afghanistan	10
Emmanuel Luhaka	45	M	Married	DRC	12

Bernard Tshibanda	42	M	Married	DRC	11
Nathalie Njoya	30	F	Unmarried	Cameroon	5
Karim Sadat	29	M	Unmarried	Afghanistan	9

Table 4 - Demographic profiles of participants

3.5.5. Standard Interview Protocol

Throughout the six-month data collection phase, from December 2022 to June 2023, the study involved semi-structured interviews with urban refugees in New Delhi, focusing on community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development. Interviews were arranged through telephone and email communications, where participants were thoroughly briefed on the research's intent and their participatory role.

A set of structured questions was prepared to guide the interviews, ensuring both consistency and the flexibility to explore emergent themes (see Appendix A). Prior to the interviews, participants received Information Sheets and Consent Forms (Appendices B and C), which clearly outlined the research aims and their rights as participants. Both written and oral consent were diligently obtained, respecting participants' rights and ethical research standards.

The researcher emphasised the participants' right to withdraw from the study at any point and the option to decline answering any specific questions. The use of a tape recorder for the interviews was agreed upon with the participants, along with the possibility of subsequent communication for clarification purposes if required.

The semi-structured nature of the interviews granted participants the opportunity to share their narratives and highlight aspects of their experiences they found significant. This was integral to understanding the nuances of resilience and social capital among refugees. The interview

questions were dynamically adapted in response to the dialogues with participants, ensuring the research remained attuned to the unique experiences and insights shared.

- *Interview Setting:* Utilising secure video conferencing software with audio and video capabilities allowed for a more personal connection and the observation of non-verbal cues, integral to qualitative research. Participants had the discretion to disable video to maintain their comfort and privacy. To ensure meticulous preparation and analysis, interviews were scheduled with ample spacing, with one week between each of the 3 sessions.

- *Data Storage:* All interviews were securely recorded using audio and video applications, with the consent of participants. Recordings were meticulously transcribed, anonymised, and analysed for thematic patterns, employing qualitative data analysis methods. Data was stored on encrypted drives, with stringent access control to uphold confidentiality and adhere to data protection standards.

This protocol was underpinned by a commitment to ethical rigour and respect for participant agency, providing a foundation for gathering profound qualitative insights and contributing significantly to the research's primary objectives.

3.5.6. *Limitations in the Sample Size*

While this study provides valuable insights into the experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, certain characteristics of the sample, such as age, gender, nationality, level of education, and duration of stay, may influence the findings in ways that should be acknowledged. The

diversity in these factors reflects the complexity of the refugee experience, allowing the study to explore a range of perspectives, but it also introduces potential limitations.

For instance, the sample's variation in age could influence how resilience and social capital are perceived and constructed. Younger refugees might adapt more quickly to their new environment, whereas older refugees may face greater challenges, particularly in learning the local language and navigating new social systems (Morrice, 2013). Similarly, gender differences can impact integration, with women possibly facing more significant barriers in accessing resources and establishing networks, especially in patriarchal cultural contexts (UNHCR, 2019). However, this diversity also enriches the study, providing a glimpse into how different groups within the refugee population navigate their circumstances.

The participants' varied national backgrounds and levels of education further add to the complexity of the findings. Refugees from countries culturally closer to India may find integration easier, while those from more distant cultures may encounter greater challenges (Berry, 1997). Additionally, those with higher education levels may experience faster economic integration, which could skew the findings towards more favorable outcomes (Bloch, 2002). Despite these potential biases, the diversity in nationality and education helps highlight the different pathways to integration and resilience among refugees, making the study valuable for exploring these variations.

Lastly, the duration of stay in the host country, ranging from 5 to 15 years, plays a significant role in shaping the experiences of the participants. Those who have been in New Delhi longer are likely to have established more robust social networks and a higher degree of integration, which may influence their levels of resilience and social capital (Ager & Strang, 2008). While

this could mean that the study captures more of the experiences of well-established refugees, it also provides important insights into how integration evolves over time.

Overall, while these sample characteristics introduce some limitations, they also contribute to the exploratory nature of the study, offering a nuanced view of the diverse experiences of refugees in New Delhi. The findings, though shaped by these variables, provide a valuable starting point for understanding the complexities of integration and resilience in urban refugee populations.

3.5.7. Features and Considerations of Thematic Analysis

Analytical Approach

The researcher aimed for 'theoretical saturation'; a point where additional data would not significantly alter the study's conclusions.

Theoretical Saturation

The concept of saturation is straightforward, but its practical determination can be complex and subject to debate. The researcher considered various factors to decide on the sample size, such as the specificity of the study's aim, the richness of the dialogue, and whether the research was focused on individual experiences or a cross-case perspective. These considerations were influenced by existing literature, including guidelines from Braun & Clarke (2013) and calculation-based approaches (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2017).

The final selection of 8 participants was deemed suitable, given the rich nature of the dialogues with each participant interview session divided into three parts their diverse demographic backgrounds, and the later stages of the methodology which included a detailed reading and thematic analysis of participant responses. Findings were sufficient to glean valuable insights into the roles of community resilience, social capital, and adversity activated development, and address the research questions.

Checking Participant Perspectives

To ensure validity, the researcher engaged in member checking. Participants were provided with the analysis, often alongside their own data like interview transcripts, to confirm the accuracy of the identified themes. This participatory approach blurred the boundaries between the researcher and the participants, aligning with the principles of participatory research (Rose, 2018).

Generalisation and Causation

The research was primarily focused on representing the experiences and perspectives of the specific participants involved. While the study did not aim for broad generalizability, it has considered the causal relations within themes. The research contributed to a more nuanced understanding of these complex processes, thereby adding value to the existing body of knowledge. This aligns with proponents of a causal mosaic approach, who argue that qualitative research can uncover complex causal processes often overlooked in quantitative research (Johnson, Russo, & Schoonenboom, 2017).

The researcher employed an iterative approach to thematic analysis. Given the researcher's prior engagement with organisations in the community, there was an initial level of familiarity with the subject matter that proved invaluable throughout the research process.

As the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with 8 refugees and asylum seekers, themes began to organically emerge. These were not static but evolved in real-time as more interviews were conducted and as the data were analysed. This iterative process allowed for a nuanced exploration of complex constructs like social capital and adversity activated development, which are central to the lived experiences of refugees in this urban setting.

The constant comparative method was employed to deepen the analysis. Segments within each interview were compared for recurring patterns or divergent views on issues such as community action or trust. This comparative lens was not limited to individual interviews but extended across the dataset, which included participants from diverse ethnic communities, genders, and age groups. This method was instrumental in capturing the multifaceted nature of community resilience among the refugees involved in the study.

The iterative nature of the thematic analysis was particularly beneficial for the research objectives. It facilitated a dynamic interplay between the emerging themes and the ongoing data collection, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the complex social dynamics at play.

3.5.8. *Process Undertaken for Thematic Analysis*

In the formative stages of this research, an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was initially considered. This reflective stance, influenced by Smith (1996), was aimed at comprehending the experiences as narrated by the individuals within the community.

However, it became apparent that IPA might not fully address the research questions, which were oriented towards understanding phenomena as constructed within social contexts, aligning with a moderate social constructionist epistemology (Willig. 2008). The focus shifted from individual lived experiences to how knowledge and experiences are constructed collectively within the community. Consequently, the methodological approach required reevaluation. In collaboration with the research supervisor, thematic analysis was selected as a fitting method to distil socially constructed phenomena into themes, as suggested by Braun & Clarke (2012).

Thematic analysis was preferred for its utility in identifying both explicit and latent patterns within the data, thus enabling the capture of the breadth and depth of community narratives (Taylor & Ussher, 2001). It offered a structured yet flexible approach to navigate the complex interplay between individual experiences and the overarching social framework.

A constructivist grounded theory approach, while valuable, was deemed unsuitable for the research goals. While grounded theory focuses on the emergence of a theory directly from data, encapsulating social processes (Hawker & Kerr, 2016), the intent of this study was not to generate a new theory but rather to elucidate the subjective mental health and psychosocial experiences of refugees. Thematic analysis, therefore, was employed to explore these experiences within the context of their social environment, to understand the role of social capital and adversity activated development in fostering community resilience.

While the analysis was primarily inductive, it also incorporated deductive elements, aligning with the hybrid approach recommended by Fereday (2006). This approach allowed for the integration of data-driven codes with theory-driven codes, offering a nuanced understanding of the social constructs at play. Given the study's social constructionist epistemological stance, the emphasis was on the positioning rather than the functionality of the data. Therefore, references to the construction of ideas were integral to the analysis, especially in relation to the participants' responses and the research questions.

The data was analysed using Braun and Clarke (2006) recommendations for a phased approach to thematic analysis, as below:

Phase 1: Familiarising Yourself With the Data

In the initial phase of analysis, the researcher engaged deeply with the collected data, undertaking a process that went beyond mere reading of the interview transcripts. Each transcript was perused multiple times to capture the intricacies of the refugees' experiences. This engagement was complemented by attentive listening to the audio recordings, which was pivotal in understanding the emotional undertones behind the participants' words, nuances that might be lost in text alone.

The researcher asked critical questions to unravel the layers within the narratives: "How does this narrative reflect the individual's journey through pre-migration adversities?" and "What insights does this provide on the formation of social capital post-migration?" This was not a passive process but an active, analytical, and critical engagement with the data. It involved

delving into how participants navigated their identities as refugees and the coping mechanisms they revealed. The aim was to construct a comprehensive picture of the unique challenges and triumphs faced by each individual, set against the broader backdrop of social capital and community resilience.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

During this phase, the focus was on systematically dissecting the narratives gathered from the interviews through coding. Each line of the transcript was scrutinised to identify features considered relevant to the research question. In the context of this research, codes represented interpretive tags that captured the essence of the participant experiences, e.g. "coping mechanisms," "community support," or "cultural challenges." Both semantic and latent levels of meaning were considered, allowing for a multi-layered understanding of the data.

Phase 3: Searching for Themes

In this pivotal phase, the researcher employed a hybrid approach to thematic analysis, integrating both inductive and deductive methodologies to construct a coherent narrative from the data. This approach is in line with Guest's (2012) recommendation for robust qualitative research, drawing from multiple perspectives to enrich the analysis.

The deductive element of this phase was guided by five pre-existing broader themes: pre-migration, post-migration, social capital, community resilience, and adversity activated development. These themes were informed by the theoretical framework that underpins the

thesis, providing a scaffold to explore and contextualise the participants' experiences within established constructs.

Concurrently, the inductive aspect involved allowing themes, codes, and categories to emerge organically from the data. This led to the identification of emergent themes such as 'Safety and Security,' 'System Navigation,' 'Trust,' 'Sense of Belonging,' and 'Positive Developments' and more. These themes captured the rich, patterned responses and meanings within the data, as articulated by Braun & Clarke (2006, 2022), revealing the intricate interplay of factors that shape the refugee experience. The thematic map created in this stage outlined the connections between the data points and the emerging themes, serving as a foundational tool for the subsequent analysis. This map ensured that the emergent themes were deeply rooted in the content of the interviews, reflecting the explicit meanings conveyed by the participants.

This hybrid approach proved essential in providing a balanced exploration of the data, with the deductive component offering a theory-driven perspective on the pre-existent categories, and the inductive component ensuring that the phenomenological essence of the refugees' narratives was authentically captured. The utilisation of both inductive and deductive reasoning within this phase allowed for a comprehensive understanding that was both empirically grounded and theoretically informed.

Phase 4: Reviewing Potential Themes

During this reflective phase, the researcher meticulously revisited each potential theme that had emerged from the coding process. It was a deliberate examination to ensure the themes' robustness and their capacity to represent the intricate realities of the participants' lives.

'Collective Identity: Exploring the sense of belonging and collective self-amongst community members.' was one such theme, initially drawn from narratives of shared experiences and mutual support, scrutinised for its authenticity and scope within the broader spectrum of the data.

Simultaneously, some themes underwent a process of amalgamation or division, enhancing their descriptive power. For instance, the 'Pre-Migration Challenges' theme, initially capturing the participants' concerns 'Economic Deprivation', 'Access to Basic Services' and 'Social Services' were combined into 'Lack of Resources' thus providing a more holistic view of the refugees' adversities in their country of origin. This rigorous review was instrumental in distilling a thematic structure that resonated deeply with the lived experiences of resilience and social capital among the refugee community.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

In this phase, the focus was on honing the themes to articulate the nuances of the refugee experience in relation to the research questions. The researcher refined the themes to capture the complexities of the refugee experience with precision and depth. The primary themes (pre-migration challenges, post-migration facets, social capital, community resilience, and adversity activated development) were each articulated to highlight their distinct contributions to the research narrative. These main themes acted as lenses through which the multifaceted experiences of the refugees were examined and interpreted.

For example, within the broad category of post-migration facets, various codes such as 'Legal Frameworks,' 'Healthcare Access,' and 'Service Provision' converged to form the sub-theme of

'System Navigation.' This sub-theme encapsulated the refugees' experiences with institutional structures and their resourcefulness in accessing necessary services. Similarly, codes relating to interpersonal interactions and support networks were synthesised into the sub-theme 'Social Cohesion,' underpinning the social capital theme.

Phase 6: Producing the Report

The final phase was not merely an act of documentation but a synthesis of all the analytical work that had been done. Writing was not a post-analysis activity but was integrated throughout the research process, and involving regular rounds of reviewing the data, taking notes, compiling these, structuring these, etc. The report aimed to tell a compelling story, one that did justice to the complexities and nuances of the refugee experience in New Delhi. It wove together the themes, codes, and raw data into a coherent narrative that not only answered the research question but also offered deep insights into the lived experiences of the participants.

Thematic analysis was applied in both an inductive or a deductive manner and themes identified on a semantic level (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun and Clarke, 2006; Trahan and Stewart, 2013; Jugder, 2016). This research employed an inductive approach to identify themes on a semantic level. This involved coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame and identifying themes within the content of the interviews and the explicit meanings of the data (Boyatzis, 1998).

Overall, the thematic analysis served as an effective tool for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within the data, offering valuable insights into the lived experiences of refugees in New Delhi.

3.6.Ethical Considerations

Adhering to research ethics is paramount to safeguard the welfare and rights of both participants and researchers, as emphasised by Braun and Clarke (2013). Ethical clearance was secured from the outset, in line with the guidelines stipulated by the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytical studies at the University of Essex (see Appendix D for documentation). Furthermore, to ensure the safety and ethical integrity of conducting interviews beyond the confines of the University, a comprehensive risk assessment was carried out.

The ethical considerations surrounding the interview process were meticulously addressed through the use of participant information sheets (found in Appendix B). They also provided a transparent overview of the research objectives, thereby equipping participants with a thorough understanding of their role and the scope of their contribution. Following a comprehensive briefing on the study's aims, potential impacts, and benefits, as delineated by Smith and Fogarty (2016), participants were required to sign a consent form (referenced in Appendix C). This procedure was instituted to confirm their informed consent and their voluntary participation in the research, underlining our commitment to ethical research practices. It clearly outlined the rights of the participants, including their freedom to disengage from the study at any moment.

The study was designed around, and followed, the following set of ethical principles:

1) ***Informed Consent:*** Informed Consent was the basis of participant engagement, underpinning the process by which participants were educated about the study and able to voluntarily agree to partake. Subjects should understand what is being asked of them, and involved persons must be competent to consent (Conelly, 2005). In this study, consent was obtained only after a comprehensive explanation about the research aims, methods, and implications, and participants' agreement was documented through a signed consent sheet.

2) ***Voluntary Participation:*** Voluntary Participation was another key ethical principle, emphasising that participants should willingly choose to be part of the research without any coercion. In this study, participants were informed that they had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions, to ensure there was no sense of pressure to participate.

3) ***Anonymity and Confidentiality:*** This is especially the case when working with refugee and asylum-seeking participants especially given their legal status and the emergence of sensitive issues (Berry, 2008). Refugees may also be stressed about disclosing information related to their history in their country of origin and giving those details to a researcher (Temple & Moran, 2011). Anonymity was included in the consent form and the participants were reassured that there would be no mention of their names anywhere in the research.

4) ***Data Analysis and Dissemination:*** Data Analysis and Dissemination focused on the ethical handling of data during its analysis and when sharing the research findings. In

this study, transcribing was done privately, and any identifiable information was removed. Participants were referred to by pseudonyms in the findings, ensuring that the sensitive information shared by refugees was treated with the utmost care and respect. Any written document with the participants personal information will be kept securely and destroyed in accordance with the University of Essex procedures.

5) ***Data Protection:*** Data Protection was the final ethical principle adhered to, emphasising the safeguarding of the data collected during the research. In this study, data was stored on encrypted devices and was password-protected. Access to this data was limited to the researcher and authorised supervisors. The information storage on the university computer, personal computer or laptop, hard disk and memory sticks were protected by using passwords that were only held by the researcher. Given the sensitive nature of the data and the vulnerability of the participants, such clear data protection protocols were non-negotiable.

In this research, safeguarding participants was a paramount concern, especially given the emotional and potentially distressing topics that could arise during interviews with refugees. The need to balance what Ramazangolu and Holland (2002, p. 157) describe as the "self-interest" of the researcher, with responsibility towards research participants, has been well founded. While the research itself was non-clinical and the researcher had background as a trained counsellor, these considerations were still instrumental in managing any emotional risks. This expertise allowed for a nuanced approach to participant well-being, balancing the research objectives with ethical responsibilities. Participants were explicitly informed that they had the freedom to halt the interview at any time, thereby mitigating any undue pressure or distress. This was not merely a theoretical safeguard; it was an actionable option that

empowered participants. Additionally, the research setting was designed to be a safe space where participants could share their experiences, potentially finding the process therapeutic or reassuring, as suggested by Holloway and Jefferson (2000).

Another important ethical consideration was cultural sensitivity and understanding (Palmer, 2008), especially given the diverse backgrounds of the refugee participants. Doing cross-cultural research necessitates the acquisition of cultural knowledge of the social group that the researcher wishes to learn from (Papadopoulos & Lees, 2002). This means that the researcher must have an in-depth understanding of the culture which includes detailed knowledge of social, familial, cultural, religious, historical, and political backgrounds (Jackson & Niblo, 2003 p. 24). In turn, the research design incorporated a deep understanding of the cultural, social, and historical contexts from which the participants came. The questions posed during the interviews were carefully tailored to reflect the cultural norms, values, and experiences of the participants. This cultural relevance ensured that the questions were understandable from the participants' perspectives, allowing them to engage more fully and authentically.

In a similar vein, overcoming language barriers was another ethical obligation and methodological necessity to ensure the integrity and validity of the research (Palmer, 2008). Here, the onus lay on the researcher to 'ensure that the best possible communication and services are maintained' (Williams, 2005, p. 47). For example, all consent forms and study information were translated into the languages relevant to the participant pool. This was done with the assistance of trained professional interpreters and translators to ensure accuracy. The researcher, being bilingual in English and Hindi, was able to communicate effectively with many of the refugees and asylum seekers in New Delhi, further minimising the language barrier. This was particularly important in a cross-cultural context, where language isn't just a

tool for communication but also a medium through which participants express their unique experiences and perspectives.

In this research, language served a dual role, therefore: it was both the medium through which data were collected and a critical aspect of the data itself. Interviews were initially recorded in oral form using a tape-recorder, and these recordings were later transcribed verbatim for analysis. The researcher's familiarity with the community and practitioners further eased communication and rapport-building. Given the centrality of language to both the data and the data-collection process, meticulous attention was paid to the phrasing and structure of the semi-structured interview questions to ensure they were culturally and linguistically appropriate.

3.7. Reflexivity

Reflexivity, as highlighted by Haynes (2012), plays a crucial role in enhancing the rigour and trustworthiness of qualitative research. It serves as a methodological tool that illuminates the subjective influences on the research outcomes, fostering a deeper understanding of the interactions between the researcher and the subject matter. This research incorporates reflexivity to acknowledge and address the potential impacts of the researcher's background, biases, and interactions on the study's findings.

The researcher's extensive experience working with refugees and asylum seekers through organisations such as UNHCR and Bosco in New Delhi has provided a profound understanding of the contexts and challenges faced by these communities. As a trained psychologist specialising in clinical psychology, the researcher possesses the necessary skills to handle sensitive information and situations with care and empathy. This background has equipped the

researcher to approach the research subjects with an informed and sensitive perspective, enhancing the depth and relevance of the interactions and interpretations.

Acknowledging the influence of one's positionality on research engagement and interpretation is vital (Ritchie & Lewis, 2013). The researcher's prior experiences and specialised training have undoubtedly shaped the approach to and understanding of the study subject. Therefore, engaging in reflexivity is not just a methodological preference but a necessity to ensure the integrity and depth of the research (Kasket, 2012). Reflecting on one's values, assumptions, feelings, and behaviour is critical to understanding how these elements influence the research process and outcomes (Cunliffe, 2009).

In line with this, the researcher maintained reflective notes throughout the research process. This journal served as a tool for continuous self-examination, enabling the researcher to critically assess the influence of personal biases, experiences, and interactions on the research. By documenting reflections on the research process, decisions, and interactions, the researcher aimed to clarify the role played in the research and any potential influences on the findings (Ratner, 2002). This practice of reflexivity not only enhances the transparency and trustworthiness of the research but also enables readers to understand and evaluate the extent to which the researcher's background and reflections have shaped the research process and outcomes.

3.8.Methodological Implications of COVID-19

The exigencies of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated significant methodological adaptations in the conduct of this research. The impossibility of face-to-face interviews due to public health restrictions led to the utilisation of virtual platforms like Zoom and Google Meets

for data collection. This transition, although not part of the initial research design, became indispensable to continue the research process amidst global lockdowns and social distancing measures.

Despite the adaptability of these technologies, they introduced new complexities to the qualitative research process. Establishing a rapport, an essential element in eliciting rich, qualitative data, presented unforeseen challenges in a virtual setting. As Rodriguez et al (2022) articulate, the absence of physical co-presence may result in a diminished emotional engagement, which could potentially compromise the depth of trust and intimacy that face-to-face interactions facilitate.

Additionally, the transition to digital mediums brought about concerns of data security, requiring heightened vigilance against potential breaches. Technical glitches and the proficiency needed for effective audio-video data handling added layers of complication to the researcher's responsibilities.

These methodological implications of the COVID-19 pandemic have stressed the need for qualitative researchers to be agile and innovative in their approach. It has also highlighted the criticality of developing robust digital engagement strategies that can uphold the integrity of the research process while navigating the challenges posed by such unprecedented global disruptions. Considering these, the researcher followed the some of the recommendations by Gray et.al (2020), namely those below:

1) *Tested Zoom Ahead of Interviews:* Zoom was rigorously tested with a colleague to troubleshoot any potential technical issues. Guidance was also provided for participants

who were unfamiliar with the application or had special requirements, e.g. needed to download the application to their phones. Audio volume was also tested before and during each interview to ensure clarity.

2) ***Provided Technical Information:*** Participants were given specific information about participating in a Zoom interview through the study information letter. This included options for devices they could use, required audio and visual capabilities, and the option of using a headset with a microphone.

3) ***Backup Plan:*** A pre-arranged backup plan was in place for participants in case of technical difficulties or other disturbances, which was to continue to discussion through a mobile call. Participants were reminded at the start of the Zoom interview that they would be phoned if problems arose.

4) ***Planned for Distractions:*** The interview guide was designed to account for time taken up by possible distractions, as participants could be in various settings like their home, car, or a public place. Additional interview time was also allocated to accommodate for unexpected delays.

5) ***Provided a Direct Link to Meeting:*** A live link to the Zoom meeting was pasted into the email invitation sent to study participants. This allowed participants to enter the online interview with one click.

6) ***Ensured Uninterrupted Internet Connection:*** Other devices connected to the researcher's Internet provider were unhooked during the interview, including Wi-Fi on cellphones and tablets.

7) ***Created a Visual Reminder:*** A visual cue was used to remind the researcher to press record at the start of each interview. Consent to record was confirmed from the participant before proceeding.

8) ***Managed Consent Processes:*** Before each interview began, the information letter and consent form were reviewed, even if they had been previously signed and returned. Participants were invited to ask questions, and their verbal consent was recorded separately from the interview itself.

4. Findings

4.1. Introduction to Findings

This thesis, through qualitative inquiry, reflects upon five main themes from the transcribed interviews, subsequently branching into nineteen emergent subthemes. The categorisation of ideas provides a structural narrative to the findings, to better captures the multifaceted experiences of refugees, traversing the trajectory from their homeland to New Delhi.

The ensuing discussion will present these main findings, leveraging direct quotations, data, and visual aids to provide a lucid and grounded response to the research questions. The themes will be revisited in subsequent chapters, positioning them within a wider theoretical framework, thus enabling a comprehensive discourse on the complex tapestry of urban refugee life in New Delhi.

Crucially, however, it is important to note there is, invariably, a significant overlapping in the nature of the sub-themes, owing to the reality that the phenomena being observed in this study cannot be neatly compartmentalised in all cases. There is, in short, thematic interplay, with its inherent overlaps, which is a testament to the entangled nature of challenges and experiences faced by refugees. Many of the ideas picked up in a certain sub-theme naturally have relevance for others, and should be taken in combination to highlight their cumulative impact on the refugee journey.

Figure 3:   **OVERVIEW OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS AND SUB-THEMES**
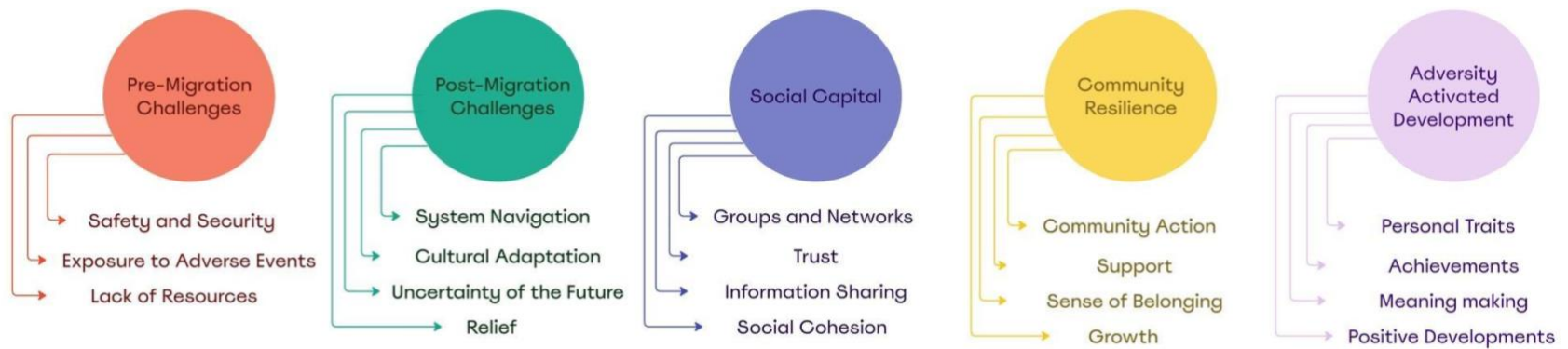
Figure 3 - Overview of thematic analysis Key findings and sub-themes

4.2. Pre-Migration Challenges

The first major theme identified from initial clusters of the thematic analysis is Pre-migration challenges, referring to the refugees and asylum seekers' account of experiences in their home country during the pre-displacement phase. This core theme has been divided into 3 sub-themes that emerged, as visualised below:

Figure 4:   **STRUCTURE OF SUB-THEMES UNDER PRE-MIGRATION CHALLENGES**

Figure 4 - Structure of sub-themes under pre-migration challenges

4.2.1.   Exposure to Adverse Events

Exposure to Adverse Events, represents the actualisation of the threats implicated in the safety and security sub-theme that follows. This theme captures the direct experiences of violence, trauma, and loss that individuals endure, including physical harm, displacement, and the witnessing of atrocities. These events are concrete manifestations of the latent threats that loom within their original environments, marking pivotal moments that often precipitate the urgent need to flee. "Exposure to Adverse Events" denotes critical incidents that crystallise these

threats into tangible experiences of harm and loss, often marking a turning point in the lives of affected individuals.

This theme therefore explores the intricate and often harrowing experiences that refugees and asylum seekers encounter prior to their migration. In doing so, it looks at the complex psychological and emotional landscape that refugees navigate, often as a result of life-altering events that have long-lasting impacts. Papadopoulos' conceptualisation of trauma is particularly relevant here, trauma is not just an individual psychological condition but a phenomenon with diverse contributing factors and consequences that extend beyond psychology and psychiatry. It evokes emotional responses and shapes perceptions, identities, and discourses within broader socio-political contexts (Papadopoulos, 2013). The theme encompasses a broad spectrum of experiences, ranging from direct threats to family, to systemic issues like economic hardship and societal corruption. These adverse events serve as critical push factors that compel individuals to make the difficult decision to leave their home countries. The narratives from the participants in this study offer a look into the multifaceted nature of these challenges, providing valuable insights into the lived experiences of refugees before they embark on their migration journey.

"There are some family where they took their property like this. You have been living there, for example, for generation to generation, many years. One couple of days, you see, someone came and claimed your land, said that, no, it's not your property. Even you protest or you go to the courts don't hope that you will win. No, it's not possible. There is a lot of corruption. Only those who have power, they are the one who have money. There is high rate of poverty" (Nathalie)

Nathalie's account paints a vivid picture of the economic and systemic challenges that individuals face in Congo before migrating. The narrative is particularly striking for its emphasis on the role of power dynamics in shaping life chances. When the participant says, "*Even you protest or you go to the courts don't hope that you will win*" it encapsulates the sense of powerlessness in the face of an adverse event.

This entrenched inequality is compounded by the participant's account of property rights violations, which echoes the broader notion of corruption and legal failure. Such systemic issues not only drive economic hardship but also erode the rule of law, prompting individuals to seek out societies where justice and economic stability are more attainable.

> *"You have to help your soldiers to infiltrate the rebels or to lead them to where rebels are living so that they can kill them. For me, it was not only risky, but I was not assigned, I didn't assign to this kind of activities. And I said, no, I'm here to help all the villages and I'm a humanitarian. What I'm doing here, the water not only for villages, even you soldiers, you can get the water. So why should you get involved in this military operation? And that was the beginning of the programme. So I've been accused of wrongly, like I'm working with the rebels, I'm not helping the government. All of this happened and then they start killing me. I ran away and then they got all my information, where I've been living, my parents and everything."*
> *(Karim)*

Karim's experience in the Congo highlights the ethical quandaries faced by humanitarian workers, whose dedication to neutrality puts them at odds with military factions. Their story, similar to the dilemmas described by other participants, highlight the kinds of adversity faced

by aid workers (both personal safety and integrity) in conflict zones. This account broadens the scope of pre-migration challenges, showing that migration is not only about seeking safety but also about maintaining ethical principles when these are threatened.

