Exploring the Lived Experience of Immigration Reporting

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Abstract:

Background: Minority ethnic groups are often portrayed as threats to national identity, stemming from colonial forms of racism. The use of Immigration Removal Centres and immigration reporting (also termed 'signing') are common means of surveillance for irregular migrants in the UK. As part of the UK's security systems, asylum seekers, foreign national offenders and undocumented migrants are often required to 'sign' at police stations or reporting centres managed by the UK Visas and Immigration Agency (a branch of the Home Office). 'Signing' is consistent with the criminalisation of people considered to be 'abusing' the immigration system. There are a total of 14 reporting centres in the UK, three of which are within police stations. Increasingly, Counselling Psychologists, and allied professions, have seen a call to address social inequalities within society and this study aims to consider how wider social contexts impact wellbeing for this population.

Aims: To explore the lived experience of individuals required to report to the Home Office (HO) in the UK.

Methodology: The study involved interviewing individuals with experience of reporting (3 identifying as male and 3 female). Of the six interviewed, 5 had direct experience of reporting (i.e., received orders from the HO). One participant, though not having experienced reporting herself, shared her experiences of supporting her husband when doing so. Interviews were analysed using Max van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenology (1997). A relativist ontology and constructivist epistemological stance were adopted.

Findings: Power is exerted over the lives of undocumented migrants constantly. Four themes were identified, (1) *The racialisation of undocumented bodies*, (2) *The undocumented: A life suspended in time*, (3) *The Home Office: As predator to prey* and (4) *The undocumented: Taking power back.*

Conclusions: It is important as CoPs to not replicate unequal power relations and adopt a social justice and leadership stance, aiming to influence 'signing' policy.

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List of Abbreviations

BPS- British Psychological Society

CBT- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

CoP- Counselling Psychology

CoPs- Counselling Psychologists

DSM- Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

EHRC- Equality and Human Rights Commission

FNO- Foreign National Offender

IPA- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

IRC- Immigration Removal Centre

FDA- Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

NGO- Non-Governmental Organisation

NT- Narrative Therapy

NET- Narrative Exposure Therapy

PTSD- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

UEL- University East of London

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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1. Introduction and Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

As part of the UK's security controls, individuals are sometimes required to report (also termed 'signing on' or 'signing'). This can take place at police stations or Home Office (HO) reporting centres managed by the UK Visas and Immigration Agency (UKVI, a branch of the Home Office). There are 14 reporting centres in total within the UK (of these, three are in police stations). Foreign national offenders (FNOs, those who have been convicted in the UK of criminal offences), asylum seekers awaiting decisions on applications to remain in the UK, those awaiting asylum appeals, those with appeals rejected and/or making follow-up claims, and those unable to be sent to their home country e.g., due to difficulties ascertaining their country of origin, are often those required to report (Burridge, 2017).

According to data published by the Home Office in 2005, 430,000 people without leave to remain were residing within the UK (though there are no reliable recent estimates) (National Audit Office, 2020). It is believed however that the figures have likely doubled (National Audit Office, 2020). 40,000 people have been reported to have remained in the UK following failed asylum claims and India, Bangladesh and Pakistan make up the largest populations in the Migration Refusal Pool (MRP). The MRP consists of those whereby there are no records of them having left the UK despite their leave to remain (or applications to remain) having been denied (National Audit Office, 2020). Such individuals, once they come to the attention of the HO, may be required to report. There are approximately 90,000 people reporting to the HO (National Audit Office (2020).

No demographical data exists for those required to report. Albania, Iran, and India were the top three nationalities entering immigration detention between 2010 and 2019 (Home Office, 2019). Of note, seven out of ten of the countries listed are within the Global South. As research has shown the use of reporting to aid in facilitating detentions, it may suggest that those reporting are perhaps disproportionately represented by those originating from the Global South (Fisher et al., 2019). The power of the state is exerted over the lives of irregular migrants in their ability to integrate into society and their access to services. As part of this thesis, it was thought helpful therefore to explore power as conceptualised within the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF).

Within the British media, coverage of forced migrants and people without immigration status are often represented by such headlines as, 'Send in Army to Halt Migrant Invasion' (Reynolds, 2015), and 'Turmoil in Tunisia Could Lead to 1000 Extra Migrants a Day' (Philips, 2023). It is argued that such headlines are sensationalist in nature and create a moral panic among the public (Martin, 2015). Such discourses have been found to induce a sense of fear of 'the other' (McKay et al., 2012).

I was drawn to the field of immigration reporting following my experience of individuals I have known having to regularly sign. I thought the topic was of particular relevance following the recent war in Ukraine, Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, all of which led to an increased focus on immigration and the disparities in treatment of different groups within society (Bulman, 2020). Encounters with otherness (i.e., difference) are often blamed for problems within a nation. For example, concerning Brexit in 2016 (the referendum that led to the UK leaving the European Union (EU)), most of the debates centred on rates of immigration into the country (Stone, 2016). The concept of othering will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter. According to the literature review conducted for the purposes of this research, I identified a gap in the literature on an in-depth exploration into the experience of immigration reporting, which motivated me to research this topic. The next section outlines some of the recent developments regarding immigration in the UK.

1.1.1. UK Immigration Developments 2022-2023

Within 12 days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, two million people fled the country, with the UNHCR estimating that millions more have been displaced since (Timsit et al., 2022). The EU has stated that member States will welcome these refugees with 'open arms', while neighbouring countries (e.g., Poland, Hungary, and Romania) have accepted millions of Ukrainians since the start of the conflict (Bajaj & Stanford, 2022). Since the war broke out, the UK government has allowed Ukrainians to seek work immediately upon arriving in the UK under a new sponsorship scheme (Hockaday, 2022). This contrasts with others (e.g., those fleeing Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, and Yemen) who can only work after waiting 12 months for their claim to be processed by the HO. The CEO of Freedom from Torture, Sonya Sceats, argued that special systems had been put in place for Ukrainians to avoid them having to go through

the usual refugee system (Hockaday, 2022). As Europeans are perceived to 'come from our world', it legitimises their preferential treatment above others mentioned earlier. She argues that this demonstrates how 'racism is backed into our immigration and asylum system' (Hockaday, 2022). In 2022, the UK announced its plans to tackle 'illegal' migration by sending those who arrive on small boats via the English Channel, or those hidden in lorries, to Rwanda to have their claims for asylum processed (Limb, 2022). This plan has been heavily criticised, with the UK government being accused of trading asylum seekers as commodities to a repressive state, discarding their legal obligations, and undermining international protections of refugees (Limb, 2022). Though the plans are still being outlined by parliament, it is argued in this paper that it could result in individuals being diverted away from reporting in the UK and sent to Rwanda while their asylum cases are being considered.

1.1.2. Irregular Migration

The term, 'irregular migrant' (or undocumented migrant) is mostly used for those who are in the UK without the legal right to do so (Walsh, 2020). There exists no legal or broadly accepted definition of this term however (Walsh, 2020). Irregularity concerns the status of individuals at a certain point or period in time (rather than referring to the person themselves) (Vespe et al., 2017). Forced migrants fleeing persecution or conflict and seeking protection in another country can be considered irregular migrants whilst crossing the border, but once they apply for asylum, they become regular (Vespe et al., 2017).

Irregular immigration is often referred to as illegal migration, which suggests a breach of criminal laws. According to the Immigration Act (1971), it is a criminal offence in the UK to enter and remain without authorisation. The term 'illegal immigrant' is often used by the media, though many argue it is degrading as it implies that people can themselves be illegal (Walsh, 2020). Many organisations avoid using such terminology for this reason, preferring 'irregular migrant' and 'irregular migration' (Walsh, 2020). There are few legal routes available to irregular migrants to regularise their position in the UK. Prior to July 2012, individuals were able to apply for settled status after having lived in the UK continuously for 14 years. This has since changed and been replaced by a 20-year requirement. Some have suggested that such

changes are aimed at making life difficult for some migrants by keeping them in positions of instability whereby they are excluded from access to state welfare (Walsh, 2020).

Refugees and asylum seekers are often categorised as forced migrants, however, forced migrants can be anyone forced to migrate due to some form of coercion or threat to life and livelihood, that can arise through man-made or natural causes (European Commission, 2023). Some of the factors that can influence forced migration can include persecution, famine, developmental projects, war, or natural and environmental disasters (Bloch and Dona, 2019). By the end of 2021, 89.3 million people were forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, human rights violations, and fear of persecution (UNHCR, 2022). The report by UNHCR (2022) predicts that if conflicts remain ongoing, and new ones are not curtailed, it could result in increasing numbers of people forced to flee, with limited options available to them. Most forced migrants leave for reasons not recognised by international law, which can adversely impact asylum applications upon entering an international border (Schuster and Majidi, 2019). Achieving asylum status can take several years, during which time individuals may be required to report to the HO (Bloch and Dona, 2019).

1.1.3. The Refugee Convention (1951)

The 1951 Refugee Convention is an important legal document which defines refugees as those, "*owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".* This definition denotes that to be worthy of being granted settlement, one must be a 'fearful' and therefore vulnerable individual, experiencing some form of persecution. It is left to the state to determine who is considered to meet these criteria. Perceptions of what constitutes a fearful subject may vary depending on cultural understandings and individuals may lack the vocabulary to best articulate their experiences (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). This may therefore stand against them when making asylum claims, thus resulting in epistemic injustice, which concerns the views or experiences of some groups or individuals being given less credibility or status than others (Fricker, 2007).

1.2. The Hostile Environment

The UK Immigration Act (1971) introduced the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) policy which places conditions on leave to enter and remain in the UK and outlines what state funds migrants are entitled to. Section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999) states that those with NRPF, should be subject to immigration control, with no access to UK benefits, tax credits or allowances from the government (Home Office, 2021). NRPF affects refused asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, regular non-EEA (European Economic Area) migrants, EEA nationals, those on spousal visas and those with limited leave granted under family and private life rights (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999). In 2020, it was estimated that 1.4 million people had NRPF and enquires related to NRPF increased by 91% during the pandemic, which saw an increase in unemployment levels (Citizens Advice, 2020).

With the introduction of The Immigration and Asylum Act (1999), much of state support for asylum seekers was removed. In its place, detentions, deportations and forced dispersals increased (Cohen et al., 2002). Access to public services were no longer deemed a right, but something migrants had to earn. Migrants were also criminalised, with an increased focus on distinguishing between 'bogus' and 'genuine' claims for asylum and, tackling 'criminals who abuse our borders' (Furman et al., 2012).

In 2012, Theresa May (then Home Secretary) stated that the UK government would create a 'hostile environment' for those considered to be in the country 'illegally' (Kirkup and Winnett, 2012). This led to a rise in incidents against those thought 'foreign'. For example, undocumented migrants being made to wear coloured wristbands in Cardiff for ease of identifying their immigration status (Taylor, 2016) and G4S (a private contractor) painting the doors of asylum seekers red in Middlesbrough (once again said to be a means of identifying them from other members of the public) (Dearden, 2016). 'Go home or face arrests' billboards (where billboards were erected displaying these words) provoked fear and anger against UK immigration policies (Farmer, 2017).

Following the Immigration Act (2014), those with NRPF faced the Immigration Health Surcharge (HIS), requiring them to pay a fee to access NHS care. Currently, almost all migrants are exempt from public funds. Asylum seekers, if at risk of destitution, are entitled to apply for asylum support set at £5.66 per day. Undocumented migrants however do not have rights

to such support, and some have argued that the hostile environment agenda seeks to compel individuals to leave or risk destitution (Randall, 2015).

1.2.1. The Windrush Scandal

The British Nationality Act (1948) provided free movement of citizens to Britain from nations colonised by the UK. The Windrush scandal resulted from the 2012 immigration policy introduced by Theresa May, which saw those lacking documents to prove their status in the UK being denied the right to work, denied healthcare and other benefits and denied access to bank accounts (Hewitt, 2020). It was termed 'Windrush' after the ship that carried workers from the Caribbean to the UK in 1948. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2020) found that the HO lacked a commitment to equality, leading to several cases of individuals being wrongly classified as 'illegal'. A review into the Windrush scandal found that decisions were influenced by the individual's race (Institute for Public Policy Research's (IPPR), 2020; Qureshi et al., 2020). As part of hostile agenda practices, the state has also been shown to exercise control and surveillance of foreign nationals, and it is argued that this disproportionately affects those from the Global South. These issues have led to an increased focus on racial injustice, racism, and racial inequality in the UK (Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning, 2021). The following section will explore state surveillance further.

1.2.2. State Surveillance and Control

Surveillance and control by the state is said to serve as a form of punishment, intended to make life difficult for unwanted foreign nationals (Hasselberg, 2016). Hasselberg (2016) suggested that such punishment was the consequence of the individual wanting to remain in the host country. As foreign nationals are perceived as a threat to state security, they are stripped of their rights and political status and therefore, whatever is committed against them is not considered a crime (Hasselberg, 2015). Immigration control greatly impacts one's sense of security and restricts their choices and movement (Hasselberg, 2016). The power of the state is constantly exerted upon their lives and aimed at compelling them to accept deportation, an approach that is deemed a form of coercive action (Hasselberg, 2015). Power

of the state is perceived through the technologies of surveillance such as reporting centres and electronic tagging, which can negatively impact an individual's sense of self (Whyte, 2011).

1.2.3. Home Office Immigration Reporting (also termed 'signing')

The Immigration Act (1971) outlined grounds for the detention of foreign nationals. Such individuals risk being deported from the UK, which can occur at any time if the government believes them to be an absconsion risk, or if a decision has been made to deport them (e.g., after having exhausted all appeals). Both detention and deportation can take place at any point during a reporting appointment. Reporting involves individuals being allocated an appointment at a pre-determined reporting centre or police station. They are usually expected to attend weekly (though occasionally daily or monthly) at a designated centre and present their immigration reporting documents. The risk of detention during reporting appointments is high and has been found to exacerbate distress (Bosworth, 2014).

The Home Office determines the frequency by which someone is to report to their assigned reporting centre, which is based on the likelihood of them being detained or deported (The greater the likelihood, the higher the frequency). Many reporting centres have short-term holding facilities (STHFs), consisting of secure cells. Those detained upon reporting are often held in STHFs prior to being transferred to immigration removal centres (IRCs) to await deportation (Hasselberg, 2014). The UK has no time limit for how long someone can be detained for. There is a great deal of pressure to attend appointments, and on time, as failing to do so could result in detention (Burridge, 2017). Signing is regarded as a means by which the state places restrictions on an individual's freedoms and independence, such as not being able to work or travel abroad (Klein and Williams, 2012). It also makes it difficult for people to travel away from the reporting site for risk of missing their appointment. The next section will give some detail about detention and deportation which, as stated, can occur when reporting.

1.2.4. Detention and Deportation

Time spent in immigration detention in host countries entails loss of liberty and threats of forced return to countries of origin, a particular post migration stressor (Robiant et al., 2009).

It can also be reminiscent of experiences of being deprived of liberty and human rights for many individuals who have experienced traumatic events (Robjant et al., 2009). Detention further exposes people to abuse from staff, possible violence from other detainees, social isolation, and deportation (Medical Justice, 2019). These factors risk exacerbating existing mental health difficulties further (Priebe et al., 2016). In addition, experiencing detention may act as a new stressor, contributing to the cumulative effects of exposure to traumatic events, increasing the likelihood of developing mental health difficulties such as PTSD (Schauer et al., 2003).

Deportation involves the forcible return of individuals from settler countries to their countries of origin by a state. Deportation has been found to terrify, marginalise, and exclude individuals, rendering them compliant and exploitable (Jones et al., 2017). The state decides when to return individuals and whether it is safe to do so, irrespective of individual accounts (Chimni, 2004). Afari-Mensah (2017) found that there were inequalities in accessing healthcare within detention (where they are often held prior to deportation). Two groups of people were interviewed, service users (detainees) and service providers (an immigration lawyer, a detainee support worker, head of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and a doctor). Drawing upon the work of Agamben (2003) regarding the 'state of exception' and 'biopower', the study argued that those detained were perceived as threats to national security, and therefore did not deserve basic human rights. The study used a phenomenological approach, though rather than focusing strictly on lived experience, utilises other resources such as secondary data to support the interpretation of the interview data (Afari-Mensah, 2017). Interviews were conducted over the phone, rather than face to face, which could potentially have influenced the data and produced different results had they been conducted in person. This research however gave insight into difficulties in accessing healthcare and the attention given to mental health within detention facilities in the UK. It was thought interesting therefore to uncover whether this was equally experienced for those reporting.

1.2.5. Medico-legal reports (MLRs)

Although obtaining medical evidence is not an essential component of asylum applications, if torture or ill treatment is reported, the absence of such evidence can potentially stand against an individual's claim (Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCP), 2015). There are several reasons why such a report may be considered useful:

- To support claims that mental illness has resulted from being tortured, persecuted, trafficked or subjected to ill-treatment.
- To provide evidence that an individual has a mental health difficulty and whether this supports their accounts of events relating to torture, ill-treatment, persecution or trafficking.
- To demonstrate the effect of being detained or deported on an individual's mental health and highlight any breaches of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), part of the Human Rights Act (1998).

The HO acknowledges that survivors of torture, traumatic events and ill treatment may have difficulties recounting their experiences due to their traumatic and sensitive nature (RCP, 2015). Such treatment can form part of any asylum or human rights claim. Where an individual claims they have been subjected to torture or other ill treatment, the HO requires that caseworkers collect information about when, where, how, and by whom such treatment was inflicted. In such cases MLRs may be considered as evidence to support the claim (RCP, 2015). This can result in individuals enduring invasive questioning and asked about sensitive information, which some argue may be distressing (Proctor, 2017).

1.3. Race and Ethnicity

The concept of race has often received criticism, along with the rationale for categorising people in this way, with researchers arguing that it is socially constructed (Lewontin et al., 1984). Race is most often considered as being related to the colour of an individual's skin or physical characteristics attributed to those not considered White (Lewontin et al., 1984).

Post 9/11, citizenship within the Global North focused primarily on public security, with political rhetoric defining who posed a threat to the security of a nation. There grew an emphasis on the 'threatening Other' and subsequently, the 'war on terror' led to the citizenship of such individuals being revoked (Masters & Regilme, 2020). This demonstrates that even for those who have citizenship, the state could withdraw it if they deemed them to be a threat. It further illustrates the persisting colonialist conceptions of citizenship (e.g., to be a citizen is to be White and therefore safe from having their status removed), while demoting non-citizens to bare humans (i.e., '*homo sacer'*, those outside the protection of the law) (Agamben, 1998). This is further espoused in exploring theories on othering below.

1.3.1. Intersectionality

Individual identities such as race, gender, sexuality, and others, are said to overlap and intersect and reflect macro-level forms of oppression and privilege (e.g., racism, sexism, and heteronormativity) (Crenshaw, 1991). It is argued that privilege and oppression can change depending on context, and it is important to consider all forms of marginalisation (Carastathis, 2016). Bowleg (2012) outlined three tenets of intersectionality, namely, that social identities are not independent, but multiple and intersecting. Secondly, those from historically marginalised and oppressed groups are considered the focal point and lastly, intersectionality can reveal disparities in health outcomes.

Many disciplines (including the field of psychology) regard theoretical research and qualitative approaches as not trustworthy or rigorous enough (discussed later), which makes it challenging to incorporate the concept of intersectionality into research (Collingridge & Gannt, 2008). Measures such as Scheim & Bauer's (2019) Intersectionality Discrimination Index (InDI) sought to use quantitative measures to explore intersectionality. Harnois & Bastos (2019) however argue that though helpful, it remained difficult to distinguish between intersectional, multiple, and single axes experiences of discrimination.

Attending to the various forms of oppression one may experience enables therapists to consider and work with the various structural differences and power inequalities at play in an individual's life (i.e., their unique experience of discrimination) (Collin, 2000). The relative

importance of each category contributing to the whole experience of oppression cannot be assumed but can be uncovered by exploring this directly with those impacted (Hankivsky, 2014).

Social Graces (Burnham, 1992) is the dominant model within systemic theory and practice in the UK (when exploring power and social location). It was created as an easily accessible tool for supporting therapists, supervisors, and students to be aware of multiple areas of social difference to subsequently inform their interventions. The 'GRACES' were developed from 9 areas of social difference into 15 which are Gender, Geography, Race, Religion, Age, Ability, Appearance, Class, Culture, Ethnicity, Education, Employment, Sexuality, Sexual Orientation and Spirituality (Burnham, 2012). This list enables the in-depth exploration of each aspect of identity to consider the lived experiences of clients and address the skills development needs of therapists (Burnham, 2012). Social Graces have received criticism however in that unlike the concept of intersectionality (which states that different aspects of identity combine and contribute to create unique experiences), Social Graces treats social inequalities as mutually exclusive (Seedal et al., 2014). This paper posits that those required to report likely experience various forms of oppression, due to their immigration status and country of origin, and therefore issues of intersectionality need to be considered.

1.3.2. Theories on Othering

Turner (2021) outlined in detail the concept of intersectionality in relation to the process of othering. In his book titled, *'Intersection of Privilege and Otherness in Counselling and Psychotherapy',* he explores intersectional differences and the role that privilege plays in the construction of otherness. Sexism, racism, homophobia and ableism are said to be means used to dehumanise the other through stereotyping, objectification and othering (Turner, 2021). Dehumanisation is deemed the process by which the complex identity of 'the other' is reduced from a whole object into a 'part' to be used, projected upon and weaponised by individuals and groups (Turner, 2021). Mitchell (1986) posited that the process of reducing the other into a part was a necessary stage of development a baby must go through to access the fullness of their parent or caregiver. This stems from Klein's theory (1923) on part and whole

objects. By doing so, they are able to recognise the humanity of the parent and therefore feel remorse at their treatment.

Racism itself is said to involve one group's inherent superiority against another based on a perceived racial difference (Turner, 2021). Dalal (2006)'s exploration into othering and racism has been influential in the field of psychology. He suggests that racism can be described in two ways. The first relates to the social world, regarding organising people and commodities (along with the relationships between them) along racial lines (Dalal, 2006). The second way of understanding racism, he suggests, is through the emotional world. This consists of feelings of hatred, disgust, repulsion (and other emotions usually deemed 'negative') from one group, directed towards another (Dalal, 2006). Psychoanalysis tends to look at the cause of things as seen in the external world, as being the result of internal psychic processes. This is illustrated in the quote below:

"All social problems are ultimately reducible to problems of individual psychology." (Fairbairn, 1935:241).

This has been considered reductionist and not considering racism in the context of group behaviour. Dalal (2006) outlines four psychoanalytic explanations for the phenomenon of prejudice. The first relates to transference, whereby behaviours and events in adulthood are said to be patterns or repetitions laid down from infancy. If these patterns/ events are experienced as traumatic, the adult will develop aggressive and perhaps racist ways of behaving. Secondly, a group/individual dichotomy posits that racism is a group phenomenon in that when in groups, people lose their otherwise 'civilised sensibilities', and regress into a more primal, savage state. Thirdly, individuals are driven to behave in certain ways due to our internal instincts (i.e., biology/genetics) and lastly, racism is said to occur through the process of splitting, repression, and rejection. Here, aggressive impulses and other difficulties arising within an individual's internal world (which cannot be managed by them), are split off from consciousness, repressed and subsequently projected unto an object or person in their external world (Dalal, 2006). That object/person is then experienced as difficult.

Dalal (2006) argues that this only considers behaviour at an individual level, stating that it suggests that people behave in certain ways because of some genetic or biological predisposition. I also argue that it neglects the agency within individuals as to why some people do not behave in such ways when in groups. Chasseguet-Smirgel (1990) also suggested that the racism exhibited with the Nazi's could be explained by an 'archaic oedipal matrix', enacted from early childhood. At this stage, the child struggles to tolerate difference and responds to this by seeking to merge with the mother and then over time grows to develop a tolerance for difference. She stated that the Nazi ideology lay in a desire to become one with the 'mother'. To do so, they needed to be made pure and for this to happen, they must be 'purged' of all difference and thus, the annihilation of the Jews.

Attachment theory takes the stance that difficulties forming healthy attachments in childhood led to a generation of ambivalent, avoidant and disorganised patterns of relating with others (Bowlby, 1988). The individual would then experience a tension between being preoccupied with the self and being avoidant/ hypervigilant towards others. This however can be potentially considered as reductionist because it suggests that securely attached people cannot be racist. Racism is said to be a dehumanising process through which 'an other' is transformed into 'The Other' i.e., from being 'one of us' into 'one of them' (separate and different from us). The dehumanised other is then positioned outside of the moral universe and thus denied the same qualities and expectation one would accord a fellow human (Dalal, 2006). Differences between individuals in relation to the other, are then named and exaggerated, resulting in a process of detachment from 'them'. These theories can help explain the underlying processes inherent in the exclusion and racialisation of the other. The process of detachment can be interpreted from the treatment of individuals subjected to 'hostile' policies which distinguish between those deemed as belonging in the UK and those who do not. The next section will explore developments in psychology that attempt to acknowledge wider systemic issues relating to mental health. This is pertinent as those who struggle with immigration (such as those reporting) can experience various systemic systems of power that can potentially contribute towards poorer mental health.

1.4. The Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF)

The PTMF argues that the role of power regarding how adversities impact people has been largely neglected in research (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). The PTMF states that what society would label as 'symptoms' of 'disorders' are an individual's attempts to survive difficult situations. In other words, what we do either consciously or unconsciously, to cope with life's hardships (as opposed to being the result of an illness). The PTMF replaces the question, 'What is wrong with you?' with four others, 'What has happened to you? (i.e., How power operates in their life), How did it affect you? What sense did you make of it?' and 'What did you have to do to survive?' (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). This perspective takes the focus of the problem away from the individual and locates it within a wider social context. This is pertinent to the lives of groups such as undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees which are governed by powers within society that can restrict their movements and choices, often subjecting them to liminal states of existence and thus, contributing to poorer mental health.

The field of CoP acknowledges that inherent power imbalances exist within the client-practitioner (or participant-researcher) relationship (Crethar et al., 2008). For this reason, the PTMF was included to ensure awareness of the potential role of power in shaping the participants' accounts of their lived experience and to guide reflections on how they may have responded to me as researcher (and therefore in a position of power). Boyle & Johnstone (2020) identified six kinds of power (seen below); coercive, legal, economic/material, biological/embodied, interpersonal, and ideological, and asserts that the roots of 'mental problems' are social and political.

1.4.1. <u>What happened to you?</u> (i.e., How was power operating within your life?)

1.4.1.1. Biological/Embodied Power

This relates to our bodies, along with physical characteristics. This includes being considered physically attractive, possessing good health, fertility and so forth. Additionally, one could experience various limitations such as physical pain, disabilities, disease, or injuries. There could also be cultural meanings attached to our bodily characteristics that determine how society caters for and accommodates them, which can impact our daily functioning (e.g., body shape, body size, skin colour).

1.4.1.2. Interpersonal Power

This relates to power functioning through relationships, though in particular, the power to look after or not look after someone, to provide support and protection or not, to abandon or leave someone and whether to give, withdraw or withhold love or praise. Relationships provide us with security, support, protection, validation, love and connection, which can have a great effect on shaping our sense of who we are and how effectively we manage difficulties in life (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

1.4.1.3. Coercive Power

This involves use of violence, aggression, threats, physical strength, particular gestures or postures, or reminders of past violence to frighten or intimidate individuals to make them do something they do not want to do or prevent them from doing what they want to (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

1.4.1.4. Legal Power

This can involve some forms of coercion (e.g., police stop and search powers, arrest, and imprisonment). The law can in many ways protect our rights and limit or support other forms of power. It can be used to prosecute those who cause harm and restrict their freedoms, though it could also fail to accord equal rights to certain groups or people, or fail to prosecute individuals for wrongdoing (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Government policies (e.g., welfare, education, housing) are supported by legal powers to ensure individuals can access services and benefits for which they are entitled. It can also be used to impose policies seen to be unfair and even harmful (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

1.4.1.5. Economic/ Material Power

This power concerns the ability to obtain goods and services important to our wellbeing, being able to meet financial needs and engage in valued activities (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Such

powers enable us secure food, housing, employment, transport, education, medical treatment, safety, security, privacy, legal services, leisure, and cultural activities. It can also involve the ability to control others' access to possessions and services (e.g., through welfare systems and social and economic policies), which can have a significant impact on individuals and wider society (e.g., how services are funded) (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Those with economic power can use this power to influence policies to their advantage.

1.4.1.6. Social/Cultural Capital

This involves access to educational and job opportunities, qualifications, knowledge, shared experiences, and connections that help ease an individual's way through life and provide a sense of belonging and social confidence (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). The lack of social capital can act as a barrier to accessing helpful information to navigate through difficult life situations or pursue one's rights. It could also lead individuals to feel excluded from some activities or forms of influence (e.g., certain jobs, education, healthcare etc) (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

1.4.1.7. Ideological Power

This relates to control of meaning, discourses, language, and agendas. It is considered one of the least visible, though important forms of power because it concerns our thoughts and beliefs, perceptions of how we should think and feel, how we see ourselves, others, and the world and what we consider as 'natural' or 'factual' (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Ideological power can operate in several ways, some of which being that it can hold certain groups or people from public scrutiny, reframe certain problems as individual 'dysfunctions', create beliefs or stereotypes about certain groups, silence or undermine certain individuals and support some actions or policies above others (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

1.4.2. Core Threats (*How did what happened to you affect you*?)

These are considered as threats to safety, survival or wellbeing and can adversely affect our lives, causing us to struggle as opposed to flourish (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). They can occur *Within Relationships* (e.g., friends, family, healthcare professionals and other important

people). Such threats involve abandonment, rejection, losing important people to you, or experiences of being undermined or invalidated by others (e.g., criticism, humiliation, having your views dismissed or others' views imposed on you). Threats can be *Bodily* (e.g., ill health, disability, physical danger, violence etc), *Emotional* (e.g., feeling out of control or overwhelmed by emotions difficult to control), *Economic/Material* (e.g., threats to financial security/housing, an inability to meet basic physical or material needs or access services), *Social/Community* (e.g., isolation, exclusion, injustice/unfairness, loss of social/ work role), *Environmental* (e.g., lack of safety, lack of connection with homeland), *Knowledge and Meaning Construction* (e.g., lack of opportunity, support or social resources to help make sense of one's situation, devaluing by others of your own knowledge, understandings and experience), *Identity* (e.g., loss of status, loss of social, cultural or religious identity, sense of inferiority due to discrimination, abuse, media portrayals, government policies etc) and *Value Base* (e.g., loss of purpose, values, beliefs).

1.4.3. What sense did you make of it? (i.e., *What did the experiences mean*?)

There are several meanings suggested by Boyle & Johnstone (2020) regarding how individuals attempt to make sense of distressing experiences. Examples include feeling unsafe/ afraid/ attacked, helpless/ powerless, invaded, controlled, excluded, humiliated/ shamed, sense of injustice/ unfairness, inferior and so forth. Several of these examples were reflected throughout the narratives of those interviewed.

1.4.4. What did you have to do to survive?

The PTMF outlines ways individuals may respond when confronted with threats (i.e., threat responses). For example, panic, nightmares, flashbacks, submitting/appeasing, protesting, weeping, hypervigilance, giving up, suspicious thoughts, self-silencing, distrust, bingeing/ overeating, and loss of faith (among others), are all interpreted as common threat responses (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). The PTMF however acknowledges that threat responses range across a continuum and though we may respond in similar ways to perceived threats, some may be easier to control than others. They are also shaped by the power resources available to us and can vary across cultures.

1.4.5. Conceptualisations of Trauma

Trauma has been considered as an emotional shock experienced after an extremely stressful traumatic event. It is often unpredictable, unexpected, overwhelming, and highly life threatening (Lee & James, 2012). Trauma stems from the Greek word for wound (Harper, 2020), and often used in forced migration literature. It has been argued that trauma-informed approaches often position refugees as passive victims and therefore within positions of powerlessness (Malkki, 1995). This perspective implies that someone with knowledge is required to "fix" the trauma and, the individual on the receiving end needs to be 'fixed' (therefore creating a power imbalance). Diagnostic labels are often used as a means of understanding distress and used to support immigration applications (Hollis, 2019). Though some argue that Western paradigms can provide a helpful means of understanding distress, others posit that it can take attention away from those who are categorised, implying that such labels can be applied universally (Summerfield, 1999).

1.4.6. Going Beyond a Diagnosis

Cooper (2009) asserts that as CoPs, we should attempt to understand our clients as transdiagnostic beings (i.e., as exiting outside a particular category or label). The issue of diagnostic labels and tests have been argued extensively within the CoP field and it was said that some clients find procedures for diagnosing and testing to be helpful, empowering and reassuring when carried out collaboratively (Fischer, 1970). It has been argued however that when the diagnosis is at the forefront, and the individual is seen as their diagnosis, it results in what has been termed a 'thingification' of the Other, i.e., an attempt to reduce their unknowable otherness into something familiar and the same (Levinas, 2003). There is therefore a lack of understanding of the individual in their sometimes "*complex, unknowable otherness*" and ignoring their position as social and relational beings (Cooper 2009:9). The Power Threat Meaning Framework (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018) was put forward to address some of these issues.

1.4.7. Psychological Distress and Power

Several researchers have highlighted the relationship between power, control, and the experience of powerlessness. The likelihood of experiencing what is conceptualised as distress (by fields within psychology and psychiatry) has been associated with an individual's position in society regarding structural power. For example, there are higher rates of those said to be experiencing depression, anxiety and eating disorders in women compared to men, reflecting the position of women within society pertaining to power (Proctor, 2004). Proctor (2017) argues that the way to manage difficulties stemming from abuse, deprivation and powerlessness is not to impose further power and control through the psychiatric system.

1.4.8. Attachment Theory, Identity and Positive Power

Power is not always negative. Even in difficult circumstances, positive power can protect and support us to meet our needs in helpful ways. Examples of positive power can come from experiencing secure early relationships that were protective, as well as feelings of belonging and social support. Having access to money, qualifications, knowledge, and information about your situation that can help you manage, are sources of positive power (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Additionally, the ability to share experiences with others and plan towards addressing injustices and threat, is another example of positive power.

Attachment theory takes a deterministic stance, stating that human beings are predisposed towards forming attachments with others (Reuther, 2014). Though this notion can be considered to go against this research's constructivist epistemological underpinnings, the theory does take into consideration that individuals are attuned to and orientated within a social environment (Reuther, 2014). Humans are therefore considered to exist within a historical, social and cultural context (Heidegger, 1962). Bowlby's *Theory of Attachment* (1988) states that when infants form secure attachments with their primary caregiver, they feel safe to explore the world in the knowledge that once they return, they will meet the caregiver once again. Secure attachments are said to aid in the healthy development of individuals and encourage the formation of secure attachments as adults (Bowlby, 1988). It further enables the infant to develop mental representations of the self and others, which impacts how identity forms in later life (i.e., identity formation emerges through co-construction with

others) (Pittman et al., 2011). Researchers have found that patterns of attachment are not fixed but fluid, and because of the neuroplasticity of the brain, can adapt through interacting with the environment and social connections (Cozolino, 2016).

As stated above, our interactions with our environment and social connections can inform the formation of secure relationships with the self and others. The unpredictability of the reporting process, exclusionary state policies and the constant threat of detention and deportation, may therefore influence the sense of self in relation to the state and others. As those subject to reporting may present in therapeutic services (or require other mental health support), it was thought important in the next section to discuss the possible implications of the use of interpreters in this work.

1.5. The Therapeutic Relationship and Using Interpreters

Often people who are required to report to the HO may present with language barriers and therefore require interpreters, particularly when being interviewed during their reporting appointment, having to attend tribunal hearings, or coming into contact with health services. Power differentials that may originate from one's country of origin may affect the relationship between clinicians, interpreters, and clients (Tribe & Thompson, 2022). This is particularly pertinent during periods of social and political conflict (Tribe & Thompson, 2022). Asylum seekers have reported experiences of being 'silenced' or that their voices were 'taken away from them' by political regimes which were hostile towards allowing multiple accounts or criticism (Tribe, 2010). As they may be subjected to interviews as part of their asylum claim, giving account of their lives and their problems may therefore be difficult. They may have encountered situations whereby their trust was compromised, and secrecy served as a survival strategy (Tribe, 2010). Being unable to speak the language of the host country fluently can also be a frightening and disempowering experience and potentially serve as a barrier to engagement (whereby people do not seek much needed support from services e.g., psychological) (Tribe & Thompson, 2022).

Cultural nuances may be encoded within language in ways not easily conveyed when translated (Oquendo, 1996). Language is therefore not directly interchangeable, meanings are coded, emotionally processed, and internalised in one language in ways not directly accessible

in another (Antinucci, 2004). Working with interpreters results in the communication being mediated by a third person. Interpreters process the material in line with their subjective experience, which results in the interpreter shaping the material in some way (Tribe & Thompson, 2022).

1.6. Migrant Coping Strategies and Support Networks

Detention has been shown to have an adverse effect on the mental health of detainees (Turnbull, 2016; Afari-Mensah, 2017). Detention has also been found to exacerbate existing trauma of detainees, increasing their vulnerability (Medical Justice, 2018). Suicide and self-harm are shown to be common means of coping within detention (Griffiths, 2012). Migrant support groups provide invaluable information to individuals concerning reporting processes and informing them of the risks of detention and ways they can prepare for it (Hasselberg, 2014). Alliances can be formed in such groups, enabling individuals to oversee one another's appointments. If one is detained following an appointment, the other is then able to contact their family, representatives, and advocacy groups who may be able to intervene on their behalf (Hasselberg, 2014). An organisation that supports irregular migrants at risk of detention and/ or those required to sign is Right to Remain.

Faith and spirituality (both religious and non-religious forms) can contribute to helping individuals cope with new and potentially shocking situations (Shishehgar, et al., 2017). It refers to one's strong belief, based on spiritual conviction (Starnino & Sullivan, 2017). Faith can support individuals to cope with traumatic events and helps foster resilience in survivors (Peres et al., 2007). Communal coping strategies have also proven important for migrants whereby individuals provide one another with practical and emotional support (Bruce & Banister, 2019). The next section will critically evaluate some of the existing studies on immigration control with an aim to identify current gaps in the research.

1.7. Existing Research on the Lived Experience of Immigration Control

1.7.1. Identity and Immigration Control

There was minimal research found pertaining to the concept of identity and immigration reporting, though some exists related to identity formation and identification within detention centres (Home Office, 2021; Hollis, 2019). The concept of identity features prominently within contemporary academic literature. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), having met basic needs of food, shelter and belonging, it enables individuals to achieve higher level needs, such as self-esteem and self-actualisation (both of which inform self-identity). Self-identity is said to form from birth, although is influenced by developmental stages (Erikson, 1968). It is argued that the disruption that refugees experience in their lives can alter their perceived self-identity (Jalonen & La Corte, 2018). This results in refugees having to re-evaluate themselves in response to new experiences originating from external factors that can influence their internal belief system (Jalonen & La Corte, 2018).

Regarding the use of detention, identity is considered the main reason for its use, with the HO stating that it is required to establish an individual's identity (Home Office, 2021). Establishing one's identity enables the HO to determine where a person is to be deported to and which country they are deemed to 'legally' belong to (Griffiths, 2012). Griffiths (2012) conducted anthropological research within one detention centre, over a period of two years. The study aimed to explore identification of those within detention and involved speaking to 160 detainees. It argued that detention should be understood in relation to identity and identification discourse. Data was collected through short phone calls, face to face meetings and observations. The research highlighted the increasing use of systems for identifying individuals and how this impacts asylum claims (Griffiths, 2012). Griffiths (2012) asserted that issues of identity were not confined to experiences of detention (or immigration control alone) but were relevant to wider discourses on identity and legitimacy. Four themes were identified, namely, *Identities*, *Identity Crimes*, the *Un-Deportable* and *Embodied Identity*. Embodied identity related to the use of medical reports and how torture claims were influenced by the strength of such reports. Often medical reports were overlooked in favour of body inspections, which could be considered invasive (Griffiths, 2012). Biometrics also featured in this research e.g., use of finger-print verification. Participants described their bodies as though partly separated. Griffiths described this as being "*as though part of one's*

person was bureaucratically trapped in a country by being fingerprinted there" (Griffiths, 2012: 1732).

1.7.2. Temporality and Experiencing Uncertainty

Griffiths (2014) also conducted ethnographic research, which aimed to explore the impact of 'not knowing' on people who were at risk of deportation. Four temporal themes were identified i.e., *Sticky* (slowed), *Suspended* (directionless), *Frenzied* (fast) and *Ruptured Time* (dramatic and sudden). Griffiths (2014) argued that temporality had previously been largely neglected within research. The study found that temporal uncertainties left those who had been refused asylum, feeling as though they existed outside of time and within a 'precarious, quasi-legal space'. Detainees also had to contend with both endless waiting and imminent change.

As earlier stated, there is no time limit regarding the length of detention in the UK. Turnbull (2016) conducted ethnographic research into the experience of 'waiting' on detainees. Information was collected through fieldwork data relating to time spent in detention (within four detention centres) and with those who were released from detention. Four themes were identified, which were '*Passing Time'*, '*On Being Stuck'*, '*Playing the Waiting Game'* and '*What is at Stake'*. Waiting was understood from a wider political context and considered as forcing individuals into positions of subordination to the will of others. Additionally, waiting was considered an "*exercise of power that is enacted and re-enacted through acts of waiting*". (Turnbull, 2016: 76). The concept of wating was relevant whilst detained and post-release, whereby people continued to live with uncertainty concerning their immigration status (Turnbull, 2016). Turnbull reported that some would become 'compliant' with waiting, though they had little choice.

1.7.3. Deportability and Families

There appeared to be limited research into how deportability affects families. Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning (2021) explored the intersection of family life and immigration enforcement. Thirty mixed-immigration families were recruited between 2014 and 2017, and

included men at risk of deportation and their British partners and children. Interviews were conducted with couples and practitioners from private, state, legal and civil society sectors, alongside observations of deportation appeals and other hearings, and analysing public and media discourses on immigration and family rights. The research found that immigration statuses affected one's private life, relationships, families, finances, physical and mental health, careers and identities. Living with insecurity made people sicker, unhappier, and poorer (Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning, 2021). Their ability to plan for their future (and that of their families) was severely restricted due to forced unemployment, threat of separation by detention or deportation, and long-term uncertainty. The effects of immigration control were not only felt by the individual themselves, but by their British and EU partners close to them (including their children). The research illustrated racialised, gendered and class biases in the state's recognition and evaluation of the right to a family life (Griffiths & Glendinning, 2021). They found that reporting conditions hindered one's abilities to live with and support their families. There were also disparities reported in the perceived treatment of EU and non-EU migrants.

As per the participants used, their partners were predominantly White and ranged in age from their 20s to late 40s. Nearly half of the men were from sub-Saharan Africa. A few had entered the UK irregularly, though others arrived with insecure time-limited visas. The research provided novel data on the impact deportability has on one's family and children, which had been mostly neglected in research. The research does not state the data analysis method, so it is not possible to comment on how this aligned with its research aims. Though written informed consent was obtained, the researchers do not comment on how any language barriers or issues regarding understanding were explored and managed.

1.7.4. Additional Research on Immigration Control

There were minimal studies found exploring the lived experience of immigration reporting, and for those that were discovered, reporting often formed a small part, with the focus being mainly on detention and experiences of being released from immigration bail. Fisher et al (2019) explored reporting from a geographical lens, in terms of the mobilisation of asylum seekers and FNOs. They proposed two concepts, (1) *Slickness* and (2) *Tethering*. Slickness referred to the ease of moving individuals, while tethering was the 'fixing' of deportable

individuals in place and enforcing punishment. They asserted that reporting blurs the distinction between detention and freedom, doing so "*by enacting the carceral in everyday spaces*" (Fisher et al., 2019: 632). It addressed the difficulties people faced in attending their reporting appointments e.g., due to funds, which meant that people had to walk long distances. The research was conducted over a three-year period and made use of participant observation and engaging with solidarity groups supporting work with asylum seekers. Researchers also accompanied asylum seekers to reporting events (when requested by them) and were also the first point of contact for those recently detained or requiring emotional support. Interviews were conducted with asylum seekers who had been recently detained, which the researchers stated was to get a better understanding of detention procedures occurring in spaces inaccessible to the general public (Fisher et al., 2019). Verbal and written consent was sought, and participants were made aware of the research aims, their rights to withdraw and that their information would be kept confidential. Friends were able to accompany individuals during interviews or stay nearby while interviews were facilitated. The researchers made attempts to contact the HO for a formal interview, however these were rejected. Participants risked being deported without first spending a night in detention if individuals did not communicate to staff that their circumstances had changed, if they did not challenge the decisions to remove them, or that they wished to contact legal representatives (Fisher et al., 2019).

The study was helpful in highlighting the barriers to accessing support to challenge HO decisions and was able to see first-hand what occurred during reporting events. Though researchers outlined the purposes of the research, accompanying individuals to appointments (and the power held by researchers) could have influenced individuals giving informed consent to participate (believing they would receive support from researcher's regarding claims). The researchers also had a dual role of providing emotional support for those recently detained and therefore this may further influence how individuals responded within interviews. The study however does not stipulate how many individuals were recruited or what analysis method was adopted, so it was not possible to comment on these. Overall, the study addressed the need for closer scrutiny into immigration enforcement.

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS, 2020) reported on those who had been detained or were at risk of detention in their research titled: *"Detained and Dehumanised"*. The research involved a sample of 31 individuals liable to detention, 24 of whom had experience of detention and 7 who did not. Participants engaged in semi-structured interviews concerning their experiences of detention and reporting. There is no mention of their analysis method however or the researcher's epistemological stance. All participants were recruited by staff leading the project at the JRS UK day centre.

Questions were developed in close conversation with those with direct experience of detention and reporting, along with JRS UK's detention outreach team and JRS UK's destitution services team. All questions were asked and answered verbally, and some participants were offered interpreters (Amharic, Arabic, French, Lingala and Tigrinya), which was said to ensure that individuals were not prevented from participating due to language barriers. There was however no mention of considerations made regarding assigning interpreters and how this may potentially impact participation. The research was advertised through the JRS UK day centre, and staff within the centre held responsibilities for contacting prospective participants and arranging the research interviews. Though providing ease of access to participants, this could have potentially presented issues regarding power dynamics whereby participants may feel compelled to engage in the research due to having received support from the service and wanting to give back or may assume that there was some gain regarding their immigration situation by participating. The researchers however state that they were informed that whether they participated or not, it would not affect their relationship with JRS (though did not state potential expectations from participant's' regarding their immigration difficulties and therefore what steps were taken to ensure appropriate boundaries around this were established). The researchers made efforts to ensure that the participants were not left feeling disempowered by their participation, through the use of written consent forms, by offering them means to provide verbal consent.

The study by JRS (2020) gave an in-depth exploration into asylum seekers and refugees post-detention and their experiences of destitution. Their results were split into three sections, Section 1 (*Experiences of Being Detained*) outlined the process of detention and revealed 5 themes (*Trapped, Forcible arrest, Long Wait, Lack of Information, Torn from life* and *Community*). Participants reported having been taken to separate rooms to be interviewed

while reporting, which often occurred without warning and with no legal advisor present and asked to sign documents that they did not understand. They further stated that signatures were subsequently used for travel documents needed for deportation. There was also a report that a woman was promised accommodation by the HO if she signed certain documents (she was however detained instead). Others were detained upon attending their reporting appointment (e.g., a man who went to the reporting centre to inform them of a change of address). Some collapsed at the reporting centre when told that they would be forcibly arrested and subsequently detained. Little information was relayed as to why they were being detained and they were often kept for long hours at the centre without food. Though not directly exploring reporting, the study shed light on the experiences of reporting for some of their participants who were at risk of detention, particularly pertaining to how detention was unexpected upon reporting and the lack of communication accorded them by the HO.

Bhatia (2021) investigated electronic monitoring (EM) and drew on data from an 18-month ethnographic research project, which involved observing participants at three refugee charity organisations (where she had volunteered), gathering and analysing case files (and other documentary evidence) and interviews with practitioners (6 in total, which included a primary care doctor, two charity social workers, a clinical psychologist, a manager from a homeless shelter, and another from a migrant rights charity) and 22 individuals seeking asylum. The study aimed to explore the impact that electronic monitoring had on those seeking asylum after having completed prison sentences for immigration offences (for possessing or using a false passport). Participants were deemed 'at risk of absconding' and subsequently tagged. EM is a tool for surveillance, implemented under the Criminal Justice Act (1991) and used to track offenders and suspects, verify their location and ascertain whether they are complying with the requirements of their sentence (Bhatia, 2021). EM was said to have been introduced to address the issue of prison overcrowding and the high costs of incarceration and divert people away from custody (Nellis, 2002). It was also used in immigration control as an administrative decision taken by the HO. Bhatia (2021) provides insight into a niche area of immigration control, with little attention given to the subject matter. The research however does not state the analysis method, nor the epistemological stance, so it is not possible to comment on how much this aligned with the methodology and research aims.

Bhatia (2021) posits that EM is a form of racial surveillance and argues that present day surveillance and migration controls should be viewed in the context of slavery, colonialism and empire. Surveillance has been said to operate at the borders of nations (both internal and external) and that through everyday bordering, migrants are targeted and constructed as unwanted and risky. Upon release from custodial sentences for immigration offences, some spent additional time in immigration detention (under administrative powers) and on release, were required to appear at the immigration reporting centre in person on a weekly or fortnightly basis. They were not told the reason why the monitoring device had been attached, which also came with a mandatory curfew (lasting between 8-12 hours). Individuals were informed that breaking the conditions of monitoring or tampering with the device could lead to arrest, or them receiving a negative decision on their immigration or asylum cases. The study highlighted that EM was perceived by individuals as a continuation of punishment (after having completed custodial sentences) and shown to be harmful to health and wellbeing. Some coped with this process by taking drugs, which they reported was to numb the feeling of being "trapped". Curfews were found to significantly disrupt social activities and resulted in deeper exclusion and isolation (Bhatia, 2021). There was a constant feeling of being watched and uncertainty about the future, which triggered 'negative thoughts' and low mood. HO policies stated that EM devices could be removed if the individual was considered vulnerable and being tagged could exacerbate distress, however this was rarely followed through in practice (Bhatia, 2021). Participants were often disbelieved and said to be 'faking it' when displaying visible physical ailments caused by the devices. Though not directly about reporting, the study provided an in-depth exploration of a form of another immigration control, suggesting that such controls (e.g., reporting) were ways by which "*racist violence is inflicted on migrants*" (Bhatia, 2021: 13). There were no reflections on how issues of intersectionality (e.g., the participant's gender) may have influenced their experience of such controls. It was also unclear about the demographics of the participants (e.g., age, countries of origin), whether interpreters were used, or the researcher's positionality to the research (which could have influenced how the participants responded to her within the research process). How informed consent was obtained was also not discussed in this paper. Bhatia, having volunteered in the organisation where participants were sought, presented an inherent power imbalance and therefore participants may have felt compelled to participate or have envisaged some personal gain from doing so.