> *"So they believed that because of all this, there was a lot of centralisation in Cameroon. So Cameroonians, or the English Cameroonians, decided that they should have a situation from the first time that it was advocated. That is how the violence escalated, and it became resorted to a civil war. So as a result of that civil war is what transpired (Nathalie)*

Nathalie's testimony sheds light on the intricate dynamics between governance issues and civil unrest, detailing how power centralisation in Cameroon ignited escalating tensions that led to civil war. This account emphasises the complexity of challenges refugees confront prior to migration, painting a picture of adversity that is multi-layered and rooted in long-standing political issues.

Further, the narrative illustrates that a civil war is not merely an isolated incident but the culmination of compounded governance failures. This perspective deepens our grasp of the 'exposure to adverse events' theme, demonstrating that such events are often the tipping point after prolonged systemic dysfunction. The decision to migrate, as depicted by the participant, emerges as a final bid for safety, underscoring the dire consequences of systemic failures for the lives of individuals and the fabric of communities.

> *"Discrimination against women in Afghanistan, and it's not only by people, it also comes from, I would say, the religion and the community…when it comes to*

doing certain things which people have to follow, they have no rights. Basically, I would say, the lack of rights. People are not able to have their expression express what they feel. Or you can say, for example, LGBTQ community also, people were not I mean, for them it was a disease or kind of it was regarded as a disease or disgrace, something that is not there in Islam and people cannot practise." (Participant 2)

The quote brings to light the experiences faced by vulnerable groups in Afghanistan, highlighting the systemic discrimination faced by women and the LGBTQ community, and their daily exposure to many forms of violence. This discrimination, deeply rooted in societal, religious, and community norms, manifests as a significant adverse effect, stripping individuals of their basic rights and freedoms, including the right to express themselves and live authentically. This narrative is a stark illustration of how exposure to adverse effects extends beyond physical threats to encompass the denial of identity and expression. The specific mention of the LGBTQ community's struggles, regarded as a "disease or disgrace," highlights the severe societal and psychological adverse effects stemming from such discrimination. This perception not only alienates and isolates individuals but also subjects them to potential harm, both mentally and physically, reinforcing the cycle of trauma and adversity.

Adversity is not an isolated event but a pervasive experience that affects multiple facets of life, including mental health, social relationships, and even physical well-being. The importance of this theme lies in its ability to shed light on the multi-dimensional nature of adversity, which is deeply embedded in the socio-cultural and political contexts that refugees find themselves in.

"You probably hear it in the news about the issues that women face in Afghanistan, we are nobody there, our rights or wishes don't matter, we cannot protest against these issues, we are just things." (Karim)

Karim's statement reveals the severe marginalisation of women in Afghanistan, encapsulating their experience with the stark reality of being treated as inanimate objects. This dehumanisation speaks to a broader societal issue where women's rights and voices are systematically disregarded, reflecting Papadopoulos' insights on trauma as deeply embedded in the socio-cultural context. The participant's words echo the collective suffering of women in such oppressive environments, where the inability to protest or seek change further perpetuates their sense of adversity. This reinforces the call for systemic change, to shift the cultural narratives that perpetuate gender-based oppression and to create spaces where women's rights are acknowledged and upheld.

"I lost my elder sister, prior to that my younger brother and the others, we got separated because it was a rush that same day, and it was very quick when we had a loud scream. And the scream was all about the military coming into the neighbourhood and shooting all the things. In that kind of a scenario, you don't look for your brother, don't look for your sister. You just run in, and then you come to a point where you ask him, oh, when you run until you feel safe, then you start looking for the other people." (Nathalie)

The participant's harrowing tale captures the chaos and heartbreak of losing loved ones amidst military incursions, a reality for many in conflict zones. This account vividly depicts the instantaneous need for survival that can tragically lead to family separations.

Echoing Papadopoulos' insights on the relational aspects of trauma and adversity, this narrative illustrates the deep psychological impact of such violent disruptions. The forced prioritisation of personal safety over familial bonds during crisis speaks to the dual nature of trauma in these settings, it is both an intensely personal and a shared community experience. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the journey to healing and recovery is ongoing, and the scars of adversity may never fully fade away. This demonstrates the importance of providing comprehensive support and resources to refugees and asylum seekers.

4.2.2. *Safety and Security*

During Pre- Migration, refugees and asylum seekers endure a severe sense of insecurity and lack of safety, due to the exposure of conflict. The role that this plays in contributing to a sense of insecurity cannot be overstated.

While the previous theme highlights the actual manifestation of adverse events and experiences that undermines the psychological well-being and stability of communities, "Safety & Security" recognises that the omnipresent threat of violence that pervades the daily lives of individuals within conflict-affected regions. Both themes are intricately linked, making them distinctly impactful. The continuous threat of violence under the theme of "Safety & Security" creates a backdrop of fear and instability, influencing daily decisions and quality of life. Together, these themes underscore the complex interplay between the anticipation of violence and its direct impact, both of which are central to understanding the motivations behind migration and the subsequent challenges faced by refugees in urban settings like New Delhi

Participants who had fled Afghanistan due to various security reasons, mentioned that this is one of the main reasons to leave Afghanistan. According to them those who were politically aligned with the Taliban were safe but those who were working with any western alliances or were protesting the Taliban regime (in areas of the country that were in de facto control of the Taliban) were threatened in various ways. Some participants suggested there was no other way to feel safe, than to leave Afghanistan.

"we left Afghanistan because we had security issues there. That's why we fled our country and came to India. in Afghanistan, actually, my sister's life were in danger because, in Afghanistan as the government is there, but still there are people who are in power. So they can do anything they want. So even government authorities cannot help. So, there were few group of people who wanted to marry one of my sister because, the guy was very aged and he was very powerful. He wanted to forcefully marry her." (Farid)

Farid's experience reveals the deep-seated power imbalances in Afghanistan, in which civilian safety and rights were regularly undermined. The threat of forced marriage to the participant's sister exemplifies the acute personal risks faced, particularly by women, and the inadequacy of state protection. This narrative demonstrates how migration can become a forced choice based on the need to seek safety and autonomy when one's homeland fails to provide security or uphold justice.

Naveed below, discussed how she and her family left due to her husband working for an American company, for which he was being sent death threats causing her husband to quit his job and resulting in his inability to provide for the family.

"My family and I left Afghanistan after my husband was being sent death threats to stop working for an American company. After that we almost fully stopped going outside in fear of his life. Since he had to stop working we were in a very bad condition for even basic things such as food." (Naveed)

Naveed's experience shows a grim reality where threats to safety coupled with lack of resources, can lead to or exacerbate economic distress. The coercion her husband faced for his association with a Western company resulted in a both threats of danger and a perilous financial predicament, echoing the oppressive power dynamics faced by Naveed. These accounts articulate that migration is often a compelled decision, a confluence of threats to personal well-being and livelihood.

"Many days I would just cry, I could not eat or sleep, I was worried for my children, for my husband, we were all in that state all the time, it was very difficult emotionally." (Naveed)

Naveed's candid words bring to light the profound emotional distress that underpins the pre-migration experience. The visceral image of days filled with tears is a potent illustration of the psychological impact of living in constant fear, a subject often sidelined in discussions of migration yet extensively noted in trauma research (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010).

The participant's narrative extends beyond individual suffering, reflecting the collective anguish of a family unit in crisis. Such family-centric adversity accentuates the compounded emotional adversity that accompanies the more visible challenges of pre-migration,

contributing to the overall sense of hardship that necessitates the pursuit of safety and stability through migration.

> *"So, the whole issue is related to a very bad situation where one after the other, we noticed that teachers and school owners were being kidnapped from one teacher to another, to a school owner to another" (Nathalie)*

Nathalie's narrative reveals a distressing pattern of kidnappings targeting educational leaders, a tactic that destabilises both personal security and educational infrastructure. This systematic violence against educators disrupts not only individual lives but also the fabric of community and knowledge, resonating with themes of targeted aggression in conflict research (Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

In tandem with accounts from Afghanistan, Nathalie's experience underscores the broader implications of security threats on societal stability. The collective narratives highlight migration as a defensive strategy against the collapse of vital community pillars, seeking out safer havens where social structures and personal safety are intact.

> *"The challenges we were facing in Afghanistan, it was, uh, technically, uh, domestic violence, from, my paternal uncle. And, the reason, reason that nobody could help us, not Afghanistan government even the police authorities or nobody in there. Since, we couldn't find any help the only thing which we had was to accept whatever he was saying. overall problem was the also the lack of governments, power to control the situation. There was always suicide, bombings, attacks, assassinations and uh, nobody could do anything about it. Even the government was also helpless.*

It was always like 2 governments going side by side. And even like with our case also what happened was when we, we asked to try to take help from government, the government, uh, said that we cannot do anything about him because he has powerful links with Taliban. If we do something, he will easily assassinate any one of us." (Roya)

In Afghanistan, Roya's experience underscores a systemic collapse of state mechanisms where, depending on the province, even the vestiges of government authority were rendered ineffectual in the face of an insurgency. In such a context, and given other non-state actors besides the Taliban, it created a climate in which the rule of law was often supplanted by the rule of the gun. The resultant governance vacuum necessitates compliance with the dictates of the powerful, often under duress, and justifies the decision to seek refuge.

"I came to India because of some situation which was happening to my country, especially in the east part of the country, which is called the Capital City of South Kiva. So I used to work as a humanitarian in different villages of my country with one NGO. It was an international organisation which was called PIN, means people in need…The government used to have this military operation with rebels and all. And most of the time, whenever they are fighting, people get killed" (Bernard)

In the context of the DRC, Bernard's account delineates the fraught nature of humanitarian work within the theatre of armed conflict. The explicit advisories to NGO workers about the imminence of risk shows a grim reality where the state's protective functions are abdicated. Such conditions necessitate a recalibration of personal risk thresholds and, ultimately, substantiate the recourse to migration as a rational response to systemic insecurity and the

dereliction of state responsibility. Nathalie's experience below further highlights safety and security risks which leave them feeling threatened.

"So, the whole issue is related to a very bad situation where one after the other, we noticed that teachers and school owners were being kidnapped from one teacher to another, to a school owner to another" (Nathalie)

Nathalie highlights a disturbing pattern of abductions in the educational sector, an issue that not only threatens individual security but also seeks to destabilise the reliability of basic services such as education. This systematic targeting of educators reveals a tactic of warfare that extends beyond physical violence to encompass psychological terror and social disruption. The literature recognises such targeted violence as a means to undermine community fabric and governance structures (Mazurana et al., 2013), painting a grim picture of the societal breakdown that precedes the flight of refugees. These kidnappings, by eroding educational stability, suggest a deliberate undermining of social cohesion and community development. Nathalie's experiences contribute to a broader discourse on pre-migration challenges, illustrating how the perpetuation of insecurity by both state and non-state actors catalyses migration. The narrative demonstrates the critical need for safeguarding educational institutions as bastions against the collapse of civil society. However, as we will see from Naveed's experiences below, financial stressors and the threat of the Taliban put them into such a state of fear, that it permeates down to the very safety of their basic physiological needs being met.

"After my husband lost his job, we were scared to go out due to the threats he received. We have seen many cases where the Taliban have killed people for not

listening to them. We did not want that to happen to us. We were struggling for even

basic things like food. It was hard to even feed our children, thankfully my mother

and father helped us as much as they could. I used to cry to her at all times, saying

what has happened to our condition" (Naveed)

Naveed's experience delineates a convergence of economic hardship and security threats that typify pre-migration stressors. The loss of employment, compounded by Taliban intimidation, not only strained resources but also instilled a persistent state of fear, underlining the intersection of financial and psychological distress documented in the literature on conflict-affected populations (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). This narrative illuminates the role of familial support as a crucial yet insufficient buffer against the multifaceted adversities leading to migration. It embodies the acute challenges faced when adversity impinges on the most fundamental necessities of life, propelling individuals towards migration as a means of securing safety and sustenance.

" We could not do anything except accept our fate, the best we could do is

to leave and hope that we can at least save our lives" (Roya)

Roya's reflection reveals the desperation that drives the decision to migrate. The resignation to 'accept our fate' highlights the extremities of a situation where agency is stripped away, compelling individuals to view migration as the sole avenue for survival, a narrative well-documented in forced migration studies (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). This sentiment of hope, interlaced with urgency, emphasises the act of migration as a critical lifeline. It signifies not only a quest for safety but an act of defiance against the conditions that threaten existence. The

narrative conveys the stark reality of pre-migration: a juncture where the erosion of governance and the lack of safety nets render migration a necessity, not a choice.

The narratives from the participants reveal a complex and harrowing landscape of pre-migration challenges centred around safety and security. These accounts span from targeted violence and kidnappings to systemic issues like power imbalances and the inability of formal institutions to provide protection. The testimonies serve as a reminder that the decision to migrate is often a last resort, driven by an array of insurmountable challenges that make staying in one's home country untenable. Whether it is the threat of forced marriage, targeted kidnappings, or the perils of humanitarian work in conflict zones, these accounts indicate the significant impact of these pre-migration challenges on individuals' lives. They also highlight the resilience and courage it takes to make the difficult decision to leave one's home in search of safety and a better future.

4.2.3. Lack of Resources

The theme "Lack of Resources" illuminates that resources go beyond financial or economic assets and include critical protective resources - access to healthcare, education, safe housing, and legal structures. These are essential for the security, well-being, and future potential of those compelled to leave their homes. This expansive view of resources emphasises the interconnection with other pre-migration themes, recognising that while economic factors alone do not qualify individuals for refugee status under UNHCR criteria, they significantly intensify other recognised grounds for seeking refuge (Economic Migrant, n.d.).

Resource scarcity not only magnifies vulnerabilities linked to safety, security, and exposure to adverse events but also deepens existing societal inequalities, notably affecting gender

dynamics. For instance, narratives from Afghan participants shed light on the systemic discrimination and marginalisation of women, illustrating how limited access to education and employment perpetuates dependency and undermines female autonomy and societal participation. This systemic disenfranchisement necessitates a closer look at the interplay between gender and displacement, urging the adoption of inclusive policies that address the unique barriers women face in accessing resources and participating fully in society.

Moreover, economic stability is highlighted as a critical foundation for the development of secure and resilient communities. Refugee narratives unveil the increased vulnerability to exploitation and radicalisation amid unemployment and financial insecurity, pointing to the urgent need to address resource deficits. Alleviating these deficiencies calls for a unified, multi-sectoral approach that involves governments, humanitarian organisations, and community initiatives. Such efforts should aim to ensure equitable access to resources, opportunities, and rights, thereby enhancing the resilience and self-reliance of displaced populations and supporting their capacity for independent decision-making.

> *"We were living in a province called Kandahar, there people in mosque (some representative from Taliban), they started speaking at the mosque prayer saying that, people should join hands and join Taliban in order to fight against infidel status, the foreign forces. So, they wanted my brother to join the Taliban. My sister's life was in danger, as well as my brother. So, my father decided that we cannot do anything, even if we report to authorities." (Farid).*

Farid's account from Kandahar, Afghanistan, reveals the coercive tactics employed by the Taliban, transforming spaces of worship into forums for forced recruitment. The dual threat to their siblings – a brother pressured to join the Taliban and a sister's life endangered –

exemplifies the intimate impact of the Taliban's reach on families, leaving them with no recourse to local authorities. This experience highlights the lack of protective resources available to those under the shadow of the Taliban, where the authorities offer no refuge, compelling families to flee. The decision to migrate, fraught with its own challenges, becomes the only path to safeguarding their future, underscoring a desperate escape from an environment devoid of security or support.

"Without a job and money, my husband had no other option but to sit at home, how long can we live on savings, they had to run out at some point and Afghanistan is not like other countries where women can work so I could not work either" *(Naveed)*

Naveed illuminates the grim economic reality in Afghanistan, where unemployment and gender norms create a dual barrier to family stability. With the male head of the household jobless and cultural restrictions preventing the participant from seeking employment, their financial reserves inch closer to depletion, leaving them in a precarious situation. This narrative not only reflects the financial scarcity but also the societal constraints that exacerbate it, highlighting the urgent need for change to enable both genders to support their families. The family's story is a testament to the hardships that drive the search for a new life where employment and equality are more accessible.

"In Afghanistan, mainly people face discrimination for example, a big discrimination for women. Women are not given their respect that they belong to. There is always a stereotype that they, are supposed to do their work at home and they cannot get educated. They should not go out. So the first thing is the

discrimination against women in Afghanistan. It's not only by the people, it also comes from, I would say the religion and the community, the belief of people. I would also say that the, the challenges, the community, like my community we're facing was lack of education, lack of awareness about certain things, for example about the role of male and female and many other things where people, they don't have knowledge and they take law in their hand when it comes to punishing people or when it comes to doing certain things which people have to follow." (Farid)

Farid's account from Afghanistan emphasises deep-seated discrimination against women, rooted in societal and cultural norms that limit their public roles and access to education. This systemic bias is intertwined with religious and communal beliefs, reinforcing gender inequality. The lack of educational resources or informational resources is identified as a key factor in perpetuating gender roles and social injustices, illustrating how societal issues extend beyond economic deprivation to include the fundamental right to knowledge and equality. This deprivation significantly contributes to the marginalisation of women and the entrenchment of discriminatory practices.

"The challenges we faced in Congo was it was first economical issue, financial issues. You know, in Congo, if you are not part of those people who have power, you cannot get a good job first. You will not get a good job. That is injustice." (Emmanuel)

The participant's reflection on life in Congo captures a grim reality of systemic economic and social inequities. Access to employment is starkly influenced by one's position within the power hierarchy, rendering quality jobs inaccessible to those lacking influence. This exclusion

not only fosters a cycle of poverty but also entrenches a deep-seated sense of injustice among those marginalised. This account sheds light on the broader implications of resource scarcity, encompassing the denial of both material wealth and prospects for societal mobility, perpetuating entrenched cycles of inequality and societal stagnation.

"How can our children go to school for the longest of time, and then these children are not able to get a job because they can't speak French. Now, many of them try to adapt, go to French speaking environment, learn the language, but yet, because they don't have a surname, which is French, they still cannot get into the system. So these are some of the marginalisations or some of the difficulties that we had been part of the English system." (Nathalie)

The narrative from this participant draws a connection to the earlier discussions of systemic discrimination, where linguistic barriers present yet another facet of societal exclusion. Despite educational attainment and efforts to assimilate, non-French surnames become a symbol of marginalisation, reflecting entrenched cultural biases that hinder employment and social integration. This echoes the sentiments of Farid from Afghanistan and Nathalie from Congo, where socio-cultural constructs (whether based on gender, power, or language) serve as gatekeepers to opportunity and equality. The term "marginalisation" encapsulates the broader struggle against ingrained prejudices, underlining the need for systemic change to ensure inclusivity and equal opportunities for all, regardless of background.

"Now it created conflicts between communities, different communities and it has disturbed the security and activities. There's no farming anymore, there's no school, hospital clothes many Congolese run away living in neighbourhood countries such

as Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi just because in this part of the country the war is

going on and it has been there for years now, for decades and nothing can change

it. This is the situation." (Emmanuel)

The participant's account describes a distressing situation where protracted conflict has eroded the fabric of community life and importantly access to basic services such as education and healthcare – central resources to any individuals wellbeing. The reference to "conflicts between communities" highlights the divisive impact of sustained warfare on social cohesion. As a result, essential services and agricultural practices have ceased, underscoring the conflict's pervasive impact on daily life and stability.

The situation described is a stark illustration of how conflict not only disrupts immediate security but also dismantles the infrastructure necessary for a community's survival and well-being, leading to a cycle of displacement and insecurity. It's a powerful example of how the effects of war extend beyond the battlefield, pervading every aspect of civilian life and necessitating international attention and aid to break the cycle of violence and instability.

In closing, the narratives from Afghanistan and the Congo converge on a central theme: the impact of resource scarcity on individuals and communities. These stories reveal how the absence of economic opportunities, educational facilities, and stable infrastructure creates a cascade of adversities that extend beyond material deprivation. They depict a world where systemic inequities, discrimination, and conflict strip individuals of their agency, dignity, and security. The resulting exodus is not merely a quest for better economic prospects but a flight towards safety, autonomy, and the fundamental human right to lead a life with potential for personal and communal growth. These accounts collectively call for a holistic approach to

refugee support, one that addresses the intricate web of needs that arise from the devastating impact of resource scarcity.

4.3. Post-Migration Facets

The theme of post-migration facets encapsulates the multifaceted experiences and hurdles that refugees and asylum seekers encounter upon their arrival in New Delhi, India. This critical juncture in their journey marks a transition from fleeing perilous conditions in their home countries to confronting a new set of challenges in the host country. The theme is dissected into 4 sub-themes: System Navigation, Cultural Adaptation, Uncertainty of the Future, and Relief, each delving into specific aspects of their post-migration experience.

This transition phase is laden with uncertainty and adaptation, as refugees strive to establish a semblance of normalcy in an environment starkly different from what they left behind. The process of System Navigation becomes a pivotal aspect of their journey, requiring them to decipher and engage with complex asylum procedures and legal frameworks, often without adequate guidance or information. Cultural Adaptation, on the other hand, necessitates a revaluation and adjustment of their social and cultural practices, as they attempt to bridge the gap between their heritage and the norms of the host society. The themes of Uncertainty of the Future and Relief further examine into the emotional and psychological dimensions of their experience, highlighting the constant oscillation between anxiety for the future and the solace found in moments of stability and support.

Collectively, these sub-themes paint a comprehensive picture of the post-migration landscape, illustrating the resilience and tenacity required to navigate the myriad challenges and uncertainties that define this phase of their journey.

Figure 5:   **STRUCTURE OF SUB-THEMES UNDER POST-MIGRATION FACETS**
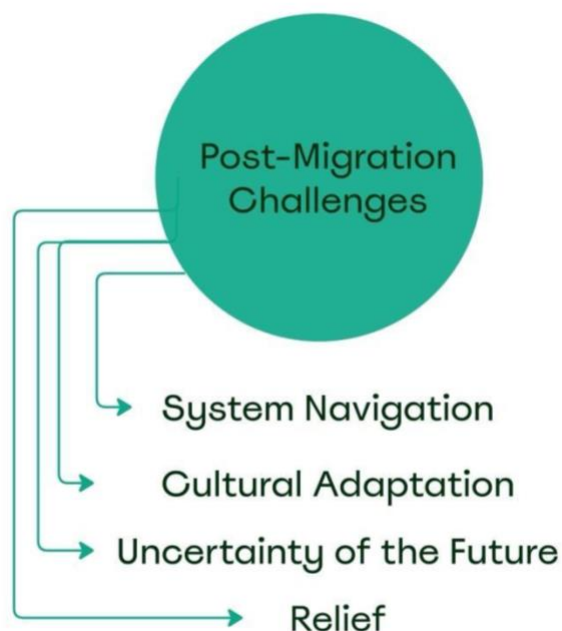
Figure 5 - Structure of sub-themes under post-migration challenges

4.3.1. System Navigation

The first theme, System Navigation, focusses on the complexities and difficulties associated with navigating the asylum system in a new country. Refugees often find themselves in unfamiliar territory, grappling with bureaucratic procedures, language barriers, and a lack of clear guidance. This phase is crucial as it lays the foundation for their future in the host country, influencing their access to essential services, legal status, and overall well-being.

The importance of this theme cannot be overstated, as it directly impacts the refugees' ability to rebuild their lives and integrate into the host society. The challenges encountered during this phase can have lasting effects, shaping their perceptions of the host country and their

place within it. Furthermore, the theme also highlights the resilience and resourcefulness of the refugees as they navigate these hurdles, often with limited resources and support.

> *"After coming to a new country, we were very lost, we did not know what to do, we had arrived in India leaving everything, there is no one place to go where they tell you what you have to do. I had some Afghans then tell me that I had to go to UNHCR and get ourselves registered for asylum and they* will help, then we have to wait for refugee status, it's a process with a lot of waiting" (Naveed)

The experience described by Naveed is a common narrative among refugees who find themselves in unfamiliar territories. The feeling of being "very lost" extends beyond physical dislocation; it encompasses the emotional and psychological state of uncertainty and the lack of clear direction in a new environment. The absence of a structured system or a welcoming committee to guide refugees through the necessary legal and social processes exacerbates the sense of disorientation, particularly in low and middle income countries. The narrative highlights a critical gap in the host country's support mechanisms for refugees, suggesting a need for more robust, streamlined processes that can provide clarity and reduce the psychological strain associated with the uncertainty of asylum procedures. The experience of Naveed emphasises the importance of establishing comprehensive support systems that address both the logistical and emotional needs of refugees as they navigate the complexities of resettlement and integration.

> *"I never knew as a refugee, I'm entitled to at least a case worker. So most of these things. Just getting to know about this helps.: (Nathalie)*

The discovery of entitlement to a case worker, as articulated by a refugee, is indicative of the uncertainty that permeates the post-displacement experience. Unawareness of such support mechanisms exacerbates the precariousness of their situation, hindering their ability to navigate the complexities of life as a refugee. A case worker's role in providing essential guidance and advocacy is fundamental, yet the initial lack of this knowledge is indicative of the systemic information gaps that prevail. Being informed not only facilitates access to necessary services but also contributes significantly to psychological stability by reducing the unpredictability of their circumstances. Ensuring that refugees are aware of and can claim their rights is a crucial step towards mitigating the inherent uncertainty of their futures and fostering a sense of agency.

> *"We had my mothers distant relatives who helped us when we came to New Delhi, they told us to go to UNHCR, to register and then to BOSCO for the services provided there. My mother was a single mother so she needed help and guidance to find a house, to enrol us in school, medical care etc"* (Roya)

Roya's recounting underlines the critical role that community, familial support, and local NGOs play in the resettlement experience for refugees. The guidance from distant relatives in navigating the refugee registration process and essential services was invaluable, particularly for a single mother tasked with establishing stability for her family in a new environment. This reinforces the notion that while official channels like UNHCR are fundamental, the support from personal networks can be equally crucial in addressing the multifaceted needs of refugees. These experiences advocate for a holistic approach to refugee assistance that integrates formal aid with the nurturing support of community ties.

"You don't realise it is a long process to get registration, apply for asylum and then wait for refugee status" (Farid)

Farid's insight reveals the lengthy and complex journey of seeking asylum, a process that extends far beyond initial registration. The protracted wait for refugee status, fraught with uncertainty, often stands in stark contrast to the urgent circumstances from which refugees have fled. The prolonged asylum procedure not only delays the resettlement but can also intensify the psychological distress for those in limbo. This underlines the importance of more efficient systems and better communication from authorities to alleviate the strain of this waiting period, allowing refugees to move forward with rebuilding their lives with certainty and support.

"Choosing the right house for us was a big challenge because every house had their own rent, their own agreement, their own way of paying the rent. For example, advance. We never had this thing in Afghanistan because you know one another" (Karim)

Karim's narrative touches on the complexities of housing for refugees, where navigating rental agreements in a new country can be an additional stressor. Accustomed to the trust-based transactions of their homeland, refugees must adapt to different, often more formalised rental practices that can exacerbate financial challenges. This account reflects the broader difficulties of economic assimilation for refugees, who must learn to manoeuvre through unfamiliar financial landscapes without the cushion of established social networks. It highlights the critical role of support systems in aiding refugees with housing, financial literacy, and integration into the local economy, facilitating a smoother transition into their new communities.

"The big challenge was there because of the communication barrier. Not only to study from Chennai, but also in Delhi. I was facing this problem and on that time also I was going to Bosco school, English school." (Emmanuel)

The participant's recounting highlights the communication hurdles faced in post-migration life, where language barriers impede not just educational advancement but also everyday interactions. Despite efforts like attending an English school to improve language skills, the challenges persist, affecting various aspects of integration into new communities in Chennai and Delhi. This account underlines the critical need for language support systems that are tailored to help refugees navigate their new environments effectively. Comprehensive language programmes play a pivotal role in enabling refugees to access services, engage with their communities, and pursue educational and professional opportunities, ultimately aiding in their socio-cultural adaptation and empowerment.

"Another challenge is that sometimes, many times they think that we are involved in some illegal activities. Because there are what I can say other African national, they are calling us Nigerian. Nigerian, they are doing bad things. But many people, they don't know that in Africa there are manyIf for example refugee got an opportunity to teach French, for example, somewhere they may ask him for bank account. Yeah, with refugee document we are not able to have a bank account. It's not possible with our refugee document. Not possible." (Emmanuel)

The participant's words convey the struggles with discrimination and systemic restrictions that refugees commonly face. They point out the stigmatization stemming from the conflation of

their identity with negative stereotypes associated with others, particularly the Nigerian community, which can lead to social isolation and limited job prospects.

Additionally, the participant notes institutional barriers, such as the inability to open bank accounts with refugee documents, which directly impede the pursuit of economic independence and employment. This barrier not only limits refugees' ability to teach and earn but also contributes to their financial precarity. The narrative calls for policy reforms that recognise refugees' potential contributions and adapt financial regulations to facilitate their integration and autonomy.

> *"I will try to help those kids from one family to get admitted in government school. In Chattarpur, it was so challenging. They were not accepted. They told them to go to private. So private also it's so challenging because of financial issues." (Bernard)*

The participant's efforts to secure schooling for refugee children in Chattarpur, an area in New Delhi, illuminates the educational barriers within public systems and the financial constraints that complicate access to private schools. The rejection from government schools and the consequent push towards private education are indicative of systemic issues that exacerbate educational inequity for refugee families. This account underscores the urgent need for educational policies that ensure all children, including those of refugee families, have equal access to quality education. Addressing these barriers is crucial not only for the integration and future self-reliance of refugees but also for upholding their basic rights and fostering inclusive communities.

In conclusion, system navigation presents a formidable challenge to refugees who must acquaint themselves with complex new bureaucratic landscapes while grappling with the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic nuances of their host countries. Moreover, the stigma and discrimination faced by refugees, particularly from African nations, as they are often wrongly associated with illegal activities, further exacerbate their plight, and hinder their ability to integrate and contribute to the host community.

4.3.2. Cultural Adaptation

Cultural adaptation is a multifaceted process that refugees navigate when integrating into a new society such as New Delhi. It involves significant psychological and social adjustments, requiring not only personal change but also acceptance from the host community.