Klein and Williams' (2012) paper is perhaps one of the most notable exploring the experiences of individuals released from detention (some of whom were required to report) from the field of sociology. They argued that immigration detainees were treated like anomalies within the liberal democratic state, both within detention and upon release, whereby participants reported feeling continuously detained upon release. 6 former detainees were interviewed and recruited through the personal networks of one of the authors. Interviews were carried out in situ (within the hostels they resided in), to facilitate direct observation and verifying verbal statements. Informants were used to gain access to the research participants, being that they were a 'hard to reach' population (which is also popular within ethnographic fieldwork) (Griffiths et al.,1993). Participants originated from a range of countries (e.g., Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Morocco, and Vietnam), and interviews were conducted in English with a French speaking peer interpreter providing language support. They do not state whether others were offered interpreters and if not needed, the reasons for this. Klein & Williams (2012) stated that because of the long-standing relationship between one of the authors and some of those interviewed, it gave them confidence in the general validity of findings.

Two themes emerged from the findings. The first was '*Bewilderment regarding release from IRCs*', stating that for many former detainees, arrest and detention were bewildering, affected their sense of selfhood, notions of natural justice and expectations of how a just society should treat their members. The second theme was *'Conditional freedom'*, stating that though release from detention led to greater freedom of movement, it restricted autonomy and self-determination. Individuals were often let out without preparation, which was said to be as disruptive as their initial arrest. The researchers do not outline the analytical method used to analyse the data, nor do they reveal the epistemological underpinnings of the research, so it was not possible to comment on this area. It is additionally difficult to ascertain whether the research aims aligned with their philosophical standpoint and research method used.

Klein and Williams (2012) argue that detention (unlike prison) does not serve the function of rehabilitation, as there is no 'new beginning' following release. Rather, they state that release conditions appear designed to humiliate individuals in social situations and add

to their sense of conditional freedom. Government surveillance e.g., tagging curfews, phone calls and reporting, was said to reinforce the sense that individuals were living under a suspended sentence (Klein and Williams, 2012). They discuss the use of electronic tagging as a means of immigration control, and like Bhatia (2021) report on the stigma of having to wear the devices and the physical discomfort they cause. Once again, participants reported that they were not informed of the reasons for curfews and were threatened with being detained were they not to comply with curfew orders. Reporting was spoken about as a significant restriction on the freedom and independence of the former detainees (who were required to attend appointments weekly). Failure to report resulted in being sent out a letter by the HO and facing possible arrest. Reporting appointments were also said to create 'nervous tension', due to the risk of being re-arrested and re-detained. Unlike JRS (2020), there is a lack of information about strategies for coping with their predicament either pre or post detention, such as, what internal or external resources were drawn upon to help them endure the difficult situations they experienced due to their immigration status. They found however that rather than providing support, communities could hinder integration (as individuals would avoid seeking assistance from local faith and ethnic communities).

Liebling et al., (2014) explored the lived experience of asylum seekers in the UK. The researchers state that their aim was to highlight key issues and concerns of this group. Nine participants undertook semi-structured interviews, all recruited from a refugee centre in Coventry, through purposive sampling (all were asylum seekers). The study used thematic analysis (TA, Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyse asylum seekers' accounts of their life premigration, their journey to the UK and life after arrival. The researchers noted a gap in the literature regarding the lived experience of asylum seekers. Seven themes were identified relating to the experiences of asylum seekers in the UK. For example, *The Importance of Safety, Negative Experiences of the Home Office (e.g., reporting), Experiences of Support in the UK, Emotional Effects of Being an Asylum Seeker, Significance of Family, Hopes for the Future* and *Positive Experiences of Living in the UK*.

Nine participants were interviewed, eight conducted in English and one with assistance from an interpreter. Regarding the Negative experience of the Home Office, participants reported inhumane treatment and that the system was 'uncaring'. Their experiences were

marred with uncertainty, having to endure slow processes, meaning that people had to wait several years for decisions regarding asylum applications, during which time, some had to endure reporting. This made is difficult for individuals to plan for the future and exacerbated their distress. The HO was described as controlling, requiring individuals to report every week to police stations, which meant that some had to travel long distances leading to them incurring additional expenditure that they could not afford. One participant described reporting as disrupting her routine and affecting her ability to look after her new-born (i.e., having to take her child to her appointments). The epistemological and ontological stance of the research was not stated, and they did not offer a rationale for using TA as opposed to a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology (with its focus on analysing lived experience) may be argued as a more appropriate research method (as opposed to TA which generally looks for patterns and themes in data).

Taylor et al.'s (2020) research used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to provide a rich and detailed analysis of the lived experience of UK based asylum seekers and refugees. The researchers stemmed from varied disciplines, which included psychology, counselling and psychotherapy, sports science, and criminology. It aimed to explore the ontology of trauma and efforts to recover. 12 people took part in the research (9 women and 3 men). Eight were asylum seekers, and one participant chose not to disclose their immigration status. They came from a range of countries (Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone, DRC, Libera, Zimbabwe and Iran. All located within the Global South). Ages ranged from 28-61 and the length of time in the UK was between 5 and 21 years. Participants were recruited through an agency providing advocacy and therapeutic support to refugees and asylum seekers who have experienced trauma and torture. Researchers identified 4 superordinate themes (*Loss, Struggle, Memory and Helpful Coping Strategies*) and corresponding subordinate themes. These are presented alongside detailed interpretations from the researchers and participants. Regarding limitations and strengths, the researchers highlighted that for many participants, English was not their first language, which could have affected the findings and increased the chance of potential misunderstandings. This may also be true when using interpreters. They state that though efforts were made to build rapport with participants, there may have remained issues of trust which could limit the information they shared (due to the inherent power dynamic

between researcher and researched). Power, though not named explicitly, is reflected in the authors' discussions about the potential for mistrust of the government and consequently, the researchers (who may be perceived as an extension of the State). The study explored the importance of faith in informing the lived experience of participants, particularly concerning coping and instilling hope.

From the field of anthropology, Hasselberg (2012) engaged in ethnographic research concerning how the deportability of foreign national offenders is understood and lived by those experiencing it as part of her doctoral research. 18 deportation cases were followed (11 of which were the appellant, 10 males and one female) and seven from a family member's perspective (e.g., parent of spouse). The home countries varied among participants, and all were facing deportation after having been convicted of a criminal offence over assault, fraud, robbery, drug-related charges, and immigration offences (e.g., the use of false documents or working without a license. Age range was between 18-60. Most were struggling financially at the time of the field research which was said to be due to their deportability. Hasselberg attended and accompanied individuals to deportation hearings, bail applications and reporting appointments and at least two interviews were conducted per participant (which were conducted in places decided by participants). Semi structured interviews were also conducted with legal case workers, NGO staff and other removable migrants (e.g., asylum seekers, undocumented people, overstayers etc). She engaged in conversations with solicitors, case workers, Immigration judges, non-legal members, court clerks and stakeholders. Observations were also conducted at Asylum and Immigration Tribunals (AITs).

Participants were selected from an NGO that the researcher had been volunteering with that supported FNOs. Hasselberg stated that she had hoped the NGO would act as a gatekeeper between herself and potential participants. It is unclear what analysis method was used, and there was no mention of the specific epistemological stance. Three themes were identified; *Deportation as a Process, Living the Law* and *The Right to Stay*. Deportability was considered as a direct consequence of their criminal convictions. The study asserts that immigration tribunals are the theatres of state power over migrant bodies. When migrants become subject to deportation or removal, they were said to be transformed into subjects to be kept under surveillance, controlled and detained. Both Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs)

and reporting centres were conceptualised as the arenas of state control. Though deportation (and other forms of state surveillance) were justified in policy as administrative processes, they were experienced by participants as underserved consecutive punishments (Hasselberg, 2012). Surveillance narratives highlighted concerns that participants were treated as though they were no longer people. Participants responded to this by asserting that they were people with histories, regrets, hopes and ambitions (Hasselberg, 2012).

It was argued that reaching a point where it is not the political agency or identity of migrants that were being reclaimed but their human essence, was a cause for concern (Fischer, 2012). Participants' court narratives also centred on being seen as a person and not an 'offender'. They further spoke of having possessed a legal identity prior to their conviction, understood as being worthy of an existence in the UK. Their post-conviction narratives were rooted in their rejection by the state having been classed as a danger to society (which contradicted with their perception of being good citizens prior to their conviction and after their release) (Hasselberg, 2012). For this reason, participants felt a sense of entitlement to remain in the UK, having established lives and families in the country. Coutin argued that *"the stripping away of a prior legal identity is a violent act"* (2010:205). Most of those who participated in this research had indefinite leave to remain prior to their conviction and it held that their offences were not serious enough to warrant being stripped of their legal status (Hasselberg, 2012).

1.8. Rationale for current research and relevance to CoP

It is hoped that this research will highlight the experiences of those required to report to the Home Office and some of the social inequalities that exist in the UK. There have been calls for social justice in CoP to emphasise the importance of working alongside and empowering the oppressed within society by addressing power imbalances and inequality (Crethar et al., 2008; Speight & Vera, 2004). It is important therefore to acknowledge that one's issues are intertwined with their broader social and political contexts (Prilleltensky, 2013). We can tentatively hypothesise that those experiencing distress due to immigration controls may present within psychological services and research can help identify the potential needs of this population.

This research hopes to demonstrate the application of CoP values particularly in its prioritisation of the subjective and intersubjective experiences of the participants, appreciating that participants are unique beings that are socially and relationally embedded and, creating an awareness of the prejudice and discrimination that they may face (Woolfe, 1996). Cooper (2009) asserts that humanistic practices are committed to understanding and engaging with individuals in a valued and respectful way. As per CoPs social justice stance, this study aims to promote the right to self-determination and the fair and equitable treatment of 'irregular' migrants (Kagan et al., 2011).

1.8.1. Research Question

My research aims to explore the lived experience of those required to report to the HO and will address the following research question: What is the lived experience of those subject to immigration reporting? It is interested in the subjective experience of the research participants, which aligns well with CoP values stated above (Woolfe, 1996). Throughout this paper, the term 'immigration reporting' will be used synonymously with 'signing' (a term more commonly used among the research participants). The research will adopt a constructivist epistemology and relativist ontology, which were considered most appropriate for addressing the research question as well as being in line with my values as a CoP. These philosophical underpinnings will be addressed in more depth in the next chapter.

2. Methodology

2.1. Introduction

Counselling psychologists (CoPs) are trained in, and often identify as, scientist-practitioners, which involves integrating research and practice (Barkham et al., 2010). Practitioners are conversant with epistemological positions and theories of knowledge that underpin research methodologies (Willig, 2013). The CoP profession recognises a tension that exists between their philosophical position and the expectations of working within a medical model (Blair, 2010). This chapter will start by exploring the paradigms related to the profession's research and practice and outline the key epistemologies in the field. Later, the research's methodological considerations and issues related to ethics will be discussed.

2.2. Reflections on research paradigms and Counselling Psychology practice and research

CoP in the UK is predominantly influenced by the humanistic psychology movement (Henton & Kasket, 2017). People are regarded as unique and whole beings, who cannot be reduced to mere components (Bugental, 1964). These values influence the professions evaluation of the capacity for research to contribute to practice (Henton & Kasket, 2017). The British Psychological Society (BPS) states that the profession should consider the clients' unique and subjective psychological experiences (BPS, 2017). Those in the profession are expected to integrate psychological theory and research with therapeutic practice. Counselling Psychologists find ways to express values, such as the prioritisation of subjective experience, through research in the form of "*ethics in action*" (Cooper, 2009: 120). Practitioners aim to prioritise the client's subjective and intersubjective experiences, facilitate growth, and actualise potential, establish a democratic non-hierarchical relationship, acknowledge that the clients are unique and understand the client as a social and relational being (Cooper, 2009).

2.2.1. The Scientist-Practitioner Model

Embedded within Counselling Psychology's research and practice is the scientist-practitioner model (Cooper, 2009). As scientist-practitioners, CoPs often apply psychological knowledge to

their therapeutic work and the psychological assessments conducted with clients (Jones & Mehr, 2007). Practice-based evidence is deemed the result of research emerging from practice (Barkham et al., 2010).

Counselling psychology is made up of diverse ideologies, paradigms and frameworks which are occasionally competing (Blair, 2010). The medical model, for example, rooted in positivism (discussed further down), can be considered in conflict with the other values of the profession due to its rationalistic stance (Ponterotto, 2005). It asserts that evidence is gathered without consideration of subjectivity, personal values or meaning (Ponterotto, 2005). In contrast, Counselling Psychology stresses the importance of subjectivity, meaning making, values, feelings, and mutually constructed truths (Blair, 2010). This requires employing a scientific attitude to therapeutic work (Spengler et al., 1995). The term 'scientist' contained within the scientist-practitioner identity has certain connotations attached to it, and what constitutes evidence in Counselling Psychology may not be readily accepted by the wider scientific community (Blair, 2010).

2.3. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

Quantitative methods quantify data as the researcher seeks to control empirical variables. They involve large scale sampling and use statistics to determine group means and variables with an aim to identify causal or correlational relationships between the variables under investigation (Ponterotto & Grieger, 1999). Conversely, qualitative methods adopt a range of procedures which are designed to describe and interpret the experiences of participants in context within a particular setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2006). Qualitative methods seek to gain a deeper understanding of experiences and explore nuances that may not be accessible through quantitative methods (Ponterotto, 2005).

2.4. Epistemology

Epistemology relates to *"how we know what we know"* (Crotty, 1998:8). It provides the philosophical grounds for deciding what kind of knowledge is possible (Maynard, 1994).
Ontology is concerned with *"the study of being"* (Crotty, 1998:10) and the "*nature of reality*" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 37). According to Crotty (1998), the ontological stance will dictate a

researcher's epistemological position and vice versa. As stated, the epistemology chosen for this study is constructivism. Central to the constructivist paradigm is the interaction between the investigator and the object of investigation, which is considered the only means by which deep meanings can be uncovered (Ponterotto, 2005). Qualitative research methods underpinned by a constructivist philosophical position aim to understand lived experience from the perspective of those living it (Schwandt, 2000). Such methods often have a relatively small sample of participants. Regarding qualitative data, emerging themes do not require researcher consensus as it is believed that there are multiple interpretations of a phenomena for those experiencing it, as well as multiple researcher interpretations of data (Ponterotto, 2005).

2.4.1. Epistemological Considerations

As earlier stated, it is important that research is informed by epistemological positions (paradigms) e.g., positivism, post-positivism, critical theory and constructivism (adapted from Guba & Lincoln, 1994). It is argued that within the field of psychology, positivism is the dominant paradigm (Willig, 2013). Positivist theorists concern themselves with empirical, quantifiable, and observable evidence, subject to specific principles of reasoning. This logic of inquiry is considered as similar across the natural sciences (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). Participants are not seen as constructors of meaning (as with constructivism), rather the research focus from a positivist perspective is on discovering or deducing results that can be used to make statements on universal truths (Ashworth, 2003). Positivism is often aligned with philosophical realism (Ponterotto, 2005). Positivist researchers usually adopt quantitative methods that aim to verify hypotheses by using mathematical formulas to express causal relationships within the data (McGrath & Johnson, 2003). Positivist epistemologies suggest knowledge claims can be made objectively and use language as a means of conveying some universal truth (McGrath and Johnson, 2003). Positivism has been the dominant approach in the fields of science (including in psychology), for over a century (Ponterotto, 2005).

Post positivism arose out of positivism due to the dissatisfaction some researchers had with aspects of it (Ponterotto, 2005). Post positivists view reality as being apprehendable, though only imperfectly, and that one can never truly capture reality (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

Both positivists and post positivists adopt quantitative methods to emphasise a cause and-effect relationship between phenomena that can be identified, studied, and generalised (Ponterotto, 2005). Both paradigms are underpinned by realist assumptions and place the researcher in a detached, objective role towards the research. While positivists seek theory verification, post positivists seek theory falsification (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Critical theorists posit that reality is shaped by cultural, ethnic, social, gendered, and political values (Ponterotto, 2005).

Constructivism asserts that knowledge is co-created though relationships with others/objects/ourselves etc. (Hansen, 2004). Knowledge is therefore considered subjective and can vary between individuals, based on their own unique understanding of the world and their experience of it (Berger & Luckman, 1966). Constructivist researchers believe that it is not fully possible to separate their worldviews (with associated prejudices and biases) from the research. In partnership with research participants, they aim to co-create an interpretation of their lived experience (Ponterotto, 2005). Constructivist theorists assert meaning is hidden and can only be brought forth through deep reflection (Schwandt, 2000). Reflections are said to arise from the dialogue between researchers and research participants (Ponterotto, 2005). This research adopts a relativist ontology. According to relativism, there is no objective knowledge that can be discovered. Rather, there are multiple, constructed realities (Ponterotto, 2005). In contrast, a realist ontology takes the position that there exists one measurable reality (Ponterotto, 2005).

2.5. Considerations of Other Methodological Approaches

When exploring existing hermeneutic approaches, there were two other approaches initially considered to explore lived experience. The first was Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) and the second, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). I will discuss both in more detail below.

2.5.1. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA)

FDA is concerned with language and the role it plays within our history, culture and society (Foucault, 1980). It explores the relationship between discourse and how people think

(subjectivity) and what they do (practice) (Willig, 2013). Post-structuralist ideas are the main influence of FDA, particularly ideas stemming from Michel Foucault (1979). FDA was introduced to Western American psychology in the 1970's and was initially of interest due to its concern with human beings, their relationship with the world and the process of making and reproducing meaning (Willig, 2013; Belsey, 2002). Instead of a focus on phenomena, FDA explores the role of power, culture and ideology and the "*Rules of discourse*" (which are said to enable our current discussions about these areas to make sense (Parker, 1992: 131). As discussed earlier, the participants in this study (i.e., irregular migrants) often have various powers exerted over their lives from their home countries and within host nations. As a result, it was initially thought that FDA could provide an examination of the role of power in the lives of those reporting to the HO. It was believed however that this approach did not adequately address the research question, which calls for an exploration into how participants made sense of their lived experience specifically. FDA however is less concerned with the meaning making of individuals, but rather 'broader patterns of social structures and practices' within society (Willig, 2013: 381).

2.5.2. Interpretive Phenomenological Approach (IPA)

IPA (Smith, 1999) aims to explore the subjective experiences of individuals, which is in line with the research question. It recognises that the researcher's view of the world and the interaction between the research and participants can influence the data. The data produced is considered the researcher's interpretation of the participant's experience (Willig, 2013). Researchers seek to uncover the meanings contained in participant's accounts through interpretive engagement with the texts and transcripts (Smith, 1997). Though popular, IPA has received some criticism. For example, van Manen (2019) stated that IPA does not adequately align with the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology saying its application had "*little or nothing to do with the phenomenological world"* (van Manen, 2019: 812). On examining IPA's step-by-step approach (which offers a path to follow to approach the data), it has been said to go against fully exploring the human experience as it presents itself (van Manen, 2019). Though Smith (2019) argued that IPA was complex and multifaceted, Chamberlain (2011) supported the claims made by van Manen, stating that by following a method rather than the phenomena, it created an emphasis to search the data for sub-themes rather than seek for a

deep reflection on the phenomena as it emerges. It was thought therefore that van Manen's phenomenological approach was more appropriate for providing a more open method that enabled the capture of phenomena through reflecting on the data, said to be more in line with the hermeneutic approach (van Manen, 2017).

2.6. Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophical movement stemming from the work of Edmund Husserl and subsequently developed by Martin Heidegger (Langdridge, 2007). Phenomenology originates from 'phainómenon' and 'lógos' Greek words. The former means 'that which appears' or 'that which shows itself', while the latter, the study of 'making something manifest' (Harper, 2020). Phenomenology is considered both a method of research and a philosophical tradition. It is the study of human existence, exploring how phenomena appear i.e., *"describing the world as it appears to people"* (Langdridge, 2007:11). Transcendental phenomenology founded by Husserl, is a form of descriptive phenomenology termed, which emphasises a desire to see things 'as they appear' (termed intentionality), as opposed to questioning why they appear (Langdridge, 2007). He stressed the importance of 'epoché' and 'reduction'. Epoché concerns the stripping away of pre-conceptions, while reduction was a continuation of the process initiated by epoché (Langdridge, 2007).

2.6.1. Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology engages with reflexivity and is a form of interpretive research. Knowledge is believed to be both a cultural as well as a social construct (Charmaz, 2006). Researchers are expected to be aware of their assumptions and views that may have an influence on their process (Bennett-Levy et al., 2003). In reflective practice, issues of power are considered, e.g., how the interviewer and interviewee may respond in certain ways based on perceptions of one another's power (Alex and Hammarstrom, 2008). For example, researchers may focus on some information while dismissing others. Alex and Hammarstrom (2008) states that reflexivity should be practiced throughout the research process. By engaging in reflexivity, researchers can minimise such occurrences (Alex and

Hammarstrom, 2008). Researchers noted that research often does not neatly fall into one single paradigm (Morrow, 2007). Rather, CoPs can cross paradigms in response to the emerging data and nature of the research question.

The chosen methodology for this research is van Manen's Phenomenology, which explores the lived experience of participants (van Manen, 1984). IPA relies on interpretation grounded in text, while van Manen takes a hermeneutic phenomenological stance, adopted from Gadamer (1989). The underlying philosophy posits that language reveals knowledge within some historical and cultural contexts. This approach calls for engaging in the 'hermeneutic circle', which involves moving between part of, and the whole text, the objective of which is to uncover knowledge by uncovering phenomena and interpreting them (Langdridge, 2007). Like IPA, Van Manen's approach draws upon and connects hermeneutics and phenomenology (van Manen, 1997).

Van Manen's approach originates from pedagogy, which is concerned with letting things speak for themselves while being attentive to how things appear in consciousness. It asserts that it is not possible for phenomena to not be interpreted in some way (van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology is said to transform lived experience into a *"textual expression of its essence"* (van Manen, 1990: 36). While other approaches conceptualise phenomenology as a technique or science (e.g., IPA), van Manen states that phenomenology is artistic, describing it as a 'poetizing project' (van Manen, 1984). He opined that phenomenology should speak to, rather than of, the world (van Manen, 1984).

Van Manen (1984) suggests that researchers acknowledge their assumptions and presuppositions as they will inevitably enter their reflections and therefore bracketing is not fully possible (van Manen, 1990). Reflexivity is therefore important and involves researchers being reflective about how their questions, methods and epistemological positions might impact the data and the knowledge produced by the research (Langdridge, 2007). According to van Manen (1997), reflection should not be thought to explain the nature of the phenomenon, but rather provides a description of it as it appears in consciousness.

2.6.2. Van Manen's Lifeworld Existentials (1997)

Phenomenological research is said to be the study of the lifeworld (Morse & Richards, 2002). Van Manen's Lifeworld's (1997) have been used to explore the lived experience of individuals, founded in the work of Husserl. Van Manen offers four lifeworld existentials, namely, *Lived Body* [Corporeality]*, Lived Time* [Temporality]*, Lived Space* [Spatiality] and *Lived Human Relations* [Relationality]. Lived body refers to the physical body and how it is experienced in everyday life. Lived Time, refers to time as it is experienced by individuals. Lived Space relates to our subjective experience of spaces, and lastly, Lived Human Relations, refers to relationships we make and how they are experienced.

2.7. Rationale for chosen methodology and its underlying epistemological perspective

It is important for Counselling Psychologists to choose a paradigm and method that is closely related to practice (Morrow, 2007). In consideration of my epistemological position, I reflected on the kind of research I wanted to conduct. This involved becoming aware of how I viewed reality, thoughts about how knowledge is acquired, and my position within the profession as a scientist-practitioner (Cooper, 2009). My research aimed to explore the lived experiences of those required to report to the Home Office due to their immigration status, through acquiring detailed accounts from those who have experienced it first-hand. The research sought to avoid making assumptions about lived experience or making universal claims about the nature of reality (such as with realist/ positivist approaches) (Ponterotto, 2005). These aims align with a phenomenological perspective and a relativist ontology, which qualitative methodologies are best placed to investigate (Ponterotto, 2005).

My research sought to provide greater insight into lived experience, rather than addressing the disparities in the immigration system alone or society more generally (more inclined to critical theory). It aimed to reflect upon the meaning that participants attached to their experiences, from a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (van Manen, 2014). I adopted a constructivist epistemology, which asserts that knowledge is co-constructed between researcher and participant (Willig, 2012).

2.7.1. Research Paradigms

A paradigm is defined as, *"a set of interrelated assumptions about the social world which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organised study of the world"* (Filstead, 1979:34). Paradigms can be used to guide the researcher in their philosophical assumptions concerning the research, and their selection of methods, tools, instruments, and participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2006). These assumptions were managed by taking a reflexive stance, involving a recognition that hermeneutic phenomenology is itself a paradigm. Therefore, van Manen's (1997) hermeneutic phenomenology (which includes his Lifeworld's Existentials) were approached tentatively to allow for full exploration of the client's lived experience.

2.8. Considerations Regarding Social Justice and Power Relations in Qualitative Research

It is important to acknowledge an individual's social contexts and experiences of discrimination (Division of Counselling Psychology Professional Practice Guidelines, 2005). This is particularly relevant when working with this participant group. The CoP profession asserts that professionals should work in ways that empower individuals and uphold anti-discriminatory practices (Division of Counselling Psychology Professional Practice Guidelines, 2005). This is pertinent not only in clinical work, but when conducting research. The social justice stance goes further to state that social and cultural explanations of distress should be considered at a broader level, rather than focusing on the individual (Kagan, Tindall & Robinson, 2010). As part of this research, it was important therefore that the role of power that occupies the position of researcher was considered, and how this could influence the research. This research sought to minimise the power imbalance as much as possible by ensuring that participants were reminded of their rights as pertaining the research and attempting to not recreate the unequal power relations often experienced by my participant group within society. The use of language was important, as it could potentially lead to the revictimization of participants (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018).

Though the studies discussed earlier did not address how the researcher's position of power may have influenced the participants' responses and why, I recognised that being a person of colour, I may appear to belong to the ethnic group of many required to report to the

Home Office. I initially assumed however that this would limit the level of mistrust, however my position as a researcher already implies a power imbalance. Consequently, participants may feel compelled to participate and answer questions or withhold information for fear of how it may be used. For this reason, I aimed to be transparent by providing participants with my research aims, consent forms and by debriefing interviewees post interview. Other considerations were made concerning this (discussed later in the Ethics section below).

The participant group used in this research (i.e., irregular migrants) are often seen as being vulnerable and unable to assert agency or autonomy (Harrell-Bond & Voutira, 2007; Hayden, 2006). It is important that interpretations of vulnerability therefore be considered in context, as everyone's experiences are different (Perry, 2011). How individuals are perceived and the assumptions that may be made about them can have implications for how the research is conducted, for example in ensuring that participants are aware of their rights pertaining to the research e.g., the right to withdraw. As researchers may be perceived by some participants as having the power to effect direct change in their lives at both an individual and community level, it was imperative that respective roles of both researcher and participant were made clear prior to the research being conducted (Pittaway, Bartolomei & Hugman, 2010).

When considering the methodology for this research, it was imperative that participants were made aware of their rights as pertaining to the research and reminded that they could exercise their power as per their engagement. It was also important that any assumptions about the participants themselves or the potential research findings were acknowledged through reflective practice. It recognised that the participant group have a voice and it was important that the accounts of their experiences were presented as accurately as possible (Ellis et al., 2007; Hugman et al., 2011).

2.9. The Research

2.9.1. The Research Design

The research adopted a phenomenological research design to explore the lived experience of those who have experience of immigration reporting (signing) to the UK Home Office. It adopted a constructivist epistemological position and a relativist ontological framework. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and subsequently transcribed verbatim.

Interviewing is considered the most common qualitative data collection method, and there are three types of qualitative interviews: (1) in-depth/ intensive, (2) semi-structured and (3) unstructured (Mason, 2002). Each of these involve an exchange of dialogue, which has a relatively informal style, is thematic and topic-centred, biographical, or narrative. This approach posits that knowledge is situated and contextual. The purpose of interviews is to bring forth the relevant contexts so that situated knowledge can be produced (Mason, 2002).

2.9.2. Sampling:

The study recruited those with experience of reporting to the UK Home Office. Due to this sample group being potentially hard to reach, the length of time required to have reported was not specified to increase the chances of recruitment. Males and females above the age of 18 were asked to participate. They were required to be able to communicate in English without the need of an interpreter. This was to minimise the potential for misunderstandings between myself and the research participants. This was established pre-interviews during the initial introductory phone calls.

All participants were expected to have had experience of the phenomenon being explored, i.e., immigration reporting (Langdridge, 2007). Purposive sampling was adopted, with participants being selected based on their characteristics (i.e., foreign nationals) and the objective of the study (their experience of HO reporting) (Burns and Grove, 1997). Through snowball sampling participants were encouraged to aid in recruiting others (Coleman, 1958).

Six participants were recruited for interviews through social media and personal contacts (n=3 identifying as male, and n= 3 female). Though not initially intended, Julian asked that his wife be able to relay information to add additional context to Julian's account of his experience of reporting. In hindsight I understand that this may not be best practice, however being new to the research method (and not being expected) she was permitted to give a voice to the wider social context. The main focus however would remain with those with direct experience. The research was advertised via various social media pages supporting migrants such as asylum seekers and refugees, as well as counselling and psychology pages. Advertisements were placed on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, which featured the

recruitment poster and called for participants who met the recruitment criteria. Table 1 below details the sample demographics.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

Participants	Age	Sex	Country of origin	Arrival to UK	Period of reporting	Duration of reporting	Reporting location	Current Immigration Status	Interview medium
Julian	35-44	M	Nigeria	1990-1999	2010-2019	12 months	London HO reporting centre	Two-year visa	MS Teams (Written consent)
Stephen	45-54	M	Nigeria	2000-2009	2010-2019	5 months	London HO reporting centre, then police station	Indefinite leave to remain	MS Teams (Written consent)
Tony	35-44	M	Nigeria	2000-2009	2010-2019	3 months	London HO reporting centre	Two-Year visa	MS Teams (Written consent)
Rachel	35-44	F	Nigeria	2000-2009	2010-2019	5 years	London HO reporting centre	Two-year visa	MS Teams (Written consent)

Grace	65+	F	East Africa	2000-2009	2000-2009	6 weeks	London police station	Indefinite Leave to remain	Telephone (Verbal consent)
Caroline	35-44	F	British-African	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	British	MS Teams (Verbal consent)

2.9.3. Measures, Materials and Equipment:

Recruitment posters featured on social media advertisements through various posts and were also sent via email to organisations providing psychological and practical support to migrants. An encrypted audio device was used to record each interview. Interview schedules included nine open ended questions, with prompts. A laptop was required to conduct remote sessions via Microsoft (MS) Teams (as per university policy). MS Teams was also used to record interviews alongside the encrypted audio device. Participants were contacted using a mobile phone to introduce myself, arrange a convenient time to hold the interviews and answer any questions they had about the interview process. This was helpful in ascertaining their proficiency in English and their understanding of what the research entailed. Access to a reliable internet source was essential for facilitating remote video interviews via MS Teams. One participant did not have access to internet and therefore the interview was conducted via the telephone.

Participants were provided with a Participant Invitation Letter, which gave a brief outline of the research aims, what their participation would involve and what would happen to their data once interviews were completed. Contact details for myself and my research supervisor also featured for ease of communication if the participants required any further information about the research or had any questions or concerns. Participants were given the choice to provide verbal or written consent, though all were provided copies of the consent forms.

Consent forms outlined the participant's rights as per the research (e.g., confidentiality and their right to withdraw). Participants were debriefed post-interview and provided with a

debrief letter. This informed them of what would happen to the information disclosed during the interviews, and detailed relevant services that could provide support if they were adversely affected by taking part. Lastly, a reflective journal was used throughout to document my assumptions, views and biases that may have influenced the research process and reflect on potential emerging themes.

2.9.4. Data Collection and Analysis:

How data is collected can affect how people respond to the research, such as whether they agree to take part or provide consent to participate (Muller-Funk, 2021). The places that individuals flee to can lead to experiences of unequal power relations, poverty, legal precariousness, violence, politics, and policies (Moore & Shellman, 2007). As the researcher, I may be perceived as being an extension of the state (i.e., UK government), with associated notions of oppression. I could also potentially be seen as representing their country of origin, leading to feelings of fear about what they disclose and concerns about being under surveillance (Muller-Funk, 2021). This was echoed in the responses of some who were approached to take part in the research, expressing concerns about information being shared with the government or fears that their participation may affect their settlement applications in some way. There were also worries about others learning of their current or past immigration status' and wanting to keep this private.

Pre-Interview Phase

There were difficulties recruiting participants. As stated above, prospective participants expressed concerns about how the data would be used and their confidentiality maintained (e.g., whether their information would be shared with third parties or if there was a way they could be identified by the research). In some cases, gatekeepers (people who knew the participants) were sought who had access to the participants, so they could be the initial point of contact, particularly when the gatekeepers already held a position of trust. It was thought important as a means of building trust between me (as researcher) and the participant group. For this reason, courtesy calls prior to the interviews were facilitated to introduce myself and my role and address any of their concerns. This further served to ascertain the interviewee's

proficiency in spoken English and their understanding of what they were consenting to if they were to participate. This was a vital step in ensuring they were able to provide informed consent. Furthermore, it was also an opportunity to be clear about the objectives of the research and what would happen to the data once collected.

The research aimed to conduct interviews at a place and time that was convenient for participants. In line with the PTMF and previous research, it was acknowledged that their agency and autonomy may have often been restricted as the result of powers within society, both in their country of origin and engaging with the UK Home Office. Therefore, enabling participants to make choices such as where and when to be interviewed was aimed at empowering participants and minimising further experiences of oppression (Division of Counselling Psychology Professional Practice Guidelines, 2005). Research has shown that asking this participant group to sign consent forms could mirror experiences with the Home Office, and therefore participants were given the choice to give verbal or written consent (Ellis et al, 2007). Only one participant chose to give verbal consent, though she was provided with a physical copy of the consent form. Participants' rights to withdraw from the research were made clear prior to engaging in interviews, at the start of the interview process and at the debriefing phase.

The Interview and Post-Interview Phase

Van Manen (2016) encourages an approach to interviews that is conversational in style. He preferred semi-structured interviews and cautioned against unstructured or open-ended styles. Crotty (1998) stated that semi-structured interviews allow participants to draw upon their memories and reflections which aided them to revisit their experiences (Crotty, 1998). The interview schedule included non-directive and open questions, giving participants freedom to recount their experiences. A pilot study was conducted (though not included in the final analysis) to enable feedback concerning the interview protocol and delivery. It also enabled me to reflect on the effectiveness of my interview schedule and process, and to amend the questions if necessary.

The interviews ranged from 60-120 minutes. They were transcribed verbatim and anonymised. Van Manen's phenomenological approach was used to analyse the data.

Regarding the interview schedule, effort was made to ask as few questions as possible, with follow-up questions and gentle prompts to encourage participants to elaborate on points. Participants were made aware that they did not have to answer anything they did not wish to and could provide as much detail as felt comfortable (Krause, 2017). They were informed post-interview of my intention for possible future publication. Participants were provided with information regarding support services to address any possible distress that may have arisen from their participation, and organisations offering well-being support (Krause, 2017).

Data Analysis Phase

Van Manen's (1997) phenomenology allows researchers to use experience common to them and the participant to conduct analysis. Transcripts are read and re-read. Emergent themes are then identified that capture the essential meaning or essence of the lived experience of under investigation. Van Manen (1997) distinguished between appearance (that which we see as everyday) and essence (the obscure) and stated that it was through phenomenological research that the essence was brought into focus (van Manen, 1997). Through writing, researchers aim to uncover the thoughts, feelings, and attitudes of participants, whilst maintaining a strong orientation to the phenomenon by remaining focused on the research question (van Manen, 1997).

Van Manen (1990) identifies three methods of isolating themes (known as structures of experience); the wholistic approach, the selective approach, and the detailed approach. In the wholistic approach, the text is attended to as a whole and the researcher is expected to consider what sententious phrase captures the *"fundamental meaning or main significance of the text as a whole?*" (Van Manen, 1997: 92). Researchers then attempt to express the meaning through formulating the phrase. The selective approach involves reading the transcripts several times and asking, *"What statements of phrases seem particularly essential or revealing about the phenomenon or experience being described?"* (Van Manen, 1997: 92). Statements are then circled, highlighted, or underlined. Lastly, in the detailed approach, every sentence or sentence cluster is looked at and the researcher asks, *"What does this sentence or sentence cluster reveal about the phenomenon or experience being described?"* (Van Manen, 1997: 93). There is no fixed means of engaging in this methodology, rather, it involves

a circular process termed the hermeneutic circle (going back and forth between steps) (Smith et al., 2009; van Manen, 1997).

This research adopted the selective approach to analyse the data. Each transcript was read several times and any statements, phrases or word that seemed to reveal some essence of the participants' lived experiences were underlined or highlighted. Beside each, I recorded notes as to what each seemed to reveal about the phenomenon in question (i.e., reporting). I engaged in the hermeneutic circle which involved going back to the text several times and reflecting on notes generated and potential 'themes' (i.e., to aid in organising my analysis). The validity of emergent themes was continuously questioned in relation to how accurately they conveyed the narratives of the participants and their experiences (i.e., that I was not making assumptions about what I thought they may be saying, based on my own preconceptions, but rather than they were stemming directly from the participants own words and therefore the data itself). Regular meetings and discussions with my research supervisor further helped me distinguish between the participant's own words and my assumptions. A list of possible themes was then recorded and those that appeared similar were grouped together. Lastly, I sought to assign an overarching theme that would help organise the data and structure the reporting of the findings.

2.10. Ethical Considerations

To conduct this research, key ethical considerations were made, as outlined by the British Psychological Society Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2021) and the University of East London Code of Practice for Research Ethics (2015). Ethics was sought from the UEL Ethics Committee prior to collecting data. This study adhered to government guidelines as per conducting research during the global pandemic.

As stated earlier, all participants provided informed consent prior to their participation. Participants had the right to decline to participate in the study and could withdraw from the interviews at any time (even if they had already consented to participate). All data collected was anonymised and all identifiable information removed. All electronic data was stored in password protected files and recording devices were encrypted to ensure data remained

confidential. All physical data was scanned and stored on password protected files before being destroyed.

Confidentiality was upheld. If there was a risk of harm to themselves or others, confidentiality would then be broken in favour of ensuring the safety of the participants or others by involving the relevant service (e.g., the police). Participants were made aware of this stipulation at the consent stage (prior to interviews). If a risk was identified, it was to be discussed with my research supervisor as per next steps.

For transparency, individuals were informed of the nature of the research, deadlines to request to withdraw their data and when data that was being held would be destroyed (BPS, 2021; UEL, 2015). Data could be withdrawn up to three weeks post interviews, to not hinder data analysis. Recorded data was destroyed after final submission of the thesis. To ensure scientific integrity, the study maintained clear research aims of contributing to developing knowledge and improving work practices within the field of CoP (BPS, 2021; UEL, 2015).

Due to the pandemic, all interviews were conducted remotely to ensure the participants' safety. Convenient times to conduct interviews were agreed with participants and they were to ensure a quiet and private space in which to talk. This was to uphold their confidentiality and minimise distractions. All identifiable information was stored separately from anonymised data and interview transcripts. Signed consent forms, along with interview recordings and transcripts, were stored on the encrypted UEL OneDrive. Encrypted files were backed up on the UEL H: Drive. The data was stored on a password protected computer and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Recorded data would be destroyed after final submission of the thesis. All other data would be retained for a maximum of 5 years before being destroyed, with the intention of publishing my findings in an academic journal. Only I (principal researcher) had access to the identifiable data (e.g., participant contact details). Other than myself, my research supervisor and examiners had access to my anonymised data for assessment purposes, via the research write-up. I further aim to upload this research paper unto UEL's Research Repository, making it accessible to the public.

2.10.1. Risks to Participants:

The pilot study conducted helped highlight any potential risks not considered in the initial risk assessment. It was also used to ensure that the originally proposed risk assessment was effective in managing and minimising the risks to myself as researcher, and the participants. The Screening Interview and Distress Protocol were utilised to ensure the suitability of the research questions and the psychological stability of participants to engage in the material covered in the interview schedule. It also considered the impact to me as researcher (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Haigh & Witham, 2015).

It was envisaged that there may be the potential for psychological risk posed to participants by discussing distressing experiences of the UK immigration process, and their lives pre and post migration. Prior to the interviews commencing, participants were informed that they had the right to terminate the interview at any time if they so wished. Particular attention was given to the participants' presentations. If at any time they appeared distressed, they would be offered the opportunity to take a break or terminate the interview completely. They were made aware that they were within their rights to withhold any information they wished not to feature in the research. They were also reminded that they were able to withdraw their data up to three weeks post-interview (as after this time, data analysis would have begun).

After interviews had taken place, considerations were made regarding distress that participants may experience post-interview, which may not have been apparent during the interview process. All participants were debriefed and signposted to counselling and immigration support services. Debrief forms detailed some helpful support services available to participants. If a participant threatened self-harm after becoming distressed, the interview would be terminated immediately. Participant's next of kin information were collected prior to them engaging in the research to ensure their safety and allow for next of kin to perform wellbeing checks (or contact emergency services) if required.

2.10.2. Risks to Researcher:

The initial pilot study addressed issues concerning the potential for psychological risk to the researcher. Concerns that arose were discussed with the research supervisor and personal

therapist. Amendments to the research risk assessment would be made to account for any additional concerns that arose. Risks of the researcher (myself) becoming distressed by listening to migration experiences was considered. Any such issues were thoroughly discussed with my research supervisor prior to conducting interviews and during our scheduled meetings. As a CoP trainee, it is a requirement to attend regular therapy sessions with a private therapist. Any psychological risks posed by the research were discussed during these sessions, along with any of my concerns that arose prior to interviewing participants.

2.11. Reflexivity

Reflexivity refers to the ability of researchers to be conscious and reflective of the ways their research methods, questions and subject position impacts on data or the psychological knowledge produced in the study (Langdridge, 2007). Hermeneutic phenomenology asserts that a researcher's biases, assumptions, and prior knowledge cannot be fully bracketed (i.e., suspending one's presuppositions) as the researcher is the primary analytic tool (van Manen, 1984). Rather, researchers engage in a process of being aware of their own assumptions and preunderstandings through journaling. Reflection is seen as aiding in investigating the nature of a phenomenon (Van Manen, 2016). Reflection allows a description of the phenomenon as it appears in consciousness (van Manen, 1997).

Though I have not experienced reporting or the risk of deportation, I have seen the impact on those close to me. I am aware of my opinions about the UK immigration system, believing it places undue restrictions on those considered undesirables. Therefore, I was conscious about not asking leading questions during the interview or focusing more on responses that seemed to support my views on UK immigration policies. In my data analysis, I was aware of assumptions I may have been making about what was shared, differentiating this from the participant's own meaning-making. Therefore, I used the reflective journal throughout to record my reflections during data collection and analysis and discussed them in meetings with my research supervisor. It was also helpful in ensuring that I was adhering to the van Manen (1997) approach. For example when reflecting on how the participants came to leave their home countries for the UK, I had initially arrived at the 'theme', *Unmet Needs*. After reflecting on this theme further (and discussing it with my research supervisor), I came to the realisation that this did not fully reflect the narratives of the participants and that what

I had not considered was the impact leaving origin countries had on their sense of self (i.e., their identity, which was reflected in their accounts). By utilising the hermeneutic circle (i.e., continuously engaging with the transcripts) what later emerged was the seeming racialisation and subsequent dehumanisation of the individual (i.e., perceived as less than human based on race and country of origin). This was inherent in descriptions of experiencing restricted access to aspects of society that would enable them meet basic needs, and being transformed from a person with a name, into a number within a system.

While writing this paper, war was declared between Russia and Ukraine, resulting in refugees fleeing the country, many finding their way to the UK. This was deemed the fastest humanitarian crisis since World War Two (Beaumont, 2022). What became apparent to me was the change in discourse, particularly within mainstream media, who often alluded to how these were not people we were used to seeing as refugees as they were 'just like us'. As a person of colour, I was used to seeing refugees depicted as people of colour, fleeing war and persecution from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. I became aware of how easy it was to 'other' these individuals as they more often came from cultures and countries considered very different from White middle class Britain.

Where previously, political discussions centred on diverting boats carrying migrants to the UK back across the Channel (Syal, 2021), we were now confronted with calls to open our borders to Ukrainian refugees, some even being paid to accommodate them in their homes (Hall, 2022). These refugees were offered the opportunity to live and work in the UK, something not previously offered to others so readily. I found myself conflicted. Firstly, it was wonderful seeing the outpouring of empathy towards these refugees worldwide, however it brought to question why all who experienced similar predicaments were not accorded the same level of humanity. Furthermore, I wondered how participants may have responded had I conducted this research after the war had begun and having been privy to current immigration discourses.

Being confronted with the media portrayals of these 'new' refugees and being aware of the impact of the hostile environment agenda, brought to light the discrimination faced by many

unfortunately othered as not conforming to what was perceived as the 'desirable immigrant', (as was experienced by those who participated in this research). I used my reflective journal to enable me to bracket my own views on injustice, to perceive my data as objectively as possible.

Throughout the interview process I was conscious of my position of power in relation to the participants and how this could potentially hinder what they felt comfortable sharing (Proctor, 2017). Of those who had been approached to participate and later ceased contact, a common concern was their proficiency in English, and they had often made a point of clarifying with me whether they were being understood, or were apologetic for not having the right words, they felt, to adequately convey their story. I was therefore mindful of not talking over participants and ensuring, as much as possible, they had the space to use their voices to tell their stories. On a few occasions when the recordings were stopped, participants continued talking and would often become more animated and expressive about their felt sense of injustice at the hands of the HO (e.g., how they believed their treatment was steeped in racist practices). Though it would have been helpful to have had this recorded, by reflecting on this, it highlighted that perhaps there was a felt sense of safety (and protection) from not being monitored in that space, and therefore the permission to speak freely without concern for how the information may be used or who else might hear it. Understanding cultural nuances was important as I noticed there were some ways of speaking that I had to explain in the analysis that may not be understood otherwise (being African myself and understanding this) (Oquendo, 1996).

3. Data Analysis

The following section will be an analysis of the interviews conducted as part of this research. Though van Manen does not posit that any specific method be used to explore lived experience, his Lifeworld Existentials was adopted to help guide my analysis and facilitate a deeper exploration of the text (van Manen, 1990). The quotes below are presented with their time marks (corresponding to the transcripts).

3.1. The Racialisation of Undocumented Bodies

3.1.1. The delegitimization of racialised bodies

Distinctions were made by participants between their lives pre and post migration. Identity was of particular significance, particularly in relation to the status held in origin countries, what resources were therefore available to them, and their ability to exercise agency and autonomy. It was also relevant to how individuals were treated based on how they were evaluated by the state. Pre-migration, participants occupied positions influenced by their own or their family's socio-economic status. Julian described himself as coming from a middle-class background, characterised by having "*house helps*" [01:23] (i.e., maids) and attending private schools. Rachel also spoke of her family being "quite comfortable", due to her father working in an oil company. This theme refers to the perception participants held of occupying a particular place in society pre-migration and experiencing a demotion in their position post-migration. This demotion was understood by participants as the result of where they originated from and therefore not being welcomed (i.e., not being the migrants readily accepted by the UK). Participants inferred that falling to a lower position within the hierarchy of society in the host nation, stemmed from how they were evaluated by the host nation (UK), based on their race, which conflicted with how they perceived themselves.

The socio-economic status an individual held prior to relocating, also provided access to opportunities beyond the borders of their home nation. Families made decisions aimed at improving the lives of their members, resulting in some of the participants leaving their home countries to pursue further education, better career opportunities or reunite with family living

abroad. For those who were adults at the time they migrated, there was a perception that their home country could not provide the stability and future that they sought and that this could be achieved by migrating elsewhere. For some, their sense of identity was influenced by having a career and the opportunities this provided (e.g., being able to take care of family back home, or potentially bring family over to the UK), which were particularly important for Stephen, Tony, and Grace. Grace had worked as a civil servant in her home country for over 20 years until she was made redundant abruptly and unexpectedly (given no more than the equivalent of £20 severance pay). She talks about her experience below:

Grace [04:35-05:24]: *"…no more work, no more nothing, and of course, so with my experience and the age, I couldn't get a job…it was really hard…nothing worked. I came to the conclusion, no, I can't just sit here and suffer. I want to look for [an] alternative way of getting an income, at least, feed myself."*

The quote above illustrates an internal drive that motivated Grace towards effecting change in her life. It further demonstrated how impactful the process of redundancy was for Grace. Having held her position at work for more than two decades, she was then left with *"….no more work, no more nothing*". The lack of security accorded her by the state is very evident, as well as the lack of acknowledgment or value assigned to what she had given to the organisation. Remaining in a country where she had lost her livelihood and struggled to gain employment was a significant loss for Grace and being left with "nothing" put her in a position of suffering (unable to provide for her basic needs and her loved ones). Part of her sense of identity lay in being the breadwinner of the family and now, she struggled to feed herself. Her age and experience, rather than providing access to employment, served as a barrier. Migrating was a means of survival for Grace and a way she could seek to continue providing for her family and keep herself alive.

Participants spoke about their lack of legal status as placing them in positions of vulnerability and fear. Acquiring status was associated with an ability to finance oneself (e.g., through access to work), and considered as elevating them higher up the hierarchy of power within

society. References to being a 'nobody' (associated with a lack of legal status), signified a lower positioning within society. Without an identity recognised by the state, using one's voice could potentially have detrimental implications for the undocumented. Stephen reported that when dealing with HO staff (particularly during reporting events), staff would "*talk to you anyhow…anyhow they want to talk to you. They don't talk to you with respect*" [30:10-30:14]. This confers a carelessness in the speech and a lack of regard, therefore an embodiment of disrespect. Tony referred to the absence of legal status as being the absence of a legitimate identity.

Tony: *"There's so much struggle…It's a lot of thing that you…hope that could have worked for your advantage and that is not, and you know you live with the fear of not having a legitimate identity…even if you see police coming you have to change the direction of your, of your walking..."* [05:53-06:26]

The statement above highlights the difficulty in existing within the state. It further reflects the role the state play in granting this legitimacy (i.e., the right to remain within UK borders and have access to the rights and freedoms accorded to citizens). The lack of legitimacy instilled a sense of fear, where one was compelled to hide away from police and immigration enforcement, who were perceived as extensions of state authority. Additionally, lacking legal status created barriers to access certain spheres of UK society that could work for one's "advantage". There is a desire to work, but the lack of a 'legitimate identity' created a barrier to doing so. For Tony, this would provide the means to send money to family members in his home country.

Migrating to the UK and not acquiring legal status, transformed individuals to positions of being "nobody' within society. They no longer had access to the finances they had in their home countries. Being 'legitimate' within a nation accorded them access to employment and the ability to utilise one's voice in defence of their rights, and without this, people were silenced by fear. Stephen described his experience of being at the reporting centre and the treatment he witnessed by staff there, which illustrates this well:

Stephen: *"Everybody in that, in that journey, none of them is fortunate to be finance, can finance themselves 'cause you can only finance yourself when you are legal in the country. Then you can bring out your career, you can bring out what you have to earn a better money for yourself. When you are not, you are nobody. As simple as that…that's the reason why they talk to people anyhow they want in [Reporting centre] …'cause they know you are scared. Then you are vulnerable, then you cannot say a word."* [37:22-37:33]

From the statement above, it can be interpreted perhaps that access to money elevated individuals to a higher standing within society, enabling them to use their voice against oppression enacted against them by society. This was seen as indirectly giving HO staff (representatives of the state) powers to interact with the undocumented in ways that were hostile, and the fear instilled in individuals was such that they were unable to defend themselves. Rather, they were subject to subordinate positions in relation to these systems of power.