Essential for well-being and integration, cultural adaptation affects language acquisition, social interaction, and the understanding of different societal structures. Successful adaptation can enhance employment prospects and mental health, fostering a sense of belonging, while failure to adapt can lead to isolation and discrimination. This theme suggests that significant resilience is required for cultural transition as well as the value of fostering an inclusive and empathetic environment.

> *"It is a different environment for sure, your people are not there, you feel alone at times, geographically it is different, adopting a new environment is also very different, there are cultural differences, where you are born you are used to certain things, you have an identity, you have similar race, language, culture and there is a comfort there, but we have to break that, we have to get used to new things in a new way" (Naveed)*

Naveed speaks to the isolation that defines the cultural adaptation process for refugees. Uprooted from their native cultural landscape, they face the daunting task of integrating into a new environment with different customs, languages, and social norms. This adaptation demands not only practical adjustments but also the emotional work of forging a new identity within an unfamiliar community. It's a testament to their resilience and the need for inclusive policies that support cultural exchange, easing the transition and enriching the social fabric of the host society.

> *"Language is one of the biggest challenge we face livelihood problems, accommodation issues, how to talk to doctors if you cannot speak the language and how to gain employment if you cannot speak in their language and generate income for families?" (Roya)*

Roya highlights language as a crucial barrier in refugees' lives, impacting their ability to work, secure housing, and access healthcare. The struggle extends beyond personal communication; it is about navigating and thriving in the host society. This emphasises the need for targeted language assistance to support refugees in building new lives, signifying the role language plays in integration and community building. It's a call to action for host nations to prioritise language services as part of their commitment to refugee welfare and social harmony.

> *"I think learning the language was a big help for me, I was taking care of my children alone, who else will earn money? I learnt how to speak Hindi and I used to be a 'tarjuman' for those who came for medical purposes to earn extra money" (Naveed)*

Naveed's story exemplifies the transformative impact of learning the host country's language. Gaining language skills enabled them to earn an income as a translator, showcasing the crucial role language plays in empowering refugees to become self-reliant and contribute to their new communities. This narrative highlights the importance of language acquisition in enhancing refugees' autonomy and capacity to support themselves and others, and it underscores the value of providing accessible language education to refugees.

> *"Like, Africans have different types of, uh, issues. Burmese have different types. Like if you compare like the way government of India looks at refugees also is very much different. Mm-hmm. With Burmese, it is usually like government-to-government approach. With Africans, it is not so much with Afghan status and plus with Afghans, the government of India and even the local people are easy-going."*
> *(Emmanuel)*

The participant's remarks bring to light the distinct experiences of refugees from different regions and the host country's differential treatment based on national origin. African and Burmese refugees' challenges in India reflect wider geopolitical and social biases, while Afghan refugees seem to navigate their environment with comparatively more ease due to more favourable local perceptions. This disparity suggests the need for a consistent and fair approach to refugee assistance that transcends national prejudices. A nuanced understanding of each refugee group's unique situation is crucial to foster inclusive policies that facilitate equitable cultural adaptation and integration.

"I can say the same, because when I left them, they came here in 2018. It was like 6 years, right? Yeah. It was not easy for them to come here and then to adapt in this country where there are new culture, new languages, even for my doctor, my daughter was not easy." (Bernard)

The participant reflects on the lengthy and challenging journey of cultural adaptation, emphasizing the impact of time on this process. For their daughter, the transition has involved complex negotiations of identity in the face of a new cultural environment and language. This account highlights the significance of providing support to young refugees, who must balance their cultural heritage with the demands of assimilation into a new society. It's a reminder of the critical need for supportive structures that can ease this transition, particularly for children and adolescents at crucial developmental stages.

The narratives from various participants highlight the challenges that refugees face in cultural adaptation. Their experiences demonstrates the resilience required to navigate new societal landscapes, the importance of language as a bridge to belonging, and the impact of systemic barriers on their ability to thrive. As they strive to weave their past into the fabric of a new community, these stories highlight the profound role of support systems, both formal and communal, in facilitating a transition that is not just about survival but about the opportunity to flourish in a world far from home. The insights provided advocate for nuanced, empathetic approaches to refugee integration, urging for policies that acknowledge the diversity of experiences and the universal desire for dignity and inclusion.

4.3.3. Uncertainty of the Future

The theme of "Uncertainty of the Future" highlights into the sense of instability that permeates the lives of refugees in India. It's not just the immediate challenges of adaptation and survival that weigh heavily on their minds, but also the looming question of what lies ahead. This uncertainty is not a mere inconvenience; it is a significant source of anxiety and stress that affects every aspect of their existence. The lack of a clear path forward, the absence of a legal framework for refugees, and the unpredictability of resettlement outcomes all contribute to a state of limbo, where planning for the future becomes an exercise in hope against hope.

For many refugees, the future is a blank canvas, fraught with the potential for both hope and despair. The absence of refugee-specific legislation in India means that they must rely solely on the UNHCR for protection and assistance, which, while invaluable, cannot single-handedly dispel the fog of uncertainty. The refugees' narratives reveal a deep yearning for stability and a rightful place in the world, a place where they can rebuild their lives with dignity and certainty. This theme indicates the critical need for comprehensive support systems and legal protections that can provide refugees with a semblance of predictability and control over their future.

> *"People actually feel and for example, someone from other community, they, they easily get the support from the organisation compared to other community who are struggling for many years. At least they wait for many years for their interview. To be approved. Yeah." (Farid)*

Farid's perspective illuminates the inequities within refugee assistance programs, where the duration and outcome of support can vary dramatically between communities. This disparate treatment magnifies the uncertainty that pervades the refugee experience, as lengthy waits for

crucial interviews or approvals become a common grievance. Such delays not only hinder the path towards stability but also reinforce a sense of marginalisation among those who perceive themselves as less favoured by the support system.

"We only have UNHCR to go to, because, in India, there are no domestic laws. concerning refugees. There is less help from Indian government or from any other Indian NGOs." (Farid)

The absence of domestic refugee policies in India casts a shadow of uncertainty over the future of asylum seekers reliant on UNHCR. This reliance flags the vulnerability of refugees navigating a system with limited local support. The lack of legal clarity and consistent aid exacerbates their precarious status, leaving them facing an indeterminate future.

The singular dependence on international bodies highlights the critical need for comprehensive national frameworks to manage refugee affairs. Such frameworks would provide predictability and stability, enabling refugees to engage with the future with measured hope and clearer expectations. Addressing these gaps is essential for fostering resilience and facilitating the integration of refugees into the fabric of society.

"My intention was get somewhere. And then from there, we look for better opportunities, not that coming to India, the possibilities of going out again were so clear. It's not like any other Europe country that gives so much opportunities, right? (Karim)

The participant's reflections reveal a strategic, albeit provisional, approach to resettlement, treating India as a transit rather than a terminus. The implicit comparison with Europe's offerings hints at perceived limitations in India's opportunities for refugees, reinforcing a narrative of enduring uncertainty and the aspirational quest for a more secure future. The quote encapsulates a global disparity in refugee reception, reflecting a tiered landscape of asylum where prospects of integration and permanence vary widely. This accentuates the pressing need for equitable refugee policies worldwide, ensuring comprehensive support that includes mental health services to address the lasting effects of adversity experienced during conflict, enhancing not just the safety but the well-being and future prospects of displaced individuals.

"Like, there were nights I dreamt about these issues. Even when I came to India, there were times just walking on the way, I was hearing gunshots when nobody was shooting, actually. Like, I had the illusion that I was being followed. I carried a lot of image within me. Somebody's trained me, somebody's following me. At any point in time, there might be a gun show. Just those sounds that are being inside of you for years." (Nathalie)

The testimony of a refugee, vividly recounting the lingering psychological impact of past adversities, illustrates the intricate journey from survival to stability. The illusory gunshots and the pervasive sense of being pursued are stark manifestations of PTSD, a common yet severe aftermath of conflict experiences that can impede the process of settling into a new life of safety. This narrative highlights the imperative for culturally and linguistically tailored mental health support within refugee assistance programs. Ensuring access to such services is essential for addressing the invisible yet profound wounds of war. As refugees strive to integrate, the residual effects of adversity can disrupt this process, necessitating sustained psychosocial

support. Mental well-being is integral to their ability to thrive in a new environment, thus reinforcing the call for comprehensive, long-term assistance that acknowledges the complexity of their experiences.

The concept of uncertainty for the future, as portrayed by the experiences of refugees, encapsulates the transient yet pervasive anxieties inherent in their narratives. Their accounts, steeped in the pursuit of stability, highlight the indeterminate nature of their existence in the host nation. The complexities of their experiences underscore a common thread of liminality, accentuated by a lack of definitive legal frameworks and support systems in India.

Their voices collectively express the critical need for information, equitable treatment, and the structural support that recognises and safeguards their rights. The refugees' accounts serve not only as a reflection of their current predicament but also as a catalyst for comprehensive policy reform. Ensuring robust, empathetic, and transparent systems is paramount to alleviate the pervasive uncertainty and to foster an environment where refugees can envisage and actualise a stable and hopeful future.

4.3.4. Relief

While the above section focuses on the post-immigration challenges, this section highlights the positive sentiments of relief post-immigration. This will be highlighted in the context of refugee experiences in New Delhi, India, offering a glimpse into the emotional landscape of individuals who have navigated the treacherous path from danger to safety. It is a testament to the human capacity for resilience and the importance of sanctuary on those who have endured the unimaginable. This theme highlights the psychological and emotional sanctuary that

refugees find upon their arrival in a host country, highlighting the complex interplay between the relief of escaping immediate danger and the challenges that still lie ahead.

Relief as a theme, is not merely about the absence of conflict or threat; it is about the restoration of a sense of normalcy and the ability to exercise fundamental human freedoms. It underscores the importance of a supportive and understanding environment that acknowledges the plight of refugees and offers them a semblance of stability. An exploration of this theme uncovers the layers of relief that unfold as refugees transition from survival mode to a state where they can begin to contemplate a future filled with possibilities.

"When I came to this country I felt relieved, I felt that my family is safe and alive and that was important." (Naveed)

The sense of relief Naveed expresses upon reaching a safe haven is a reminder of the paramount importance of security in human life. Their relief is not just a personal sigh of freedom from fear, but a collective breath for the well-being of their family. It marks the end of a perilous chapter and the beginning of a more hopeful one, albeit filled with new challenges and adjustments.

"Staying in India has its challenges but local people are easy on the Afghans, they know about us, the police knows about us, the fact that police do not bother and the government is also sympathetic towards Afghans especially. So that's a, a kind of blessing and that has been a kind of relief" (Roya)

Roya's reflection provides valuable insights into the post-migration experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, suggesting there is reasonable differential treatment experienced by refugee groups based on ethnicity and nationality, with Afghan refugees expressing relief and gratitude for the sympathetic reception from the local community, police, and government. This disparity highlights the intricate interplay of social identities and the need for a more equitable refugee policy framework that transcends such biases. The reflection ultimately emphasises the imperative of fostering an inclusive society where refugees of all backgrounds can access support and inclusion within the host community.

"We saw a lot of Afghans there. And the good thing about that was that you feel a little bit safe, a little bit home. You feel that your culture still exists when you're near to your community. You come and go. You talk in your own language. You express in your own language. You say everything that you want to do in your own language. The expression is the main thing that is benefiting people living in their own communities." (Karim)

The account from Karim captures a sense of respite experienced by Afghan refugees in India, a stark contrast to the challenges faced by other refugee groups. The empathy and understanding from local authorities provide a semblance of security and acceptance, highlighting the significant role of host communities in shaping refugee experiences. This differential treatment underscores the need for consistent and fair policies to ensure all refugees can find solace and support in their new surroundings, promoting equitable treatment and fostering a more inclusive society.

"The woman got a lot of choices to make in India. They were free. They had their rights, they had their freedom. They could go, they could come any time of the night. Doesn't matter. We had that safeness for women, the right of the choice. But for some families in Afghanistan, it was hard. I think if they stayed in Afghanistan, they wouldn't have made those choices which they made after becoming a refugee. This is a fact." (Karim)

The reflections from Karim illuminates the transformative impact of resettlement on the lives of refugee women in India. Gaining freedoms that were previously restricted, these women experience a profound sense of autonomy and safety, a stark divergence from the past. The ability to navigate life with newfound rights and choices signifies not just a personal victory but a societal shift, allowing them to redefine their roles and assert their agency. This is emblematic of the broader emancipatory potential of asylum, providing an opportunity for refugees to rewrite their stories with resilience and hope.

"But gradually, when I came here, I talked to a couple of pastors who took me for some translation. Gradually they encouraged me with the word of God. Gradually, I overcome that phobia and that nightmare. Physically, I think I'm doing good" (Nathalie)

Nathalie's experience highlights the pivotal role of spiritual and community support in the healing journey of refugees. Their transition from distress to well-being exemplifies the huge impact of compassionate guidance and the sense of belonging that faith communities can foster. Such support, offering both spiritual solace and practical aid, is a cornerstone in rebuilding lives marked by upheaval, underscoring the holistic nature of recovery and integration.

"We share particular issues pertaining to women, pertaining to children, pertaining to so many things. Our lifestyle difficulties you face India community as a whole, when you go to the market, what was the reaction with people? And then they also tell us how to be able to adapt to the community, how to make the community to accept us, how to make the community to see us differently. Despite the different situation, we keep pushing. We keep trying to imprint a good reputation."(Nathalie)

This quote offers a poignant perspective on the collective experiences of refugees as they navigate the complex process of integration. It suggestive of distinct challenges faced by segments like women and children, who find relief in overcoming gendered and age-specific obstacles during their journey towards assimilation. These challenges extend beyond physical access to spaces like markets and encompass the broader pursuit of societal acceptance, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of their adaptation journey. It also accentuates refugees' proactive role in shaping their adaptation narrative, as they strive to establish a positive reputation within the host community, showcasing their agency in challenging stereotypes. Additionally, it illuminates the vital role of social capital through community support networks, offering guidance to newcomers in navigating the intricate social landscape of their unfamiliar environment.

In summarising the relief theme for refugees in New Delhi, it is evident that the journey from hardship to sanctuary is imbued with complex emotions. The immediate relief from danger is profound, offering essential freedoms, particularly for women and children. Yet, the path of integration is layered with challenges that demand resilience and adaptation.

The refugees' narratives suggest a dynamic process of acclimatising to new freedoms and overcoming barriers. Their proactive engagement with their new environment, bolstered by community support, highlights their resilience. Thus, relief for refugees is a dual experience of initial sanctuary and the ongoing endeavour to build a new life, encapsulating both the joy of safety and the rigours of adaptation.

Refugees in post-migration grapple with diverse challenges: mastering system navigation, cultural adaptation, and coping with the uncertainty of the future. They must overcome socio-economic constraints to rebuild their lives, yet amidst these struggles, there's a sense of relief in the safety and support found in their new communities. These sub-themes (system navigation, cultural adaptation, uncertainty, socio-economic constraints, and relief) form a collective narrative of resilience, marking the refugees' journey towards integration and stability.

4.4. Social Capital

Social capital is essential for refugee integration and resilience, particularly in urban contexts such as New Delhi. This concept encapsulates the intangible networks, trust, and norms that enable collective action and resource sharing within communities. Its significance is well-documented in migration literature and is increasingly prominent in policy discussions (Madhavan & Landau, 2011). As Putnam (1993) elucidates, social capital comprises features of social organisation that enhance societal efficiency through coordinated action (p. 167).

In New Delhi's diverse urban fabric, social capital represents both a support mechanism and a conduit to new opportunities for refugees. It manifests in practical ways, from facilitating job prospects to easing cultural adaptation. This discourse will explore the sub-themes of Groups

and Networks, Trust, Information Sharing, and Social Cohesion, offering insights into the formation and impact of social capital among refugee populations.

Figure 6: **STRUCTURE OF SUB-THEMES UNDER SOCIAL CAPITAL**
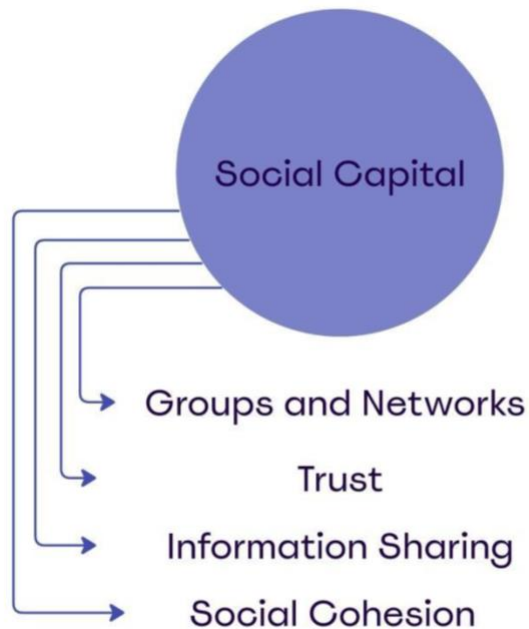
Figure 6 - Structure of sub-themes under social capital

4.4.1. Groups and Networks

Social capital's relevance to refugee integration is critically examined through the prism of groups and networks. This theme scrutinises refugees' involvement in varied social frameworks, from official entities to informal familial ties, which are vital for their adjustment and resilience.

Diverse in structure and purpose, these groups and networks underpin the refugees' social capital. Official groups offer formalised support, while informal networks provide immediate, personal aid and a sense of community. The interplay of these networks illustrate the layered dimensions of social capital, with each connection type fulfilling unique, synergistic functions.

Refugees' accounts highlight social capital's complex role. Engagement in community groups often opens doors to essential services and a communal safety net. Simultaneously, informal networks act as a lifeline, offering tangible aid and comfort. Notably, these networks facilitate acclimatisation during resettlement, providing crucial socialisation channels and a navigational compass for the intricacies of new societal norms, as evidenced by the Afghan diaspora in New Delhi. These testimonies affirm the indispensable role of social capital in fostering navigational acumen within refugee populations.

"I have been part of different refugee community groups, I was also part of the AsiaPac network of refugees and a member of the Afghan Solidarity groups, these are are all refugee groups that work towards refugee wellbeing" (Roya)

The active participation of Roya in refugee-centric networks like the AsiaPac network and Afghan Solidarity groups illustrates the critical role of social capital in fostering resilience among displaced communities. These affiliations not only offer support and advocacy but also enable refugees to contribute meaningfully to the collective welfare of their peers, exemplifying the reciprocal nature of social capital.

The existence and engagement with these networks underpin the participants' capability to both leverage and augment communal resources, thereby reinforcing the support structures necessary for refugee well-being. Such communal participation not only aids in addressing immediate challenges but also fortifies the sense of identity and belonging, which is indispensable for the long-term integration and empowerment of refugees within new sociocultural environments.

*"There are many times for example if someone is a single working mother, someone else will pick up their children from school or provide them with lunch, people help each other financially, as much as they can. Some of the older children help the you*ing younger ones exemplifies intergenerational cooperation and social capital transmission, fostering a sense of responsibility and community among the youth.*nger children to study as well" (Farid)*

Farid's narrative illustrates the strong communal solidarity within refugee groups, particularly in supporting single working mothers. This assistance ranges from childcare to financial aid, highlighting a robust network of mutual support crucial for those lacking broader familial help. The practice of older children tutor These informal networks play a critical role in providing a safety net for vulnerable community members, enhancing collective well-being, and aiding in navigating the challenges of their new environment.

"When I had first arrived to India someone told me to go talk to a community representative for help, the community representative then guided me through the process. I know many examples where the community reps have helped members. Sometime they even pool in money and help members really in need of rent money or if someone needs temporary accommodation they help them out" (Naveed)

Naveed's account highlights the structured support provided by community representatives in refugee networks. These representatives serve as guides for newcomers, aiding their adjustment to the complex resettlement process. The community's practice of pooling resources to assist those in dire financial need exemplifies the collective spirit and shared responsibility within the group, strengthening communal bonds and trust. These acts of solidarity are

particularly significant in the absence of formal support systems, underscoring the community's resilience and adaptability. Additionally, the proactive role of community representatives in securing temporary accommodations demonstrates the practical application of social capital, enabling members to leverage collective assets for individual and communal benefit, prioritizing the welfare of even the most vulnerable.

"The women's group is really helpful in empowering women. They hear out each others problems, sometimes the cases are more serious such as domestic violence or harassment, the women help each other out, they go with them to the authorities as well and help them" (Naveed)

Naveed's insights into women's groups and faith-based communities shed light on the deeper dynamics of social capital within refugee communities. Women's groups, as described, serve as crucial platforms for addressing sensitive issues like domestic violence and harassment. Beyond mere support, they foster a sense of agency among women, enabling them to collectively confront systemic challenges. This illustrates the transformative potential of social capital, where solidarity and mutual support lead to empowerment and social change.

On the other hand, faith-based communities represent a unique form of social capital, utilizing pre-existing religious networks to strengthen community bonds. These communities often provide a deeper level of support, drawing on shared faith and values to enhance social cohesion. The example of the Ismaili community, Afghan Christian association, and Hindu Sikh Afghan community showcases how faith-based networks can be pivotal in nurturing a sense of belonging and offering specialised support within the broader refugee context.

"Some groups have stronger community support, specially the religious community

of Ismailis so they have better support. And the other factors because they also have

support from Indian Ismaili Muslims. They also get funding from the Aga Khan

foundation." (Roya)

Roya's insight highlights the role of religious affiliations in shaping social capital among refugees. The Ismaili community, supported by Indian Ismaili Muslims and the Aga Khan Foundation, exemplifies how religious ties can strengthen community support across boundaries. However, this reliance on religious networks raises questions about fairness and inclusivity, potentially creating disparities in social capital distribution. Balancing the benefits of these connections with equitable support for all refugee groups is crucial for fostering resilience and integration. This perspective invites a deeper examination of how religious affiliations intersect with social capital, influencing refugee communities in their host countries.

"Those kind of projects. In my communities, it's very difficult. First, we are not too

many, we are less in number. We don't stay in the same area." (Emmanuel)

Emmanuel's statement illuminates the challenges faced in launching and sustaining community projects within refugee communities. Emmanuel identifies 2 primary obstacles: the community's limited size and its geographical dispersion. These practical barriers significantly hinder the community's capacity to mobilise resources, facilitate communication, and engage in collective endeavours.

This perspective resonates with Putnam's (2000) concept of social capital, which goes beyond the mere presence of social networks to encompass their quality. Effective social capital relies on established norms of reciprocity, which encompass mutual support, trust, and shared responsibilities. In communities where members are both sparse and widely dispersed, cultivating and upholding these norms of reciprocity becomes a formidable task, potentially impeding the development of robust social capital.

In conclusion, the examination of groups and networks within refugee communities reveals the multifaceted nature of social capital. These networks provide vital support, but their impact can be influenced by various factors. The gendered and age-specific challenges faced by refugees, the agency and proactive efforts of community members, and the role of faith-based and external networks all contribute to the complex dynamics of social capital (Putnam, 2000). Additionally, the geographical dispersion and small community size can present structural challenges, akin to "structural holes" in social network theory (Burt, 1992), potentially impeding the cohesive and effective utilization of social capital. Faith-based networks, such as the Ismaili community, play a crucial role in bolstering community support through their established networks and financial backing from institutions like the Aga Khan Foundation. These networks exemplify the potential for inter-community social capital, transcending geographical and cultural barriers.

4.4.2. Trust

Trust, as a fundamental component of social capital, plays a vital role in refugee communities, shaping their ability to adapt and thrive in unfamiliar host environments. It acts as the adhesive binding individuals together, enabling them to rely on one another for support, pool resources,

and collaborate toward common objectives. This sense of solidarity is particularly critical for refugees, given their often-vulnerable circumstances stemming from displacement.

The landscape of trust within refugee communities is multifaceted, influenced by shared experiences, cultural affinities, and the necessity of mutual assistance in times of scarcity. It transcends mere shared identities and is actively constructed through collective actions that reinforce the community's social fabric.

> *"If there is a job opportunity then they encourage people to apply for it. So yea, I would say that we trust the community to help"* *(Farid)*

Farid's reflection encapsulates the pivotal role of trust within the refugee community, particularly in the context of economic empowerment. The act of sharing information about job opportunities transcends mere transactions; it exemplifies the community's unwavering belief in mutual advancement and its collective commitment to progress. This practice of endorsing fellow members for job opportunities speaks volumes about the trust-based network's emphasis on the economic stability and prosperity of all its constituents. This trust goes beyond individual gains and extends to building a cohesive network that operates as a unified entity. It empowers the community to act collectively, offering resources and encouragement necessary to navigate the intricacies of the job market.

> *"If there are children who are unaccompanied, unaccompanied minors they provide shelter to the refugee child and they look after them. And if there is a person who is sick and there is nobody to take care of him. So in the community they look after the person and they take care of them till the time they recovers. If a person*

passes away in the community and there is no family or support the community

members prepare for the funeral and they internally pay, they do their last rights

and they just support each other." (Naveed)

Naveed's account provides a comprehensive view of the community's support system, particularly in times of need. This includes sheltering unaccompanied minors, caring for the sick, and organizing funerals for those without family. These actions go beyond individual goodwill and reflect a community that has internalized these norms and actively practices them, emphasizing collective responsibility.

"For example, in one community there are different tribes. So there, there is a tribal

difference between each other. So they don't share with the other tribe maybe No,

they don't develop that bond that they can develop with same community/tribe

member." (Naveed)

These communities are often diverse, comprising various tribes or subgroups, each with its distinct identities and histories. Trust, a crucial element of social capital, is not uniformly distributed among community members and can be influenced by these tribal affiliations. The presence of tribal differences can hinder the formation of a cohesive social network within the community, impeding trust and cooperation between different tribal groups, and limiting the community's ability to act collectively and support its members effectively.

Furthermore, this observation emphasises the propensity for in-group favouritism, where trust and solidarity are more readily extended to individuals within the same tribe or group, potentially resulting in the emergence of cliques or factions within the larger community.

"Refugees do not trust anyone except themselves. Because for them, anything can be a threat. For them, anything can be an obstacle, can turn into an obstacle for them. In India, the communities they were trusting each other, not as much as they could trust an Indian or a person who is living there. For example, sharing things. They used to share it with Afghans because they used to think that they can understand each other, then to share it with an Indian. This is a fact which exists with all the human beings and with the refugee community as well." (Karim)

Karim's quote highlights the delicate nature of trust within refugee communities, shaped by their sense of vulnerability and the uncertain nature of their situation. This inherent mistrust is not merely a personal sentiment but a survival strategy, born out of the unpredictability and potential threats that characterize the refugee experience. It extends beyond the refugee community to encompass the host society, emphasizing a clear division between 'us' and 'them.'

The preference for sharing within the Afghan community rather than with the Indian community reflects the importance of social capital built on shared experiences and cultural understanding. This in-group trust is a vital resource for refugees as they navigate their new environment, fostering a sense of community and mutual support crucial for their well-being. However, this inward-looking trust may also limit opportunities for integration and building bridges with the host community.

"About to trust other community members. We are human being, okay? We are human being. And what as we say, we trust only God. Okay? Because in our community also we are community. Yes, but the truth is that we are human. There

are also issues within the community. There are also clashes within the community

and in the community, everyone knows how he's surviving. " (Emmanuel)

Emmanuel's words provide a nuanced perspective on trust within refugee communities, revealing its complexity and fragility. The emphasis on placing trust in a higher power, rather than solely in fellow individuals, highlights the fragility of trust amidst the community's struggle for survival. Trust emerges as a selective and strategic resource, extended cautiously among community members while reserved in abundance for divine reliance. This guarded approach to trust reflects a survival instinct, shaped by the uncertainties and vulnerabilities inherent to the refugee experience. It highlights the intricate interplay between individual survival strategies and the collective ethos of community support.

"Yeah, the trust is there because we always believe in something that if we stand

together we can become stronger. So instead of together from where we started

today, where we are, we have built that trust between us. Of course, as I've been

saying before, that all is the up and down and sometimes some conflict, especially

if other community members from Congo, from Bayanmulenge group is always

trying to creating some division when you have to make people understand that we

all are Congolese, even if we have a different culture." (Bernard)

This quote highlights the resilience and unity within the refugee community, emphasizing the collective strength that arises from their solidarity. While acknowledging challenges and conflicts, particularly due to cultural differences within the Congolese community, there's a hopeful message that a foundational level of trust has been established, enabling the community to progress together despite occasional setbacks. The mention of conflicts, often rooted in

internal divisions, highlights the complexity of building social capital in a diverse refugee population. It emphasises the continuous need for efforts to foster understanding and unity across cultural boundaries, crucial for the community's collective strength and resilience.

The Trust within refugee communities in New Delhi is multifaceted. As one participant points out, refugees tend to trust their own community over outsiders due to shared experiences and cultural understanding. This in-group trust serves as a crucial resource for their well-being, enabling mutual support and solidarity. However, it can also limit integration opportunities with the host community. Another participant highlights that trust is not static; it evolves through shared experiences and efforts to overcome internal divisions. Despite conflicts, a foundational level of trust has been established, contributing to the community's resilience.

4.4.3. Information Sharing

Access to information is vital for marginalised communities (World Bank, 2002). In the realm of social capital, information sharing connects individuals and communities, enabling effective navigation of their environments. Refugees rely on information exchange to share resources, warn of dangers, and offer support. This sub-theme explores refugees' information sharing dynamics, revealing how it empowers and challenges their social capital during the crucial settlement phase. For refugees, information sharing is a vital component of social capital, facilitating resource sharing, threat warnings, and mutual support. This sub-theme explores how refugees engage in information sharing, highlighting the adaptability of their social networks.

The initial settlement phase is crucial for integration, where proactive information use is foundational. Participants emphasise the benefits of being part of a community with efficient

information flow, with community representatives serving as key conduits for information from various sources, including UNHCR.

"For example, there are WhatsApp groups and from the community, like everybody has made their WhatsApp groups. So if anything important happens, in the UNHCR here send it to the representatives and they share it with the people. So that's a good source of information. And the fact also that most of the Afghan people, they live in one locality. and very close to each other. So if something happens, they usually quickly tell each other." (Farid)

Farid's description of WhatsApp groups highlights the resourcefulness of refugee communities in leveraging digital platforms for efficient information sharing. These groups serve as a structured yet adaptable network, allowing vital information to circulate rapidly among community members. Additionally, the physical proximity of Afghan residents amplifies this communication network's effectiveness, enabling swift information exchange crucial for community support and coordination.