Post-reporting, Stephen spoke about the use of biometrics as a means of verifying identities, which was requested for each time an application was made for his 2.5-year settlement visa. This was described by Stephen as though a pointless exercise, as it was asked for upon in application, despite someone's visa being refused or not. Instead, Stephen alluded to it perhaps being a way the state extorted money from those seeking to remain in the UK, saying, *"…and none of them is free. You have to pay… you have the biometric. So why are you, keep asking someone to do biometric as part of the application? It's written there."* [28:03-28:22]. Biometrics is depicted here as less about keeping records of the identities but an unnecessary process, something unjust, that greatly impacts individuals financially.

3.1.2. Exclusion of unwanted bodies

Several accounts provided by participants in this study raised the issue of differential treatment experienced by migrants, inferring that it was potentially the result of racial practices (i.e., due to a racialised identity, not conforming to the desired migrant). Julian asks a serious of questions which, though seemingly rhetorical, present a challenge to the HO to look inward at its policies and on what grounds certain groups are socially excluded:

Julian: *"…are some people excluded and why are they excluded? Is he excluded on the basis of race? Are they excluded on the basis of oh, they're not our culture, so we don't want them here? You know what are the criteria's that you're using, and you know there needs to be sincerity…the Home Office needs to look inwardly at its rules and what is at the heart of its rules."* [01:17:16-01:17:45]

Julian seems to imply here that there is an underlying process governing who is permitted to remain in the UK and who is not. There is a sense that he perceives his treatment (i.e., exclusion from British society) to be the result of injustice and imposed upon him on the grounds of his race or culture (being of a category unwanted by the state). It suggests the existence of an agenda exercised by the HO to exclude people who do not belong to a desired social or cultural group and rather than being explicit in this discrimination, it is hidden behind the various practices carried out as part of immigration control. Thus resulting in the covert, though systemic, exclusion of undesirable migrants. This discrimination was also felt among those interacting with border control (at the airport upon entering the UK):

Tony: *"If you come through Terminal 3 and Terminal 5, the experience that you have is so different…Terminal 5 is used mostly by immigrants and you know you have, if you have your red passport, you do another side, you just walk in…it's quite quicker. But it's just the attitude as well towards immigrant. Even in that place is it's barbaric, it's, is something, it's, it's hard thing to see how they treat people…. There was no care…there are people that spend three to four hours in that place, just to come into the country… some people believe that they have power to do whatever they want to do and to frustrate people's life…. You are simply determined to ensure that they don't enter the country."* [29:31-31:23]

This was an embodied experience from the initial welcome into the country even for those, as Tony described, "*have a legitimate reason to be in the country*" [31:15]. The discrimination therefore goes beyond having a legitimate identity, but rather the racialised body one occupies. Though he does not make it explicit, his use of the word 'immigrant' highlights that

the 'racialised' body is perceived as something unwanted by the state, and therefore it responds by frustrating their efforts to enter its borders. The use of power spoken above (indicative of his statement that they do "whatever they want…"), emphasises the state's sovereignty over the land and borders, enabling them exercise authority to provide smooth entry for those that are desired and, receive with hostility those it wishes to exclude. Comparisons were further made by Tony regarding stop and search and his assertion that: *"nine out of ten Black people always be stopped* [by police]*, regardless of whether they're wrong or right*" [32:19] and that the police were "*picking on the wrong people"* [32:32]*."* He made further comparisons with the Windrush scandal, commenting that it came from a place of wanting to reduce net migration (of certain migrants). The mention of Windrush and police racial profiling further emphasise the perception that inherent systemic racism exists within the UK more generally and disproportionately affects racialised groups within society:

Tony: *"…there's a lot to those decision that they're not paying attention to…because the end product for us is to make sure that we reduce the number from 300 [thousand] to 10,000…Windrush yeah, that's where everything came from as well. Just somebody saying they want to reduce the number."* [33:22-33:51]

The quote above relates to his earlier point that the "*wrong people"* were unjustly being targeted and that the determining factor in the decision making was them representing a particular undesired race or culture, and therefore wanting to reduce their numbers. His reference to the Windrush scandal emphasises the errors made by the HO in their decisions regarding who has a right to stay in the UK and who does not. Those who may have a legitimate right to a life in the UK may not have their applications fairly considered (being that the focus is on reducing the numbers of certain migrants). Lacking a 'legitimate identity' coupled with an agenda to exclude racialised groups, would subsequently result in an order by the HO to begin reporting.

Julian had arrived in the UK as a minor and spoke about the level of disruption he faced in trying to access a secondary school education when he initially arrived, and the subsequent instability he experienced when engaging in higher education. This instability was caused by

delays in the HO responding to applications for settled status, and later, appeals against rejected visas. This culminated in he and his brother having to face court when he was just 14 years of age, defending himself against forced removal by the HO. This was described as a particularly challenging period for both Julian and his brother (who had relocated with him to reunite with their mother in the UK). Not only had he feared being accepted by his mother (who, he reported, had left them in Africa to pursue an education and build a life in the UK), they were now confronted by a state who asserted their position as unwanted bodies within its borders.

3.1.3. Criminalisation of the undocumented

Participants described the HO as assigning criminalised identities to undocumented migrants. For participants, this meant those deemed to have overstayed their visas. This was experienced through the spaces used by the HO for immigration control and how immigration controls were exercised. For example, the use of police stations as reporting centres, and disused prisons for detentions. The process of individuals being picked up by immigration officials (termed an arrest, and often involving being handcuffed and placed in a van), was reported as not dissimilar from the process of a police arrest. Such incidents could represent the start of their HO reporting journey. Julian describes his experience below:

Julian: *"I was pretty much arrested and put in their van and I remember them trying to cuff me. I said why would you, why would you put handcuffs on me if you know that no, no, that I've never been a criminal or done anything that requires me, you know, to be locked away…so now I'm in prison, you know, you had hard criminals who are there…I'm being put together with criminals. People who are looking for ways to start dealing drugs."* [14:39-32:50]

At the time of the incident above, Julian had been living in the UK since age 14 and was now an adult. Settlement visa applications had been refused and decisions had been made by family members to refrain from further appeals. Remaining in the UK beyond visa conditions, was perceived by participants as the state's justification for hostile treatment, communicating to individuals that they did not belong in the UK. Arrest and subsequent detention were also

seen as punishment for the act of overstaying. Though participants spoke about overstaying as being 'wrong', all stressed that immigration matters should not be synonymous with criminality and therefore not dealt with in the same manner. For example, Grace commented that being asked to report at the police station made her *"feel like, you are a criminal*" [08:15]. This, for her, was not in line with the act of having overstayed in the UK. She speaks about the experience of reporting at the police station and the embodied sense of criminality:

Grace [08:09-08:15]**:** *"…for the six weeks I was going to the police station, I was crying all over…because you feel like you are a criminal…all what I have done is overstayed, well that was wrong for me to overstay the visa, but that doesn't make me a criminal".*

The physical structures of control (i.e., reporting centres, STHFs and detention centres), seemed to serve the purpose of internalising within individuals the sense that they were perceived as criminals by the state. For example, within detention, those deemed to not have legal status in the UK were separated from family, locked away from the public and placed in facilities that participants reported were often disused prisons. They also often inhabited such spaces with those detained for criminal offences and would witness criminal activity (e.g., people *"dealing drugs"* [Julian]). Participants made sense of these spaces as signifying that they too were criminals, their specific crime being against the state. The process of arrest, subsequent detention within disused prisons, and the use of police stations as reporting centres illustrated for them, the interplay between the immigration and criminal justice systems. Caroline, Julian's wife commented that she was "horrified" when she discovered that he was being detained within an ex-prison and his treatment as though a criminal, conflicted with how she expected such issues to be treated by the state.

Grace appeared to express a sense of wrongdoing by having *"overstayed my visa"* [06:08], perhaps with an acknowledgement that there were conditions of the visa (set by the HO) that had not been adhered to. She stressed however that this did not make her a criminal. Rachel spoke about distinctions made between those who belong and those who did not, which was stipulated by conditions within visas saying, *"I don't see the point of ok, you need a visa to stay here."*. The visa was seen as a means by which the HO "*criminalised everybody who is coming from somewhere else*" [Rachel, 43:20]. It denotes a sense that the visa becomes a tool to

certain people and reject others. Her statement also denotes perhaps a racial undertone to the exclusion of certain migrants, i.e., the 'somewhere else', denoting that exclusion is dependent on the place the person originates. She earlier made distinctions between migrants from the West (i.e., EU and Australian) and non-EU migrants, and the harsher treatment experienced by those occupying the latter category. This appeared to support the notion that perhaps those who come from 'somewhere else' are those specifically originating from countries that did not fit the White Western demographic.

Those interviewed argued that they were labelled as people 'liable to flee' and were told that detention (following their initial reporting appointment), was implemented as a means of monitoring them and reducing their likelihood of absconding. This label created a tension within participants as it was said to be in opposition with their intention to remain in the UK (particularly due to ties they had to the country, e.g., family). This was said to be evident by them having applied for settled status or willingly complying with requests from the HO to attend their appointment. For those detained after doing the latter, their sense of shock was attributed to believing that the appointment was to receive a response about submitted immigration applications, or to address their immigration status to enable them to continue residing in the UK. For example, Julian stressed that he had no interest in running away, saying that doing so would be tantamount to "*abandoning my family*" [34:34]. In the same vein, Rachel spoke about her confusion at being detained upon being invited into the HO reporting centre for the first time:

Rachel: *"…when I was taken away there to Yarlswood* [detention centre] *I wasn't running, so I was like, what's the reason? "Because we're afraid you might flee", but I came here* [reporting centre] *by myself. You know I'm not running. I came here by myself. Why would you lock someone up because you think that they might run away or hide when they literally came to you?"*

According to Rachel, being ascribed the label as someone liable to flee, did not align with her intentions to remain in the UK (evident in voluntarily complying with letters from the HO inviting her to an appointment). She repeats the line "*came by myself*" twice and then again,

"*literally came to you*". For Rachel, voluntarily attending the reporting site was an outward expression of an intention not to flee, but rather abide by conditions outlined by the HO. Despite this, she was evaluated by the HO (i.e., the state) as being someone without an intention to abide by their conditions. This again emphasised that individuals were perceived as "criminals", unwilling to abide by state laws. This sentiment was echoed by Julian when he spoke of being perceived as someone incapable of obeying the law:

Julian: *"…if you miss your signing and you can't give a good explanation, they will say, Oh yeah, so we can't trust you to blah, blah, blah come and sign so again, they will try to now detain you, because that means potentially keep going back into detention. Yeah, and again if that's the case, that really is supposed to work against you. That, well, you see this guy, he doesn't obey law…we need to throw him back. We don't need him here. He's been given instructions he didn't follow them."* [52:39-53:14]

From the above, not abiding by the requirements of reporting was evaluated as evidence of ongoing offending against the state (following the initial offence of overstaying) and therefore the person was undeserving of a right to remain in the UK. The term "thrown back" denotes a violence in the deportation, a use of force against an individual who is resisting, as well as a lack of value accorded to the object being thrown. The statement conveys a sense of manipulation by the state to seek out evidence that could be used to support a narrative created against the undocumented individual (e.g., unwilling to follow state laws).

3.1.4. No longer human

Participants stated that when reporting, they were rarely referred to by name. This was evident in how they were addressed by HO officials during reporting appointments (at HO buildings and police stations), which also mirrored treatment in detention centres. After initially coming to the attention of the HO, individuals were assigned a number and referred to by that number. This denoted a stripping away of their human qualities and perceived as no more than an object of data. The interview extract below exemplifies their experience of having their humanity disregarded:

Tony: *"Even from the get-go, because I think this system as well, we've been identified with numbers, not pretty much names. Even when in detention it's just, it's just called number. It's not names, no names, nobody…the officer that was calling my door number. Most times he called, he was just identifying us with our numbers and no name…they don't pay too much attention to the humanity aspect of you…and if you're signing as well, the same thing."* [27:3628:05]

The "system" likely refers to HO operations and processes (e.g., given a case number), and it is this number that is used when being referred to by HO officials. The absence of names signified the lack of attention to humanity on the part of the HO. One's humanity is felt to be ignored and being referred to by a number, was seen as an outward expression of this. The stripping away of a human identify signified perhaps that their treatment did not warrant that ordinarily accorded to human beings.

There was a sense that the state did not care how their decisions, exemplified through immigration controls (e.g., signing), affected those subjected to it, both psychologically and systemically (e.g., the impact on the individual's family). According to Tony this aspect of the individual *"doesn't really matter to them*" [28:49-28:52] and HO staff were "*trained to, to see people as numbers as well*" [24:52]. In support of the above, he explicitly referred to being perceived as a number and therefore not considered human (which is exemplified by how decisions were subsequently made):

Tony: *"…they see us as number they, they don't see you as a human being. And, and, and then you can see that also, in their decision making" [24:40-24:49]*.

The statement above suggests that if one is not considered human (i.e., only data within a system), it gave permission for the HO to treat them with hostility, without considering the wider implications. Julian's statement mirrors this, that HO officials have been "*trained to be hostile*" [45:14], which was outwardly expressed by "*the attitude*" they had towards those required to sign, and the impression from HO staff that, "*We* [HO] *don't want to talk to you*

ok. You're just a number [45:1945:33]." This further highlights the sense that they did not consider themselves relating with fellow human beings, but something different, entities, unworthy of humanity.

The lack of humanity was also evidenced in both Julian and his wife pleading with the HO to consider granting him settled status on the grounds of having a family (i.e., the right to a family life), and that a return to his home country could be detrimental to the health of Caroline and their unborn baby (citing the potential lack of adequate healthcare in his homeland, made worse by the fact that Caroline did not originate from there, nor had ever visited). Interestingly, Caroline's language (below) mirrors the experiences of her husband and others made to report. Not only are those reporting left feeling like they are "*just a number*" in a system, but family members supported this.

Caroline (Julian's wife): *"…this really is about numbers. They, there's no humanity in any of this. There's no compassion in any of this. There's no actually stopping and reading someone's case and understanding the reality of, no, for this person…they can't relocate."* [38:50-39:03]

The stripping away of an individual's name, and subsequent dehumanisation they experienced, was also said to serve the HO's agenda to meet a quota (inferred above) as per the number of individuals they were required to deport (either through coercing them to leave voluntarily, or through forcible returns). The reporting centre itself was regarded as a tool, enabling them to exercise these powers, by placing the undocumented body within a fixed space for ease of facilitating removals. For example, individuals reported that because the HO knew the exact time (and day) they were due to report (because it was set by them), they could enforce detentions and deportations during these appointments. Considered as something not human was also spoken about concerning how the HO justified their exclusion from welfare services and the ability to work (and therefore denied the ability to meet their basic needs or provide for their family).

Interviewees spoke frequently about the long queues outside reporting centres and often having to wait long hours before they were seen by immigration authorities (regardless of the

weather). They described a sense of humiliation and shame felt in the way they were treated, and how they were perceived by others (illustrated in the quote below).

Julian: *"It's humiliating to have to stand there. And most people who work in that area, they kind of know, or some people who don't know are just staring like what is this line about? And then when some of them find out, they're like whoa, and you just thinking in your mind, how do they see us? Like peasants here, just here begging to stay in the country…it's really dehumanising and disrespectful the way they just make you stand out there, whether it's raining or not they don't care…you must come and sign."* [49:18-49:50]

The sense of humiliation, dehumanisation and disrespect permeates through Julian's statement above. It denotes cruel treatment, with a total disregard for the physical body or the recognition of the other as human. His sense of self, being made to stand out in view of members of the public, depicts a divide between 'us' and 'them' i.e., those who the state has determined belong in the UK, and those who do not. The quote above illustrates Julian's experience of being seen (a body representing the undocumented other) as a "*peasant*", begging to stay in the UK. The social hierarchy is evoked here, whereby he describes himself as unwanted, subsequently rejected and evaluated as occupying the bottom of the social hierarchy. There is a sense of shame his description evokes, particularly for someone who had experienced a higher and more affluent, social status in his home country. It further signifies a position of powerlessness within society in relation to the state. The state's objective was for those without legal status to sign (and therefore the condition of the weather, and the impact upon their physical bodies, was inconsequential). Below, Rachel speaks about treatment that she received from staff when reporting:

Rachel: *"You eventually get to the door, you are let in by the super rude, um, security guard person, where you go into the main building, where there's another super rude security guard too…checks you because, I don't know, for some reason, even though you're coming to the Home Office, and you don't have anything better to do, you're going to come with a bomb or, I don't know. Some kind of weapon to kill everyone."* [25:33-26:00]

According to the quote above, there was an embodied sense of being a threat to the state (i.e., a 'threatening other') and therefore responded to with hostility. This was demonstrated by staff addressing those signing in a rude manner and those reporting having to undergo security checks (e.g., taking off their shoes and belts). The hostility was also experienced by family members who would accompany those reporting. Caroline, Julian's wife, also reported rudeness from staff directed towards her and her husband whilst accompanying him to his reporting appointment.

Being considered as an entity unworthy of humanity, and the subsequent lack of concern for the physical body, was further evident in the lack of food and drink given to those held within reporting centres prior to being transported to detention. Tony recalls, *"…it was a long time and there was no food…no water, you know…because you didn't prepare for that*" [13:36-13:42]. Not only did the individual not prepare, but they were not offered anything by HO staff. Tony reported that he had arrived at the centre in the afternoon and transported to detention late at night.

Lastly, participants reported the lack of mental health support despite actively seeking it out. Rachel spoke about this regarding her initial detention, after release and during reporting (seeking out counselling through the NHS), which she said she found helpful. Access to mental health services was difficult and often officials were not aware how to access such services for those in detention. It was left therefore to the individual to source this themselves. This is echoed in Tony's assertion that, "*They don't care too much how that [treated like a number] affects you mentally*" [28:37]. If not considered human, but data, such matters are not important.

3.2. The Undocumented: A Life Suspended in Time

Participants described living in a state of limbo. They were unable to return to their country of origin, however remaining in the UK also kept them in positions that made it difficult for them to progress in life. This was related to being restricted from being able plan their future and develop themselves (e.g., improving their position in life through work). This "limbo" position (a perceived fixed state of not progressing) placed them at the mercy of the HO, who would

dictate whether they could be granted legal status in the UK and therefore work, study, and move freely within its borders (as well as leave and enter the border freely). The threat of missing reporting appointments often meant that people would not travel too far away from home.

Limbo represented an in-between level of existence whereby individuals were restricted from exercising agency and autonomy over their lives. This in-between state was one where they were awaiting full judgement by the HO (regarding whether they would be permitted to stay in the UK or not), though would never know when this judgement would come.

Rachel: *"…just that feeling of being stuck. There's nothing else you can do…you're left in limbo for so long that limbo starts to, you know, get shorter and shorter. So 10 years starts to feel like two and um, five years starts to feel like six months, so just keeps on going".* [01:12:47-01:13:05]

Limbo was embodied by a sense that time was shorter than it was in reality. Being "stuck" evokes a sense that they were unable to exercise control regarding decisions over their future, progress onward with their lives, nor return to their home country. Who holds the power is the state (i.e., HO) who will decide when this limbo ends. The felt sense of time denotes a lack of comfortability in the waiting and the individual becoming somewhat lost in time.

3.2.1. Forced into absolute uncertainty

All participants interviewed spoke of constantly being faced with uncertainty about their future, which was exacerbated by not knowing what may happen during their reporting appointment. The reporting centre itself represented a physical manifestation of this uncertainty, a structure wherein the undocumented had no control over what would happen within (e.g., whether they would return to their families once again). This decision was experienced as solely in the hands of the state. Decisions could be made to return individuals to their countries of origin, and often was only communicated to them by the HO upon

attending their reporting appointment. Such processes were perceived as the HO exercising their powers over those reporting, because they knew when the individual would attend and therefore it provided ease of detention and subsequent removal. The quote below illustrates this point well:

Tony: *"Signing was terrifying I'll be honest. You just never know what might happened. It's just the system for signing is exactly what happened to me when I was told to come in for my application, when…they knew that my application was being refused and there and then as well…they told me to decide if I was gonna go to, um, my homeland or be detained."* [19:2319-58]

Signing could be a "terrifying" experience, not knowing what could happen each time one attended their appointment. The reporting process itself was almost indistinguishable from the initial reporting appointment whereby Tony was informed his application for settled status was denied. There and then an answer was required as to whether he would voluntarily return or be detained (he was subsequently detained). Signing therefore seemed synonymous with deportability, whereby the individual became an object under the complete control of the HO, with one's agency and autonomy stripped away. Grace spoke of having "*sleepless nights*" [37:45] which she attributed to not knowing what is going to happen [37:41] each time she was to report, saying, "*Oh it was terrible*" [37:49]. Tony also reported problems with sleep and having regular nightmares.

This uncertainty was not only confined to attending reporting appointments but extended to life beyond the walls of the reporting centre. Rachel compares her life pre and post reporting. Regarding life post-reporting, she talks about the freedom to "*Think about things I can do tomorrow, day after, next week…*" [Rachel]. This contrasts with her life during the period she was reporting:

[Rachel]: *"That, living in an absolute uncertainty…it made me feel like, you know, that I, there was nothing I could do. I was stuck. I was in, you know, like being stuck in a well, and not being able to come out and you can't ask for help because the, nobody around you has resource to be able to, to change anything. You know, it's the people, the people in power who have um, clearly [put] you in that position."* [1:00:34-01:01:13]

The use of the word “absolute” emphasises the gravity of the uncertainty, something completely out of their control. The corresponding statement that there was “nothing I could do” further accentuates a position of powerlessness, not just for the individual affected, but those within their social circle, not being able to offer help or a change of circumstance. There is an assertion that those in power have intentionally placed such individuals in states of uncertainty. Though not explicitly stated, it can be inferred that these *“people in power*” are represented by those within the state responsible for making decisions concerning immigration. These state powers are then exercised by the HO through their administrative practices. Witnessing others being detained during reporting appointments also evoked anxiety and feelings of uncertainty for those interviewed (see below):

Stephen*: “It’s very scary. It’s scary because you don’t know, most people, they would say, oh that guy he went to go and sign, he was arrested, then they deported him…you don’t know what the next going will be. You might go there that’s it. A lot of people gone that way.”* [18:37-19:20]

The description above illustrates the connectedness between the self and others facing the same predicament, leaving people hypervigilant for what would be their fate. Knowledge of others’ experiences, even when not directly experienced, could elicit fear in individuals about their own fate upon reporting. Each time one attends the appointment, there is a fear that that day may be their last and that they too, like *“a lot of people”* can find themselves arrested and deported. Waiting and the inherent ‘not knowing’ therefore was experienced as threatening, wherein one was unable to prepare for what was to come. Individuals could be asked to wait in another room, which could mean possible detention and it was reported by participants that the longer one spent during their appointment could indicate an increased risk of them being detained. The appointment was otherwise relatively quick and involved them presenting identity documents to officials.

It was reported that staff at the centres would abruptly go on their break, leaving individuals to wait, not knowing when they would be seen. The centres themselves were described as full of people, with many windows, where, once your number was called, you

would meet an official and present your documents (i.e., 'sign'). There was an embodied experience of being made to wait as being indicative of a lack of care towards the individual.

3.3. The HO: As Predator to Prey

Participants used emotive language to convey a relationship with the state (i.e., HO), as though akin to the animal kingdom. The HO (exercising the power of the state) was often described as though a predator hunting prey (discussed below). There were similarities drawn between slavers capturing slaves, which further emphasised the concept of a relationship between predator and prey.

3.3.1. Staying under the radar

Commonly reported among participants was a certain level of freedom regarding pursuing an education or finding ways of earning money. Outwardly, there seemed less of a distinction between citizen and non-citizen (despite for some, regular visa renewals). They (prey) were accorded some level of visibility whilst going unnoticed by the state. For example, participants reported the ease of acquiring visas, granting individuals some semblance of security and stability while living in the UK (to access to education and employment opportunities). Despite overstaying one's visa (often due to having visa applications refused), there was a certain element of access, though being undetected by the state (e.g., getting paid cash in hand). This was attributed to having a minimal degree of state surveillance over their lives. Tony expressed how upon initially migrating to the UK (under the Labour government) *"things were easy"* [02:11]. The quote below illustrates this well:

Tony: *"…the flexibility that you have with Open University and then, Open University was not keen about um, your status as such, so that give a lot of people room to, to continue to um, to study then…What you hear about UK, until you get here before you know what really go down here…I was still a bit young um, understand how things is being done…so you need to legalise yourself to be able to do a lot of stops…when Labour was in power, who had been*

respected, people were being, migrant were being treated against their application." [02:15-34:10]

The quote illustrates there was some semblance of fairness to how migrants were being treated. During the Labour government, Tony had been able to renew his visiting visa on three occasions, however once Conservatives took power, subsequent visa applications were denied. Tony describes Labour's treatment of migrants as being fair, whereby applications were considered without bias. Having to "legalise" himself to be able to "do a lot of stops" indicated that despite access to some opportunities, one would inevitably encounter barriers (i.e., 'stops' being a term used to refer to actualising plans one has for oneself). Things however seemed to change once power exchanged hands, and he describes a seeming naivety in acknowledging the barriers he would face in his desire to achieve what he wanted for his future in the UK. Stephen also spoke about the ease of gaining employment and housing following his arrival in the country.