Furthermore, the reliance on community representatives to relay UNHCR information underscores the trust placed in these individuals and the hierarchical nature of information flow within the community. However, it raises concerns about inclusivity and access, assuming that all community members are connected to these groups and that representatives distribute information impartially. The participant's emphasis on locality suggests the significance of physical community spaces in reinforcing social bonds and facilitating face-to-face interactions, is essential for building trust and social cohesion.

"Main source is UNHCR because UNHCR, SLIC. They used to share information with the community representatives because they have their mails, they share with them by emails. And then the community representative share those information in the community WhatsApp groups" (Bernard)

Naveed confirms the pivotal role of UNHCR as the primary information source for the refugee community, with information relayed through community representatives. This centralized approach guarantees information reliability but places significant responsibility on these representatives as intermediaries between UNHCR and the community.

The utilization of email and WhatsApp groups combines formal and informal communication channels, facilitating rapid and efficient information dissemination. However, its effectiveness depends on community members' digital literacy and access, potentially creating disparities. Furthermore, this method raises concerns about gatekeeping and selective information sharing, emphasizing the importance of transparency and accountability within the process to maintain trust and effective information flow.

"Now, it depends on the type of information. For example, if it is, uh, kind of something which happens for everybody like, uh, let's say ration distribution, or there are some clothes distribution, which is for everybody they will share it. Or if there is any classes, something, they will share it. But if it is something of, uh, for example, somebody. trying to do something for their case. and they don't know how to approach the UNHCR here or what to say if they approach. So in that case they'll not share the information (Naveed)

Naveed's account sheds light on the selective nature of information sharing within the refugee community, driven by considerations of collective benefit. Information of general relevance, like ration or clothing distribution, is readily disseminated, exemplifying a community that prioritises the well-being of its members through inclusive social capital. Conversely, the hesitation to share information that could impact an individual's case with the UNHCR reflects a protective stance toward personal interests. This tension exemplifies the intricate interplay between collective support and individual survival strategies, revealing the complexity of trust dynamics in the community.

> *"No, they don't keep the information we share that's good. Like, for example, when they're starting to arrest people, we share this information that currently immigration is arresting. They are arresting people. There are some police officers. They are not in uniform. We share that information in WhatsApp group. Even during COVID also. We use the same information to raise awareness. During COVID right? Yeah." (Emmanuel)*

The real-time sharing of updates regarding immigration raids and health crises through WhatsApp groups demonstrates the community's reliance on immediate and informal communication channels, reflecting a form of 'collective vigilance' essential for survival in uncertain environments. However, while these channels enhance community resilience, they also introduce the risk of misinformation and panic due to the lack of formal verification processes.

The use of WhatsApp groups for sharing sensitive information highlights a high level of trust within the community, serving not only as social forums but also as lifelines that provide

members with timely warnings and guidance. This form of information sharing exemplifies 'bonding social capital,' where strong ties within a group facilitate mutual support and protection.

> *"Some information, like, in general, about union government. It's general by the television, by the news, and by the people about the UNHCR. They used to have stations to spread the information between them. We used to translate in the main languages of them. We used to make brochures, pamphlets, call them, and phone them and inform them, have pictures, have stalls illustrating the information, banners of those information. We used to have all of this to make the community educated sets of rules which were changing, which were coming. We had volunteers who used to explain better in their own language to their community to remove the confusion not one time, but more than five times, 6 times" (Karim)*

The participant's account shows a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to information sharing within the community. It highlights the use of diverse mediums, including visual aids, translations, brochures, and volunteers, to ensure that vital information is accessible to all community members. This inclusive strategy reflects a deep appreciation for informed decision-making and collective comprehension.

Translating information into the main languages and utilizing various media forms not only eliminates language barriers but also empowers community members by equipping them with the knowledge needed to navigate their circumstances effectively. Moreover, the commitment to clarifying and explaining new rules and changes multiple times demonstrates a dedication to preventing confusion, a critical aspect in a refugee context where misinformation can lead

to serious consequences. The involvement of community volunteers who communicate in the community's language underscores the importance of trust and rapport within the community, as these individuals are viewed as relatable and trustworthy sources of information.

Overall, this approach to information sharing is a testament to the community's resilience and adaptability. It shows a proactive stance in ensuring that all members are kept informed and educated about matters that affect their lives, thereby strengthening the community's collective capacity to respond to challenges. The refugee community's approach to information sharing highlights their resilience and adaptability, proactively ensuring that all members are informed and empowered.

In summary, this exploration of information sharing within the community showcases its critical role in fostering resilience and empowerment. While challenges exist, the community's inclusive strategies, use of various mediums, and reliance on volunteers build trust and mutual support, contributing to a strong social fabric that aids in navigating the uncertainties of refugee life.

4.4.4. Social Cohesion

Social cohesion, the cohesive force that binds communities together, is of paramount importance within urban refugee settings. It represents the intricate web of connections, shared values, trust, and collective identity that enable individuals from diverse backgrounds to come together and support one another despite the challenges posed by displacement. In New Delhi's urban landscape, where refugees face numerous barriers to integration, social cohesion becomes a critical factor in fostering a sense of belonging and resilience among those who have experienced forced migration.

Our exploration of social cohesion within refugee communities highlights into the multifaceted nature of these bonds. It encompasses the common experiences that unite refugees, the daily practices that reinforce their connections, and the underlying factors that either nurture or hinder social cohesion. By examining these dimensions, the role of social cohesion in building community resilience and its broader implications for the themes of social capital and adversity activated development in urban refugee contexts, can be highlighted.

"To be honest we all get along because we are in the same boat. We all share the same challenges and issues. I believe that people, they easily get along, they support each other irrespective of which language they speak or from where they belong. For example, when we come together on a certain occasion, let's say refugee day or some festivals, everyone celebrates, or they try to show support for each other"
(Naveed)

Naveed highlights strong social cohesion among refugees, forged through shared challenges of displacement. The idea of being "in the same boat" signifies unity born from collective adversity, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers. This active unity is expressed through mutual support and celebrations of events like Refugee Day, reinforcing their shared identity and strengthening bonds. The reliance on specific events for community bonding is demonstrative of the need for sustained social cohesion. Beyond these occasions, fostering daily interactions and diverse communal activities can strengthen the sense of belonging and mutual support within the refugee community in New Delhi, enhancing its resilience in the face of collective challenges.

"When you say community, It means a group of people, okay, who may have a common origin or group of people who are living together. They are sharing some same parameters. They may be considered as community." (Emmanuel)

Emmanuel's perspective on the concept of community in the refugee context emphasises its inclusive nature. He acknowledges that communities can form around both common origins and shared living experiences. This open-minded view recognises that in the refugee context, people often come together based on their shared circumstances rather than shared histories. The notion of 'sharing some same parameters' highlights the importance of common needs, interests, or goals as the binding force within a community. These shared parameters become the foundation for unity, trust, and mutual support, all integral aspects of social capital.

At the same time, the quote also acknowledges the diversity and fluidity present within refugee communities. The term 'may' suggests that while commonalities bring people together, individual differences and multiple identities can coexist within the community. This diversity can be a source of strength, offering a range of experiences and perspectives, but it also requires sensitivity and inclusivity to maintain social cohesion.

"Here? It's mostly during Christmas. Christmas in the church. Most of them they will meet because after that, if it's about to meet somewhere else, it will depend on friendship." (Emmanuel)

This quote affirms the significance of shared religious and cultural events, such as Christmas in the church, in fostering community cohesion among refugees. These gatherings provide essential moments for communal solidarity, strengthening social bonds, and offering a reprieve

from daily challenges. Such events serve as stable anchors in the community's social calendar, providing predictability and a sense of normalcy amidst displacement.

The mention of Christmas and church gatherings suggests a particular importance of structured communal rituals in maintaining a sense of belonging and continuity amid uncertainty. These rituals facilitate the expression of shared identity and values, pivotal for social cohesion. However, the quote implies that regular social interactions often hinge on individual friendships rather than broader community engagement, highlighting the need for additional efforts to foster daily social cohesion and inclusivity within the community.

> *"To do something like that, people are mostly busy to try to survive, to find where you may find some cash, some money, right. To pay his rent, to pay his food, like that." (Nathalie)*

This quote highlights the prevalent economic struggles within refugee lives, which often take precedence over community-building activities. The relentless pursuit of basic necessities, such as shelter and food, leaves little time or energy for fostering social cohesion. This economic imperative creates a fundamental tension within refugee communities, as survival takes precedence over social interaction.

The economic struggles have collective consequences, limiting the community's ability to support each other collectively and potentially causing social fragmentation. This highlights the importance of economic stability for social cohesion and the need for interventions addressing both social and economic vulnerabilities to strengthen community resilience.

"We learned a lot of things after. Sometimes we found our way. When you are a refugee, when you leave your country in the next country, at the beginning, you were just disappointed. But by time being, you get habited. You make families there, you make communities there because we are a social being. For that reason, you try to contact other communities. You get to know the communities, you make communities, you make friends. But the fact is, the differences will always exist and the differences will always be there." (Omid)

This quote portrays the adaptive journey of refugees as they transition from despair to acclimatization in their host country. It illustrates the enduring human need for social connections and community, even in the face of displacement. The process of creating families and communities is a natural response to this need, reflecting the resilience of the human spirit. Yet, the quote also acknowledges the persistence of differences within and between refugee communities. It recognises the complex nature of social cohesion, where unity coexists with diversity. This dynamic process of community formation evolves over time, with refugees actively engaging with others to build networks that contribute to their social and emotional well-being.

"The small happinesses, the small occasions that they have, they should be included too. They feel very relaxed. It's like a vacation for them. It's like a cut off of all their problems, worries and difficulties that they have. Yes. So we used to celebrate all of those functions india, but it wasn't the same. Of course. It would never be the same, but it was joyful." (Karim)

This reflection sheds light on the emotional landscape of refugees as they navigate their new lives, emphasising the importance of 'small happinesses' and communal occasions as brief respites from ongoing challenges. These moments of joy and celebration contribute to mental well-being and social cohesion, providing a sense of normalcy amidst displacement.

The participant also acknowledges the bittersweet reality that celebrations in the host country, while joyful, can never fully replace the sense of belonging and cultural resonance of their homeland. This reflects the dual experience of loss and adaptation in the refugee journey. However, the ability to find joy in new traditions and celebrations highlights the resilience and adaptability of the refugee community, a vital aspect of community resilience that allows for the creation of new sources of happiness and connections in challenging circumstances.

"Because I went to India, I live as a refugee, so the versatility coming my mind, I had different people living around me. For me now, the definition of a community is totally changed. For me, the definition of a community right now is that different people, different colours, different cultures, different languages, they come together and they live together and they work for their life. There's just one goal to make this life worth living, to make a better living for themselves, for their children, and to have a contribution to each other. That's what community for me is, because i live with Indians, Somalis, Afghans, many different other countries with different cultures." (Karim)

This definition of community highlights inclusivity and a shared pursuit of a better life. It underlines the common thread binding people, a desire for dignity and mutual support. This aligns with social cohesion, often strengthened by shared goals. The speaker's insight reflects

the transformative power of adversity, suggesting individuals can develop a more encompassing understanding of social bonds through challenges. This is valuable in understanding social capital within refugee communities, showcasing potential for diverse groups to forge strong networks.

The insights gained from this exploration of social cohesion within urban refugee communities in New Delhi reveal a dynamic interplay of factors that shape the resilience and adaptability of these communities. The narratives of refugees and asylum seekers showcase the significance of shared experiences, particularly those rooted in cultural and religious practices, in fostering a sense of belonging and continuity. Events like Christmas celebrations and church gatherings provide essential anchor points, offering moments of joy and unity amidst the challenges of displacement.

The quote emphasizing the reliance on individual friendships for daily interactions reveals a potential gap in sustained social cohesion, as occasional structured events may not suffice for enduring and inclusive community bonds. This shows the need for consistent and diverse communal activities to foster deeper connections among members. Additionally, economic challenges among refugees pose a significant obstacle to community-building, diverting resources away from social engagement. This not only affects individuals but also hampers collective action and mutual support, potentially leading to social fragmentation. Addressing economic vulnerabilities is essential for strengthening social cohesion and community resilience.

4.5. Community Resilience

Community resilience refers to a community's ability to adapt and recover from adversity, encompassing challenges such as natural disasters, economic setbacks, and social upheaval. Within the context of refugees in India, community resilience is pivotal in helping individuals and families overcome the hurdles of displacement, social isolation, and economic hardships.

Studies have underlined the significant impact of community resilience on the mental well-being of refugees. For instance, research conducted on refugees in Greece (Triantafyllidou et al., 2018) demonstrated that higher levels of psychological well-being and lower levels of PTSD symptoms correlated with community resilience. This resilience is measured through factors like positive attitudes towards the future, effective coping strategies, and social support. These findings demonstrate the role of community resilience in bolstering the mental health and overall well-being of refugees.

Figure 7: **STRUCTURE OF SUB-THEMES UNDER COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

Figure 7 - Structure of sub-themes under community resilience

4.5.1. Community Action

Community action is a vital element of community resilience, especially in urban refugee communities. It represents collective efforts by individuals to influence the conditions and decisions affecting their lives, empowering them to assert control and seek sustainable solutions to challenges. In examining community action among New Delhi's refugee communities, this section will explore its diverse forms, from grassroots advocacy to formal engagements with organizations like UNHCR. These actions showcase the community's capacity to mobilise for common goals and reflect the presence of social capital. Furthermore, community action can drive adversity activated development, responding to challenges and promoting growth and resilience.

Delving into the specific instances of community action described by the participants, it can be seen how these actions reflect the community's resilience, the challenges they face in initiating and sustaining such actions, and the impact these actions have on their social capital and overall well-being.

> *"For example, some of the classes of, uh, BOSCO is shut down, so the students are thinking about going to UNHCR here to ask them to open the classes again for them. Before also, like they used to, have some protests together." (Roya)*

Roya's account sheds light on the proactive stance of the community in addressing issues that directly impact them, such as the closure of educational classes by BOSCO. Their readiness to take action to reopen these classes demonstrates a commitment to education and self-advocacy. The mention of past protests and the current plan to approach UNHCR highlights a history of collective action and a willingness to engage with institutions to address community needs.

However, the use of the phrase "thinking about going" suggests a cautious approach, possibly reflecting previous challenges in effecting change. This indicates the community's recognition of the importance of education and their readiness to mobilise for it, despite potential obstacles.

> *"UNHCR holds meetings with community representatives and there are also community members that are present. They also have a community interpreter who then helps them translate the information for us. These meetings are helpful cause the community can then directly talk to UNHCR staff. Although sometimes it takes time for things to change but sometimes they do and that is good for the community. For eg, we had raised concerns for more services to those who are disabled and for specialised care. It took some months but then we had some of the children put in specialised schools, which is really helpful."* (Emmanuel)

This quote reveals the structured interactions between the refugee community and UNHCR, with community representatives and interpreters playing pivotal roles in bridging communication gaps. These interactions serve as crucial platforms for the community to express concerns and advocate for services, leading to positive outcomes such as placing children in specialised schools. However, the narrative also highlights the frustrating bureaucracy that can delay improvements, underscoring the importance of more responsive administrative processes to build and maintain trust within the community.

> *"Community action is not that easy. We have to get funds from UNHCR or Bosco to start any project. And even then, it's not enough."* (Emmanuel)

This quote accentuates the systemic challenges that the community faces in initiating and sustaining action. While external organisations like UNHCR and BOSCO offer some financial support, it is evident that these funds are not adequate to fully realise community projects. This financial inadequacy could potentially lead to project abandonment, partial implementation, or even the compromising of project quality. It raises questions about the sustainability of community action and points to a larger issue of resource allocation and accessibility. The insufficiency of funds not only hampers current initiatives but may also discourage future community-led projects, thereby affecting long-term community development and resilience.

"About a community project? One example is like, you know, there are some few women here, they used to do hair breeding. So that hair breathing, it's their business. They earn money by doing everything to their client." (Emmanuel)

Emmanuel's quote offers a glimpse into grassroots community action, where individual skills and entrepreneurship play a vital role in shaping the community's economic landscape. The example of women engaging in hair braiding as a business not only provides income but also fosters social cohesion through shared cultural practices. This reflects the concept of 'bonding social capital,' where strong ties are formed through economic interdependence and communal activities. However, the reliance on individual initiatives is also suggestive of the community's resource limitations. While these businesses contribute to survival and social connections, they may not fully address broader community needs or socio-economic improvement.

"There were activities for the youth, which we call youth meets. There were youth clubs for the youth. Those activities were used to give confidence to the youth a lot. We have psychosocial projects a lot back then which were helping the refugees

a lot to come together, to share their wisdom, to share their knowledge, to share

their experience, to share their struggles, and to learn from each other. Those

things existed which were the best and helping a lot." (Naveed)

The importance of youth engagement in community activities is evident in the quote, emphasizing their role as platforms for psychosocial support, development, and resilience-building. Youth meets and clubs not only provide recreation but also serve as vital environments for fostering a sense of belonging and identity, addressing the challenges of displacement. Simultaneously, the mentioned psychosocial projects play a pivotal role in connecting individuals, sharing experiences, and promoting collective learning and support, mitigating the isolation often linked to refugee status. These initiatives empower individuals to actively contribute to their community, even in the face of adversity.

In conclusion, the sub-theme of community action within the urban refugee communities of New Delhi reveals a dynamic landscape of empowerment, challenge, and resilience. The community exhibits a proactive stance, advocating for their needs through formal channels with organizations like UNHCR and engaging in self-initiated projects that foster economic independence and social cohesion. However, these efforts are often constrained by systemic barriers such as inadequate funding and bureaucratic delays. Despite these challenges, the community's commitment to collective action and the particular emphasis on youth engagement highlight a forward-looking perspective that prioritises the cultivation of social capital and the strengthening of community resilience. This sub-theme suggests the importance of supporting such grassroots initiatives and the need for external agencies to work in tandem with the community to ensure that their efforts are not only recognised but also bolstered for greater impact.

4.5.2. Support

The sub-theme of support within the urban refugee communities of New Delhi highlights the pivotal role of community support in refugee life. Participants' narratives reveal the multifaceted nature of support, encompassing practical aid, emotional encouragement, and fostering self-reliance. This support network is particularly vital for vulnerable individuals, yet it can also be challenged by mistrust and self-preservation. Despite these complexities, the community's commitment to self-reliance and internal solidarity demonstrates its resilience, preserving its identity and coherence in the face of external adversities.

Despite these challenges, the community's commitment to self-reliance and internal solidarity is a testament to its resilience. The proactive approach of relying on internal strengths before seeking external help not only fosters a sense of empowerment but also ensures the preservation of the community's identity and coherence. The regular convening of community members for discussion and mutual support acts as a catalyst for collective resilience, enabling the community to confront and overcome external adversities.

> *"The community is supportive, they helped me when I first came to india and I had no idea about my next steps; when I wanted to join university my parents and family friends helped me to feel supported and that I can do this. They give this confidence you know? That you can do this." (Karim)*

The quote from Karim highlights the essential role of community support during the resettlement process, particularly in the pursuit of higher education. The community's assistance is depicted as both practical and emotionally empowering, providing newcomers

with the confidence and guidance needed to navigate their new environment successfully. This support signifies the community's investment in the individual's potential and showcases its commitment to personal and collective growth despite the challenges of displacement.

"When I was working and I was divorced so I only had myself to earn money for my children, they used to help me picking my children up from school and keeping them in their house to do their homework and taking care of them till I came back from work. They were extremely supportive in that way" (Emmanuel)

Within the urban refugee communities of New Delhi, the sub-theme of support shines a light on the interdependence and solidarity that sustains individuals through the complexities of refugee life. Community support, as depicted in the narratives, serves as an indispensable source of strength, encompassing both practical aid in daily life and emotional encouragement during times of uncertainty. The multifaceted nature of this support system caters to immediate needs such as childcare and financial assistance, while also nurturing the confidence and determination of individuals in pursuing education and personal growth. This intricate web of support proves especially vital for those in vulnerable positions, like single parents or individuals facing discrimination, providing a safety net that significantly alleviates the burdens of daily survival and social integration.

"It depends what kind of support, yes they are helpful some of the time but everyone cares about themselves, they don't want others to know about their case, how far their case has reached, what part of the process they are in? They are secretive and sometimes some people also try to spoil others' cases by giving added information. So I do feel that the community is supportive but only selectively." (Omid)

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Omid's quote offers a nuanced perspective on community support, recognizing its willingness tempered by conditions and caution. Secrecy around UNHCR cases reflects a protective stance due to the asylum-seeking process's uncertainty, limiting support flow. The potential for individuals to undermine others' cases underscores the community's dual nature, both cooperative and competitive. This, in turn, shows the balance between solidarity and self-preservation, emphasizing trust-building and fostering openness for enhanced community resilience.

"Africans face many problems comparing to other communities because as an African they can come and arrest you just believing, like, you're running drugs. So we have this problem, and sometimes this kind of problem try to pull us back as a community. But what makes us stronger is since we keep meeting each other again and again, discussing our issues, saying that first of all, we should count on our own strength before looking or searching for the help outside. And then we'll move forward. Otherwise the community will disappear like this and nobody will understand us if we can't understand each other first." (Bernard)

The African community's resilience is multifaceted, shaped by external challenges and internal unity. Discrimination, like racial profiling, poses collective threats, but the community counters this through regular meetings and discussions that foster collective problem-solving and emotional support. Moreover, the emphasis on self-reliance reflects a strategic approach to resilience. By prioritizing internal resources and capabilities, the community aims to build a sturdy foundation to withstand external pressures. This resilience is proactive, aiming to

preempt challenges through collective action and mutual support, ensuring the community isn't solely reliant on external aid.

"Without the support of community, the achievements that you have, we always need appreciation, we always need support; someone to tell us that we did good or not. These things were reflection. The community is a reflection of your struggles, your way of choices, right? The things that you choose, the things that you pick for yourself, the reflections, comes from the community, actually. Are you doing good or bad? You get a feedback from the community. And of course the community plays a strong role in your future choices in a lot of things that you do." (Karim)

In the broader context of community support, this participant's reflection highlights the community's pivotal role as both a mirror reflecting individual achievements and a sounding board offering essential feedback and validation. Within the intricate fabric of a refugee community, the need for appreciation and support takes on heightened significance, given the multifaceted challenges of displacement and the pursuit of stability.

This reciprocal dynamic between individuals and their community serves as a guiding compass, shaping future choices and actions. It highlights that community support extends far beyond the material realm, encompassing emotional and psychological dimensions. Moreover, the community's involvement in reflecting on individual choices and providing feedback becomes instrumental in the process of identity formation and successful social integration within a new and unfamiliar environment. It highlights the community's impact on nurturing a sense of belonging, personal growth, and overall well-being among its members.

In conclusion, the theme of support within urban refugee communities in New Delhi forms a network of interdependence, resilience, and selective solidarity. The narratives and analyses presented illuminate a community that acts as both a pillar of strength and a mirror reflecting individual journeys. Support transcends mere transactions; it is deeply woven into the social fabric, providing both practical aid and intangible validation. The community emerges as a vital catalyst in empowering its members, fostering a sense of belonging, and serving as a platform for collective action. Nevertheless, this support is characterized by nuanced conditions and boundaries that mirror the intricate dynamics of trust and self-preservation within the community. Selective support, particularly concerning sensitive information and personal challenges, suggest a more complex landscape, where communal bonds navigate alongside individual aspirations and vulnerabilities.

4.5.3. Sense of Belonging

The sense of togetherness within a community may be influenced by various factors, such as shared cultural or ethnic backgrounds, a common experience of displacement or adversity, and the quality of social interactions and relationships within the community (Omid). For refugees and asylum seekers, this sense of togetherness within the community is crucial, as it serves as an essential source of support and comfort, facilitating their connection and integration into their new environment. Within the community, members often provide both emotional and practical support, exchange experiences and perspectives, and assist each other in navigating the challenges associated with displacement and adapting to a new culture.

> *"Yes there is a sense of belonging, you are in a new country, with a different culture,*
>
> *religion and language differences, it feels good to be part of the community, to have*
>
> *people who share the same culture, language and ideas. Why do you think all*

Afhgans live in Bhogal? We want to be together with the community, same for Somalis or Congolese, everyone wants to feel like they belong somewhere." (Omid)

The statement offers a nuanced understanding of how the sense of belonging operates within refugee communities. It's not just about finding comfort in shared cultural or linguistic elements; it is also about the strategic choices that communities make to cluster together geographically. The mention of specific areas like Bhogal where Afghans reside indicates a conscious effort to create 'cultural pockets,' which serve as both a physical and psychological sanctuary. These enclaves offer a semblance of the familiar in a foreign landscape, acting as a buffer against the cultural shock and isolation that often accompany displacement.

Moreover, the participant's emphasis on the importance of 'feeling like they belong somewhere' speaks to a deeper, existential need for stability and rootedness, which is often disrupted by the refugee experience. In this context, the geographical and cultural clustering becomes more than a coping mechanism; it is a form of resilience, a collective strategy to mitigate the feelings of alienation and dislocation that are inherent in the refugee experience.

"Community is where is you feel protected, right? You don't feel alone, you feel good surrounded by our own people and we are together in time of difficulty and in happiness we are together." (Naveed)

In the context of the refugee experience, this notion of a 'safe space' becomes especially poignant, as individuals often face the constant spectre of discrimination and vulnerability. Within the community, they find a haven where they can shed their fears and be their authentic selves, free from judgment or harm.

Beyond physical safety, the community serves as a source of emotional support, contributing to the psychological resilience of its members. This resonates with Michael Ungar's (2001) concept of 'navigation,' where individuals actively seek and utilise community resources to enhance their well-being. The phrase 'in time of difficulty and in happiness we are together' encapsulates the enduring nature of community support, transcending circumstances and reflecting a collective resilience that thrives not only in adversity but also in shared joys.

"Because at least the community can contribute or can come together for something, but when we are all alone and they don't have any partners or any other, nobody can help you, it's very difficult to achieve." (Roya)

The participant's response demonstrates the power of collective action, emphasising that individual goals become more attainable when pursued as part of a community. This speaks to the concept of 'social capital,' where the community acts as a reservoir of resources (be it material, informational, or emotional) that individuals can tap into. The notion that it is very difficult to achieve' goals when isolated highlights the limitations of individual agency, especially in the context of refugees who may already be facing numerous systemic barriers.

Furthermore, the participant's statement suggests that the community's collective action is not just about pooling resources but also about creating a sense of shared responsibility and mutual accountability. This shared sense of purpose can be a powerful motivator, driving individuals to contribute to the community's well-being, which in turn enhances their own resilience.

"Sense of belonging. We try, especially when we come together, some of the activities in the group, they make us feel comfortable for a while." (Nathalie)

The participant's observation that group activities provide temporary comfort underscores the transitory nature of the sense of belonging within refugee communities. While these collective endeavors offer moments of unity and shared identity, the phrase "for a while" implies that such feelings are fleeting. This ephemerality may be attributed to the inherent instability of refugee lives, where individuals grapple with ongoing systemic challenges, cultural dislocation, and the uncertainty of their future. It aligns with the concept of 'liminality,' reflecting the state of being in-between, neither fully integrated into the host country nor able to return to their homeland, resulting in a fragile sense of belonging.

By seeking temporary solace in group activities, the community may be employing a coping mechanism to provide emotional sustenance for its members amidst enduring challenges. This adaptability demonstrates a form of resilience, as the community navigates the complexities of refugee life by periodically coming together for shared experiences and support. However, it also raises questions about the sustainability of these collective activities and the long-term resilience of the community, suggesting the need for more enduring structures and support systems to maintain a lasting sense of belonging.

The sense of belonging within refugee communities is a dynamic and multi-faceted construct that significantly contributes to individual and collective resilience. It acts as a sanctuary, offering emotional and practical support to alleviate feelings of alienation and dislocation. However, this sense of belonging is not static and is influenced by various factors, including cultural similarities, shared experiences, and ongoing challenges. Recognizing its transient

nature highlights the need for sustainable efforts to nurture this sense of belonging, considering the concept of 'liminality' that characterizes many refugees' in-between state. The community's adaptive strategies, such as collective activities, serve as coping mechanisms while underscoring the importance of long-term efforts to foster resilience.

4.5.4. Growth

Refugee communities have the potential for growth and development in their host countries. As refugees settle into their new communities, they often establish support networks and develop social capital that can help them navigate the challenges of their new environment. These networks and social connections can lead to the development of community-led initiatives that support the well-being and integration of refugees. By recognising and building on the strengths and resources of refugee communities, host countries can support the integration and resilience of refugees, while also benefiting from their contributions to their new communities.

The theme of "Growth," highlights multifaceted dynamics of how refugee communities not only adapt but thrive in their host countries. Beyond numerical expansion or economic advancement, growth encompasses emotional well-being, cultural adaptability, and the acquisition of new skills. Participants' narratives illuminate the interconnectedness of individual and collective growth, contributing to community resilience. This growth intertwines with other facets of community life, including a sense of belonging, support networks, and community action. "Growth" provides insight into the adaptive capacities and burgeoning potential of refugee communities in their host environments.

"I think the community has grown, we are more accepting, there are differences which will always be there, I think, but yes I think the community has become more openminded, they are open to new experiences." (Omid)

The participant's insightful observation that the community has undergone a transformation towards greater "open-mindedness" and "acceptance" offers a glimpse into the emotional and cultural evolution of the refugee community. This shift signifies a collective growth that transcends mere numerical or economic indicators, exemplifying a community not only adapting to its new environment but also displaying a remarkable willingness to recalibrate its cultural norms and attitudes. This is especially noteworthy given the diverse backgrounds and deeply entrenched cultural practices and beliefs that refugees often bring with them, making it a testament to their resilience in the face of immense change and uncertainty.

"My family has become more confident, I think; I think when you feel safe you are relieved and then you are interested in other things. My family seems more confident day by day and I can see that in them." (Emmanuel)

The participant's reflection on their family's increasing confidence over time offers a nuanced understanding of how individual and familial resilience can be indicative of broader community growth. This shift in confidence is not an isolated phenomenon; rather, it serves as a microcosm for the community's overall development. The family's newfound sense of security has allowed them to move beyond the immediate concerns of survival and safety, enabling them to engage more deeply with their community and explore other facets of life. This transition from a focus on basic needs to more complex forms of social and emotional well-being aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954), where the fulfilment of

basic safety and physiological needs paves the way for the pursuit of higher-order needs like belonging, esteem, and self-actualisation.