Stephen: *"…then, because eh, UK, nobody asks you where you're going, where you're coming from. As far as you are not into trouble or anything you, you are free to go anywhere you want to go…I don't know if they care about the documents you gave them. But whatever you give them, they will register you. You give them your Nigerian passport…you use that passport to go and register for work."* [08:20-09:55]

Stephen's quote supports notions of an initial sense of freedom some experienced when they first arrived in the UK. They were able to use whatever documentation they had to work, with minimal scrutiny from employers or the state, thus enabling them to earn a living and provide for their basic needs. Living in the way described above, meant that individuals could evade being detected by state authorities (i.e., being paid cash in hand and therefore 'avoiding detection by HO and therefore, the gaze of the predator). As earlier stated, Tony reported similar, for example changing the direction in which he was walking to avoid being sighted by police and risk subsequent capture. Grace's quote below takes this further:

Grace: *"I'm staying here and have no status, no nothing. I better uh, report myself to the Home Office."* [06:41-06:47]

Grace acknowledged her lack of status in the UK, which compelled her to make initial contact with the HO. Having this status was said to provide a certain level of security and stability. It granted access to be seen by the state without fear of consequence and provided some protections under the law (e.g., access to benefits). This was a significant motivation for Grace seeking to contact the HO with an aim to change her status.

There was a fear associated with being seen (i.e., visible to the state). Rachel reported that her experience of reporting, and subsequent detention, had led her to experience the world as hostile and unpredictable. She believed that this exacerbated existing mental health difficulties, leading her to become afraid to go outside during the day and avoid venturing into her local high street for over a year. This fear further manifested itself physically whereby she would experience shaking:

Rachel: *"…I think that experience, that immigration experience triggered something I was already, that was kind of an underlying issue, that was there already…I started experiencing anxiety and, and depression. So there was a fear of going outside, there was a fear of being seen."* [20:15-20:38]

Others reported similar reactions, for example, experiencing nightmares. Rachel further commented (post-interview) that talking about these experiences during her interview, caused her to remember things she had previously forgotten (though she asserted she was no longer distressed by them). There were potentially grave implications for "being seen". Rachel was made visible as a result of attending her first appointment with the HO, which led to her subsequent detention. She spoke at length about several others she knew who had experienced a similar fate (e.g. arrested by HO officials at their place of work or detained upon reporting). HO processes were experienced as unpredictable and many feared that they could be picked up, detained, and deported at any time. Rachel states that the reporting centres

were, "*…that kind of environment where everyone is…losing their minds*" [17:05-17:14]. The environment itself therefore could have an adverse effect on one's mental health.

Similarly, after having visa appeals denied at age 14, Julian then "*Stayed under the radar*" [10:36], existing in a way that was hidden from the state. He described being advised by others to stay patient, "*wait it out*" and therefore "*live to fight another day*" [12:38], which he believed was good counsel at the time. Responding in this way served as a survival strategy to protect him from the strain of a system that had pushed his brother to voluntarily return to Africa (to protect his own mental health), and to fight back in support of his right to remain in the UK. Staying hidden enabled him continue attending school and later work, though he remained hypervigilant of threats posed by the HO (e.g., being mindful of immigration vans around his workplace).

3.3.2. Theft of undocumented bodies

For the undocumented, becoming visible to the HO resulted in significant disruptions to their lives. Individuals could be arrested from anywhere e.g., at their places of work, school, when engaging in ceremonial activities or other everyday practices. Participants spoke of their shock at being invited to a meeting with the HO, only to be detained upon arriving at the reporting centre. Interactions with the HO served as a reminder to the undocumented that their presence within the UK was unwanted. Rachel first experienced this upon attending her first reporting appointment where she was subsequently informed that she had no legal basis in the country (which she was unaware of at the time). This revelation came with grave consequences whereby she was told that she would not be returning to her family home. She described such experiences below:

Rachel: *"…Someone was arrested during her wedding. There was a person who was picked up from school. There was a person who was a nurse and she was picked, she was literally picked there at the hospital. So just stealing people from their everyday lives, you know. Why would you do that?... there's something wrong about all of that. It's not like they're committing crimes, they're working."*

There is a sense of injustice inherent in what Rachel has said above. These were people working and suddenly found themselves "stolen". It's a powerful sentiment, indicating the power that the state can have over undocumented bodies, to capture people at will. These arrests are perceived in line with criminality, which Rachel contests above, indicating that they were people not committing any offence, but engaged in routine human practices. Rachel describes the shock experienced by suddenly being confronted with the realisation that the country she had been residing in since childhood, was now rejecting her. She recalled being held within the reporting centre for "*hours and hours and hours and hours*", "*almost a whole day*". Though she plead with HO staff saying her children were "*waiting for me at home…the family are at home*", she was denied being able to leave. This illustrates how individuals faced being stolen from their everyday lives and thus, separated from family and other social support.

It was said the HO used reporting appointments as a means of 'taking advantage' of individuals upon having their visa applications denied, to enforce deportations. Rachel described visa applications as "torture". The quote from Tony below supports this. He suggests that a decision was made to deport him prior to him attending his initial appointment. This is reflected in his account below:

Tony: *"…I was invited in. I went in. And on getting there um, yea, I sat down and, and I was told that yeah, my application has been refused. So, the first thing my head was thinking that, did you refuse my application now or you refused it then?... I don't know who came up with that idea, but I think was one of the things that they were using to, um, yea, to call people in and, um, and you can use that as an advantage uh, over everyone that made an application."*

The immigration process of arresting and detaining people was likened to the enslavement of human beings, for example Rachel spoke emotively about the experience as being akin to *"…how the slaves felt when they were being kidnapped from Africa"*. This analogy evokes images of Britain's colonialist past. The statement itself infers the use of racist practices in the treatment of those reporting. Rachel also originates from Africa, from a country colonised by Britain. The use of the word "kidnapped" indicates that there is a sense of injustice in the

process, along with the use of force. An individual is placed in a position of powerlessness against another who takes control of their physical body and is consequently able to move them from one place to another as they see fit. She continues below:

Rachel: *"…Just someone, maybe somebody was just, woke up in the morning. 'Hi mum, I'm going for a walk, where, I'm just gonna go, I don't know. No, catch some antelope or something', and then a teenager walks into a Bush and then he's shackled and taken, you know, to a different, you know, into a boat and ship to…doesn't know where he is, doesn't know how long he's going to be there. It's scary and it's traumatising".*

What seems interesting in the description given above is in the everyday experience of the individual depicted and the familial relationship with a mother figure. It's seemed an important component of the narrative to provide this context, that they were at home, within a family context and heading out to engage in their everyday activities. The character in the story is also a teenager, who is shackled and taken to a place they do not know. Not using an adult character further gives the impression of their inherent powerless against their kidnappers (i.e., as though predators). The character who is taken does not know where they are or where they are going, and it is implied that this decision is in the hands of the captors (in this case, the HO).

Rachel uses the above to illustrate her experience of her and others' stories of being "picked up" by immigration authorities when engaging in inherently everyday practices. Reflecting on this further, Rachel shakes her head and comments, "*there's something wrong with that*". There are instances where it seems that the true feeling, the experience is beyond words, something that is felt but cannot be fully verbalised in a way that encapsulates the pain or felt sense of injustice. As the researcher however, her body language and tone (accompanied by her words) expressed that there was something intrinsically wrong with the treatment of people who are undocumented or lacking legal status in the UK.

3.3.3. Reporting: A life and death experience

There were similarities in the descriptions of reporting and detention. In both, the physical building seemed to represent a structure wherein one was sent to their death, and upon leaving, would return to life again. This death was a personification of having their agency and autonomy ripped away.

For Rachel, she faced being deported directly from the reporting centre. She describes the experience as being a shock, with a lack of preparedness evident in her account. The element of covertness was also present in her narrative, where she had arrived for her appointment, never comprehending that she would not be able to return home. Her choice to leave was taken away and her plea to return home and attend to her children and appropriately prepare herself for a return, was denied.

Rachel: *"…you've gone through, they tell you to switch your phone off. No phones allowed…you queue up and then get a number…when your number is called out you go to the window and then they look at your paperwork and then they type in something to say you've been there…then you can go home…unfortunately some people, when they type in to say that they've been there, they asked them to sit somewhere else…you can't go home…you can already see them having a panic attack…it's like a life or death experience"*

Returning home seemed to refer to more than a physical space, but rather what her life in the UK composed of and represented to her. Not going home meant the separation from family, friends, and community. It also potentially signified the end of one's hopes and aspirations pertaining to their life in the UK. These incidents not only affected the individual themselves (marked out and separated from the group), but others reporting who witnessed it. What Rachel described above exemplifies how what occurs when signing is a collective experience, and a reminder of the unpredictability of the reporting event. Rachel states that others "*start to panic".* She spoke of seeing them "*jump*" and secretly switch on their phones to message those on the outside, bridging the gap between life and potential 'death' (deportation). "*No phones allowed*" seems to go beyond a strictly administrative process but appears to serve to cut off those reporting from the outside world, restricting their ability to reach out to support systems on the outside (thus like prey, minimising their chance of defence). Similarly those

detained had their phones confiscated and instead provided with alternative handsets that struggled to connect to an outside network and therefore frustrating attempts to communicate with support systems on the outside.

Each week individuals were expected to return to sign, was said to be like going to your death and upon being permitted to leave the reporting centre, one was returning to life again. The metaphorical death seemed to refer to the separation from (and potential loss of) the fragility of the life they had built over several years in the UK, the loss of control over whether they would leave the centre and the risk of return to a country that had become unfamiliar to them.

Stephen: *"So going there, it's like when you, you're going to death and coming out, you come back alive again. Next week here again, it's like you're going to death, if you're out, you are coming out alive again. That's how you feel, that's how I feel. So you're going to the dark side, then you're out again"* [18:47-1907]

The statement "*a lot of people gone that way*", perhaps symbolises that detention and ultimately deportation, represented a final death. Upon deportation individuals may not be permitted to return to the UK for several years meaning a separation from family, social support and the life created in the UK. Julian describes the HO as *"…a predator who's looking for prey to devour"* [Julian; 1:18:22]. This was thought particularly apt in its description of the experience of reporting and individuals being detained for removal. Devouring signifies being consumed, stripping the prey of all control over their plight (i.e., being brutally ripped away from life).

The reporting centre represented the space within which undocumented migrants faced being returned to a country that was now unfamiliar to them. The concept of home was no longer attached to their country of origin, but was in the UK, a country they had built a life in and become more familiar with. For example, Rachel catches herself referring to her country of origin as "home" and subsequently corrects herself:

Rachel: *"The Home Office could have already made a decision and you don't know about it yet, so you go there and then they just kidnap you and take you back home again, you know…no, no did I say home? Because I didn't have a home in Africa anymore, that you know, my home was here. So they kidnap you and send you, you know, wherever."* [22:47-23:06]

Rachel refers to her country of origin as "wherever", denoting a place devoid of any meaningful connection, an unknown place where she was liable to be 'kidnapped' and sent to. Her statement above further raises the issue of discourse and defines the concept of home. For the state, home was not in the UK. The impending threat of death experienced in the days leading up to reporting appointments aroused feelings of anxiety and panic in individuals. Rachel spoke of coping with the anxiety in the two to three days prior to her appointments by resorting to "*binge-eating*". Others expressed fears about how they would survive were they to be deported (i.e., not knowing how they could provide for themselves and 'start again').

Julian: *"What's gonna happen? How am I gonna survive? I've never, I've not lived in Africa for a very long time. I have more familiar with how things work here. How am I going to, not only go there, but also take a family there? How am I going to provide for them there?... it was so stressful."* [17:06-17:25]

Not having lived in Africa for several years, there were concerns about how Julian could provide for himself and his family there. His sense of self as their provider was potentially under threat. Julian acknowledges that he was more familiar with "*how things work here*" and navigating the system there would be a struggle. The questions posed here portray a sense of inconsideration on the part of the HO on the wider social implications of a return to an unfamiliar nation, not just for himself, but his family.

3.3.5. Coerced into submission

HO reporting was described as stressful, humiliating and one of "*the hardest things any human can go through*" [Grace: 1:00:12]. For some, this compelled them to give in to pressure from the HO to leave the UK. Rachel had attended her reporting appointment as usual whilst heavily

pregnant with the intention of informing officials that she was ready to return 'home'. A home she had described earlier in the interview that she no longer considered as such.

Rachel: *"…I was like yeah, I wanna go home and they were like um, home? I said yeah…I've had enough of this reporting centre, I don't want to be coming here anymore…clearly I'd had enough because the, once you go through it in your head, I don't think it's worth it sometimes…I don't know if they do that to make people give up and say that they can't do that anymore. But it's, it's horrible."* [28:35-29:56]

Rachel spoke about having had 'enough', which on the surface denotes a sense that she had given up and submitted to HO powers. Rachel decides that it is best to return 'home', which seems more of a protective move than an act of defeat. Rachel suggests that HO reporting served to coerce people to give in and agree to voluntary deportation. Tony acknowledges the emotional impact of reporting, likening it to a battle and describing himself as being 'held down' and 'kicked'. This description bears some similarity with Rachel, where both came to a place of having had 'enough'. Tony refers to the detrimental effect reporting had on his mental health and being conscious of the potential for 'losing' his 'mind'.

Tony: "*I just decided on my own that, I, enough is enough, I can't go through that because at that moment I be strong for myself. To move forward, signing for me was like, hold me down, kicking me in, and I just feel like no, I can't continue with that because I've been trying to be so strong for so long…frightening and I don't want to get to the stage where I'm losing my mind as well…It was beginning to get to me and I didn't want to continue…one of the things you see in people we have in common is nightmare…strange dreams all the time."* [44:1947:31]

Both Rachel and Tony contemplated the possible implications were they to continue reporting. To give in, perhaps enabled them to reclaim some agency and autonomy lost through reporting. While Rachel asked to be sent 'home', Tony responded to his situation by returning

to Africa on his own terms (by obtaining a Travel Certificate, TC) and used that opportunity to resolve his immigration problems from overseas.

3.3.6. The HO: A law unto themselves

Stephen spoke about his and others' experiences of having their indefinite leave to remain (ILR) revoked without their knowledge, culminating in them being required to start reporting. For Stephen, immigration officials visited his home after he had already been granted ILR years earlier. He was subsequently informed that he had been sent a letter by the HO years earlier, asking him to start reporting (though he was adamant that he had never received such a letter). He was then told that his ILR would be revoked until they could investigate why he never complied with reporting conditions when initially requested. Stephen utilised the power of his solicitor who subsequently wrote to the HO, informing them that, *"…they can't take my indefinite leave away, if they want to cancel [it]…they have to go to tribunal or to the court*" [Stephen; 16:01]. In other words, asserting that the HO neglected to follow the correct procedures in revoking his ILR. Upon his solicitor intervening, Stephen had his ILR status returned to him. Stephen elaborates on this experience below:

Stephen: "*My solicitor said…they have to go to judicial review. They didn't want to go. So there was no date of the court or whatever, they resent it back to me, without going to court….now they see they have no case because the barrister wrote them, wrote them more than twenty pages telling them off. Telling them it's illegal*." [16:34-36:19]

Stephen suggests a perceived hypocrisy enacted by the HO, that though they accused him of not adhering to immigration law, they themselves were acting illegally. The decisions by the HO were perceived by participants as existing outside of the confines of common law. The term "indefinite leave" suggests a status that is permanent, however participants reported that this could be revoked at any time, without notice and at the will of the HO (even as an error). Unlike usual criminal offences, offenders would be expected to be seen before a judge and judgement would be subsequently enacted as per the defendant's culpability in a crime. For all those interviewed for this research, they received no judgement in a court prior to being ordered to report or prior to being subjected to other immigration controls (e.g.,

detention or deportation). Courts were mostly referred to in relation to making appeals against deportation orders, or being denied settled status, and hearings were initiated by migrants via their solicitor. Julian spoke about the HO attempting to deport him despite having received an order of stay:

Julian: *"…they rushed things through trying to get me out of the country…they told me to take all my stuff. I'm like what? You mean I'm going back today? But no, there's a stay of order, you know. You shouldn't be taking me back and I was hoping that I hear they haven't seen anything, so they just, they're just working according to what they have. I remember being stressed trying to call my wife and tell me what's going on…So basically, try to get hold of the solicitors out of hours, it was difficult because again, they're trying to ship you out in the night."* [20:57-22:17]

The quote above demonstrates the level of precarity that individuals face within the UK immigration system. Though Julian was adamant that he had a stay of order, preventing the HO from deporting him (which they later discovered he was in possession of), they continued to enforce the deportation. It was not until he made frantic attempts to call his wife in the early hours, that she was able to communicate with their solicitor (who then intervened in preventing the deportation). This further highlights the errors that can occur within the immigration system, resulting in individuals being at risk of being wrongfully deported.

The deportation attempt discussed above, occurred in the early hours of the morning, when solicitors would not be in their offices and family members were likely asleep. There is something almost ominous about this description. With the HO operating under the cover of darkness (therefore hidden from their prey), it offered the protection from scrutiny or interference from outside forces. Rushing through things was also indicative of this, in minimising the likelihood of the operation being stopped. Similarly, participants spoke of the HO potentially turning up at their residences were they to miss reporting appointments. They stated that this would often occur early in the morning when people would most likely be found at home. This further signified the means by which the HO operates, avoiding scrutiny and interference, thus increasing the chances of capturing their intended prey. Participants also spoke about being open to exploitation from lawyers who would charge exorbitant fees even when they knew they could not help their case.

3.4. The Undocumented: Taking Power Back

Participants were able to utilise resources available to them to fight back against a system that they had considered as unjust and cruel in its treatment of them and others without legal status. As mentioned earlier, some sought to educate themselves on the legal processes to build their knowledge of the immigration system and use this knowledge to assert their autonomy and advocate for their rights (and those of others). Rachel also actively sought mental health support through the NHS and charities. Tony and Rachel shared that they had educated themselves on the UK immigration system to not have to rely on solicitors. Tony believed that the incorrect information, submitted as part of his initial visa applications (by his uncle), had compromised how he was perceived by the HO. Returning to his home country enabled him to correct these inaccuracies (e.g., incorrect date of birth). Tony saw this as being able to regain control over his life by taking power away from the HO:

Tony: *"…one of the things we decided to do, was to…anytime I'm coming back to UK, do everything right and don't give them that power again to have control over your life…I went to [African city] to go and change my passport to the right date of birth…we did everything right…give them [Home Office] more than they could ask us."*[48:01-49:10]

The quote above reflects an internal motivation to effect a positive change in one's circumstance. For others, the motivation came from an external source. This was evident in the narratives from both Rachel and Grace. For Rachel, once she had taken herself to her reporting assignment with the intention of submitting to deportation, she received unexpected help from one of the HO staff, who helped her with an application to secure her first initial 2-year settlement visa. Grace applied for a tribunal hearing with the HO (who failed to attend on two occasions). It was at the third hearing that she was awarded her first 2-year visa by the judge. She states: "*Judge said no. We can't continue you coming and going. Now what I'm going to do is I'm going to grant you; they should give you a visa*" [10:01-10:16]. Such instances demonstrated individuals with authority intervening on the behalf of undocumented migrants in support of them receiving settled status. Family and faith groups

were also a source of support for those reporting. Both Tony and Julian cited their spouses as being influential in giving them the strength to persevere through their difficulties with the HO. Julian reflected on being in court as a 14-year-old and how as an adult he was confident in challenging the HO concerning his immigration status, *"I'm fighting for my family now, this is not even about me only. I'm fighting for my daughter. I'm fighting for my wife at this point"* [Julian, 56:50-57:00]. Family was a source of strength to fight for and defend one's right to remain in the UK. Julian stated that it was his wife and church members who had fought for him to get his stay of deportation whilst he was detained.

3.4.1. Silence, as embodying power

Some participants demonstrated caution in how they gave their responses. Towards the end of Rachel's interview, she asks for the nature of the research to be explained once again (despite clarifying this prior to interviews and having been provided information about the nature of the research). This act by Rachel, though potentially a means to be reminded of the research aims, may have served to assess how safe she felt regarding what she wished to disclose. It could also have been to ensure she was adequately answering what was being asked of her (desiring to fulfil the role she had been called to perform as part of the research). Silence could also provide protection from perceived threat from one's external world. This was evident in that once the recordings had ended, some participants continued talking, perhaps in the assuredness that the information would fully be kept confidential. In these latter exchanges, participants often gave more in dept information about how they felt about their experiences and their thoughts about the UK state itself and HO specifically.

On one occasion, Rachel began discussing the disparities between the treatment of migrants from the EU and Australia, and those from the Global South. She however cuts the sentence short saying "*I don't want to say anything, I don't want it to go to anyone."* [37:33-37:37]. It was thought that this was protective, being unsure how the information would be used and what implications it could have for her.

There was a general distrust of the HO expressed by participants. Participants reported that narratives had been distorted in ways that participants felt was to further dehumanise and criminalise them, to justify removing them from the country (e.g., Julian's experience of

court at fourteen). There were concerns that others would perceive undocumented migrants unfavourably and therefore silence protected individuals from possible hostility.

Grace: *"If I tell anybody who doesn't know me very well, they will start saying oh, these are the ones who come here and eh, there are so many names so that, we people are called. So that, that it makes you not to say anything to anybody."* [48:27-48:39]

If one's voice was kept to oneself, it perhaps protected them from perceived judgement from the outside world and thus, serve to maintain their humanity and sense of self (as a fellow human being to be treated as such).

3.4.2. Faith: Source of hope and resilience

Some spoke about how their faith gave them hope to persevere during the period they were reporting and in fighting for settled status. Their social network was also influential in this, whereby others would encourage them in the faith to trust that God would get them through because, "*People have been in worse situations and have prevailed*" [Julian; 1:2:25]. Grace would meet up with friends and pray about her situation, which she found a great source of encouragement. She attributed the end of her reporting conditions to these prayers, saying, "*God listened to my prayers*" [47:00]. God was often spoken of as a being who superseded the authority of the state and could bestow wisdom regarding how to approach situations with the HO. Grace said of her prayer group:

Grace: *"They really gave me hope. They were just telling me there's nothing impossible in God's hands, you are going to get what you want, and we believe, and we, oh my, we used to pray so much."* [47:17-47:31].

Prayer acted as a powerful tool in instilling hope in those reporting and a sense of control over their situation (because the power lay not in their own abilities but a higher being who operated outside and above the authority of the state). There were accounts where

participants utilised wisdom to navigate their immigration difficulties, which subsequently led to the end of reporting. Julian had been asked by the HO to withdraw an application for a judicial review into his immigration case (after having already paid the £1000 review fee). He states:

Julian: *"I don't trust these people, So I told the lawyer, no I don't trust these people. What if we…withdraw and then they still make the same decision they've made, and then we are back to judicial review again...So I said ok, this is what we do, and I thank God for the wisdom. If they are willing to reimburse us for what we paid for the judicial review, then yes, it will be dropped…They agreed…They will pay back whatever to the solicitors."* [57:20-58:26]

Similarly, Tony spoke of religious scriptures being both encouraging and being influential in his decision to amend the inaccuracies in his immigration paperwork. During his interview, he cited a particular scripture that read: "*The truth set[s] you free*" [1:00:16]. This quote was thought profound and illustrative of being set free from the restraints of the HO (and thus, reclaiming agency and autonomy for oneself). Tony reported that his faith led him to becoming a pastor in the church whilst in detention. Upon overcoming his immigration difficulties, he continues being an encouragement to others going through similar issues, by visiting detentions and praying with them. He also provides spiritual counselling to those currently reporting.

4. Discussion

The results of the research identified four main themes related to the experience of immigration reporting by those interviewed. The main themes were: *The Racialisation of Undocumented Bodies, The Undocumented: A Life Suspended in Time, The HO: As Predator to Prey* and *The Undocumented: Taking Power Back*. This section will provide an overview of these themes and relate the findings to current research.

4.1. Overview of Findings

Power played an important role in the experiences of those interviewed in relation to the HO, and it is thought that the PTMF could be a helpful tool in understanding the role of power in shaping their experiences and how they responded to them. Forms of power will therefore be discussed within the context of the research findings. Though van Manen (1990) does not advocate the use of frameworks to guide analysis of the data, it was thought pertinent to include the PTMF to guide reflections on the role of power in shaping experiences, which could also inform clinical practice (in line with our CoP identity as scientist-practitioners) (Copper, 2009).

4.1.1. The Racialisation of Undocumented Bodies [Corporeality]

Pertaining to van Manen's Lifeworld Existentials (1997), we exist bodily within the world and therefore initially encounter others through our bodies. This theme concerned how the bodies of those reporting were perceived and subsequently treated by wider society (reflected in their treatment by the state and the wider public). As per the PTMF, bodily/ embodied powers were evident in the accounts of interviewees, in that their physical bodies were deemed representative of objects to be rejected and excluded by society based on their race and immigration status. They represented what was considered the undesirable immigrant, which was embodied in their initial treatment upon entering the UK. The desirable migrant was spoken of as consisting of neo-colonialist ideals, i.e., being White (Agamben, 1998). Identity was of utmost importance, whereby participants reported that they were assigned an identity by the state that conflicted with their own sense of self. Identity was used by the state to

determine one's legality within its borders, and biometrics were to support this (upon each settlement application) (Griffiths, 2012). Core threats to identity included a loss of status and a sense of inferiority (due to discrimination experienced). Threats *Within Relationships* also included experiencing humiliation, criticism and having their views dismissed by those in power (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

In support of Turner (2021) and others, issues of intersectionality were particularly pertinent. Participants' socio-economic statuses in their home countries, age and family background provided the means for individuals to pursue job/study opportunities and being able to reunite with family abroad (which were some reasons given for migrating to the UK). Post-migration, these factors were perceived as irrelevant and rather, being non-White, originating from the Global South and their subsequent immigration status informed their experiences, ultimately leading to their requirement to report. Pre-migration, individuals occupied higher positions within the social hierarchy, which accorded them the opportunities to effect change in their circumstances, possessing what they considered as 'legitimate' identities. Migrating resulted in a process of delegitimization regarding their social status, which stemmed from how the state evaluated them. This further lends support to the notion that racialised biases exist in how the state evaluates individuals, which subsequently affects their private life, relationships, families, and their physical and mental health (Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning, 2021).

The process of delegitimization is suggested here as a form of othering. Those perceived as different and therefore, not belonging, experienced a stripping away of their human essence, whereby they perceived themselves as no longer considered human in the eyes of the state. Without a human identity, one was then unworthy of being treated as a fellow human. They were subjugated to positions of the *homo sacer*, existing outside of the moral universe (Agamben, 1998), outside of state protection, thus giving the state authority over their physical bodies (i.e., forcible arrest and detention). There is a distinction made between 'us' (citizens/residents) and them (the undocumented other). Those considered 'other' were regarded as different and consequently, separate from 'us', i.e., those deemed to belong in the UK (Dalal, 2006). The other is transformed from a whole object (e.g., human beings, with families, needs and so on) into part objects (e.g., data, immigrants, criminals) (Mitchell, 1986; Klein, 1923). Projection could also be said to occur whereby undesirable characteristics were

assigned to the undocumented other, leading to their criminalisation and the reported distortion of their narratives to fit this discourse (a form of epistemic injustice, Fricker, 2007). Differences are then exaggerated, which leads to the detachment from 'them' and therefore no longer acknowledging their humanity (Dalal, 2006).

This theme highlighted various powers impacting the lives of the undocumented (in line with the PTMF). For example, the physical attributes of individuals, embodied through their skin colour and what this represented (i.e., the other) was evident in the participant's comparisons between the treatment of migrants from the Global North, those from the Global South and the treatment of Black people within the UK (e.g., Windrush and stop and search). Interpersonal powers (Johnstone & Boyle, 2020) concerned the relationship between individuals and the state. As reported, the hostile relationship experienced from the state, led to them being denied security, protection, and support (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Overall, individuals made sense of these experiences as being unjust and emphasised the role that race played in their treatment. This research further explored the effect one's position of deportability had on family members (e.g., spouses) and others supporting them, as with Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning (2021). However as Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning (2021) explored immigration control more generally, this research was novel in that it looked at reporting specifically. For example, spouses could feel that due to their affiliation with the undocumented (whom the state wanted to remove), they were perceived as being in opposition to the state, experienced similar hostility (e.g., at reporting appointments), and that how their spouses' treatment affected them was disregarded. They could also feel coerced to join their spouse wherever they were to be deported. Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning (2021) reported that families were treated as 'collateral damage' when enforcing immigration controls, which was reflected in the accounts of participants in this study.

4.1.2. The Undocumented: A Life Suspended in Time [Temporality]

Van Manen (1997) posited that considerations of temporality referred to how time was perceived by individuals. Temporality featured frequently in the accounts of individuals and reporting. Participants spoke about being in limbo, a feeling of 'stuckness', unable to progress in life, and somehow frozen in time, in line with findings by Griffiths (2014). Descriptions by

participants evoked depictions of time progressing onwards, though the individual experiences the movement of time as much slower, as though life itself was passing them by. As with Griffith's (2014) research, individuals spoke of time as though they existed outside of it. They existed within a precarious space, characterised by endless waiting, though their situation could change at any moment, each time they went to report (at the whim of the HO) (Griffiths (2014).

Though Turnbull (2016) spoke of waiting as pertaining to those detained, the experiences of those reporting bore many similarities. In support of Turnbull (2016), this research found that individuals made sense of their experiences of waiting, by perceiving it as a means by which the HO sought to keep them in vulnerable positions, never knowing what could happen each time they ventured into the reporting centre or police station to sign. Waiting was considered an exercise of power from the state over the undocumented (Turnbull, 2016). This paper argues that it is additionally akin to an act of psychological violence, enacted through political regimes, against those reporting, whereby they are confined and metaphorically restrained into positions of subordination to the state. Even when not having experienced being physically detained within a structure of a building, waiting kept people in suspense, vulnerable and compliant, as though within a psychological prison. They were always aware, and hypervigilant to, the 'omnipresent' power of the state within and outside of the reporting centre.

Not identified within other research found was the experience of waiting in relation to fear. Participants reported that the longer they were kept within the reporting centres, the greater the threat (i.e., risk) of them being detained. Waiting to renew visas was also described as torture. Whilst being told to wait after having attended a reporting appointment, individuals could be separated from others within the centres, escorted into other rooms and would frantically attempt to reach out to family members to inform them that they might not return home. Waiting was also associated with being kept within STHFs for hours prior to being sent to detention. Experiences of waiting therefore were synonymous with panic and fear associated with the uncertainty of their fate. People sometimes responded to waiting by choosing to stop attending reporting appointments. Avoiding reporting could be understood perhaps as a form of survival (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

4.1.3. The HO: As Predator to Prey [Spatiality/ Relationality]

According to the Lifeworld Existentials (van Manen, 1997), spatiality related to how spaces are subjectively experienced by individuals, while relationality concerns the relationships we make and how we experience them. This theme additionally explored the participants' sense of self in relation to external powers within society (e.g., the HO) and how the spaces they encountered (e.g., reporting centres) were shaped by their relationship to the state. A powerful description of the relationship between the undocumented migrant and the state was in their comparisons between the state (predator) and themselves (as prey). The predator, operating at night (e.g., house raids, transporting people to detention and in deportation attempts), at times that would hinder the prey's ability to hide or seek support from others. This description exemplifies the embodiment of power occupied by the state and exercised through HO procedures. This was considered a novel finding and denoted animalistic depictions of a predator hunting its prey within the animal kingdom. This aligns with the participants' beliefs that the aim of the HO was to meet a quota which was regarded as part of a political agenda to get as many people deported as possible. The reporting centre provided the ease by which to do so, fixing individuals in place (Fisher et al., 2019). Once the individual became visible to the HO (either through making an application for stay or being arrested by immigration officials), reporting served as a means of maintaining their surveillance and ensuring ease of capture by the predator (due to the availability of the prey at each reporting event). Consumption here signifies the capture of undocumented bodies and subsequent disposal at the will of the state. Hasselberg (2012) considered immigration tribunals as 'theatres of state power over migrant bodies', and it is suggested here that reporting centres serve the same purpose.

An additional novel finding was in descriptions of individuals as though going to their death each time they presented at their reporting appointment. Within the physical structures of either the police station or the reporting centre, the prey was within the predator's domain of power (Bhatia, 2019; Hasselberg, 2012). Whether they would be released from the predator's grip, was at the predator's discretion. This paper argues that both the physical structures wherein individuals report, and their treatment by the HO (enacted through immigration processes) served as acts of violence aimed at subjugating the undocumented

into positions of being broken down physically and psychologically (as per the participant's accounts). This reflects notions by Jones et al., (2017), however as they stated deportation served to terrify marginalise and exclude individuals to render them compliant and exploitable, it is argued here that reporting functions in much the same way.

Reflecting on acts of power through the PTMF, individuals experienced oppression at all the areas outlines within the framework. Participants experienced interpersonal, coercive, legal, economic, social and ideological powers inflicted against them by the HO (and legal representatives) (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). State sanctions deprived individuals of the ability to meet basic needs on their own accord (Maslow, 1943) and thus, hindering their progression in life and sense of self (i.e., powerlessness against the state) (Whyte, 2011).

In support of Griffiths & Morgan-Glendinning (2021), this study identified forced unemployment and the risk of separation from family as core threats experienced by those liable to deportation. Excluding individuals from legally working, denying them access to benefits, restricting their access to knowledge that could help them, restricting access to mental health support and confusing processes, were perceived as mentally subjecting individuals to positions whereby they would give in and agree to voluntary deportation. Difficulties accessing mental health support was consistent with findings by Afari-Mensah (2017). It also seemed to render individuals vulnerable to state power by frustrating the means by which they could exercise positive power (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). In other words, by keeping people in positions where they are unable to help themselves and access vital support, it potentially limited the potential for them to garner the strength to meet basic needs and fight back against perceived oppression (Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, denying individuals food and water (basic human needs), while keeping them locked away for hours, further restricted their ability to resist or seek support, and thus opening up their bodies to be stolen and disposed of at state will (Maslow, 1943). Epistemic injustice was evident in the accounts, and it is suggested here that it served the purpose of accentuating politized voices (i.e., those with power), over those without power (Fricker, 2007). Following the PTMF, this is an example of ideological power (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). It is argued that this was potentially necessary to covey an image that the undocumented were criminals and untrustworthy, and therefore should be removed.

Regarding the concept of resilience, it is argued that how it is conceptualised in the West, may not adequately convey how it is exhibited cross-culturally (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). It is argued that the theme *Coerced into Submission*, depicting the participants' experience of coercive power, their responses rather than indicating a lack of resilience against powers experienced as oppressive (by giving in/ appeasing), can be construed as resilience, responding out of a means of protecting oneself by submitting (considered a means of survival by Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Upon reflecting on the language used by participants, they interpreted their treatment by the HO as intentionally frustrating to compel them to give in to deportation, and the act of giving in was spoken of by them as though an act of defeat. It would be interesting to explore further how behaving in this way may have shaped their sense of self. As with other research, experiences of humiliation and shame were reflected in how participants spoke about their experiences and how they made sense of them (e.g., being made to queue for hours outside reporting centres) (Klein & Williams, 2012). In line with the PTMF, developing alternative narratives can be a powerful tool for supporting individuals to redefine their sense of self-worth (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

4.1.4. The Undocumented: Taking Power Back [Relationality]

Once again, this theme related to how individuals experienced their relationships with others (van Manen, 1997). This was of particular relevance to this theme as it addressed how those reporting came to perceive themselves in relation to external powers that they experienced. It aligns with research that asserts that people have a propensity towards survival and how they respond to adversity is often a means of surviving (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018). Participants reported various ways in which they were able to reclaim power for themselves, namely, educating themselves on immigration policy, freeing themselves from poor/exploitive legal counsel, staying under the radar, seeking out mental health support, drawing upon faith and using silence as a form of protection (Tribe, 2010). Family support often proved invaluable in instilling and maintaining hope in individuals as per a change of circumstance. The accounts made by participants were framed in terms of being a fight between them and the HO, and occasionally this involved those considered representatives of the state intervening on the behalf of those undocumented (In support of their desire to remain in the UK e.g., judges and HO staff).

Community systems such as faith groups, provided vital support for individuals whereby members would liaise with legal counsel on an individual's behalf, or praying together. This highlights the notion within CoP that we are relational beings and as such, it is important that we acknowledge how one's social setting can inform how they interact with the world and shape their sense of self (Cooper, 2009; Collin 2000). All participants cited attending church, praying or support received from friends and family, as enabling them to endure the difficulties associated with reporting (and other immigration controls), in line with their goal of remaining in the UK (which is something Klein & Williams, 2012 had suggested may not be helpful). *Taking power back* was indicative of individual's challenging the HO for their rights to remain in the UK or, if they were to leave, it would be on their terms and not that of the HO. It seemed important for all those who participated to find a means by which they could take power away from the HO and regain the agency and autonomy stripped away through months or years of reporting. Silence seemed a particularly useful coping strategy for individuals who had experienced the narratives stolen and distorted by a system perceived as determined to expel them from its nation's borders (Tribe, 2010). Within the interview space, and potentially the therapy room, silence, or choosing what to share and what not, could mean the individual retains a level of agency within a space wherein there is an inherent power imbalance (Proctor, 2017). Discourses, such as how language is used could further accentuate the power differentials as it could further highlight differences in those othered by society. Not speaking in the way one believes is expected, or in a way that fits with wider society, may have implications for how they are treated, and in what spaces they feel accepted. Intersectional issues such as language barriers, ethnicity, race, gender, age and so on, can shape how individuals interact with the world in a myriad of ways, and what coping strategies are adopted to enable them to survive in certain spaces (Turner, 2021; Tribe & Thompson, 2022).

4.2. Formulations as Narratives Within Mental Health Settings

Psychological formulations are widely used within mental health services in the UK and can be considered versions of a narrative. It is considered a process whereby a professional and a service user create theories about the origins of the difficulties that brought the individual to mental health services (Johnstone, 2014). It integrates the professional's clinical and research knowledge (e.g., conceptualisations of trauma and its relationship with adversity) and the

service user's expertise concerning their own life. At its core, it aims to uncover contexts and meanings an individual (or family or couple) attaches to events to develop a shared understanding of their difficulties over time (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Formulations however do not just focus on an individual's problems or difficulties, but attends to their strengths and talents in surviving challenging life situations. Harper & Moss (2003) describe this as a process of ongoing collaborative sense-making between client and clinician. Formulations can be conducted helpfully or unhelpfully. It is thought unhelpful when used in an individualised and context-free way, and unhelpful when not (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Open Dialogue, Narrative Therapy and The Hearing Voices Network (an organisation run by service-users) are various ways individuals can create narratives that are considered compatible with the PTMF (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

4.3. Research Implications

4.3.1. Clinical Implications for Services

On a macro level, the work we do could potentially challenge the unequal structures within society and facilitate new power relations (Winter, 2019). Community psychology is gaining prominence in the UK, with increased attention given to working with groups or communities, and it is argued that CoPs and allied professionals are in a good position to undertake such work (Tribe and Bell, 2018). It is proposed that communities can collaborate with psychologists to improve service provision, which could have implications for how services are set up, how funding is distributed, help to increase accessibility, and reduce stigma (Tribe and Bell, 2018; Pollard & Howard, 2021). On a micro level, incorporating social justice values may facilitate a shifting away from individualised models of causation, which could better inform psychological interventions (Tribe and Bell, 2018; Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). The increased attention of social justice issues within UK psychology has led to the Division of CoPs (DCoP) Social Justice Network, and such groups as Psychologists for Social Change.

Currently, the dominant approach offered in talking therapies is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which focuses on the individual and replacing 'dysfunctional' thoughts with 'functional' ones (Zayfert & Becker, 2006). The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies Service (IAPT), is a national programme which recommends the use of CBT as a therapeutic

intervention (NHS England, 2018). Emphasising individualism however can be particularly unhelpful with this client group as it neglects the economic and social circumstances individuals encounter (Schwarz, 2018). Inequalities in access to healthcare and a lack of funding for services supporting refugees and asylum seekers continue to exist (Zayfert & Becker, 2006; Pollard & Howard, 2021). This was also an issue with undocumented migrants in this study, as they reported difficulties accessing mental health support both within detention and throughout their experience of reporting (though actively sought it). There was also reported ambiguity among staff as to how they could access such help.

4.3.2. Implications for Therapeutic Practice

CoPs are encouraged to look beyond diagnostic labels, as well as those used to categorise people (BPS, 2017). Research exploring the experiences of refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, often make use of Western models to conceptualise mental health as per ways of coping (i.e., resilience) and their distress (e.g., trauma), which as stated, can be unhelpful. Research has shown that reducing economic and social inequalities, is one of the most effective steps to improving the emotional wellbeing of a population, particularly in groups who have less power (due to age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and so on). It is also important to recognise the profound impact adversities of any kind can have on individuals, which can affect them psychologically, socially, educationally, occupationally, and economically (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). Continuing to conceptualise emotional and psychological distress in diagnostic terms, disconnects the threat responses from the threats themselves (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). It also risks ignoring wider social and societal issues that can result in social inequalities and contribute to distress.

The use of silence and participants apologising for how they were coming across, was understood as perhaps indicating their positionality in relation to myself as the researcher (occupying a position of power) and potentially indicative of a survival instinct (wanting to protect oneself or wishing to appease external powers). It is important therefore that clinicians are aware of what in communicated, both in what is spoken and what is expressed through the body within the therapeutic space and how this may influence the therapeutic

relationship (Luca et al., 2019). It is also important to give individuals choice within services (and particularly within therapeutic spaces) regarding their expectations pertaining to their physical and mental health (as the participants reported a lack of agency and autonomy over decisions made by them by the HO). Such choices can also include whether they wish to use an interpreter or not, and not making assumptions about what we may think people need. Doing so could help ensure unequal power relations are not replicated in these spaces (Crethar et al., 2008).

Therapeutic assessments and formulations therefore need to be approached with caution. Participants in this research had experienced their narratives used against them and therefore they may be weary of sharing information early on within therapy. Previous research has further indicated that individuals often endure invasive questioning and asked about sensitive information as part of the asylum process or during a reporting appointment, which can be distressing (RCP, 2015; Proctor, 2017). It is important therefore that clinicians are mindful of how the service user responds to questioning and ensure minimal questions are asked as possible, to avoid re-creating distressing immigration experiences and re-enacting unhelpful power dynamics within the therapy space (Proctor, 2017). Making boundaries explicit regarding what would be talked about in therapy sessions is essential and providing a space for clients to express what they feel safe talking about and what they do not. This is in line with CoP values in being aware of the impact of power and seeking to minimise its impact within the therapeutic space (Cooper, 2009).

Blackwell (1997) implores therapists to not strive towards 'helpfulness' in their work with clients, but create spaces to hold, contain and bear witness to their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. He asserts that therapists should facilitate a holding environment in which consistency and acknowledgement of who the individual is and how they feel provides a space for nurturing (similar to how a mother holds a child). Blackwell (1997) adds that containment occurs through a dialogue that seeks to find words for unspeakable feelings and experiences. This concept of holding stems from Winnicott (1953) and that of containing originates from Bion (1952). Bearing witness enables therapists to respond to events in the client's life that may be beyond their comprehension (Jalonen & La Corte, 2018). Narrative Therapy (NT) is regarded as a means by which to facilitate bearing witness. NT emphasises that dominant stories (those that are most told) become accepted as truth (i.e., the standard of normality)

and other stories subsequently become subjugated (White & Epston, 1990; Fricker, 2007). NT is a social justice approach that seeks to challenge dominant discourses that shape individuals' lives in adverse ways, which could be helpful for those with experience of reporting.

Rogers (1957) asserted that core conditions of acceptance, empathy and congruence provide a powerful framework for establishing and developing a therapeutic relationship, which is in line with our values as CoPs (Cooper, 2009). Empathy seeks to understand an individual from their subjective frame of reference and therefore a person will feel listened to if an accurate representation of their experiences is reflected back to them. It also helps the therapist maintain an open mind and understand the client from their frame of reference (Jalonen & La Corte, 2018). Congruence also involves offering reflection to develop a deeper understanding of a person's narrative. This is not facilitated in a judgemental way but aims to communicate to the client that the therapist takes a genuine interest in their story (Jalonen & La Corte, 2018).

4.3.2.1. Narrative Exposure Therapy (NET)

NET is an approach which aims to support individuals to contextualise traumatic experiences, by building a coherent life narrative (APA, 2017). The focus is on traumatic memories however, NET also emphasises the incorporation of positive life experiences (APA, 2017). Narratives (also termed testimonies) are written down by clients and can be kept by them. NET attempts to integrate the traumatic events in one's life, which includes their emotional, sensory, cognitive, and physiological experiences (Schauer et al., 2005). Research by Tribe et al. (2017) found that there existed a lack of culturally appropriate treatments (following a systemic review on psychosocial interventions for adults). NET was found to have a positive impact on responses to distress and that when taken up by asylum seekers, demonstrated positive (though moderate) results (Tribe et al., 2017; Stenmark et al., 2013). More research into the use of NET for refugees, undocumented migrants, and other cross-cultural populations, could explore whether similar results could be found. Currently, it is one of the recommended interventions for PTSD by the National Institute for Health Care and Excellence (NICE, 2018). NET may prove helpful therefore for those who have experienced immigration reporting as it offers a more contextual and client-led approach to therapy.

4.3.2.2. Tree of Life (ToL)

This approach was developed by Ncube (2006) in Zimbabwe to support vulnerable children. It involves the use of metaphors and questions to encourage individuals to tell stories that empower them. It also involves individuals hearing stories of strength, hope and shared values, whilst encouraging community connectedness (Lock, 2016). It aims to respond to communities and groups who have experienced social suffering and where more traditional Western approaches may not resonate culturally (Denborough, 2012). As with NET, ToL draws on the principles of Narrative Therapy, which is based on the rationale that our accounts of our lives and the stories we tell about ourselves, shape our self-identities (White & Epston, 1990). This was of particular importance to the research participants who stated that their motivation for participating was to highlight the various injustices they endured when reporting. Others said that telling their stories had given them further hope and strengthened their faith. One participant had started going into detention centres to share his story and educate others on the immigration process to empower them to navigate the system. Stories can therefore be powerful in giving individuals a voice to difficult life experiences and support them in reconsidering their sense of identity (Brown & Augusta-Scott, 2007). Research has found that the ToL was effective in supporting individuals to feel heard, understood and valued, and subsequently increasing mental health service utilisation by all cultures (Hughes, 2014).

4.3.2.3. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

EMDR is a therapy used for a variety of presentations, and takes into consideration relational, personal, and societal factors in its approach to interventions and clinical formulations (Shapiro, 2017). It aims to help clients process difficult memories and desensitize them to the emotional impact of that memory (EMDR Association UK, 2020). EMDR works by integrating eye movements whilst the client explores potentially difficult memories, which can be helpful for those unable to articulate their experiences verbally (Cozolino, 2016). Emphasising the approaches cultural sensitivity, Heide et al. (2014: 147) stated that it minimises *"language issues because speech is not always necessary and has been found efficacious with patients*

from a non-Western background". Tribe et al., (2017) however found that the effectiveness of EMDR for refugees is limited and there remains a need for further research into the use of EMDR with refugees (and other forced and undocumented migrants).

4.3.2.4. Psychodynamic Therapy

Psychodynamic approaches have been suggested for trauma informed interventions (Alessi & Kahn, 2017). Alessi & Kahn (2017) asserted that such therapies can provide individuals with a sense of relational and internal safety, and others have stressed the importance of increasing the adoption of psychodynamic approaches within trauma informed work (Schottenbauer et al., 2008). As stated in the literature review, Attachment Theory emphasises the importance of creating a secure base as an infant, in addition to within therapeutic settings in adulthood (Bowlby, 1988). Bowlby (1988) stated that our identity is formed in infancy by our interactions with our external world (facilitated by caregivers). Research has further posited that our identities are not fixed but can be adapted through our interactions with the environment and social connections (Cozolino, 2016). The concept of identity was reflected throughout in the accounts of participants in this study (from their sense of self prior to migrating to the UK, how this changed upon attempting to settle in the country, and the identities enforced upon them by the state and HO). There was also shame expressed in how they were perceived and treated by the state. Tummala-Narra (2019) emphasised using psychodynamic theory to explore the importance of cultural identity with clients and how this is negotiated throughout their lifetime. It is therefore pertinent that such issues are brought into the therapy room when working with migrants to inform formulations and support clients to manage the impact their experiences (e.g., reporting) have had on their sense of identity.

4.4. Implications for Future Research

There appears to be limited research into the impact of immigration controls on an individual's social network (e.g., their family). Though some research has explored this (e.g., Griffiths &

Morgan-Glendinning, 2021), minimal research was found into the impact reporting procedures themselves had on others connected to the individual. This is particularly relevant as participants often referred to themselves as being part of a social context and having this ignored in decisions made by the HO. Several researchers discussed within this thesis have emphasised the importance of recognising that human beings exist within a historical, social, and cultural context and therefore individuals cannot be understood outside of this context (Heidegger, 1962). As CoPs, we also acknowledge that we are relational beings and therefore our experiences can also affect those connected to us (Cooper, 2009). This was seen in how participants interpreted that they too were seen in opposition to the HO in defending their spouses' right to remain in the UK or face the family being separated.

Research could further explore the sense of self from a psychodynamic perspective and how this could be influenced by one's experiences pre and post migration. For example Julian (research participant) experienced a previously absent mother and the motivation for migrating was to reunite with her. It would be interesting to explore further how these early life experiences may shape an individual's response to perceived rejection by the state and immigration control.

Though there exists a body of research on the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers, there were few papers found on undocumented migrants. Participants had acknowledged that their experiences may differ from those seeking asylum in the UK, as pertaining to immigration reporting and other immigration controls. It is suggested therefore that more research be conducted into the experiences of undocumented migrants in the UK to better understand their needs and the sense they make of their experiences. Refugees and asylum seekers often face barriers in accessing mental health services, and as this research highlighted, those undocumented may be living 'under the radar' and therefore may experience more barriers to accessing support for their mental health.

There is an increased focus on community psychology, and rather than encouraging clients to attend sessions within clinical settings (which may itself present as a barrier to engagement), it is proposed that CoPs move towards meeting people within community settings by engaging in outreach within detention, reporting centres and with groups who support such migrants, to explore ways of improving access to psychological interventions in such settings.

This research highlighted the ongoing issues related to institutional racism and enduring neo-colonialist practices that result in many of those originating from countries previously colonised by the British, facing hostile and unjust immigration controls (Turnbull, 2017). As per the literature review, no research papers were found from the field of CoP (or other psychological professionals) into the lived experience of immigration reporting specifically. Future research could therefore further explore the concept of ethnicity and race from a psychological perspective (pertaining to experiences of reporting).

5. Conclusions

Overall this study found that the process of immigration reporting was not an isolated experience but influenced by that of detention and deportation. Stories were important, as the participants wanted to tell their stories to highlight their perceived injustices. Participants experienced othering, resulting in their dehumanisation, humiliation, shame, and a life consumed by uncertainty whilst enduring reporting.