> *"We celebrate lots of festivals together, we also have a cultural day where all the different cultures come together and we see the different songs and dances that are there in different communities like the Somali community and the Afghan Sikh community." (Bernard)*

The participant's reflections on cultural events and festivals provide valuable insights into the community's growth within the framework of community resilience. These organized events symbolize a shift from a survival-oriented mindset to a phase of development and enrichment, highlighting the community's capacity to thrive despite adversity. This growth is a testament to the community's resilience, as it actively leverages its challenges to foster positive change and development.

This expansion of cultural horizons is not confined to preserving existing traditions but embraces new influences, enriching the community's collective identity. It illustrates the community's willingness to evolve and adapt. These cultural events serve as 'ritualized spaces' for resilience-building within the community, uniting members for a shared purpose. These gatherings promote social cohesion, strengthen the community's social fabric, and contribute to shared memory-making and the formation of a collective narrative.

> *"Yeah, there are many new things. I also needed to learn many things for hospital assistance, new terms, when there are new members they help you, I learnt Hindi." (Emmanuel)*

The participant's statement about learning "many new things for hospital assistance" and "new terms" is indicative of the community's growth within the framework of community resilience. The acquisition of new skills, especially in the specialised field of healthcare, reflects a proactive response to the challenges posed by displacement, highlighting the community's ability to adapt and thrive in its new environment. This form of growth is closely linked to the community's resilience, as it demonstrates its capacity to actively engage with the circumstances it faces and seek opportunities for self-improvement and development. Furthermore, the participant's decision to learn Hindi represents a broader aspect of growth, encompassing cultural and linguistic adaptation. This goes beyond mere survival; it reflects a commitment to cultural assimilation and social integration, both of which are essential components of community resilience. By learning the local language, individuals contribute to the community's ability to effectively interact with the host society, thereby enhancing its overall resilience.

In conclusion, the theme of Growth within refugee communities is a dynamic and multi-dimensional phenomenon that extends beyond mere numerical expansion. It encompasses emotional and cultural evolution, as evidenced by the community's growing openness and acceptance. This collective growth reflects the community's adaptability, its willingness to modify cultural norms, and its embrace of new experiences. It resonates with the concept of 'cultural flexibility,' highlighting the vital role this plays in resilience amidst migration and displacement.

Furthermore, Growth is evident in individual and familial contexts, with families becoming more confident and individuals acquiring new skills and cultural adaptability. This micro-level

growth is emblematic of broader community development, propelled by the adversity activated development that stems from the challenges of displacement. The community's capacity to acquire new skills, learn local languages, and actively engage with its new environment underscores its resilience and integration.

4.6.Adversity Activated Development

Adversity activated development offers a framework for comprehending how individuals and communities harness resilience and foster growth in the face of adversity. In the context of refugee communities, AAD accentuates the potential for adversity to act as a catalyst for personal and collective advancement. It highlights the transformative role of adversity as refugees adapt to new surroundings, forge fresh social connections, and mobilise resources. This perspective highlights the utmost significance of recognizing adversity's pivotal role in shaping both individual and community development. It also flags the imperative for interventions and support tailored to the unique challenges encountered by refugees.

This intricate process encompasses various elements, including the availability of supportive social networks and resources, the cultivation of coping strategies and resilience skills, and the capacity to derive meaning and purpose in the midst of adversity. However, Papadopoulos' theory posits that these very challenges can also catalyse growth and development among refugees. For example, the hurdles encountered by refugees in India can instigate a proactive search for social support networks and resources, thereby bolstering resilience and coping capabilities. Additionally, the process of adapting to a new culture and environment can instigate the acquisition of novel skills, knowledge, and perspectives that contribute to personal growth and creativity.

Figure 8:   **STRUCTURE OF SUB-THEMES UNDER ADVERSITY ACTIVATED DEVELOPMENT**

Figure 8 - Structure of sub-themes under adversity activated development

4.6.1. *Personal Traits*

The sub-theme of 'Personal Traits' within the overarching theme of adversity activated development explores the personal transformations that refugees undergo as they confront the challenges of resettlement in India. The narratives shared by the participants illuminate a diverse range of personal growth, encompassing emotional resilience and the cultivation of new qualities and characteristics. These evolutions in personal traits are not incidental but intricately connected to the participants' experiences of adversity and displacement. In the forthcoming analyses of their statements, considers how these personal traits have emerged as adaptive responses, playing a pivotal role in bolstering both individual and community resilience.

"Of course I have developed new traits, like my thoughts and ideas have changed,

I believe if I was still in Afghanistan I would have been a different person. I see the

problems people have faced and that changes you. I am exploring religions, I was

born in a muslim family and coming to India gave me a chance to explore other

religions, meet people from different religions" (Omid)

The narrative shared by the participant vividly illustrates the dynamic nature of personal traits within the framework of adversity activated development (AAD). The evolution of their thoughts and the shift from their religious roots to a place of personal redefinition captures the essence of AAD, the growth that stems from facing and navigating the multifaceted challenges of a new life in India.

This introspection and transformation highlight 2 pivotal aspects of AAD. Firstly, the development of intellectual openness as the participant immerses themselves in the cultural and religious diversity of their new environment reflects significant adaptive growth. Such intellectual elasticity is vital for personal and community resilience, allowing for better integration and understanding within a multicultural context. Secondly, the courage to depart from long-held religious beliefs and the declaration of a secular identity underscores a deep psychological strength. It is a testament to the capacity of individuals to redefine their identity in response to life-altering experiences, demonstrating that AAD is as much about the re-evaluation and relinquishment of old traits as it is about the acquisition of new ones.

"Yes I do feel more confident, coming to India, divorcing my husband, taking

charge of my own life, even though I hope every day that things get better I am

grateful to be here, to be safe and to be able to keep my children safe. I feel confident

that I can handle things, however difficult they might get." (Emmanuel)

The participant's account reveals a journey of self-empowerment and increased agency, particularly in the context of a challenging life transition that includes migration and divorce. The newfound confidence is not just a psychological state but a functional asset that enables the participant to navigate complex life circumstances. This aligns with the concept of 'self-efficacy' in psychological literature, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to achieve goals and overcome challenges (Artino, 2012). High self-efficacy is often associated with greater resilience and better mental health outcomes (Hamill, 2003).

The participant also touches on the emotional resilience that comes from facing and overcoming adversity. The phrase "even though I hope every day that things get better" suggests a form of 'realistic optimism,' a balance between hope and practicality that is often cited as a key component of resilience. This form of emotional resilience is not just about enduring hardship but actively engaging with it, transforming challenges into opportunities for growth and development. This aligns well with the concept of adversity activated development (AAD), where adversity is not just a challenge to be overcome but a catalyst for growth.

> *"Yes I do feel less helpless, I feel that I have some freedom, I am able to work and provide for my family which I could have done back in Afghanistan, I feel like things will get better, even though there are days where I feel like will life be any different? But then I think about how much it is better than being back home" (Karim)*

This transformation aligns with resilience theories that argue for the pivotal role of agency in overcoming challenges. The participant's newfound ability to work and provide for their family not only enhances their individual resilience but also contributes to the collective resilience of their community, as self-sufficiency and resourcefulness are valuable assets within refugee

communities. This blend of optimism and pragmatism is a characteristic trait often associated with individuals who exhibit high levels of resilience (Feldman & Snyder, 2005). It signifies the participant's capacity to maintain a positive outlook while confronting the harsh realities of life as a refugee.

"I have developed a sense of leadership, understanding each one, trying to put everyone together and having more responsible attitudes toward communities and all of this, and understanding that living together as a community made the most sacrifices, wanting to do sacrifices." (Nathalie)

Leadership traits and a strong sense of responsibility can serve as linchpins in fostering collective resilience, as they enable individuals to navigate and address communal challenges effectively. Moreover, the participant's deep understanding of the intricacies of community life reflects a level of maturity that is instrumental in cultivating a culture of mutual support and shared responsibility within the community. This, in turn, contributes significantly to community resilience, as the ability to work together cohesively enhances the community's capacity to adapt and withstand adversities.

The narratives surrounding personal traits and developments reveal a complex interplay of emotional growth, newfound confidence, and a sense of empowerment. The participants' experiences in India have not only changed their circumstances but have also led to significant shifts in their self-perception and capabilities. From exploring new religious perspectives to taking charge of their lives in challenging situations, the participants demonstrate a form of resilience that is deeply personal yet universally relatable. This aligns with the concept of adversity activated development, as the challenges they've faced seem to have catalyzed a

transformative process, enhancing their resilience and shaping their identities in meaningful ways. Overall, the personal traits developed by the participants serve as both a testament to their individual resilience and a crucial asset for community resilience and social cohesion, illustrating the profound impact of personal growth on the collective strength of refugee communities.

4.6.2. *Achievements*

In the context of adversity activated development (AAD), "achievement" encompasses a wide range of positive outcomes and accomplishments that individuals and communities can attain despite facing adversity. These achievements may manifest as the development of new skills and talents, the establishment of successful businesses or community organizations, and the creation of art and literature that reflects the experiences of refugees. For instance, some refugees have channelled their adverse experiences and displacement into creative work, using it as a source of inspiration to process their emotions and foster a sense of identity and purpose (Kalmanowitz & Ho, 2016).

Achievements within the adversity activated development (AAD) context are understood as the energization and direction of competence-relevant behaviour. It is about striving towards competence and success despite facing challenges. The concept is multifaceted, incorporating not just tangible outcomes like skill development or economic success but also the personal triumphs of overcoming psychological and social barriers.

> *"I would say that coming to India has made me a different person, I now feel that I*
>
> *am capable to doing things, there are opportunities, I was accepted in University,*
>
> *I am one of the first people in my family to have a bachelor's degree, I don't think*

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it would have been possible back home. I mean even my sister is now attending

training to be a dental assistant, she is really happy and enjoys going to work. Life

may still not be easy but there are small positive things that are there to look

forward to." (Nathalie)

The participant's narrative offers an insight into the transformative power of adversity activated development (AAD). Since arriving in India, they have undergone a remarkable shift in self-perception, now viewing themselves as capable individuals. This newfound confidence extends well beyond their academic achievements and likely influences various facets of their life, from personal relationships to career aspirations. Moreover, their attainment of a bachelor's degree signifies not just academic success but also resilience and determination. It carries broader significance as they become one of the first in their family to reach this educational milestone, potentially inspiring other family members to pursue their own educational and vocational goals.

The enrollment of their sister in dental assistant training highlights how personal accomplishments can inspire and ignite the aspirations of other family members. This dynamic demonstrates that individual success can play a pivotal role in advancing the collective progress and overall welfare of the community, thus aligning closely with the fundamental tenets of adversity activated development (AAD).

"Achievements, I would say that being able to earn money for my family and taking

care of my children, even taking them for outings, going to the mall and having an

ice cream, giving them an education so they have different lives, it is an achievement

for me." (Emmanuel)

The participant's narrative emphasises the significance of family well-being as a notable achievement. Their ability to earn money to support their family, ensuring their children enjoy outings, trips to the mall, and even something as simple as having ice cream, demonstrates their capacity to provide emotional security and moments of joy in the midst of displacement and uncertainty. Furthermore, these family outings hold more than immediate happiness; they contribute to the emotional and psychological development of the children, offering a sense of stability invaluable in a refugee context.

The participant's dedication to providing their children with an education signifies a long-term perspective and a commitment to enhancing their prospects for a more stable future. This achievement extends beyond the individual, carrying the potential to benefit future generations and aligning closely with the principles of adversity activated development (AAD).

> *"I improved my computer skills also here in India with those hospital assistants, Because when I joined Bosco to go to those Indian government hospitals, no one will teach you." (Emmanuel)*

The participant's narrative highlights their remarkable achievements within a refugee context, specifically focusing on the development of computer skills and expertise in hospital assistance. These accomplishments are not just personal milestones but also strategic adaptations to the challenges and opportunities in the host country. They represent practical skills that enhance employability and facilitate social integration, underscoring the participant's resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity. Furthermore, these achievements have broader implications for the refugee community's resilience in India. The participant's skills in

hospital assistance can serve as communal resources, supporting the well-being and resilience of the entire refugee community. This dual significance, personal growth and contributions to the collective, aligns closely with the concept of adversity activated development (AAD).

"So we are working back to back. So together with others who never had this opportunity, I started creating opportunity. So I would say the stressful time helped me to be courageous, to be patient, to be more innovative, to be an aggressive marketing strategist. Because I said, no, I can't just sit for UN, to give me everything or somebody to pay my bills or I've got to make this work." (Nathalie)

The participant's narrative exemplifies entrepreneurial achievement within the context of adversity activated development (AAD). Their proactive approach to creating opportunities reflects a refusal to remain passive in adversity. This initiative showcases the development of traits such as courage, patience, innovation, and marketing acumen as responses to their challenging experiences, aligning closely with AAD principles.

Furthermore, these entrepreneurial endeavours have dual implications. On an individual level, they experience empowerment and self-reliance, reducing dependence on external support. At a community level, their actions contribute to community resilience and social capital. This dual impact highlights the role of adversity in fostering growth and resourcefulness and underscores the agency and resilience of individuals in refugee communities.

The narratives from the participants offer a multi-faceted view of what achievements mean in the context of adversity activated development. From academic accomplishments to financial stability, from psychological resilience to entrepreneurial initiative, the range is broad yet

interconnected. These achievements are not isolated successes but are deeply embedded in the participants' ongoing efforts to navigate the complexities of life as refugees in India.

These diverse forms of achievement collectively highlight the transformative power of adversity activated development, where challenges become opportunities for growth and resilience, ultimately shaping the narratives of refugees in India. Whether it is the pursuit of education, economic stability, psychological strength, or entrepreneurial spirit, these achievements not only benefit individuals but also contribute to the resilience and well-being of their communities, showcasing the impact of AAD in the face of adversity.

4.6.3. Meaning-Making

Meaning-making, as a concept distinct from achievements and personal traits, pertains to the internal cognitive processes aimed at constructing a personal narrative that makes sense of one's experiences, especially adversities (Williams et al., 2020). Holland et al (2010) describe it as integrating experiences into a coherent self-narrative, differentiating it from achievements, which are specific, external validations of success, and personal traits, which are enduring characteristics that define how we typically think, feel, and act.

In the AAD framework, achievements are often tangible milestones, such as educational or vocational accomplishments that refugees attain despite adversity. Personal traits, on the other hand, are the ingrained qualities and attributes that may evolve but generally persist over time. Meaning-making diverges as it involves a reflective and interpretative process, where individuals ascribe significance to their experiences, both positive and negative, in a way that aligns with their evolving identity and worldview. This interpretative process is crucial for refugees as they navigate the complexities of a new cultural context, allowing them to find

coherence and continuity between their past and their present, which is essential for psychological adaptation and growth.

> *"I think being able to give back to my community is one way that I find meaning in life. I work as a translator, I help people with doctors' appointments, I do some freelancing work, and whenever I have the opportunity and the platform I try and raise awareness of the Indian community about refugees and how if given a chance we can add value to their country as well." (Farid)*

The narrative from the participant highlights the significant role of meaning-making in their life, a core aspect of adversity activated development (AAD). By contributing to their community as a translator and raising awareness, they craft a sense of purpose that transcends individual achievement and reflects a deep commitment to societal well-being. This engagement is a proactive embodiment of AAD, as the participant not only adapts to a new life in India but actively seeks to improve the integration and perception of refugees within the host community.

Their dual role as both a translator and an advocate exemplifies a meaningful contribution that has immediate personal impact and the potential for broader social change. It showcases an understanding of how personal resilience, when channelled into community service, can foster social cohesion and challenge existing narratives about refugees. This work not only aids in their personal coping and adaptation but also contributes to the societal fabric, emphasizing the reciprocal relationship between individual resilience and community development.

"I think for, me India gave me the opportunity to explore different paths in life, I believe in being with everybody, in being friendly with everybody, there is something about meeting different kinds of people and from different types of ethnicities and background and even languages and countries and coming together and finding a sense in life." (Roya)

In this research, the participant's experience reveals a strategic engagement with diversity, integral to their process of meaning-making. This engagement is not solely about social adaptation but also serves as a catalyst for existential exploration. The narrative reflects a deliberate immersion in a new cultural landscape, underlining the participant's belief in the value of multicultural interactions for personal and collective development. It illustrates a nuanced aspect of meaning-making within the context of adversity activated development (AAD), where diverse social connections are seen as enriching and essential to constructing a coherent life narrative and fostering resilience.

The act of "coming together and finding a sense in life" encapsulates the essence of meaning-making in a multicultural context. It's not just about individual growth but also about contributing to a collective sense of unity and purpose. This dual focus on individual and collective meaning-making is crucial for understanding the multifaceted nature of resilience in refugee communities.

"I think after my divorce and becoming independent and looking after my children gave me a new purpose in life, these are the things I wanted to do from so long but couldn't. Being in India has given me that opportunity and new meaning in life." (Emmanuel)

The narrative of the participant reflects an important facet of meaning-making as part of their adversity activated development (AAD). Their transition to independence and the assumption of sole caregiving duties post-divorce has provided them with a significant purpose, driving a transformative journey from vulnerability to empowerment. This individual's story is a clear depiction of resilience, where personal upheaval has been reinterpreted as an opportunity for growth and self-determination.

The role of caregiving is especially highlighted as a cornerstone for the participant's renewed sense of meaning in life. This responsibility, coupled with the support and possibilities afforded by their new environment in India, showcases the participant's active role in reshaping their life narrative. This experience aligns with the broader understanding of resilience, where personal agency and the redefinition of one's life trajectory are crucial for psychological well-being.

"One example is like, you know, there are some few women here, they used to do hair braiding. Okay? Yeah, hair braiding. So that hair braiding, it's their business. They earn money by doing everything to their client. So a community project, it's something like we approach those who know how to do everything. Okay. And then to request them, if also they can teach other women how to do that. So it will be like a kind of skill, some skill development, training, something like that. So if other women know also how to do braiding, it will help them also to earn some money. To earn some money themselves." (Bernard)

The narrative provided by the participant highlights a grassroots initiative within the community that exemplifies the practical application of adversity activated development (AAD). The hair braiding project transcends being a mere business venture. This initiative illustrates a tangible form of meaning-making, as it not only offers economic self-sufficiency to the women involved but also strengthens communal ties through the sharing of knowledge and cultural practices.

Teaching hair braiding is a manifestation of meaning-making that contributes to both individual growth and communal solidarity. Such skill development initiatives resonate with Papadopoulos' views on the significance of meaning-making in AAD, particularly as a mechanism for fostering resilience and adaptive capacities within refugee communities. Through these communal efforts, the women are not only securing a livelihood but also reinforcing their cultural identity and nurturing a supportive network, which is essential for holistic community resilience.

The research features the diverse avenues through which refugees find meaning and purpose. From the empowerment of becoming independent providers to the cultural engagement of skill development and the broader societal contributions of advocacy and translation, these activities embody the essence of meaning-making. They emphasise how purpose and significance derived from various life domains contribute to a profound sense of fulfilment and well-being, thus supporting the concept of adversity activated development (AAD).

The conclusion drawn from these individual stories is that meaning-making is an integrative process, vital for the psychological resilience of refugees. It is through this lens that they are not only surviving but thriving, crafting a narrative of hope and contribution that enriches not

only their lives but also the fabric of the host community. These findings offer a powerful testament to the strength and adaptability of the human spirit when faced with adversity.

4.6.4. Positive Developments

The sub-theme of Positive Developments in adversity activated development (AAD) emphasises the profound psychological change that individuals can experience through their struggle with adversity. This change represents more than resilience, which is the ability to maintain stable functioning; it involves transformative renewal, additional benefits, and qualitative change. Tedeschi and Calhoun's work illustrates that such developments are marked by increased hope, religiosity, and a better appreciation of social support, signalling growth beyond pre-adversity levels of functioning.

The concept of AAD further refines this, suggesting that survivors of adversity can find deep meaning in their suffering, leading to a re-evaluation of life that often renders their past as less meaningful compared to their revitalised present. This growth is not just a testament to personal fortitude but also challenges societal views that often pathologise trauma, highlighting a shift towards viewing adversity as an opportunity for positive personal development and a reinvigorated sense of life's value.

> *"I think when we all come together and participate in Cultural day is an important positive development, where literally all communities come together, it is organised by the community so the youth group gets a good chance to put their organisation and leadership skills to use, you can see they are so enthusiastic about this. There is different energy which flows through during that time. Everyone looks forward to it." (Karim)*

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Cultural Day event described by the participant is not just a one-off occasion but a recurring event. The Cultural Day event, as recounted by the participant, exemplifies a significant Positive Development in the context of adversity activated development (AAD). This celebration acts as a catalyst for unity, allowing diverse communities to congregate and engage in intercultural dialogue. The involvement of youth in organizing the event not only serves as a cultural homage but also as an investment in the future, honing their leadership and organizational skills.

This celebration brings to light the multifaceted nature of Positive Developments within AAD, demonstrating the community's resilience and showcasing a forward-looking stance that nurtures the younger generation's potential while fostering a shared emotional experience. Such events strengthen communal bonds and serve as a psychological bolster, highlighting the collective spirit and anticipatory joy that underpin the community's journey through adversity.

> *"I really enjoy now celebrating different festivals of the Somali community; for example, we all ladies get together and cook different foods, it is such a positive experience, everyone gets along and all we want to do is give everyone a delicious meal." (Emmanuel)*

The participant's enjoyment of Somali festivals, particularly the communal preparation and sharing of traditional dishes, showcases a powerful example of positive developments in the realm of adversity activated development (AAD). These cultural gatherings are more than mere celebrations; they are a testament to the community's resilience, offering opportunities for social support, cultural expression, and collective joy.

Such cultural practices are instrumental in reinforcing community bonds and individual well-being, acting as a source of comfort and continuity amidst change. The communal cooking experience, as described by the participant, is a powerful facilitator of unity, allowing members to connect over shared culinary traditions, strengthening social ties, and nurturing a collective identity.

"I have been accepted to do a masters programme, I could never have imagined that this would be my life, even with life's difficulties, I am happy that I have my academics to concentrate on." (Naveed)

The participant's admission into a Master's program marks a critical juncture in their journey of AAD. This academic progression is not merely a testament to their intellectual commitment but also a symbol of their personal resilience. Amidst the complexities of life's adversities, the pursuit of higher education provides a focused channel for growth and a potent counterbalance to challenges faced.

The sentiment "I am happy that I have my academics to concentrate on" reflects the role of academia as a stabilizing and purpose-giving force within the AAD framework. For the participant, further education is a meaningful pursuit that enhances life structure and psychological well-being. Such educational achievements are not just personal victories but also serve as beacons of inspiration within the refugee community, highlighting the possibilities that arise when resilience is coupled with opportunity.

"Me and my children have been selected to be resettled in a third country, to United States of America. I could not be more happy about it, the process is but delayed due to the pandemic but we are so excited. Honestly, if I have not fled to India my children would not have had such a good opportunity." (Roya)

The participant's account of being selected for resettlement in the United States represents a pivotal moment in their narrative of Adversity Activated Development (AAD). This opportunity for resettlement is not only a testament to their resilience but also illuminates the transformative potential of seeking refuge. The statement, *"Honestly, if I have not fled to India, my children would not have had such a good opportunity,"* underscores the complex interplay between adversity and opportunity within the AAD framework. It highlights how the decision to flee, driven by the search for safety and a better future, can open unforeseen pathways to growth and improvement in life circumstances. This experience reflects a critical aspect of AAD: the capacity of individuals to leverage adverse situations into opportunities that may not have been available in their country of origin.

This narrative serves as a powerful example within the refugee community, demonstrating how resilience, coupled with the support and opportunities provided by LMIC host countries and international resettlement programs, can lead to life-altering outcomes. It also highlights the critical role of host countries like India in serving as transit points that can lead to greater opportunities for refugees, reinforcing the importance of global solidarity and support for displaced populations.

"I made them to understand that I could speak French, I could clean patients who never came with attendance. I could prepare food for them. I could do anything. I

could run errands for them. Then I started getting my first call for translation. At the Katewa Hospital, we had a patient who our translator is not there. Can you come? Now, in the course of working with this patient, I noticed that the patient needed African food. Okay, I start searching. How do I get African spices? I'll go to the market, buy the spices, cook and bring. And every day the patient is going to eat and appreciate. And the next day, give me money. Now, I was making a little money from the marketing that I was doing, buying things from the market and cooking." (Nathalie)

Many participants reported leveraging their skills and experiences to foster economic independence and provide culturally sensitive services within their host communities. This embodiment of adversity activated development (AAD) illustrates how individuals in challenging circumstances innovate to create opportunities for themselves and others, reflecting the resilience and entrepreneurial drive that often characterize refugee populations.

In conclusion, the research participants' narratives collectively map a journey of personal development that is deeply rooted in the principles of (AAD). Each account, from transforming language skills into a caregiving role, to finding empowerment through academic pursuits, and embracing community roles through cultural engagement, displays the multifarious nature of growth that can emerge from adversity. These stories highlight not just the tenacity of individuals in the face of hardship but also their creative and dynamic engagement with their new environments. They embody personal development as an ongoing process of adapting, learning, and contributing, which in turn fosters a resilient and self-sustaining community. The participants' experiences reflect a broader narrative of refugees not merely as survivors, but as

active architects of their futures, drawing on their strengths and capacities to navigate, adapt, and flourish in new contexts.

5. Discussions

5.1. Introduction

This research intended to contribute to the sparse body of knowledge regarding refugees' in developing urban contexts, their daily challenges and mental health needs from first-hand information. In this, and building on the existing literature, this research spread to explore the challenges that refugees faced or are still facing in India, taking into account the effect of forced displacement in the emergence of these challenges.

This chapter will delve into the discussion of the research questions that have been formulated to explore the experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, India. These research questions were selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the core concepts in this research and their complementarity.This includes the evidence of social capital, its role in promoting community resilience, the presence of adversity activated development (AAD) and its impact on the refugee population, and finally the relevance of these concepts in a low- and middle-income country (LMIC) context such as New Delhi, India and how they can inform interventions for the well-being of urban refugees. The full list of research questions can be found in Chapter 2, Methodology.

5.2. Pre-Migration Challenges

This section presents a detailed examination of pre-migration stressors, contextualising them within the core concepts of this thesis. The literature extensively documents the negative impact of such stressors on refugees' psychological well-being, with studies revealing a strong correlation between pre-migration adversity and subsequent mental health difficulties (De Haene et al., 2007; Robjant et al., 2009). This aligns with the accounts of participants in this

research, who have shared narratives of the severe conditions they endured, consistent with the findings by Gorst-Unsworth and Goldenberg (1998) on Iraqi refugees.

This research identifies 4 emergent sub-themes that are consistent with the data: Security, Exposure to Adverse Events, and Lack of Resources and their Impact. These themes are not isolated but interconnected, each contributing to the complex environment that prompts the migration journey. They reflect the broader conflict dynamics and systemic barriers noted in regions like Afghanistan, where civilian casualties and security threats have been well-documented (Obaid & Rutting, 2019) and are emblematic of the challenges that refugees face (Betancourt et al., 2015).

The narratives captured in this thesis contribute to the understanding of how such adversities serve as a catalyst for resilience and the development of new social capital in host communities. By viewing migration through the lens of AAD, this thesis argues that adversity does not solely undermine individual agency but can also precipitate positive growth and adaptation (Ungar, 2008). This positions the refugees' experiences within a broader discourse that emphasises the importance of recognizing and supporting the potential for resilience and development among displaced populations. The comprehensive analysis presented here not only enriches the academic discourse on forced migration but also underscores the necessity for informed and empathetic policy frameworks that can nurture the positive potential within refugee communities.

5.2.1. Exposure to Adverse Events

The findings on "Exposure to Adverse Events" in the context of pre-migration challenges showcase the harrowing personal accounts of participants. There is already a substantial body

of research with the evidence consistently showing that refugees often endure a range of adverse events prior to migration, which can significantly increase the risk of mental health problems such as depression and PTSD (Steel et al., 2009). The narratives from participants in this research substantiate these findings, with many detailing experiences of direct threats, loss of property, loss of loved ones, and direct targetting for societal positions and livelihoods, resonating with the literature on the impacts of such adversity (Porter & Haslam, 2005; Steel et al., 2002).

Gender-based violence, regularly emerges as one of the most significant forms of exposure experienced by participants, steming from entrenched societal and political structures. This violence, manifesting in forced marriages and the suppression of fundamental rights, is emblematic of the institutionalised oppression faced by women (Anderlini, 2007; Bemak & Chung, 2017). The narratives also shed light on specific risks faced by LGBTQ refugees, who may experience heightened vulnerability due to prejudice and discrimination (UNHCR, 2015; Alessi et al., 2013). The confluence of these factors, personal adversity and systemic inequality, exemplifies the compelling reasons behind the forced migration (Bogic et al., 2012).

5.2.2. Safety and Security

The discussion surrounding safety and security challenges faced by refugees prior to migration is central to this thesis. The narratives collected from participants reveal an acute awareness of the dangers posed by conflict, regardless of if these threats materialise, aligning with reports of heightened civilian casualties in Afghanistan (Obaid & Rutting, 2019).[1] These personal accounts are suggestive of a reality where security threats are deeply woven into the

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[1] United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) documented a 27% increase in civilian deaths from the first to the second quarter of 2019 (Obaid & Rutting., 2019).

socioeconomic fabric of their countries, corroborating the research findings on the impact of power structures on individual safety (Betancourt et al., 2015).

The participants' experiences resonate with existing literature on the multifaceted nature of insecurity, extending beyond physical safety to include social and economic dimensions (Betancourt et al., 2015; Mazurana et al., 2013). In short, it is not only exposure to specific instances of adversity that undermines the wellbeing of refugees but their continued exposure to the risks of violence and prejudice. The long-term implications of such exposure is indicated by participant's emotional upheaval, marked by disrupted sleep and eating patterns, is indicative of the psychosomatic response to prolonged stress, a phenomenon well-documented in neuroendocrinology (Sapolsky, 2004).

Many participants described the gendered nature of violence and economic desperation as dual forces propelling them to seek refuge, resonating with Jacobsen's (2005) observations on the economic repercussions of security threats. Autesserre's (2010) work on the role of governance in driving migration is reflected in the accounts of those who were targeted due to their educational roles or humanitarian work, illustrating an assault on the pillars of social capital as contributing (Mazurana et al., 2013; Fast, 2014). This demonstrates that migration is not only an escape from immediate threats (explore in the next sub-theme) but also a rejection of the systemic power imbalances that prevent safety, employment, and access to essential services, suggesting that the root causes of migration are deeply embedded in the governance and power structures of the home country.

In addressing these pre-migration stressors, findings build upon the concept of adversity activated development (AAD), postulating that migration acts not only as a means to escape

danger but also as a pathway to resilience and the creation of new social capital (Ungar, 2008). The findings suggest that the act of migration, within the AAD framework, can catalyze a transformative process, where the act of leaving becomes a form of self-preservation and an assertion of autonomy in the face of insecurity.

The experience of refugees, as this research indicates, is underpinned by the fundamental need for safety, a determinant of general health and a facilitator for healing from adverse experiences (Burgess, 2004). The decision to flee is rooted in a well-founded fear of persecution (Davenport et al., 2003), and the subsequent quest for safety is influenced by both the immediate environment and the lingering effects of adversity (Stathopoulou et al., 2019).

5.2.3. Lack of Resources

The findings highlight the importance of a broader definition of resources, recognizing that the concept extends well beyond economic or financial constraints to encompass a wide range of protective resources. This encompasses a critical lack of access to essential services and resources, including food, healthcare, housing, employment, and clean water and sanitation. Additionally, the profound loss of community and homes contributes to the multifaceted nature of adversity encountered by refugees and asylum seekers (Refugees & Health | Costs of War, n.d.). Economic deprivation often leads to increased vulnerability and can precipitate forced migration (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018).

Defining resources upfront as broader than economic and financial is crucial for understanding the multifaceted nature of adversity faced by displaced populations. While economic resource limitations alone may not qualify individuals for refugee status under UNHCR criteria, they serve as a significant contributing factor to other forms of adversity, including safety and

security concerns, exposure to adverse events, and systemic discrimination (Economic Migrant, n.d.).

The narratives from participants underline the profound impact of economic instability and unemployment as primary stressors, highlighting how economic deprivation often precipitates forced migration (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018). Furthermore, the intersection of economic hardship with entrenched social issues, particularly gender inequality, illustrates the systematic denial of rights and opportunities, especially in conflict zones (Freedman, 2016). This gendered resource scarcity not only undermines women's autonomy but also perpetuates patriarchal structures, hindering societal advancement (True, 2013).

Additionally, the psychological ramifications of resource scarcity, manifesting as diminished agency and mental health challenges, underscore the critical need for a comprehensive understanding of resources. Research has shown that the psychological impact of poverty and perceived helplessness can significantly exacerbate mental health issues and undermine resilience (Schick et al., 2016). This perspective is vital for designing interventions and support mechanisms that address the broad spectrum of needs among refugees and asylum seekers, ensuring that efforts are not solely focused on economic relief but also on enhancing access to essential protective resources.

5.2.4. Concluding Thoughts on Pre-Migration Challenges

In concluding the examination of pre-migration challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers, the journey undeniably commences amidst a nexus of hardships that critically contour their lived experiences and paths forward. The 3 sub-themes of Safety & Security, Exposure to

Adverse Events, and Lack of Resources, delineate the various and often intersecting barriers that force people to leave their homes.

In reviewing the pre-migration challenges detailed by participants as a whole, it is clear that the decision to leave one's homeland is not taken lightly but is compelled by an intricate web of adversities. The interplay between safety & security (constand threat), exposure to adverse events (actualisation of these threats), and lack of resources (broader undermining of autonomy and access) compound to disrupt the very fabric of individuals' lives. These themes, far from being discrete, are often deeply intertwined, with one exacerbating the others, creating a complex ecosystem of hardship.

The overlapping nature of these challenges is evident in the way socio-political turmoil often precipitates economic decline, which in turn amplifies social inequalities and discrimination. For instance, the violence and instability described by refugees are frequently rooted in the same socio-economic inequalities that manifest as resource scarcity, as indicated by research on conflict and migration (Castles, de Haas, & Miller, 2014). Moreover, the adverse experiences suffered by individuals within these environments are not isolated afflictions but are compounded by systemic issues, such as gender discrimination and lack of educational opportunities, as explored in studies on trauma and social structures (Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick, & Stein, 2012).

These compounded challenges reveal the importance of a holistic approach to understanding pre-migration pressures, one that considers not only the immediate triggers of migration but also the underlying structures that create such untenable living conditions. This understanding is crucial for formulating responses that not only aid refugees in their immediate crises but also

contribute to addressing the systemic issues that perpetuate cycles of displacement. The insights from Betts et al (2017) on refugee economies suggest that addressing pre-migration challenges requires collaborative efforts that cut across policy, humanitarian aid, and development agendas, ensuring that interventions are not just palliative but transformative.

Such an approach is necessary to ensure that support systems are comprehensive and address the multifaceted nature of the adversities that drive the forced migration of individuals. It is through such a lens that policies can be directed towards creating conditions that allow for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of refugees to their homelands, should they choose to do so, or their integration into new communities in a manner that respects and harnesses their potential (Koser, 2011).

5.3.Post-Migration Facets

The post-migration experience serves as a key theme in examining the lives of urban refugees in New Delhi, encapsulating the intricacies of their journey beyond mere geographical relocation. This theme is dissected into several sub-themes: System Navigation, where refugees must learn to negotiate the complexities of a new bureaucratic landscape; Cultural Adaptation, which demands significant psychological and social adjustments; Uncertainty of the Future, where the lack of predictability looms large; and Relief, capturing the initial respite felt upon arrival. Together, these sub-themes paint a comprehensive picture of the challenges and adaptive processes that define the urban refugee experience post-migration.

5.3.1. System Navigation

In the realm of system navigation, many participants expressed challenges in adjusting to the new bureaucratic landscape of their host country. These experiences are backed by literature indicating that refugees often grapple with complicated asylum procedures and a lack of clear guidance upon arrival (Field et al., 2020). A common thread in these narratives is the sense of disorientation and the emotional toll of navigating an unfamiliar system without a national legal framework for refugees, as India is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention (Jops et al., 2016).

The participants' struggles are accentuated by documentation issues, such as the Aadhar Card requirements (the Indian ID card system), which have become increasingly necessary even for the informal economy where most refugees work due to legal limitations on their residency and employment (Field et al., 2017; Tiwari et al., 2017). The narratives reflect the research by Beiser (2006), which suggests that economic independence is crucial for mental health, yet often unattainable due to these systemic barriers.

Single-parent refugee families, particularly those led by women, face distinct challenges including securing stable housing and ensuring their children's education, which intersect with broader gender and refugee issues (Indra, 1999). These narratives are part of a wider context where refugees grapple with social, legal, and economic barriers to self-reliance in India, contributing to reduced living standards and mental health problems (Raj, 2020; Silove et al., 1997).

Refugees grapple with housing complexities and linguistic hurdles in new countries, often contrasting with their home nations' simpler, trust-based systems. For instance, advance rent payments, unfamiliar to some like Participants, are examples of the difficulties encountered

during economic integration and the necessity of social networks for housing stability (Valtonen, 2004; Portes, 1998). Language barriers obstruct refugees' service access and community integration, necessitating language education for their empowerment (Ager & Strang, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

The shift towards a more enabling environment requires collaborative efforts from both governmental and non-governmental actors, ensuring that refugees are not mere recipients of aid but active participants in their journey towards living in the host country and beyond (Castles, Korac, Vasta & Vertovec, 2002). The participants' experiences call for a reassessment of asylum procedures, advocating for reduced waiting times and the provision of comprehensive support services. This support is essential not only for legal integration but also for the psychological well-being of refugees, as the prolonged uncertainty can exacerbate pre-existing adversities (Steel et al., 2006).

The journey of system navigation for refugees is marked by the interplay of barriers and resilience. Faced with complex bureaucratic processes, housing challenges, and language hurdles, refugees demonstrate remarkable adaptability. However, their path is hindered by the stigmatisation and legal limitations that shape their experiences in host countries. As this study concludes, the necessity for comprehensive support systems and inclusive policies becomes clear. These should not only ease the practical burdens of migration but also foster an environment of acceptance, enabling refugees to rebuild their lives with dignity and contribute meaningfully to their new communities.

5.3.2. Cultural Adaptation

The narratives presented by the participants, set against the backdrop of New Delhi's complex socio-cultural backdrop, epitomize the convoluted journey of cultural adaptation that refugees undergo. Naveed's articulation of cultural disorientation echoes the concept of 'cultural homelessness' (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999), a state where individuals grapple with the loss of cultural rootedness while simultaneously striving to integrate into a new, often disparate, cultural landscape. This sense of displacement is a testament to the psychological and sociocultural adjustments that Miller and Rasmussen (2017) emphasise as being intrinsic to the refugee experience.

Roya's struggle with language barriers and the resulting socio-economic impediments mirror the findings of Choi (2016), highlighting the direct correlation between linguistic proficiency and access to opportunities. This language barrier extends beyond the practical realm, hindering the cultural and emotional integration into the host community, as described by Berry (1997), where the resultant acculturative stress can pose significant risks to psychological well-being.

The journey towards cultural adaptation is not only marked by resilience but also by the empowerment that comes with acquiring new skills. Naveed's transition into a 'tarjuman' underlines the dual benefits of language proficiency, personal economic empowerment and the fostering of community cohesion. Such narratives demonstrate the empowering potential of language, resonating with Cheung et al (2022)'s observations on the contributions of refugees as linguistic bridges in their host societies.

Educational constraints, however, further complicate the cultural adaptation process. Pfortmueller et al (2016) illustrate the critical role of educational and cultural resources in

aiding refugees' socio-economic advancement and integration, a point vividly brought to life through the participants' challenges. The selective empathy and differential treatment based on nationality, as indicated by the differential experiences of African, Burmese, and Afghan refugees, calls for a revaluation of current integration policies. Silverstein (2015) and the Human Rights Law Network (2007) both highlight how such biases in policy and practice can lead to varied integration experiences, underscoring the need for a uniform policy approach that is fair and equitable.

Factors, such as social isolation and lack of support in the receiving countries, are just some of the challenges refugees face post-migration (Bogic et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2019; Giacco et al., 2018; Hynie, 2018). For the younger refugees, the narratives highlight the developmental intricacies they face, aligning with Fazel et al (2019)'s work on the need for robust educational and social support systems. This also supports Bhugra's (2004) observations on migration, in which he highlights the transformative impact it has on identity and the importance of providing a supportive environment for cultural negotiation.

In summary, the experiences shared by the participants, supported by existing scholarly research, highlight the multifaceted challenges of cultural adaptation. They call for a cohesive strategy that includes language and educational support, an equitable policy framework that transcends racial and national biases, and a societal commitment to fostering an inclusive environment for all refugees, regardless of origin. The aim should be not only to mitigate the hardships of cultural adaptation but to harness the unique strengths and perspectives that refugees bring to their new communities.

5.3.3. Uncertainty of the Future

The theme of "Uncertainty of the Future" among urban refugees in New Delhi is a always present aspect of their lived experience, encapsulated by the sense of liminality and the absence of a legal framework that offers any sense of predictability. The participants' narratives, which express their experiences of inequity and psychological distress, resonate deeply with sociological insights suggesting that high uncertainty can limit active social engagement (El-Bialy et al., 2021).

The academic discourse on forced displacement often paints it as a life characterized by unpredictability, where displaced individuals are caught in a transient state between their past and an uncertain future (Agier, 2011; Horst & Grabska, 2015). This uncertainty, while commonly associated with negative states such as hopelessness and psychological distress (Afifi et al., 2011; Becker et al., 2000; Crea, 2016), also offers a space for hope and imagination (Besteman, 2014; Brun, 2015; El-Shaarawi, 2015). For instance, Turner (2014) found that for some Burundian refugees, the unpredictable life in Nairobi's outskirts provided hope for a future that refugee camps could not offer.

Participans experience of the protracted and unequal process of seeking support parallels this literature, illustrating how uncertainty can manifest as a significant source of daily stress. The absence of domestic laws concerning refugees in India, as mentioned by Participants, adds another layer to this uncertainty, leaving refugees to rely on the UNHCR with "less help from the Indian government. In this context, resilience emerges as a strategy to cope with uncertainty, including the temporal uncertainties that come with being a refugee (Ungar, 2008). The participants' aspirations for a stable future highlight their inherent resilience and the importance of creating support systems that provide more than just immediate relief but empower them towards a more certain future.

Therefore, one must not only articulate the challenges faced by refugees but also advocate for a policy reform that establishes a more predictable environment for them. By acknowledging the complex interplay of despair and resilience, policymakers and support systems can better cater to the needs of refugees, enabling them to move beyond survival to actively contribute to society and foster their own well-being.

5.3.4. Relief

The narratives of the participants, interwoven with academic insights, paint a nuanced picture of relief as experienced by urban refugees in New Delhi. Participants relief upon reaching safety ("When I came to this country I felt relieved") aligns with the initial sense of elation described by Lysgaard (1955) and further supported by Ward et al (2005), who discuss the transition from relief to apprehension as refugees confront new challenges in their journey in the host country. This emotional trajectory is evident as Participants acknowledge the sympathetic local response to Afghans, which, while a source of comfort, also highlights the inequities faced by other refugee communities.

The contrasting experiences shared by participants is indicative of the complexities of urban refugee relief. Roya's sense of communal belonging ("We saw a lot of Afghans there...") reflects the critical role of social networks, resonating with the findings of Gottvall et al (2022), who emphasise the importance of emotional, informational, and instrumental peer support. The freedom and choices described by participants ("The woman got a lot of choices to make...") represent the emancipation that comes with relief, echoing the authentic self-expression and optimism detailed by Alayarian (2018).

Participants narrative of overcoming adversity through spiritual support aligns with the psychological adaptation tools mentioned by Gottvall et al (2022). The collective adaptive strategies depicted ("We share particular issues...") illustrate a proactive engagement with their new environment, speaking to O'Donnell et al (2020) assertion that the post-first-year resettlement period poses significant adjustment risks for refugees.

These experiences, when situated within the broader context of urban refugees' struggles in India, as reported by the Thomson Reuters Foundation (Chandran, 2018), reveal a landscape where relief is punctuated by the ongoing endeavour to build a new life. Despite the brief joy of safety, refugees must navigate the rigours of adaptation, often exacerbated by a lack of legal frameworks and policy support, the interscation of relief with the other post-migration facets identified previously. The relief theme thus embodies not just the cessation of past perils but also the resilience required to overcome new challenges, advocating for policies that promote equitable treatment and foster a more inclusive society for all refugees.

The discussion should note that while refugees may initially feel relief at their escape and subsequent safety, they must still confront the challenges of socio-economic integration, cultural adaptation, and the uncertainty of their future. This requires not just individual fortitude but also systemic support, a call to action for host nations like India to prioritise inclusive policies and support systems that recognise the diverse needs of refugees and their contributions to society (UNHCR, 2015).

5.3.5. *Concluding Thoughts on post-migration facets*

The themes of System Navigation, Cultural Adaptation, Uncertainty of the Future, and Relief intertwine to depict a landscape rife with challenges but also with the potential for hope and

renewal. Participant narratives, supported by the scholarly works of El-Bialy et al (2021), Horst & Grabska (2015), and Turner (2014), reveal a duality of experience. There is the tangible struggle against systemic barriers and the intangible battle with psychological duress, both underscored by a persistent quest for stability.

Systemic barriers compounded by the intricacies of asylum procedures and the Aadhar Card documentation requirements, reflect a broader discourse on legal and bureaucratic hurdles (Field et al., 2020; Field et al., 2017; Tiwari et al., 2017). This aligns with the experiences of disorientation and the substantial emotional toll on refugees, further exacerbated by India's non-signatory status to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which leaves a gaping void in national legal frameworks for refugees (Jops et al., 2016).

The narratives of single-parent refugee families, particularly those led by women, underscore the intersectionality of gender, socio-economic disenfranchisement, and legal barriers, as these families navigate the complexities of securing stable housing and accessing education for their children. This is emblematic of a broader issue of economic independence being a cornerstone for mental health and integration, yet remains elusive due to systemic barriers, as suggested by Beiser (2006) and reflected in the challenges of advance rent payments and the necessity of social networks for housing stability (Valtonen, 2004; Portes, 1998).

Cultural disorientation, articulated through the concept of 'cultural homelessness', captures the profound loss of cultural rootedness and the struggle to assimilate into a disparate cultural landscape, a phenomenon that underscores the psychological and sociocultural adjustments intrinsic to the refugee experience (Vivero & Jenkins, 1999; Miller & Rasmussen, 2017). The difficulties in language acquisition and the resultant socio-economic impediments highlight the direct correlation between linguistic proficiency and access to opportunities, further

complicating the cultural adaptation process (Choi, 2016; Berry, 1997; Ager & Strang, 2008; Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

The differential experiences of refugees based on nationality, with African, Burmese, and Afghan refugees facing varied challenges, call for a revaluation of current integration policies and underscore the need for a uniform policy approach that transcends racial and national biases (Silverstein, 2015; Human Rights Law Network, 2007). This is critical for addressing the social isolation, lack of support, and the educational and social support systems necessary for the younger refugees and the broader refugee population (Bogic et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2019; Giacco et al., 2018; Hynie, 2018; Fazel et al., 2019; Bhugra, 2004).

The exploration of uncertainty and its dual role as a source of anxiety and a catalyst for hope and imagination encapsulates the transient state between past adversities and the potential for future growth. This duality of experience, characterized by both tangible struggles against systemic barriers and the intangible battle with psychological duress, is permeated by a persistent quest for stability and the resilience to navigate the protracted and unequal process of seeking support (El-Bialy et al., 2021; Agier, 2011; Horst & Grabska, 2015; Besteman, 2014; Brun, 2015; El-Shaarawi, 2015; Ungar, 2008).

5.4. Social Capital

Social capital is a concept that has gained popularity in political discourse, as well as in the literature on migration and urbanisation (Madhavan & Landau, 2011). Putnam (1993) defines social capital as "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action" (p. 167). In this context, social capital is used to refer to the extent to which individuals can access resources within a community. The concept of social capital is crucial for understanding the experiences of

refugees and asylum seekers, as they navigate the challenges of resettlement in a new host country. The main theme of this discussion is refugee accounts of the social capital available to them. The theme is divided into five sub-themes: Groups and Networks, Trust, Information Sharing, Social Cohesion, and Community Action.

5.4.1. Groups and Networks

The narratives provided by the participants offer a vivid illustration of how social capital operates within these communities, serving as a vital mechanism for integration, resilience, and empowerment. This discussion aims to interlace these narratives with the theoretical and empirical work cited, offering a nuanced analysis that underscores the multifaceted nature of social capital in the refugee experience.

The dichotomy between formal and informal networks is a pivotal theme in understanding the social capital of refugees. Roya's engagement in structured refugee community groups and broader networks like the AsiaPac network and Afghan Solidarity groups exemplifies the concept of bridging social capital as outlined by Putnam (2000). This form of social capital, defined by its inclusive, expansive nature, enables access to broader resources and support, mirroring Ryan et al.'s (2008) insights on social networks as vital support systems for migrants. Its reciprocal dynamics, where refugees contribute to and draw from communal welfare, align with Lamba's (2002) findings on the diverse functions of social ties, influenced by community composition and socio-economic contexts.

Participants narrative on mutual aid highlights the essence of bonding social capital, vital for survival and well-being, and reflects Pugliesi's (1998) insights on the nuanced roles of gender and age within social networks. Naveed's experiences with community representatives

illustrate the significance of linking social capital for accessing essential services, underscoring the findings of Lee and Brotman (2011), Ives et al (2014), and Walsh et al (2016) on its importance in integration processes. Furthermore, the empowerment through women's groups and faith-based support, as discussed by Participants, aligns with Chen et al.'s (2019) on the health benefits of social integration and religious involvement.

The reliance on specific networks, such as those within the Ismaili community, brings to light the challenges of inclusivity and equity, echoing Putnam's (2000) and Burt's (1992) discussions on the potential limitations and solutions for effectively mobilizing social capital. This condensed analysis underscores the dynamic complexity of social capital in refugee communities, emphasizing its pivotal role in fostering resilience and integration, while also calling for approaches that address the diverse and evolving needs of these communities, as supported by the insights of Putnam (2000), Ryan et al (2008), and others.

5.4.2. *Trust*

In the diverse urban refugee settings of New Delhi, trust is both a linchpin for social capital and a nuanced survival tool. Farid's depiction of trust in the community for practical support, like job opportunities, aligns with Strang & Quinn's (2021) view of trust as a 'Facilitator' of integration, enhancing the refugees' capability to forge close, supportive relationships. However, participants also exhibit a selective trust, sharing responsibilities yet withholding sensitive information, indicative of "thin trust" described by Madhavan & Landau (2011) as sufficient for functional cooperation but not deep solidarity.

Naveed's narrative demonstrates the trust extended in caring for unaccompanied minors and the sick, highlighting a contextualized, collective trust that transcends individual interactions, as conceptualised by Putnam (1993, 2000). Yet, the existence of tribal differences signals a compartmentalized trust that can challenge the cohesion within the broader refugee umbrella.

This mirrors Szreter and Woolcock's (2004) differentiation between bonding, bridging, and linking social capital, which acknowledges how power dynamics within relationships can influence trust levels.

The guarded trust towards the host community, as expressed by participants, reflects the research linking individual-level social trust to mental health resilience (Desai, Dausey & Rosenheck, 2005; Kelly et al., 2009). This aspect of trust, shaping social helpfulness and fairness, is crucial in cultivating perceived social support from within the community, supporting Uslaner's (2002) assertion on the importance of trust in facilitating social support networks.

Addressing the complexity of trust within these communities requires a detailed, context-specific approach that recognises the multifaceted experiences of refugees. Future research and public health initiatives should consider the protective role of social trust against negative trauma-related cognitions, reinforcing the importance of nurturing trust as a means to enhance mental health and community integration in the urban refugee context.

5.4.3. Information Sharing

In the urban sprawl of New Delhi, the refugee communities' reliance on information sharing stands as a critical element of social capital, facilitating not just survival but potential prosperity. The participants' experiences reveal a strategic deployment of both bridging and bonding social capital through diverse communication channels.

Refugees have harnessed WhatsApp groups as a digital bridge to share vital information rapidly, embodying the concept of bridging social capital, which connects individuals across

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different socio-demographic groups (Pelling & High, 2005; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004). This form of capital is characterized by its breadth rather than depth, aiding in 'getting ahead' by facilitating access to broader opportunities and services beyond one's immediate network (Putnam, 2000; Villalonga-Olives & Kawachi, 2017).

The UNHCR's role as a primary information source, relayed through community representatives, shows the importance of structured, reliable communication. However, it also highlights a dependency on key nodes within the network, which can become gatekeepers of information and inadvertently contribute to the digital divide, limiting civic participation for those lacking access (Dekker & Engbersen, 2014; Khorshed & Sophia, 2015).

Participant narratives resonate with the notion that while bridging social capital can expand horizons, bonding social capital (stronger ties within a close-knit group) is crucial for day-to-day support and 'getting by' (Villalonga-Olives & Kawachi, 2017). Such bonding is exemplified in the community's response to shared alerts and updates during crises, indicating a high degree of cognitive social capital, which fosters trust and reciprocity within the group (Wind et al., 2011; Hanson-Easey et al., 2018).

Yet, the quality of these networks varies. While strong community bonds can be a source of support, they can also lead to anxiety and hinder action if trust in external sources is weak, as Eisenman et al (2007) found. It is a complex interplay where the digital reunification of networks can provide a sense of home and belonging, aiding in the maintenance of transnational relationships (Marlowe, 2020).

In disaster management, the preference for information from known networks over official sources indicates a need for two-way, culturally competent risk communication that incorporates local knowledge alongside expert advice (Sellnow et al., 2008). The use of varied communication methods, such as brochures and banners in different languages, reflects a commitment to fostering an educated community that can navigate changing regulations and minimize risks effectively.

Social capital, then, is not a mere resource but a dynamic, adaptive construct that refugees in New Delhi leverage for information sharing, community building, and navigating the uncertainties of their new environment.

5.4.4. Social Cohesion

The narratives of participants shed light on the essence of social cohesion, a critical aspect of their daily lives and survival in an urban landscape. The vivid accounts underscore the complex interplay of shared adversities, cultural practices, and economic challenges that both foster and test the bonds of social cohesion within their communities.

Naveed's reflection on solidarity, encapsulated by the metaphor of being "in the same boat" illustrates the foundational role of shared experiences in uniting refugees. This sense of unity, born out of collective adversity, transcends linguistic and cultural barriers, aligning with Jenson's (2010) assertion that social cohesion is a hallmark of thriving societies and often a goal of social policy. The emphasis on trust and cooperation across communal lines, as highlighted by the World Bank (2014), resonates deeply with the participants' experiences, underscoring the importance of social cohesion in building resilient communities.

However, the narratives also reveal the continuous challenges posed by economic factor, as detailed by one participant. These challenges reflect broader socio-economic impacts of displacement, where competition for resources and strained public services can heighten tensions within and between communities (Aksoy & Ginn, 2022; Zhou et al., 2022a). Such realities echo Portes's (1998) critique of social capital, suggesting that while it can facilitate community cohesion, it may also lead to the exclusion of outsiders and restrict individual freedoms.

The participants' stories indicate the critical role of inclusive policies and development investments in alleviating hardships and fostering enduring social cohesion (Coniglio et al., 2022; Zhou & Shaver, 2021). Their collective efforts in maintaining cohesive bonds, supported by recent studies (Betts et al., 2022; Allen et al., 2022; Pham et al., 2022), illustrate the dynamic nature of social cohesion, shaped by participatory approaches that engage both displaced and host communities.

Furthermore, the narratives bring to light the diverse needs of refugee communities, advocating for tailored multi-sectoral operations that ensure the provision of essential services (Foltz & Shibuya, 2022; Zhou et al., 2022a). This comprehensive approach is crucial for fostering an environment where resilience and communal bonds can thrive, highlighting the inherent strength within refugee communities in New Delhi.

Drawing from the insights of Erdoğan (2020), the discourse around social cohesion, integration, and harmonisation in refugee studies offers a nuanced understanding of these concepts within the context of urban refugee settings. The diverse perspectives of refugees, as they navigate the complexities of displacement and integration, emphasise the need for policies

and interventions that are not only inclusive and adaptive but also recognise and leverage the social capital inherent within these communities.

5.4.5. *Concluding Thoughts on Social Capital*

The essence of social capital emerges not as discrete segments but richly interconnected, where groups and networks, trust, information sharing and social cohesion blend seamlessly. This dynamic interplay, rooted in the lived experiences of refugees and scholarly insights of Putnam (1993, 2000), Madhavan & Landau (2011), and others, reveals a complex ecosystem of social interactions that underpin the community's resilience and integration.

The significance of bridging and linking social capital becomes apparent in the accounts of participants engaging with broader networks and formal support systems. These connections, as articulate, extend refugees' access to resources and services beyond their immediate community, facilitating integration and adjustment to new societal contexts (Ryan et al., 200; Lee &Brotman, 2011). The role of community representatives in guiding newcomers through initial challenges highlights the importance of linking social capital in navigating complex bureaucratic landscapes, a crucial aspect for acquiring refugee status, housing, and healthcare.

Trust weaves through these networks as both a critical underpinning and a delicate outcome, shaping and being shaped by the interactions within and across these communities. It acts as a facilitator of integration, echoing Strang & Quinn's (2021) view, while also embodying the nuanced "thin trust" that Madhavan & Landau (2011) describe, necessary for functional cooperation yet challenged by the complexities of refugee life. This trust fosters a fertile ground for information sharing, where digital platforms and community representatives become conduits for vital knowledge, navigating the urban space of New Delhi. The strategic deployment of social capital for information dissemination explores the adaptive use of both bridging and bonding social capital (Pelling & High, 2005; Szreter & Woolcock, 2004),

highlighting the role of accessible, reliable communication in enhancing community resilience and integration.

Simultaneously, social cohesion emerges not as an isolated phenomenon but as a vibrant outcome of these interlinked elements of social capital, nurtured by shared adversities and collective endeavors. It reflects a unity born out of collective action and mutual support, (Jenson, 2010) assertion of social cohesion as a hallmark of thriving societies (World Bank, 2014) emphasis on cooperation across communal lines. This cohesion, while fostering a sense of belonging and collective identity, also faces the challenges posed by socio-economic dynamics and the need for inclusive policies (Portes, 1998; Coniglio et al., 2022).

The concept of social capital, with its subtexts of trust, networks, information sharing, and social cohesion, highlight a dynamic model of community resilience that is both adaptive and transformative. It emphasises the complexity of social capital as a multifaceted construct, where the sum of its parts creates a holistic ecosystem of adaptation, empowerment, and growth. This strengthens the necessity of viewing social capital through a lens that appreciates the its interconnections, acknowledging the role of socio-economic contexts, cultural identities, and collective agency in fostering environments where refugees can not only adapt and survive but also thrive and contribute meaningfully to their new urban landscapes.

5.5. Community Resilience

Community resilience is a vital factor in promoting the mental health and well-being of refugees. It refers to the ability of a community to adapt and recover from adversity or stressful situations, which can include natural disasters, economic downturns, or social upheaval. In the context of participants in this study, community resilience plays a crucial role in helping individuals and families overcome the challenges they face, including displacement, social isolation, and economic hardship. This section will explore the theme of community resilience

among refugees in New Delhi, India and examine its sub-themes of Community action support, sense of belonging growth drawing on existing literature and participant experiences.

5.5.1. *Community Action*

Community action among urban refugee communities in New Delhi embodies a dynamic intersection of grassroots advocacy, formal engagement with organisations like UNHCR, and the empowerment of refugees to assert control and seek sustainable solutions to their challenges. These examples of community-driven initiatives, suggest a collective endeavour to navigate the complexities of urban displacement and foster resilience and growth within these communities.

For instance, Roya's account of advocating for the reopening of educational classes previously facilitated by BOSCO, and the subsequent engagement with UNHCR, exemplifies a commitment to education and self-advocacy. This narrative not only highlights the community's willingness to mobilise for essential services but also illuminates the broader socio-political landscape wherein community action serves as a catalyst for change. The proactive measures undertaken by refugees, from grassroots protests to formal dialogues with UNHCR, resonate with the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR) as outlined by Kindon, Pain, & Kesby (2007), emphasising research with people rather than on them to stimulate action and challenge social inequalities. Although it should be noted that cultural differences influence engagement with formal structures, with refugees often preferring community or family support over formal services, which may be less culturally appropriate or available (Schlechter et al., 2021).

Moreover, the collective actions undertaken by New Delhi's refugee communities can be viewed through the lens of social psychology and collective action theory. As articulated by Van Zomeren & Iyer (2009), collective action represents a fundamental mechanism for social change, challenging policies and decisions made by authorities. This perspective is particularly relevant when considering Roya's description of community mobilisation in response to the closure of BOSCO's classes, reflecting a collective determination to improve group conditions. The concept of group identification, a significant predictor of collective action as noted by Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears (2008), finds expression in the shared experiences and aspirations of New Delhi's refugee communities. Their actions not only aim at addressing immediate concerns but also at redressing broader inequalities, signifying the necessity of collective political action for social equality as suggested by Saab et al (2017).

Community competence, comprising community action, flexibility, collective efficacy, and empowerment, emerges as another adaptive capacity within community resilience, as highlighted by Norris et al (2008). The endeavours of New Delhi's refugee communities, from negotiating with UNHCR to grassroots entrepreneurship among women, illustrate a collaborative approach that mirrors Trickett's (1996) emphasis on culturally appropriate interventions and solutions emanating from within the community. These efforts, informed by an acute awareness of cultural and historical contexts, direct participants' aspirations and needs towards fostering solutions that enhance community participation and economic and social adaptation.

The narratives of participants, particularly those emphasising the importance of youth engagement and psychosocial projects, underscore the significance of collective measures in fostering a sense of belonging, identity, and mutual support. These initiatives, reflective of the

community's adaptive responses to adversity, highlight the role of social capital in enabling refugees to leverage their inherent strengths for collective benefit and improved socio-economic conditions, aligning with the World Bank Group's observations on displacement and socio-economic impacts.

In synthesising these insights, the discussion recognises the inherent strength within the refugee communities in New Delhi. It demonstrates the imperative for policies and development efforts to be inclusive, adaptive, and sensitive to the immediate and enduring needs of both refugees and host communities. By drawing from international examples and the lived experiences of participants, it is evident that fostering environments that support collective agency and skill development is crucial for the sustainability and well-being of refugee communities in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The exploration of community action within this context is a testament to the active and dynamic social capital present among the refugees, showcasing how community-driven initiatives can lead to empowerment and resilience in the face of adversity. Transformative learning principles, demonstrates the inherent potential within these refugee groups to not just survive but to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the social and economic narratives of New Delhi. The insights gleaned from this exploration of community action underscore the imperative for continued support and recognition of such grassroots initiatives, which hold the potential to catalyse sustainable change and development within refugee communities globally.

5.5.2. Support

The discussion of community support within urban refugee communities in New Delhi offers an interesting example of the multidimensional nature of resilience. Drawing from the

narratives of participants and integrating scholarly research, it becomes evident that social support serves as both a linchpin for individual well-being and a cornerstone of collective endurance.

Research suggests that the support from one's own community (be it emotional, psychological, physical, or financial) is a vital protective factor against mental health difficulties (Çelebi et al., 2017; Schweitzer et al., 2011). This is vividly captured in the accounts of refugees who recount the pivotal role community played during crucial transitions, such as settling into a new country or pursuing higher education. The sentiment of Karim, for example, suggests that the multifaceted support received, fostered a sense of belonging and empowerment, resonating with the findings on Syrian refugee youth (Kliewer et al., 2021).

The literature posits that community resilience reflects the collective's capacity to leverage a range of resources to withstand adversities (Norris et al., 2008; Panter-Brick & Leckman, 2013). In this context, the resilience of the New Delhi refugee community emerges as a dynamic process, wherein the cultural values, beliefs, and practices define the contours of resilience (Kirmayer et al., 2009; Ungar, 2015). This cultural framework shapes how the community accesses and utilises resources, highlighting the importance of culturally informed interventions that enhance community support systems (Frounfelker et al., 2020).

The dichotomy of support within refugee communities is also notable. On the one hand, the community provides a safety net for its members, as observed in the support for single parents like Emmanuel. On the other hand, the element of selective solidarity, as described by Omid, points to the underlying complexities within these support networks. This selective solidarity

can be a double-edged sword, providing a sense of security while also engendering mistrust and competition (Lin et al., 2020).

Yet, despite these challenges, the drive towards self-reliance and mutual assistance within the community does not impede the broader goal of integration into the host society. This aligns with the research suggesting that social bonding within the ethnic group may complement rather than conflict with integration (Ager and Strang, 2008; Zetter et al., 2006). The study by Singh et al (2019) exemplifies how community support permeates daily life, reinforcing the resilience of the community against the backdrop of the adversities they face.

5.5.3. *Sense of Belonging*

The sense of belonging, a nuanced and multifaceted construct, is essential for the well-being and integration of urban refugee communities in New Delhi. Drawing upon both the accounts of participants and the rich body of existing literature, our understanding of how this sense of belonging operates and its implications for community resilience, can become clearer.

Omid's reflection on the clustering of Afghan communities in areas like Bhogal, along with similar patterns among Somalis and Congolese, resonates with findings from Bogac (2009), who observed that refugees often seek out places that echo their homeland. This tendency to recreate a familiar environment is a fundamental strategy for coping with displacement, reflecting a natural instinct to seek comfort in the familiar, which in turn facilitates a sense of belonging.

The everyday life practices mentioned by participants are in line with the works of Yuval-Davis (2006) and Beck Jørgensen (2002), who identify daily routines and interactions as

integral to the feeling of belonging across various life spheres. This is corroborated by the participant who finds solace in group activities, highlighting the significance of 'a meaningful everyday life' for fostering a sense of togetherness. The importance of public spaces, as noted by Woods (2018), for open engagement and the development of belonging, sheds light on the challenges faced by the refugee community in New Delhi, where such spaces may be lacking or limited.

The concept of 'where you belong is where you are safe,' posited by Dromgold-Sermen (2020), is particularly relevant in the context of refugee communities. It demonstrates the intersection of safety and belonging, which is evident in the community members' experiences of finding protection and solidarity within their cultural enclaves.

Moreover, the research by Schachter (2016) and FitzGerald and Arar (2018) on symbolic belonging, and the work of Huizinga and Van Hoven (2018) on the structure of refuge, illuminate the importance of the host community's reception in fostering a sense of belonging among refugees. This sense of belonging is further complicated by new prejudices and racialisation in the host country's social hierarchy, as discussed by Masuoka and Junn (2013) and Love (2017).

The emotional dimension of belonging, connected to identity and attachment, is vividly captured in the participants' accounts. These emotions play a crucial role in social belonging and civic mobilisation, as detailed by Baumeister and Leary (1995) and Guibernau (2013). The communal interactions, whether through shared hardships or celebrations, contribute to the collective identity and resilience of the community, as also reflected in the literature on immigrant family values (Fuligni, 2011; Pieloch et al., 2016).

In light of these insights, it becomes clear that fostering a sense of belonging within refugee communities is not a one-dimensional task. It requires a holistic approach that considers the physical, social, emotional, and cultural dimensions of belonging. Community-led initiatives, such as those documented by Behera et al (2017), Rai et al (2016), and Rai et al (2018), exemplify how fostering social cohesion and collective action can support refugees in building resilient communities.

5.5.4. Growth

In the intricate journey of refugees within post-migration settings, the development of personal narratives becomes a pivotal tool for making sense of past adversities and for fostering a sense of safety and growth in new host communities (Hussain & Bhushan, 2011; de Smet et al., 2019). This narrative development is crucial as it is intertwined with eudaimonic aspects of well-being, where despite the adversities faced, individuals are often able to sustain purpose and engagement in valued social relationships (Bonanno, 2004; Masten, 2001). These personal and collective narratives are not mere stories; they are the embodiment of the resilience and growth that both individuals and communities exhibit in the face of challenges.

The concept of resilience, particularly within refugee communities, has evolved significantly. Initially centred around the ability to 'bounce back', contemporary understandings embrace a more adaptive response to adversity, one that encapsulates recovery, sustainability, and growth (Norris et al., 2008). These facets of resilience are not only evident but vividly lived by the participants in the urban refugee communities of New Delhi. For instance, the increasing open-mindedness and acceptance within the community, as noted by Omid, are indicative of an

adaptive cultural flexibility that aligns with Ryff and Singer's (1998) concept of eudaimonic well-being, characterized by mastery, positive relationships, and personal growth.

Participants' stories of communal celebrations and the proactive learning of new skills and languages illustrate the 'ordinary magic' of sustainability, a concept Masten (2001) and Bonanno (2004) describe as the common experience of thriving despite adversity. These narratives underscore the community's ability to maintain its cultural roots while simultaneously adopting adaptive strategies in response to the new environment. This dual capability showcases a collective approach to resilience that encompasses both the preservation of identity and the embracement of change.

The discussion on resilience within refugee communities must also consider the cultural context in which resilience manifests. As Ungar (2010) points out, what constitutes resilience can vary significantly across cultures. The insights from participants underline the need for a culturally sensitive approach that acknowledges the unique challenges and strengths of refugee communities. This inclusive perspective is critical for understanding and supporting the resilience of refugees in their adjustment to new environments and in their journey towards integration and well-being.

Furthermore, the notion of adversity activated development (AAD) provides a useful framework for understanding the growth potential within refugee communities. AAD emphasises the transformative role of adversity, highlighting how challenges can act as catalysts for personal and collective advancement. It is this transformative aspect of adversity that is mirrored in the participants' experiences, demonstrating the potential for refugees to harness their adversities for increased resilience, creativity, and personal growth.

5.5.5. *Concluding Thoughts on Community Resilience*

In the challenging urban landscape of New Delhi, the resilience of refugee communities unfolds through a deep narrative of community action, support, belonging, and growth, revealing a dynamic ecosystem of resilience that defies simple categorisation. This narrative, enhanced by the firsthand experiences of participants illustrates how the elements of resilience are not isolated occurrences but rather interlinked components that together strengthen the essence of the community amidst adversity.

There is a symbiotic relationship between community action and the support networks that underpin it. The proactive endeavors of refugees, from advocating for educational opportunities to engaging in grassroots entrepreneurship, are emblematic of a community harnessing its collective agency to navigate the complexities of displacement. These actions, reflective of the participatory ethos advocated by Kindon, Pain, & Kesby (2007), not only embody the community's response to immediate challenges but also its aspiration for sustainable change. Simultaneously, these actions cultivate a network of support that is multifaceted, encompassing emotional, informational, and instrumental aid (Çelebi et al., 2017; Schweitzer et al., 2011). This network, in turn, strengthens the community's resilience, providing a safety net that mitigates the shocks of displacement and fosters a sense of security and belonging.

The sense of belonging that emerges from this intricate web of action and support serves as both a cornerstone and a catalyst for community resilience. The clustering of communities based on ethnic or national lines, a strategy for coping with displacement (Bogac, 2009), not only fosters a sense of security but also nurtures a shared identity that reinforces the community's cohesion and resilience. This shared identity, cultivated through daily routines

and communal activities, becomes a powerful force for collective action (Zomeren & Iyer, 2009), galvanizing the community towards empowerment and social transformation. Moreover, the sense of belonging and the support networks that nurture it are instrumental in fostering growth within the community, enabling individuals and the collective to not merely survive but to thrive in the face of adversity.

This growth, characterized by adaptability, learning, and empowerment, is deeply intertwined with the community's sense of belonging and the support it garners from its networks. The open-mindedness and acceptance within the community, reflective of an adaptive cultural flexibility akin to Aristotle's eudaimonic well-being, highlight how resilience transcends the mere ability to recover (Ryff & Singer, 1998). It encompasses a transformative process where adversity catalyzes development and empowerment, aligning with the adversity-activated development framework. This transformative growth is supported by a fabric of resilience woven through action, support, and a sense of belonging, where each thread reinforces the others, creating a resilient community that is capable of navigating the complexities of urban displacement with agency and hope.

5.6. Adversity Activated Development

The concept of adversity activated development (AAD), provides a framework for understanding the resilience and potential for growth in individuals and communities facing adversity. In the refugee context, this concept gains significant relevance as it demonstrates the potential for personal and collective development as refugees navigate new environments, form social networks, and acquire resources necessary for adaptation, transforming adverse experiences into opportunities for increased resilience, creativity, and personal growth (Papadopoulos, 2007; 2008; 2021).

The work of Papadopoulos, which draws upon a wealth of clinical experience and a broad perspective rooted in ancient philosophy, challenges conventional trauma discourse. It proposes a non-pathologising, non-victimising approach to therapeutic work with displaced persons, focusing on empowerment and resilience-building rather than on narratives of victimisation (Papadopoulos, 2007; 2008; 2021). His book, "Involuntary Dislocation," provides an in-depth exploration of the complexities of migration, refugees, and exile, offering insights for practitioners and researchers working with individuals affected by forced displacement and adversity (Papadopoulos, 2021).

In this vein, the challenges and adaptations faced by refugees in India, or any other context, provide fertile ground for the application of AAD. The interaction with new cultures, environments, and social structures can potentially activate growth and development, leading to enhanced resilience and a reorientation towards finding new meaning and creativity in life.

5.6.1. Personal Traits

In the dynamic interplay between adversity and development, the personal traits of refugees as revealed through their narratives are a testament to the transformative power of adversity activated development (AAD). The discussion weaves together these deeply personal stories with the theoretical underpinnings of resilience and growth post-adversity, painting a comprehensive picture of the refugee experience.

The narrative shared by Omid suggests the emergence of new personal traits, including intellectual openness and a redefinition of religious identity. This participant's journey resonates with Papadopoulos's (2007) notion that adversity exposes individuals to their limits, often catalysing a transformation that extends beyond prior understanding or imagination. The

exploration of new religious avenues in a culturally diverse context like India exemplifies the positive developments resulting directly from adversity, a key characteristic of AAD.

Emmanuel's recount of gaining confidence after taking charge of life in India highlights a significant psychological shift, an increase in self-efficacy, and emotional resilience. This narrative aligns with Luthar's (2006) definition of resilience as successful adaptation in the face of challenging circumstances. The participant's ability to maintain hope and confidence despite uncertainty is a powerful illustration of 'ordinary magic' (Masten, 2001) and reflects the strength-based perspective increasingly advocated for in refugee mental health research (Blackmore et al., 2020; Walther et al., 2021b).

The construct of resilience, as understood by seminal work in developmental psychology, encompasses not just mental health and well-being but also functioning in the face of adversity (Luthar, 2006). It is within this domain that the healthy core of humanity, including the will to meaning and commitment to goals, as proposed by Frankl (1986), thrives and often leads to stress-related and post-traumatic growth.

Karim's narrative echoes this sentiment by demonstrating a shift from helplessness to a sense of freedom and provision for their family, indicating a move toward a better future. This transformation highlights the process of coping with and adapting to new sociocultural and political contexts, as suggested by Papadopoulos (2016), and the emergence of resilience and adaptability as crucial personal traits in response to adversity.

The research and clinical practice within refugee mental health have started to pivot towards a strengths-based view, recognising the importance of resilience and the capability of refugees

to rebuild and thrive (Papadopoulos, 2007; Murray et al., 2010). This view is supported by clinical practices that promote resilience, such as those described by Padesky & Mooney (2012), and by academic research that shifts the focus from deficits to strengths (Liu et al., 2020a).

The transformative growth discussed in the participants' stories is deeply rooted in the human capacity for meaning-making and self-transcendence, as expounded by Frankl and Jung. Frankl's work demonstrates how meaning-making can be transformative, while Jung viewed symptoms as attempts to redress psychological imbalances. This perspective is in harmony with the literature on stress-related growth and post-traumatic growth (PTG), which emphasises positive transformations following trauma (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996).

In synthesising these insights, it is clear that the adversity faced by refugees does not simply end with survival; it often sparks a profound personal and communal growth. The development of new, positive personal traits and characteristics as a direct result of adversity is not merely a coping mechanism but a powerful catalyst for change and development. Through these transformative processes, refugees can find new meanings and purposes in life, significantly contributing to their own resilience and the shared narrative of growth amidst struggle.

5.6.2. Achievements

In synthesizing the narratives and empirical insights on the theme of achievements within the adversity activated development (AAD) framework, one can appreciate the complex interplay of resilience, transformation, and growth that underpins the refugee experience in New Delhi. The accounts from participants, based on existing literature, create a compelling discourse that illustrates the multifaceted nature of achievements amidst adversity.

The narratives shared by participants, such as Nathalie's journey to academic accomplishment and Emmanuel's sense of achievement in providing for their family, show us the transformative effect of adversity on personal development and community resilience. This aligns with Kalmanowitz & Ho's (2016) perspective on creative work as a medium for refugees to process emotions and construct identity, highlighting the broader spectrum of AAD where challenges are reframed as growth opportunities.

Furthermore, the participant narratives resonate with the conceptualization of AAD as an energizing force directing competence-relevant behavior, encapsulating not only tangible successes but also the personal triumphs over psychological and social barriers. This nuanced understanding of achievement is critical as it reflects a strengths-based approach that acknowledges the diverse capabilities and resourcefulness of refugees, resonating with Papadopoulos' (2007) theory that adversity can push individuals to explore untapped potentials and new horizons.

The entrepreneurial spirit exhibited by participants such as L, who transformed stressful times into opportunities for innovation and strategic market engagement, is particularly illustrative of AAD's dynamism. Their narratives exemplify how personal agency and collective efforts can drive significant community advancements, contributing to both individual empowerment and communal resilience. These stories challenge the conventional deficit-focused narratives and underscore the need for supportive environments that nurture the inherent strengths within refugee communities, a sentiment echoed by Murray et al (2010).

Moreover, the AAD framework emphasises the significance of community in validating achievements and providing a reflective space for growth. As participants navigate the complexities of life as refugees, the community emerges not only as a support system but also as a crucible for forging a collective identity, fostering a sense of belonging, and promoting social capital. This is evident in the youth-driven initiatives and cultural celebrations that offer a platform for showcasing leadership skills and cultural unity, further strengthening the fabric of the refugee community.

In crafting this discussion, it is crucial to interweave the empirical references with the lived experiences of the participants. The achievements, whether academic, economic, or entrepreneurial, are not merely individual triumphs but also symbols of community fortitude and hope. They stand as beacons of what can be attained when adversity is harnessed as a catalyst for development, offering a counter-narrative to the often pathologized refugee experience.The findings, demand a recognition of the profound role that adversity can play in activating development, shaping identity, and reinforcing community cohesion.

5.6.3. Meaning Making

In addressing the theme of 'Meaning Making' in the context of refugee experiences, especially in New Delhi, India, it is essential to reflect on the intricate process of adversity activated development (AAD). This process, as outlined by Papadopoulos, is not merely about surviving adverse experiences but also about the potential for personal growth and the attainment of a stronger sense of self that often follows such adversity. Through the resilience displayed by individuals who navigate these experiences, there is a paradoxical nature of devastating experiences, which, while inherently negative, that can also catalyse a reshuffling of lives, imbuing them with new meaning.

The observations and quotes provide an insight into the lives of refugees who find themselves in the throes of hardship, instability, and loss of control. Roya's engagement with India's diverse society is a useful example of the meaning-making process. By forging connections across cultural and linguistic barriers, they have found a new sense of self and a unifying purpose. These conditions, as noted by Brymer et al (2008) and di Tomasso (2010), compound the psychological struggle to find a sense of meaning and identity. The role of religion and spirituality, as highlighted by Holthe & Söderström (2024), is pivotal in providing life guidance and emotional support, contributing to a sense of meaning and group coherence.

From the narratives gathered, it is evident that participants are actively engaged in the search for meaning and purpose from their experiences. By valuing, protecting, and caring for others, as noted by Copping et al (2010) and Gilpin-Jackson (2012), refugees are not only contributing to their community but also carving out a renewed sense of identity and purpose for themselves. Participant's engagement as a translator and advocate is a vivid illustration of adversity activated development (AAD). Their active involvement in their community not only aligns with Frankl's (1963) notion of the human quest for meaning and value as essential for overcoming adversity but also showcases the role of purposeful activity in fostering resilience.

The participants' experiences embody the concept of adversity activated development (AAD), as they demonstrate not just survival, but a transformative process in the wake of adversity or highly challenging life circumstances. This developmental process, as suggested by AAD frameworks, is characterised by positive psychological changes that go beyond mere resilience or recovery. It is a journey towards an enhanced emotional adjustment, where individuals gain a profound awareness of life that often leads to changes in self-perception, interpersonal

relationships, and life philosophies. AAD encapsulates the growth that comes from adversity, embodying the evolution of the self through the integration of difficult experiences, thereby fostering a redefined sense of identity and purpose.

The meaning-making process, therefore, is not a passive experience but an active, dynamic engagement with one's circumstances. It involves an existential re-evaluation where individuals reflect upon their capacity to choose their responses to their circumstances and create meaning in their lives, even in the face of adversity, as suggested by Evans et al (2017). The discussion on meaning-making in this context is enriched by the insights of Carl Jung and Viktor Frankl, who recognised the transformative potential of meaning-making in the face of suffering. These perspectives emphasise the significance of supportive environments that aid refugees in making sense of their experiences and foster positive psychological development.

In sum, the discussion of 'Meaning Making' within the context of the urban refugee experience in New Delhi is a testament to the resilience and growth potential inherent in the human spirit. It highlights the importance of creating supportive spaces that encourage the integration of adverse experiences into one's personal narrative, fostering resilience and enabling individuals to find coherence, purpose, and even growth in the face of adversity.

5.6.4. Positive Developments

Within the sphere of urban refugee communities, the concept of adversity activated development (AAD) comes to the fore, particularly in the examination of "Positive Developments" that emerge from the crucible of adversity. This discussion integrates the narratives with seminal academic references to explore the transformative potential that AAD holds for individuals who have endured significant hardship.

The phenomenon of AAD is rooted in the observation that refugees often emerge from their tribulations not merely unscathed but fortified, possessing new strengths and a revitalized worldview. The narratives reflect this transformation, capturing the essence of what Papadopoulos (2004, 2006) describes as the qualitative change that defines AAD: a transformative renewal and the development of additional benefits from adversity. These accounts serve as a counter-narrative to the dominant societal discourse that pathologizes trauma, instead offering a perspective that sees adversity as a crucible for positive personal development.

The collective participation in cultural events, such as the Cultural Day described by Karim, exemplifies the communal resilience that is a hallmark of AAD. This event is not merely a celebration but an active reassertion of cultural identities and a testament to the community's vitality. The youth's involvement in organizing such events is indicative of the development of leadership skills and a forward-looking stance, nurturing future community leaders.

Emmanuel's enjoyment of Somali festivals and communal cooking rituals illustrates the significance of shared cultural experiences in fostering a sense of belonging and well-being. These activities reinforce the psychological benefits of social support and continuity, which are vital in the face of change and upheaval.

The personal achievements of refugees, such as the participant accepted into a Master's program, also encapsulate the AAD framework. This academic milestone is a beacon of hope and determination, reflecting a commitment to personal growth and resilience. Likewise, the anticipation of resettlement to a third country, as shared by another participant, embodies the

transformative potential inherent in AAD, wherein refugees perceive new possibilities and opportunities for a revitalized future.

The discussion of Positive Developments within AAD is not complete without acknowledging the potential ethical complexities it poses for mental health professionals. The appreciation of the positive outcomes of suffering must be balanced against the moral imperative to recognise the inhumanity of the conditions that precipitated such growth. This delicate balancing act is a challenge for those providing psychological support to refugees, who must navigate the moral dilemmas that arise from acknowledging the positive without diminishing the gravity of the adversity faced.

5.6.5. Concluding Thoughts on Adversity Activated Development

In sum (AAD) within the context of refugee experiences, the interplay of personal transformation, and the quest for meaning emerges as a testament to human adaptability and growth. The resilience observed in refugees, a pivotal theme underpinning AAD (Luthar, 2006) exploration of positive adaptation in the face of adversity. This is not merely about enduring but thriving, as evidenced by the participants' narratives of overcoming challenges and achieving personal milestones. The significance for a strengths-based approach in understanding refugee experiences, moving beyond narratives of victimhood to recognise the capacity for growth and development (Blackmore et al., 2020; Walther et al., 2021b).

The transformative potential of adversity is echoed in the achievements of refugees, who, despite facing significant obstacles, manage to find success and fulfillment. Murray et al (2010) emphasize the importance of supportive environments in facilitating such positive outcomes, a notion that resonates with the stories of refugees pursuing education and building new lives in

unfamiliar territories. The cognitive strategies advocated by Padesky & Mooney (2012) further support this transformation, suggesting that reframing adversities can lead to enhanced well-being and personal growth, aligning with the positive developments highlighted by participants.

Meaning-making, a critical component of AAD, involves a profound engagement with one's experiences to forge a renewed sense of purpose and identity. This process, highlights the psychological struggle and the eventual emergence of a stronger, more coherent sense of self (Brymer et al., 2008; di Tomasso, 2010). The role of spirituality and religion in providing guidance and support, further contributes to this sense of meaning, offering a foundation for resilience and growth amidst uncertainty (Holthe & Söderström, 2024).

The narratives of participants, reflecting on their journeys of adaptation and growth, align with the concept of stress-related and post-traumatic growth (Tedeschi & Calhoun; 1996). These stories strengthens the potential for individuals to emerge from adversity with new understandings, strengths, and a heightened appreciation for life, encapsulating the essence of AAD.

In synthesizing these insights, the concept of AAD emerges as a dynamic framework for understanding the refugee experience, characterized by a complex interplay of resilience, transformation, and meaning-making. Supported by the insights of Liu et al (2020a), Copping et al (2010), Gilpin-Jackson (2012), and Evans et al (2017), this framework highlights the capacity of individuals to navigate adversity resilience, and a deepened sense of purpose.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the multiple challenges faced by urban refugees in New Delhi, India, through the 5 primary themes identified, encompassing two distinct phases of the migration process (pre and post-migration) as well as through 3 conceptual lenses.

An investigation of pre-migration challenges such as safety & security, exposure to adverse events, and lack of resources, demonstrate the negative impact that these can have on refugees' mental and physical health, leaving lasting effects on their ability to adapt to new environments, a theme commonly noted in existing literature (Betancourt et al., 2016). Post-migration facets such as navigating complex systems, cultural adaptation, and uncertainty of the future, were shown to further exacerbate the difficulties in their new environments, as is equally well documents in the literature (Laban et al., 2004).

Both of these distinct phases interact with the three foundational concepts underpinning this research, namely community resilience, social capital and adversity activated development. Each demonstrates unique value in understanding the experiences of refugees both before and after migration and the role that their communities play in fostering personal and communal growth. The table below outlines these interactions alongside some considerations for care providers.

	Social Capital	Community Resilience	Adversity Activated Development
Table 5. INTERSECTION BETWEEN THEMES			
Pre-Migration Challenges	Pre-migration phases are often characterized by a depletion of social capital due to strenuous external circumstances. Departure from their country of origin forces individuals to leave their traditional networks and old forms of social capital.	Participants often leave communities that lacked resilience and were unable to support them amidst political conflict and economic hardships, or faced marginalization and persecution by majority groups.	Adversity prior to migration may serve as a catalyst for personal growth, setting the stage for future transformation and the development of resilience in the face of new challenges.
Post-Migration Challenges	In the post-migration phase, forging new networks and tapping into different forms of social capital is essential for refugees' integration and overall well-being. The research reveals that access to bonding, bridging, and linking social capital were	Post-migration, community resilience becomes an indispensable asset for overcoming immediate challenges and healing from pre-migration trauma. The study confirms that resilient communities can significantly aid	Despite the relative stability of a new environment, refugees are not immune to post-migration challenges. Nevertheless, the transition to a new environment allows for a redefinition of self and

	all instrumental for individual and community growth post-migration.	individuals in coping with new environments and past adversities.	experience, becoming an opportunity for renewal and positive self-redefinition.
Implications for Care Providers	Care providers can consider the utility of mapping forms of social capital that are available to individuals within their community and those that are not, recognizing the individual dependencies on these networks. This process acknowledges that while social capital serves as a communal resource post-migration, there may still be differential levels of access.	Interventions should recognize communities are the primary existing mechanism for a range of services, and efforts should not be wasted on duplicating these structures. Efforts to enhance community resilience must take into account various community support structures and the importance of economic resources and their equitable distribution.	Care providers should foster environments that stimulate personal growth and development as a response to adversity. This involves acknowledging the unique challenges faced by refugees and implementing culturally sensitive interventions that promote both individual and communal advancement.

Table 5 - Intersection between themes

The study reveals that in the context of displacement, social isolation, and economic hardship, support within the community, underpinned by access to various forms of social capital, is the basis for which participants could embark on a journey of adversity activated development. The community represented an irreplicable structure providing both a form of meaningful support (accessing services, information provision, childcare, etc.) and emotional protective factor against mental health difficulties. It empowers refugees during transitions, such as settling into a new country or pursuing higher education, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment.

6.1. Conclusions & Implications of Findings

6.1.1. Conclusions & Implications of Pre-Migration Findings

The findings illuminate the interplay of continuous threats and the actualization of violence as foundational elements of adversity experienced by refugees. This dual aspect underscores the prevalence of trauma and its deep-rooted impact on individuals' psyches. Additionally, economic stressors emerge as a significant yet often unrecognized compounding influence that exacerbates other adversities. While not, for example, typically acknowledged by UNHCR and other organisations as a justification for refugee status, economic factors intertwine with other stressors, amplifying their impact and contributing to the impetus for migration.

The research also reveals a pronounced diversity in the scale and perception of trauma among participants. This variation highlights the subjective nature of pre-migration stressors and their differential impact, which is shaped by factors such as individual resilience and the extent of adversity activated development in new environments. These findings underscore the need to

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consider personal histories and individual differences when understanding refugees' pre-migration experiences.

Informed by these insights, there is a critical need for policymakers, practitioners, and supporting communities to integrate a trauma-informed approach in their work with refugees and asylum seekers, a consideration that is already being championed within a growing sub-set of the literature. Such an approach should recognize the unique ways individuals process traumatic events, accommodating for the varied manifestations of trauma and its implications for integration and support. Interventions and policies must be sensitive to these differences, ensuring that care and assistance are tailored to the diverse experiences and coping mechanisms of refugees.

6.1.2. *Conclusions & Implications of Post-Migration Findings*

Findings related to post-migration experiences are, unsurprisingly, diverse, given that this period, covering many years, combines the initial relief of escaping adversity with the daunting task of rebuilding lives in unfamiliar territory. The systemic barriers that refugees encounter, particularly in navigating new legal and bureaucratic systems, highlight that post-migration stressors are not inevitable but often constructed and shaped by political and policy contexts, such as India's legal refugee framework and the necessity of Aadhar ID cards to navigate life in India. This demonstrates the importance of comprehensive support systems that encompass practical resettlement assistance to allow refugees to reconstruct their lives with dignity. This is particularly true for women headed households and other vulnerable groups, which can face distinct challenges, requiring targeted support mechanisms.

The findings stress the importance of community during this new phase. They suggest that when systems fail, the community's role in providing support becomes paramount, alleviating the stress of system navigation. However, the role of community can go much further than this. In the case of cultural adaptation, communities offer a chance for refugees to use their familiarity within existing communities to gradually open avenues for engagement with the wider host community. It is indicative that findings also highlight that a sense of relief is closely tied to the presence of a supportive host community. The differential experiences of refugees, with Afghans reporting a stronger sense of relief compared to other groups, call attention to the importance of inclusive communities already established to welcome new refugees.

The uncertainty that defines the post-migration period can be both a source of anxiety and a catalyst for adversity activated development. While daunting, it offers refugees a chance for reinvention and hope. Policies aimed at reducing this uncertainty must create predictable environments, providing refugees with the stability needed to plan and dream for the future. In contexts like New Delhi, this is even more pertinent, given the complexities of urban life in developing cities.

6.1.3. Conclusions & Implications of Social Capital Findings

Findings suggest that social capital not only exists within urban refugee communities in New Delhi (Research Question 1) but that it becomes an integral component to the post-migration experiences of refugees. Each form of social capital was found to have an important role within participant experiences. Bonding provided direct forms of support as well as a sense of belonging, enabling refugees to maintain cultural identities and cope with the stresses of displacement. Through bridging participants were able to better navigate the broader societal dynamics in New Delhi and work towards economic self-reliance and social inclusion. Finally,

the need for linking capital was always present to access institutional support systems, (basic services, advocacy, legal assistance, etc.)

Importantly, however, findings highlight a rather complicated interplay between these different forms of social capital, one that can be characterised by evolving levels of relevance and comfort. The gradual nature through which refugees begin access social capital resources highlights the concept of 'thin trust,' where functional cooperation can exist but often comes with the withholding of sensitive information. This level of trust highlights that community members may initially be hesitant in sharing resources and take a more strategic approach. Similarly, the leap from bonding to bridging capital can take time, with the former facilitating the expansion of networks to include out-group members through bridging social capital. Both bonding and bridging, in turn, enable engagement with formal institutions (linking).

For example, access to information, a vital component of social capital, reveals the role of bonding social capital in allowing individuals to access formal information channels, such as information government and UNHCR platforms. While public, these can often be unknown, and depend on informal community networks, like WhatsApp groups, that support for information dissemination.

It is, of course, important to acknowledge that in-group dynamics can sometimes lead to the exclusion of outsiders and may restrict individual freedoms, suggesting that social capital, though largely beneficial, can be accompanied by differential levels of access, must be navigated with care to ensure inclusivity. Nonetheless, the findings still demonstrate that the strength and quality of social capital can directly influence the resilience of a community (Research Question 2). The exchanging of social capital solidifies community networks,

enhances trust, fosters collective action, and creates norms of sharing and support that further guide community behaviour. As communities navigate the complexities of urbanization, migration, and adversity, it is their exchange of resources to one another that enables them to flourish collectively.

6.1.4. Conclusions & Implications of Community Resilience Findings

The findings under the theme of community resilience demonstrate its intangibility, something which makes establishing narrow definitions of community resilience insufficient. In particular, findings to in urban refugee context highlight that it is more than a source of stability, extending into the domain of socio-political advocacy, as a means of catalysing meaningful social transformation. Findings show that community support is not only emergent during moments of crisis, but serves as a continual source of comfort for refugees, shaping and improving their capacity to handle daily challenges and creating a sense of belonging and identity.

It is within the wider structure of coordinated community action that refugees find an empowering medium to actively forge their destinies as actors of change, advocating for systemic changes rather than accepting predetermined roles as aid recipients. Such collective endeavours not only embody the spirit of adversity activated development but also serve as testament to the refugees' agency and capacity for self-determination. As such, this research demonstrates the interplay between individual resilience and community resilience is reciprocal; individuals draw strength from and reinforce the resilience of their community.

In the context of constrained resources typical of low- to middle-income settings (Research Question 4), the findings suggest that community-based strategies can often yield more cost-

effective and far-reaching impacts than individual support interventions. The multifaceted nature of community support (spanning emotional, psychological, physical, financial, and beyond) is irreplaceable by other means of aid. It is this pre-existing network that stands becomes the most immediate and important resource, one that care providers must engage with and reinforce.

Acknowledging this, interventions must be designed to complement rather than replace the role of existing community networks. Grassroots initiatives need to be bolstered and valued as critical levers for empowerment of groups and individuals based on self-identified needs. Care providers should often focus on nurturing community competencies (collective efficacy, information systems, mobilisation of resources, etc.), only directly providing such support where it is entirely absent within existing community networks. In addition to this, while intra-community social cohesion may increase in-group social support and networks, interventions should also improve linkages for people outside the community, allowing for better connections within wider host communities.

6.1.5. *Conclusions & Implications of Adversity Activated Development Findings*

The research findings of this thesis, confirm the presence of AAD (Research Question 3), as participants exhibit a remarkable psychological evolution, embodying increased self-confidence, emotional fortitude, and the desire to transform their lives. This shift is characterized by a journey from a state of helplessness to one of autonomy and provision, marking a pivot towards aspirational future, and speaks to the deeper process of meaning-making, a core component of AAD.

The interconnection between AAD and community resilience is evident, particularly as community support systems serve as the foundation against which individuals' AAD journeys unfold. Youth-led initiatives and cultural festivities are prime examples where the celebration of cultural identity and the exercise of group and leadership skills come together, bolstering both self confidence and shared resilience. AAD is also recognized as a catalyst that propels individuals towards engaging with wider community groups, going beyond their immediate circles to bridge gaps with host communities.

For care providers and those designing interventions, these findings underline the importance of recognizing the transformational potential inherent in adversity. It suggests that the journey towards resilience is not a passive trajectory but an active and ongoing engagement with one's environment. Care providers can play a supportive role in this process, facilitating the meaning-making journey and enabling refugees to draw upon their adversities as sources of strength and development.

6.2. Future Scope of the Research

The findings of this thesis have implications for future research in the field of urban refugee experiences and well-being. The themes that emerged from the data have demonstrated the importance of social capital, community resilience, and adversity activated developments in the lives of urban refugees. These findings suggest that future research should explore in-depth the nuances of these themes and their impact on the well-being of urban refugees.

One avenue for future research includes further examining the way in which urban refugees, navigate and access specific sub-sets of social capital. For example, while this study has identified social networks, trust, and information sharing as key components of social capital,

it did not examine in similar levels of detail the importance of religious networks an institutions. While some studies have done this (Laghi & El-Khani, 2019), further mapping forms of interaction with these specific dimensions of social capital would be valuable.

Another area for future research could be to explore the effectiveness of interventions that aim to build community resilience and promote well-being among urban refugees. This thesis has identified and demonstrated the importance of its foundational concepts of community resilience, social capital and adversity activated development. Further, it has also paid close attention to the potential implications that each may have from the perspective of policy makers and care providers. That being said, more research could be undertaken to examine the value that specific community focussed interventions may have in further promoting these factors.

More specifically, future research could also explore the potential role and value of AAD-informed interventions. While this thesis identified personal traits, achievements, meaning-making, and important dimensions of adversity activated development, more research is needed to understand the specific mechanisms through which AAD can be promoted through interventions at the community level. Further research could build on this thesis, and the work of others such as Papadopoulos, to measure and assess the effectiveness of interventions that leverage the community to enhance AAD within individuals.

Finally, while this thesis has demonstrated the relevance of its core concepts in the context of New Delhi, future research could expand these to other contexts. This would include for example, examining the linkages between social capital and community resilience in more homogenous contexts like refugee camps, or similarly the importance of the interplay between bonding and linking capital in high income environments, where formal information and

support channels may be more established. For example, research has shown that refugees living in rural contexts may have greater access to social support and resources than those living in urban areas (Fernandez, 2016).

6.3. Limitations

This thesis aimed to provide insight into the experiences of urban refugees in New Delhi, India. However, like any research, it has limitations that must be considered when interpreting the findings. One of the primary limitations is the small sample size of participants. Despite efforts to recruit a diverse group of participants, given that the research could not be conducted in the field, the sample size was limited, and this may implicate the generalizability of the study's findings. A larger sample size (including perhaps a broader representation of nationalities) could have provided a more comprehensive.

Similarly, the study's results may not be applicable to other urban refugee contexts where larger refugee populations exist, refugees are more culturally linked to the host nation, or better levels of formal government support are available. Instead, the findings should be taken as specific to low-income metropolitan environments, where small refugee communities have to navigate a vastly different host cultural and socio-political landscape, with little formal support.

The use of semi-structured interviews comes with some costs. On one hand, it offered the flexibility to look deeper into topics that emerge spontaneously, capturing a greater richness and nuance of participant experiences. On the other hand, however, this may have lead to inconsistencies. Depending on the flow of the conversation, some participants may have been asked more probing questions than others, leading to variations in the depth or breadth of data collected. Additionally, it is worth being aware that the open-ended nature of these interviews

can result in varied responses that can be challenging to categorize or compare systematically. Finally, it is recognised that invariably, the interviewer's reactions or follow-up questions, even if unintentional, may always influence participants' responses.

The study may also have temporal limitations. The experiences and perspectives of refugees are not static, but evolve based on a combination of factors, including personal growth, changing circumstances, and broader socio-political dynamics. While the sampling aimed to select participants that had been in New Delhi for different lengths of time, the study may not reflect the role of these concepts following the initial months and years of migration. This temporal limitation means that while the findings offer valuable insights into the refugee experience between a 5 and 15 years period (post-migration), they might not capture the full spectrum of their evolving journey.

This study is also aware of the risks of social desirability bias as well as recall bias. For the former, participants may have provided responses that they believed were more socially acceptable or desirable, rather than accurately reflecting their experiences. To mitigate this, the researchers used semi-structured interviews that allowed for open-ended responses and emphasised confidentiality and anonymity. For the latter, the study is aware that it relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to recall bias. Participants may have had difficulty remembering or accurately reporting their experiences, particularly if they were painful or emotional memories. To address this limitation, the researchers used probes and follow-up questions to clarify responses and improve the accuracy of the data.

6.4.Final Thoughts

In conclusion, this study has endeavoured to examine and consider the various challenges and opportunities faced by urban refugees in New Delhi, India, and the extent to which these can be shaped and understood through the conceptual lenses of community resilience, social capital and adversity activated development. It has done this through a qualitative methodological process which utilised a series of semi-structured interviews with participants to undertake a thematic analysis of their experiences.

The findings, split across 5 themes (encompassing 2 phases of migration and 3 concepts) have drawn from the participant experiences to substantiate a range of findings, linked closely to the initially set research questions. In turn, and while aware of possible limitations, the study has drawn on conclusive findings to consider various implications for care providers and those designing refugee interventions (such as the need for recognising the positive coping strategies and personal growth of refugees in order to design programmes that build upon these), as well as additional avenues for research (applying a similar framework to other contexts).

With global refugee numbers increasing at an unprecedent speed, and with various risks of reduced funding to support refugee programmes (2022 saw both the largest number of new refugees ever recorded, as well as funding shortfalls for UNHCR in the hundreds of millions of dollars) the need for greater attention and awareness of the dynamics through which refugees interact with their post-migration environment is crucial. It may be that bolstering existing community structures to enhance resilience, with an acute awareness of their social capital dependencies, is one the most cost-effective and impactful means of supporting refugees to improve their day-to-day wellbeing and experience the transformational effects of adversity activated development.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Hello, my name is Snigdha. I'm conducting research to enrich our understanding of refugee lives and explore avenues for improvement. Our conversations will be segmented into three main areas, each meticulously designed to capture the essence of your individual experiences and the collective narrative of the refugee community.

Each interview session is anticipated to take around 60 minutes, though we're flexible with the timing to accommodate a comprehensive and unhurried discussion. You're fully in control of the pace we can pause for breaks whenever you feel the need.

I'd like to inform you that we will be recording these sessions to ensure accuracy in capturing your valuable insights. Your consent for this recording is crucial. Rest assured; your anonymity will be preserved throughout the process. If you're comfortable with this arrangement and provide your consent, we can proceed with the interview. Should you have any questions or need clarification, please feel free to ask at any point.

Let us begin,

Set 1:

Q1) Let's start with your history; can you tell me about yourself and how you came to be in India?

Q2) That must have been a challenging transition. What were some of the obstacles you faced during that time?

Q3) Could you share more about the difficulties your family encountered during this period?

Q4) What does the word 'Community' signify to you?

Q5) What kinds of struggles did your community face in your country of origin?

Q6) Are there any activities or support from the community back in your country of origin that helped you feel supported?

Q7) I'm interested in knowing about any groups, organisations, or networks you or your family are part of. Could you tell me about them?

Q8) Back in your country of origin, how often did you or your family engage with community groups, networks, or organizations? What role did these groups play in your daily life and sense of community?

Q9) Of all the groups your household is involved in, which would you say are the most significant?

Q10) How frequently do you participate in these groups or their activities?

Q11) What do you consider to be the main benefit of being part of these groups?

Q12) Thinking about the members of these groups, would you say most of them share a similar background to you?

Q13) Reflecting on our conversation today, is there anything else you would like to add or any other thoughts you have about your experiences and the community that you haven't already shared?

Thank you for sharing your experiences with me today. Your insights into your personal journey, your family, and the community have been invaluable. I'll take some time to reflect on our discussion to better understand your perspective. If there are any additional thoughts or points, you'd like to add or clarify, please feel free to reach out. In our next set, we will focus on the positive developments and aspects of your life here. I look forward to continuing our conversation.

Set 2:

Thank you for continuing this conversation. Previously, we delved into some of the challenges you've faced. Now, let's pivot to explore the strengths and positive attributes that have carried you forward. We will focus on the resilient aspects of your experiences those that have been a source of empowerment and have positively shaped your journey.

Q1) Despite the difficulties faced, could you shed light on any favorable experiences or support structures in your homeland that proved to be of significant help?

Q2) Could you identify the types of support or resources that were instrumental for you and your family during challenging periods?

Q3) Are there cultural practices or customs from your native country that you, or others in your community, still actively participate in here?

Q4) Upon settling in Delhi, what obstacles did you confront, and what strategies did you employ to overcome them?

Q5) What newfound strengths have you observed within your family since establishing yourselves in Delhi?

Q6) In observing the community around you, which strengths are most apparent?

Q7) How has the local community provided support that has made you feel welcomed and valued?

Q8) How does the sense of trust within your current community compare with that of your homeland?

Q9) Have you noticed any changes in the level of trust within this community, and if so, in what ways?

Q10) If presented with a community initiative that doesn't benefit you directly but assists many others, would you be inclined to contribute? Please explain your reasoning.

Q11) Should you require assistance, do you believe that your community would come to your aid?

Q12) What are the family or community activities that instill a sense of support and unity for you?

Q13) For initiatives that may not personally benefit you but aid many in the community, would you dedicate your time or financial resources? Why might you choose to do so?

Q14) If you found yourself in need, do you trust that your community would provide the necessary help, whether it be financial or otherwise, such as childcare?

Q15) What are the activities within your family or community that reinforce a feeling of support for you?

Q16) Who, in your view, is responsible for providing the necessary funding and financial support for groups and activities?

Q17) What is the impact when certain community members opt out of participating in communal activities and groups?

Q18) Are there any barriers that hinder your participation in community life?

Q19) Are there organizations that assist you during your time here as a refugee?

Thank you, X, for sharing with us. Your insights about your life, family, and community have been enlightening. I'll be thinking about our discussion today. If you think of anything else you'd like to add, please let me know. In our next chat, we'll talk about the good changes you've experienced since coming to India.

Set 3:

Welcome back to our final interview session. In our last conversation, we discussed the positive traits you've maintained that helped you navigate past hardships. Today, let's shift our focus to the new: the skills, traits, and developments you've experienced since your arrival in New Delhi.

Q1) Looking back at how you took a difficult decision from leaving your country and coming to another one, what are some of things that you can say have helped you cope with these changes?

Q2) Since arriving in India, have you noticed the development of any new personal strengths or qualities?

Q3) Can you share any new positive changes within your family since your arrival?

Q4) How has the local community contributed to easing your transition into life in New Delhi?

Q5) What community activities bring you a sense of belonging and support?

Q6) What is your perception of safety within your community here in New Delhi?

Q7) In what ways has the community helped you in feeling supported and feeling stronger?

Q8) How strongly do you feel there is a sense sense of unity and togetherness within your community?

Q)9 How do the interactions within and between different community groups compare?

Q10) Do you feel that over time, the differences within the community are becoming less pronounced?

Q Q11) When information becomes available, how likely is it to be shared among community members?

Q12) What are your primary sources for news and information about government actions or policies?

Q13) Has the community played a role in supporting any new ventures or initiatives you have undertaken?

Q14) How pivotal do you believe community support has been in achieving your recent accomplishments?

Q15) How much autonomy do you feel you have over decisions that impact your daily life?

Thank you, X, for your valuable contributions. Your narratives and those of your family and community have provided rich insights. I'll take time to consider our discussion deeply. The understanding gained will inform my research to make astute observations for refugee communities. Rest assured; the details of your interview will remain confidential. My thanks again for your involvement.

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

University of Essex

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title

Exploring Community Resilience, Social Capital and Adversity Activated Development in the Context of Urban Refugee Communities in New Delhi, India.

Invitation paragraph

My name is Snigdha Asirvatham, and I am enrolled in the PhD. Refugee Care in the Department of Psychosocial and Psychoanalytical Studies at the University of Essex. It is with great interest that I extend to you an invitation to participate in a pivotal research study. This invitation is accompanied by our commitment to ensuring you have a thorough understanding of the research's purpose, the processes it entails, and its significance. As you contemplate your potential involvement, I urge you to peruse the information that follows with due attention. Your informed decision is invaluable to us and the integrity of our research endeavour.

What is the purpose of the study?

This doctoral research project at the University of Essex investigates the interplay between community resilience, social capital, and adversity-activated development within urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India. The study employs qualitative methods to

understand how these communities leverage social networks and face challenges to foster development and resilience. Full details on the study's aims may be withheld temporarily to ensure the integrity of the research outcomes, but a comprehensive debrief will be provided upon completion of data collection.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to participate in this study because of your valuable insights and experiences as a member of the urban refugee community in New Delhi. Your participation is crucial in understanding the resilience and social networks within these settings. A select group of individuals, chosen for their potential to contribute significant perspectives to the research, will join you in this study.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision to take part is highly valued, but it is entirely your choice. If you choose to participate, we will ask for your written consent. Please be aware that you have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, for any reason, and without any adverse consequences. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not affect your current or future status, including any academic evaluation or employment conditions, nor your access to services if you are part of an organization, company, or service.

If you wish to withdraw, you may contact Snigdha Asirvatham at sa19633@essex.ac.uk. Should you decide to withdraw, we will remove any data you have provided up to the point

where data is anonymised or it becomes impossible to identify your individual data within the study set.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be involved in a series of interviews where we will discuss your experiences related to community resilience, social capital, and how challenges have possibly led to positive developments in your life. These discussions will be conducted by me and each session is expected to last approximately 60- 90 minutes, with the possibility of follow-up sessions for clarity. You will be fully briefed on the process and your rights before we start, and your consent for audio or video recording will be sought.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

While participating in this study requires a commitment of your time, it has been designed to minimize any potential risks or discomfort. Sessions will involve discussions which some may find sensitive; however, these will be handled with the utmost care and confidentiality. Please be assured that your identity and any information you provide will be treated confidentially. No personal data will be disclosed in any reports or publications without explicit consent. In rare instances, if the discussion evokes distress, appropriate support will be offered. It is essential to note that there are no physical risks involved, and your participation will not affect your current or future access to services or employment.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your insights could help inform better support structures and policies for urban refugees, potentially improving the well-being and integration of these communities into the broader society. Moreover, engaging in the study may provide a reflective space for you to articulate and share your experiences, which can be an empowering process in itself. It is important to note, however, that specific individual benefits cannot be promised.

What information will be collected?

In this study, we will collect personal narratives and experiences through interviews to understand how urban refugee communities in New Delhi develop resilience and social networks. The data gathered will initially be identifiable to ensure the accuracy of our records and analysis. However, it will be anonymized at the earliest opportunity in the research process to protect your privacy. This means that your identity will not be linked to the information in any published material without your explicit consent.

Will my information be kept confidential?

Ensuring the confidentiality of your information is of utmost importance in this study. All data collected will be handled with strict confidentiality within legal limits. In the event that the information disclosed during the research indicates that you or others are at risk of harm, we have a duty to report this to the appropriate authorities.

Your data will be securely managed and stored, with access limited to the researcher and the supervisor. All electronic data will be stored on encrypted, password-protected devices or secure university drives, with physical data kept in locked storage.

We will retain the research data for a minimum of ten years, as recommended, and it will be destroyed securely after this period. Anonymised data may be shared through research data repositories, with your consent, to contribute to further scientific understanding in this field.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you are interested in participating in this study, we would be pleased to have you join us. Please reach out directly to the researcher via email or text (sa19633@essex.ac.uk or +44 79xxxxxx83) to express your interest. We kindly ask that you make contact by [Insert Deadline for Participation], to allow sufficient time for all necessary preparations. Once you have indicated your interest, we will provide you with all the necessary information and consent forms to ensure you are fully informed about your participation.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The outcomes of this research will be used to enhance our understanding of urban refugee experiences and may be published for academic and policy audiences. All participant data will be anonymised in any reports or publications. The results will also contribute to the doctoral dissertation, which will be accessible from the University of Essex repository. Participants can request a summary of the findings after the study's conclusion.

Who has reviewed the study?

The ethical aspects of this research study have been reviewed and approved by the Ethics Sub Committee at the University of Essex, ensuring that it adheres to the highest standards of ethical research practice.

Concerns and Complaints

If you have any concerns or wish to make a complaint about any aspect of the way in which the research is conducted, you should in the first instance contact the principal investigator of the project:

Snigdha Asirvatham

sa19633@essex.ac.uk

If your concern or complaint is not resolved to your satisfaction, or you feel you cannot approach the principal investigator, please contact:

Supervisor- Renos Papadopoulos

renos@essex.ac.uk

Please feel free to contact any of the researchers listed above should you need further information or assistance regarding this study.

Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

University of Essex

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Your data will be securely managed and stored, with access limited to the researcher and the supervisor. All electronic data will be stored on encrypted, password-protected devices or secure university drives, with physical data kept in locked storage.

We will retain the research data for a minimum of ten years, as recommended, and it will be destroyed securely after this period. Anonymised data may be shared through research data repositories, with your consent, to contribute to further scientific understanding in this field.

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Supervisor- Renos Papadopoulos

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Please feel free to contact any of the researchers listed above should you need further information or assistance regarding this study.

Appendix D: Excerpt from Thematic Analysis

(4)

484. Well, it is increasing. The differences are because the thing is people are becoming more and more
485. needy. Like before Covid 19 and Taliban took over, at least there were like refugees used to get
486. some income with the medical tourism of Afghans who used to come from Afghanistan. Now it has
487. been three years. That here is nothing. So most of the people are now without any income. Now
488. the more the people become hungry and helpless.
489.
490. So difference is also increase.
491.
492. How do you feel about the level of safety in your community?
493.
494. Well, it is okay. I can say. It's not very much safe. It is, uh, because, you know, I feel like I didn't
495. used to feel like this. but lately I feel like, you know, it's like if they want to just find a fault about
496. me and because it has happened to many people. and that, for example, if they send the report to
497. UNHCR here or they report to embassy, uh, just falsely that this person is doing this or this person
498. is doing.
499.
500. just to, you know, review their replication and all and they just feel like, okay, if one person is out, I
501. will take better chances or I might be looking better in the eyes of the officers and all. If I do
502. something against another person or report them or falsely. ②
503. So in that case, to be honest, I feel a little unsafe. Mm.
504.
505. What do you think the community has done to help you in settling down in a new country?
506.
507. Well, to some extent, yeah. they have helped with, when we first came to India, So like when we
508. came, we didn't know anybody. So the community was there. There are some families who lived in
509. the same building. they helped us on getting to know the people, the markets and everything. So in
510. that case, yeah.
511.
512. Would you say the Indian government has provided you with any services to make your quality of
513.

Margin notes:
- Less support
- COVID Crisis

- Lack of Safety
- Lack of Trust in International aid.
- unsafe = lack of sense of Belonging

- Community Support Post Migration.

Linking (Post Migration Positives, ts
S.C.

514. life better?
515.
516. well, not particularly like, not anything special but since, you know, one thing is like the hospital
517. government, hospital is free for refugees. That's a blessing actually. uh, uh, schools, for example,
518. primary school, at least the children can go and get an education and, uh, join these classes.
519. That's also a big help. and, uh, these things are there. and also the fact police do not bother
520. and the government is also sympathetic towards Afghans especially. So that's a, a kind of blessing
521. and that has been a kind of relief for us all. & ③
522.
523. What are the organizations that help you with your time as a refugee in India?
524.
525. well, there is under UNHCR here, umbrella. We have, like Bosco, we have SLIC, which takes care of,
526. uh, legal issues and Bosco, which provides educational opportunities. And uh, some medical help
527. and psychosocial help also. And, uh, then apart from UNHCR here, there are recently some new like
528. NGOs. That have also been active in helping the community by opening some tailoring centres or
529. providing ration for the people. And, uh, there is, like probably German embassy, they have opened
530. the kind of a cultural center for Afghans. uh, where they conduct cultural activities. So that's the
531. thing.
532.
533. If your, if your community is not happy with certain decisions, do they come together to protest
534. any organization to benefit the community?
535.
536. Yes. They do. So if they feel something is, uh, not right, so they'll come together for a protest.
537.
538. Like recently For example, some of the classes of, uh, Bosco is shut down, so the students are
539. thinking about going to UNHCR here to ask them to open the classes again for them. or before also,
540. like they used to, have some protests together. uh, for this case. Yeah they do get together.
541.
542.
543.

Margin notes:
- Free Medical care
- Free Schools.
- Some acceptance from govt.

- Cultural Activities
- Education opportunities
- International aid

- Community Action
- Agency
- Autonomy for the community.

545. 546.	Looking back at how difficult it was for you to leave your country and coming to a new country, what are some of the things that have helped you cope with these changes?
547. 548. 549. 550. 551.	Well, one thing was, uh, the language. Of course, the first thing is like, if you understand the language, it helps you a lot and coping up the problem. Another thing is, uh, being active and activities and with the community, with the socializing, with people, of course, uh, that's a thing which helped me cope up with the problems.
552. 553. 554.	Have you observed any new traits or attributes that have developed, that you have developed after coming to India?
555. 556. 557. 558. 559.	Uh, well of course, like I have my thoughts and everything has changed. and, uh, I believe I would've been in Afghanistan. I would've been different person now that I'm in here and seeing the people facing the problems and also exploring various religions and people. So that has changed a lot of things in me. like, for example, in religious case, like I was born of course in a Muslim family.
560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566.	So when I came to India, gave me a good opportunity to explore other religions and, uh, understand other things, speak with different people from different religious backgrounds. uh, finally I can say that I'm no more Muslim. I don't follow religions. So yeah. Personally, also, uh, I believe this kind of, you know, being with everybody and, uh, being friendly towards everybody, there is something about people from different type of religions and ethnicities and languages and countries and coming together, finding a sense in life
567. 568.	So those different attributes, which I feel if I would've been in Afghanistan, I might not have it.
569. 570.	Okay. Have you noticed any, um, positive developments in your family?
571. 572. 573.	Well, in the beginning, to be honest, it was there, like, uh, we had a lot of opportunities when we first came to India. and education and learning and. We are being at peace finally after long years,

Handwritten margin notes (page top section):
- Learning New Language ↓ Increased chances of finding a job
- Socialisation,
- Community Support
- Personal + community = Help Cope.
- Finding a sense of purpose,
- Introspecting
- Personal growth
- Discovering new things
- Curiosity.
- Would Not Happen if did not go through this experience.

575. 576.	but recently it has been gone back to it's going actually negatively. because, uh, the lack of job opportunities, education opportunities, to some extent, when we had, we could, we did, but now there is no other way for us, like, we don't know what to do next. We don't know what comes next for us. So that has impacted things negatively.

Would you say the community has, uh, helped you to feel stronger?

Well, in, sometimes yes. Sometimes no. Uh, sometimes when they, it's not so much personally, I would say. it was usually when we were together, so of course the community helps us be stronger because when you're with them in a foreign land, so that gives a kind of feelings of safety. but at the same time insecurity because of the reasons which I mentioned before.

What does the community do when members are doing something new or achieving something new?

Well, the thing is, if something new happens or if I want to do something new. they support, of course they cheer for it. So yeah. If they are there and they enjoy and feel happy, of course. They encourage and support us.

Can you say that without the support of the community, members will not be able to achieve the things they want to achieve?

I would say yes, the support of community was important and it was there, so it have, it would've been difficult for me to do certain things without their support.

Do you have any questions for me?

Handwritten margin notes (page bottom section):
- Positive developments initially,
- Regressed due to lack of opportunities.
- Stronger
- Support
- Sense of togetherness
- familiarity
- Supporting New Achievements.
- Cheering for members
- Happiness.
- Support essential
- Growth of the community and Individually.

Appendix E: Ethics Approval

Subject: Decision - Ethics ETH2021-0311: Ms Snigdha Asirvatham

Date: Thursday, 19 August 2021 at 11:23:07 British Summer Time

From: ERAMS

To: Asirvatham, Snigdha

University of Essex ERAMS

19/08/2021

Ms Snigdha Asirvatham

Psychosocial and Psychoanalytic Studies

University of Essex

Dear Snigdha,

Ethics Committee Decision

Application: ETH2021-0311

I am writing to advise you that your research proposal entitled "Exploring Community Resilience and Social Capital in the context of urban refugee communities in New Delhi, India." has been reviewed by the Ethics Sub Committee 3.

The Committee is content to give a favourable ethical opinion of the research. I am pleased, therefore, to tell you that your application has been granted ethical approval by the Committee.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information or have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Kegerreis

Ethics ETH2021-0311: Ms Snigdha Asirvatham

This email was sent by the University of Essex Ethics Review Application and Management System (ERAMS).