5.1. Weaknesses of the Research

Though the research highlighted social inequalities in its exploration of reporting for undocumented migrants, it is not without its weaknesses. All the participants interviewed were no longer reporting and therefore those currently reporting may have different experiences from those within this research. The participants also all originated from Africa and self-ascribed themselves as Black. Experiences of being Black in Britain (e.g., discourses pertaining to Windrush and stop and search), therefore were spoken about in relation to perceived racial injustices within the system. Others who may come from very different racial and ethnic backgrounds may make sense of their experiences in very different ways and therefore the research may elicit different data. All participants had also reported in police stations or reporting centres in England (all but one reported in London), which could also elicit different accounts for those who have reported elsewhere. Developments such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and the Ukraine war may further influence how participants make sense of the reporting experiences were they to be currently reporting.

This research utilised van Manen's Phenomenological approach (1984), which is subjective in nature. A common criticism therefore is that the ways by which researchers interpret the data may differ. Van Manen further acknowledges that it is not fully possible to use bracketing when analysing qualitative data and therefore one's presuppositions and biases may inevitably influence the data in some way (van Manen, 1990). Qualitative approaches and particularly the van Manen approach, assert that it is not about discovering some element of truth in the findings or in participants' accounts, but revealing an essence of human experience, which I believe this research has been able to do.

5.2. Strengths of the Research

This research was able to explore a niche area within immigration research (i.e., reporting). Novel findings included the experiences of family members supporting individuals during reporting events, perceptions of reporting being as though one was going to their death and perceptions of the state as a predator against the undocumented prey (akin to Britain's colonial history and role in slavery). Much of the literature reviewed explored detention, often from the perspective of asylum seekers under immigration control. This provided insight into the lived experience of the undocumented.

Engaging in qualitative research enabled individuals to share what they believed was important as per their experience of reporting and in doing so, I was able to facilitate a collaborative relationship with participants, in line with CoP values (Cooper, 2009). The research sought to attempt to minimise unhelpful power dynamics experienced by participants through previously engaging with immigration protocols. Though participants were no longer reporting to the HO, the time post-reporting may have enabled them further make sense of their experiences in ways perhaps not possible otherwise. The research was able to shed light on the experiences of undocumented migrants, which are considered a 'hard-to-reach' group within immigration research (Klein & Williams, 2012), and therefore contributing to knowledge in this area. Limited research also existed regarding the impact immigration controls have on the individuals subjected to them, as well as the impact and 'sense-making' of members of one's support system (e.g., family members). As stated, no research was found from the field of Counselling Psychology (or allied psychologists)

concerning how reporting can inform someone's sense of self, and it is therefore hoped that conducting research in this area could encourage others to explore this further.

5.3. Final Considerations

The PTMF proposes that rather than diagnosing people, it is important to listen to their stories to understand their distress. As stated earlier, one of the aims of the PTMF is to challenge epistemic injustice, often caused by the imposition of one powerful discourse, such as the diagnostic one, by making such frameworks freely available (Fricker, 2007). This is also apparent in disparities evident in how the media portrays certain migrants. As human beings, we have the propensity to make meaning from our experiences and create stories. Forms of storytelling have found their place in mental health services and therapy, however the PTMF stresses the importance of going beyond traditional forms of sense-making and recognises healing that can come in other forms e.g., through one's social group, and in collectivist societies, through community or faith-based rituals, ceremonies and so on, which as discussed, may be more useful when working with some migrant populations (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020).

Drawing on the PTMF, services have been able to offer service users an alternative understanding of their circumstances, from the diagnostic one (Griffiths, 2019). Creating alternative narratives can itself be deeply healing and can facilitate ways for individuals to "*exercise influence within inevitable psychosocial, biological and material constraints*", all of which have been experienced by those within this study (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018: 187). Johnstone & Boyle (2018) assert that all human beings are determined and determining beings and as such, are active agents in their lives (as opposed to objects to be acted upon by external forces), a concept in line with CoP values (Copper, 2009). They add that as human beings, we conform to the reality we encounter and subsequently seek to transform it, which is evident from the theme in this study, *Taking Power Back*. They state, "*We do this through our capacity for meaning making, and for reflecting on and learning from our experiences*" (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018; 47). Understanding cultural nuances as clinicians is also important and we can do so by educating ourselves further and advocating for cultural diversity in clinicians within therapies (Oquendo, 1996; Antinucci, 2004).

This research takes a social justice stance in that it highlights the disparities, marginalisation, and oppression within society, which is considered the main goal of social justice (Leong, Pickren & Vasquez, 2017). As CoPs, a commitment to social justice is an important part of our values. It is imperative therefore that we uphold the principles of social justice in the work we do, as failing to do so may result in us not serving communities to the best of our ability (Tribe & Bell, 2018). Part of the work within social justice would be in partnering with organisations such as, *Psychologists for Social Change* and others, who support marginalised groups in society. Our position as psychologists means that we hold a certain level of power, which can be used in positive ways to campaign on behalf of the marginalised and use our research, media, and other avenues to advocate for social justice and to challenge oppressive systems in society (Boyle & Johnstone, 2020). For example, this can come from policy reform in challenging the use of reporting for monitoring migrants, increasing funding for services supporting those reporting, and signposting and increasing awareness among migrants about how to access vital services that could further support them (e.g., psychological, healthcare, legal, charities). This paper argues that we as psychologists, through consultancy, are well placed to effect change in this way.

This research aimed to highlight that individuals cannot be understood outside of their context, which requires that clinicians actively engage in reflective practice to ensure we acknowledge our positioning in relation to the service users we work with (Goodman et al., 2004). As this research found (and others on the experiences of immigration control), language and discourse can influence how people are perceived and subsequently treated by the state, and through social change, we can work towards changing such unhelpful narratives. It is hoped that doing so can, in some way, improve the treatment of those under immigration control.

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Appendix I: Application for Ethics

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON
School of Psychology

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS (Updated October 2019)

FOR BSc RESEARCH
FOR MSc/MA RESEARCH
FOR PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE RESEARCH IN CLINICAL, COUNSELLING & EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

1. Completing the application

1. x Before completing this application please familiarise yourself with the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) and the UEL Code of Practice for Research Ethics (2015-16). Please tick to confirm that you have read and understood these codes:

2. Email your supervisor the completed application and all attachments as ONE WORD DOCUMENT. Your supervisor will then look over your application.

3. When your application demonstrates sound ethical protocol, your supervisor will submit it for review. By submitting the application, the supervisor is confirming that they have reviewed all parts of this application, and consider it of sufficient quality for submission to the SREC committee for review. It is the responsibility of students to check that the supervisor has checked the application and sent it for review.

4. Your supervisor will let you know the outcome of your application. Recruitment and data collection must NOT commence until your ethics application has been approved, along with other research ethics approvals that may be necessary (see section 8).

5. Please tick to confirm that the following appendices have been completed. Note: templates for these are included at the end of the form.

[x] • The participant invitation letter

[x] • The participant consent form

[x] • The participant debrief letter

6. The following attachments should be included if appropriate. In each case, please tick to either confirm that you have included the relevant attachment, or confirm that it is not required for this application.

- A participant advert, i.e., any text (e.g., email) or document (e.g., poster) designed to recruit potential participants.

  [x] Included or

  [ ] Not required (because no participation adverts will be used)

- A general risk assessment form for research conducted off campus (see section 6).

  [x] Included or

  [ ] Not required (because the research takes place solely on campus or online)

- A country-specific risk assessment form for research conducted abroad (see section 6).

  [ ] Included or

  [x] Not required (because the researcher will be based solely in the UK)

- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate (see section 7).

  [ ] Included or

  [x] Not required (because the research does not involve children aged 16 or under or vulnerable adults)

- Ethical clearance or permission from an external organisation (see section 8).

  [ ] Included or

  [x] Not required (because no external organisations are involved in the research)

- Original and/or pre-existing questionnaire(s) and test(s) you intend to use.

  [ ] Included or

  [x] Not required (because you are not using pre-existing questionnaires or tests)

- Interview questions for qualitative studies.

☒ Included or

☐ Not required (because you are not conducting qualitative interviews)

- Visual material(s) you intend showing participants.

☐ Included or

☒ Not required (because you are not using any visual materials)

2. Your details

1. Your name: **Sheila Ufot**

2. Your supervisor's name: **Dr Claire Marshall**

3. Title of your programme: **Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology**

4. UEL assignment submission date (stating both the initial date and the resit date): **August 2022**

3. Your research

Please give as much detail as necessary for a reviewer to be able to fully understand the nature and details of your proposed research.

1. The title of your study: **Exploring the Lived Experience of Immigration Reporting**

2. Your research question:

What is the lived experience of those subject to immigration reporting in the UK?

3. Design of the research:

The research will seek to explore the lived experience of those subject to Immigration Reporting by the Home Office. It will adopt a constructivist epistemological position and a relativist ontological framework. Rather than seeking to describe the lived experience of individuals, the proposed research aims to understand what the experience is like for those currently reporting. Semistructured interviews will be utilised, which will be recorded and subsequently transcribed. It is hoped that the research will inform clinical practice and further research.

4. Participants:

The study will aim to recruit those currently required to report to the UK Home Office. They will be males or females and those above the age of 18 (and therefore

able to provide consent to participate). They will also be required to be fluent in English and not need interpreters, limiting the potential for misunderstanding between myself and research participants. All participants should have experience of the phenomenon being explored (i.e., immigration reporting).

5. Recruitment:

Approximately 4- 6 participants will be recruited for interviews via social media and personal contacts. Purposive sampling will be adopted, with participants selected based on their characteristics (foreign nationals) and the objective of the study (their experience of Home Office reporting). Snowball sampling will also be utilised, encouraging participants to aid in recruiting others with experience of Home Office reporting.

6. Measures, materials or equipment:

- **An encrypted recording device will be used during interviews. Interviews will be semi-structured involving 3-4 open-ended questions with prompts.**
- **An interview schedule (approx. 6 questions)**
- **A laptop/computer**
- **A mobile phone**
- **Consent Forms**
- **Access to Microsoft Teams**

7. Data collection:

Semi-structured interviews will be utilised, which will make use of prompts for further exploration. Interviews will be transcribed verbatim, and all identifiable data will be anonymised. Interviews will take place remotely (via Microsoft Teams), via telephone or in person on UEL's Stratford Campus.

8. Data analysis:

• The chosen methodology for this research is van Manen's Phenomenology. Van Manen's approach explores the lived experiences of participants and straddles both descriptive and interpretive approaches. Text is read and reread, and emergent themes are identified to uncover the essence of lived experience.

4. Confidentiality and security

It is vital that data are handled carefully, particularly the details about participants. For information in this area, please see the UEL guidance on data protection, and also the UK government guide to data protection regulations.

1. Will participants data be gathered anonymously?

NO

2. If not (e.g., in qualitative interviews), what steps will you take to ensure their anonymity in the subsequent steps (e.g., data analysis and dissemination)? **Participants' information featured in the data analysis and final write-up will be anonymised. All participants will be given pseudonyms and all identifiable information (names, locations etc) will be anonymised when the interviews are transcribed. Only this anonymised data will feature in the final research writeup.**

3. How will you ensure participants details will be kept confidential?

All identifiable information (e.g., names, contact details) will be stored separately from anonymised data and interview transcripts. No identifiable information will feature in the transcript or research write-up. Person names will be given pseudonyms.

4. How will the data be securely stored?

All signed consent forms, along with interview recordings and transcripts will be uploaded and stored on the encrypted UEL OneDrive and encrypted files will be backed up on the UEL H: Drive. This data will be stored on a password-protected computer and kept in a locked filing cabinet upon completion of my studies. Data will be kept for a maximum of 5 years before being destroyed with a view to publish my findings in an academic journal. Identifiable and anonymised data will be stored separately.

5. Who will have access to the data?

Only I will have access to identifiable data (e.g., personal contact details). Other than myself, my supervisor and examiners will have access to my anonymised data for assessment purposes via the research write-up. Upon completion of my course, I aim to store the final research paper on UEL's Research Repository, making it accessible to the public. I further wish to publish the data in the future and therefore the anonymised data will feature in the publication and be accessible to the public.

6. How long will data be retained for?

Data will be kept for a maximum of 5 years before being destroyed with a view to publish my findings in an academic journal.

5. Informing participants

Please confirm that your information letter includes the following details:

x

1. Your research title:

x

2. Your research question:

x

3. The purpose of the research:

4. x The exact nature of their participation. This includes location, duration, and the tasks etc. involved:

x

x

5. That participation is strictly voluntary:

6. What are the potential risks to taking part:

7. What are the potential advantages to taking part:

8. [x] Their right to withdraw participation (i.e., to withdraw involvement at any point, no questions asked):

9. [x] Their right to withdraw data (usually within a three-week window from the time of their participation):

10. [x] How long their data will be retained for:

[x]

11. How their information will be kept confidential:

[x]

12. How their data will be securely stored:

[x]

13. What will happen to the results/analysis:

[x]

14. Your UEL contact details:

[x]

15. The UEL contact details of your supervisor:

Please also confirm whether:

16. Are you engaging in deception? If so, what will participants be told about the nature of the research, and how will you inform them about its real nature.
NO

17. Will the data be gathered anonymously? If NO what steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality and protect the identity of participants?

18. Will participants be paid or reimbursed? If so, this must be in the form of redeemable vouchers, not cash. If yes, why is it necessary and how much will it be worth?

NO

6. Risk Assessment

Please note: If you have serious concerns about the safety of a participant, or others, during the course of your research please see your supervisor as soon as possible. If there is any

unexpected occurrence while you are collecting your data (e.g. a participant or the researcher injures themselves), please report this to your supervisor as soon as possible.

1. Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to participants related to taking part? If so, what are these, and how can they be minimised?

There may be a psychological risk posed by participants discussing potentially distressing experiences of the UK immigration system and pre and post migration experiences. At the start of the interviews, participants will be informed that they have the right to terminate the interview at any time if they so wish.

Attention will be given to the participant's presentation as observed by the researcher. If they appear distressed, they will be offered the opportunity to take a break and asked whether they would like to end the interview. They will be made aware that they can withhold any information they wish not to feature in the research. They can also request to withdraw all their data up to 3 weeks post interview (as following this, analysis would have commenced).

After the interviews have taken place, there may also be a risk of distress to participants after having recounted their experiences, which may not have been apparent during the interview. All participants will be debriefed and signposted to their local counselling and immigration support services. The debrief forms will detail support services that are available to them.

In addition, participants will be asked to complete a Screening Interview and Distress Protocol prior to interviews taking place, to ensure their psychological stability to engage with the material covered during the interviews.

A pilot study can be conducted to ascertain whether any risks that have not been considered can later be incorporated into the risk assessment for the main study. It can also be used to ensure that the current proposed risk assessment is effective in managing and minimising the risks to participants.

If a participant threatens self-harm after becoming distressed, the interview will be terminated immediately, and emergency services contacted. Participant's addresses and next of kin information will be collected prior to them engaging in the research to ensure their safety and allow for next of kin or emergency services to perform wellbeing checks if needed. Wellbeing checks can be utilised for those participating remotely (over telephone or MS Teams). For those engaging in person (on UEL campus), they can be encouraged to remain on-site (if it is safe to do so), while emergency services are contacted. If they choose to leave the site, emergency services and next of kins can be informed of the risk and asked to perform a wellbeing check. For face-to-face interviews, any objects that could be used to cause harm are removed prior to interviews taking place (e.g., wires, cords).

COVID-19 continues to pose a risk to the vulnerable within society. Due to the ongoing risks, it is expected that individuals will be encouraged to participate remotely (via Microsoft Teams), however in cases where this is not possible,

telephone or on-campus interviews will be offered (whichever is most convenient for the participant). This is to ensure the safety of both researcher and participant. Government guidelines will be adhered to e.g., social distancing and the use of masks.

2. Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to you as a researcher? If so, what are these, and how can they be minimised?

There may be a risk of the researcher (myself) becoming distressed by listening to migration experiences and possible related trauma. This will be discussed thoroughly will my DOS prior to conducting interviews and following, during scheduled meetings. As a Counselling Psychology trainee, it is a requirement to attend regular therapy sessions with a private therapist. Any psychological risk posed by the research can be discussed during these sessions, along with any concerns that arise prior to engaging in an interview.

A pilot study can be carried out to address any issues that may arise concerning the potential for psychological risk to the researcher. Any risks that do arise can also be discussed with the research DOS and personal therapist. Further amendments to the research risk assessment can also be made to account for these risks if needed.

For interviews conducted in person, I (sole researcher) will ensure that I have access to a mobile phone device in the incident that my safety becomes compromised (security or emergency services can then be contacted if necessary). This could be that the participant becomes physically or verbally aggressive. If the participant where to become verbally aggressive or threatens physical harm, the interview process will be terminated immediately. As in-person sessions will take place on UEL campus, university security can then be contacted immediately. I will ensure that I position myself close to the nearest exit, to ensure a prompt exit if required. Prior to interviews, any objects within the meeting rooms that can be used to cause harm will be removed (e.g., wires, cords etc).

Due to the ongoing risks of COVID-19, it is expected that participants will be encouraged to participate remotely (via Microsoft Teams), however in cases where this is not possible, telephone or on-campus interviews will be offered (whichever is most convenient for the participant). This is to ensure the safety of researcher and participant. Government guidelines will be adhered to e.g., social distancing and the use of masks.

3. Have appropriate support services been identified in the debrief letter? If so, what are these, and why are they relevant? **YES**

List of relevant support services:

Advice Local https://advicelocal.uk/
Just enter a postcode and choose an advice topic to find tailored information for your area, including details of independent advice organisations who can help you get the

advice and support that you need. Local advice can help you with questions relating to: welfare benefits and tax credits; council tax, including exemptions and discounts; debt and money advice; housing and homelessness; employment and work issues; disability and social care; and asylum and immigration.

Asylum Aid:
Tel No: 020 7354 9264 www.asylumaid.org.uk
Advice and assistance to refugees on their applications for asylum in the UK, conducting appeals against refusal or asylum, providing advice on related areas such as welfare rights and housing.

Asylum Support Appeals project (ASAP):
Advice Line: 0203 716 0283 www.asaproject.org
Access to free competent legal advice and representation concerning asylum support appeals at the Asylum Support Tribunal against decisions by the UK Border Agency decisions to stop or refuse support.

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group:
Tel No: 01293 657070
www.gdwg.org.uk
Provides care and support for the 150 asylum seekers detained at Tinsley House at Gatwick who request help. Visiting and befriending service provided and listening, caring and meeting small practical needs.

Migrant Help:
Tel No: 01304 203977
www.migranthelpuk.org
Advice and support to vulnerable migrants in the UK.

Refugee Action:
www.refugee-action.org.uk
To assist refugees in conditions of need, hardship and distress, advice and support to asylum seekers who are dispersed without choice to the North West, East Midlands, South Central and South West Home office regions.

Refugee Council: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
Gives practical advice and promotes refugees rights in the UK and abroad. Provides vocational training courses, English as a second language, support and orientation into UK work culture and job search methods, employment preparation courses, advice and guidance.

Samaritans:
Offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you. You don't have to be suicidal. **Telephone number: 116 123 (UK)**

This number is FREE to call. You don't have to be suicidal to call them. They are available round the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. **Email: jo@samaritans.org**

4. Does the research take place outside the UEL campus? If so, where? **YES remotely (via Microsoft Teams)**

[x] If so, a 'general risk assessment form' must be completed. This is included below as appendix D. Note: if the research is on campus, or is online only (e.g., a Qualtrix survey), then a risk assessment form is not needed, and this appendix can be deleted. If a general risk assessment form is required for this research, please tick to confirm that this has been completed:

5. Does the research take place outside the UK? If so, where? **NO**

[ ] If so, in addition to the 'general risk assessment form', a 'country-specific risk assessment form' must be also completed (available in the Ethics folder in the Psychology Noticeboard), and included as an appendix. [Please note: a country-specific risk assessment form is not needed if the research is online only (e.g., a Qualtrix survey), regardless of the location of the researcher or the participants.] If a 'countryspecific risk assessment form' *is* needed, please tick to confirm that this has been included:

However, please also note:

- For assistance in completing the risk assessment, please use the AIG Travel Guard website to ascertain risk levels. Click on 'sign in' and then 'register here' using policy # 0015865161. Please also consult the Foreign Office travel advice website for further guidance.
- For *on campus* students, once the ethics application has been approved by a reviewer, all risk assessments for research abroad must then be signed by the Head of School (who may escalate it up to the Vice Chancellor).
- For *distance learning* students conducting research abroad in the country where they currently reside, a risk assessment must be also carried out. To minimise risk, it is recommended that such students only conduct data collection on-line. If the project is deemed low risk, then it is not necessary for the risk assessments to be signed by the Head of School. However, if not deemed low risk, it must be signed by the Head of School (or potentially the Vice Chancellor).
- Undergraduate and M-level students are not explicitly prohibited from conducting research abroad. However, it is discouraged because of the inexperience of the students and the time constraints they have to complete their degree.

7. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates

1. Does your research involve working with children (aged 16 or under) or vulnerable adults (*see below for definition)?

NO

2. If so, you will need a current DBS certificate (i.e., not older than six months), and to include this as an appendix. Please tick to confirm that you have included this:

Alternatively, if necessary for reasons of confidentiality, you may email a copy directly to the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee. Please tick if you have done this instead:

Also alternatively, if you have an Enhanced DBS clearance (one you pay a monthly fee to maintain) then the number of your Enhanced DBS clearance will suffice. Please tick if you have included this instead:

3. ☐ If participants are under 16, you need 2 separate information letters, consent form, and debrief form (one for the participant, and one for their parent/guardian). Please tick to confirm that you have included these:

4. ☐ If participants are under 16, their information letters consent form, and debrief form need to be written in age-appropriate language. Please tick to confirm that you have done this

* You are required to have DBS clearance if your participant group involves (1) children and young people who are 16 years of age or under, and (2) 'vulnerable' people aged 16 and over with psychiatric illnesses, people who receive domestic care, elderly people (particularly those in nursing homes), people in palliative care, and people living in institutions and sheltered accommodation, and people who have been involved in the criminal justice system, for example. Vulnerable people are understood to be persons who are not necessarily able to freely consent to participating in your research, or who may find it difficult to withhold consent. If in doubt about the extent of the vulnerability of your intended participant group, speak to your supervisor. Methods that maximise the understanding and ability of vulnerable people to give consent should be used whenever possible. For more information about ethical research involving children click here.

8. Other permissions

9. Is HRA approval (through IRAS) for research involving the NHS required? Note: HRA/IRAS approval is required for research that involves patients or Service Users of the NHS, their relatives or carers as well as those in receipt of services provided under contract to the NHS.

NO If yes, please note:

• You DO NOT need to apply to the School of Psychology for ethical clearance if ethical approval is sought via HRA/IRAS (please see further details here). • However, the school *strongly discourages* BSc and MSc/MA students from

designing research that requires HRA approval for research involving the NHS, as this can be a very demanding and lengthy process.

- If you work for an NHS Trust and plan to recruit colleagues from the Trust, permission from an appropriate manager at the Trust must be sought, and HRA approval will probably be needed (and hence is likewise strongly discouraged). If the manager happens to not require HRA approval, their written letter of approval must be included as an appendix.
- IRAS approval is not required for NHS staff even if they are recruited via the NHS (UEL ethical approval is acceptable). However, an application will still need to be submitted to the HRA in order to obtain R&D approval. This is in addition to a separate approval via the R&D department of the NHS Trust involved in the research.
- IRAS approval is not required for research involving NHS employees when data collection will take place off NHS premises, and when NHS employees are not recruited directly through NHS lines of communication. This means that NHS staff can participate in research without HRA approval when a student recruits via their own social or professional networks or through a professional body like the BPS, for example.

1. Will the research involve NHS employees who will not be directly recruited through the NHS, and where data from NHS employees will not be collected on NHS premises?

NO

2. If you work for an NHS Trust and plan to recruit colleagues from the Trust, will permission from an appropriate member of staff at the Trust be sought, and will HRA be sought, and a copy of this permission (e.g., an email from the Trust) attached to this application?

N/A

3. Does the research involve other organisations (e.g. a school, charity, workplace, local authority, care home etc.)? If so, please give their details here. **NO**

☐ Furthermore, written permission is needed from such organisations if they are helping you with recruitment and/or data collection, if you are collecting data on their premises, or if you are using any material owned by the institution/organisation. If that is the case, please tick here to confirm that you have included this written permission as an appendix:

In addition, before the research commences, once your ethics application has been approved, please ensure that you provide the organisation with a copy of the final, approved ethics application. Please then prepare a version of the consent form for the organisation themselves to sign. You can adapt it by replacing words such as 'my' or 'I' with 'our organisation,' or with the title of the organisation. This organisational consent form must be signed before the research can commence.

Finally, please note that even if the organisation has their own ethics committee and review process, a School of Psychology SREC application and approval is still required. Ethics approval from SREC can be gained before approval from another research ethics committee is obtained. However, recruitment and data collection are NOT to commence until your research has been approved by the School and other ethics committee/s as may be necessary.

9. Declarations

Declaration by student: I confirm that I have discussed the ethics and feasibility of this research proposal with my supervisor.

Student's name (typed name acts as a signature): **Sheila Ufot**

Student's number: **0516093** Date: **13.05.21**

As a supervisor, by submitting this application, I confirm that I have reviewed all parts of this application, and I consider it of sufficient quality for submission to the SREC committee.

Appendix II: Initial Ethics Approval

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

REVIEWER: George Georgiou

SUPERVISOR: Claire Marshall

STUDENT: Sheila Ufot

Course: Prof Doc in Counselling Psychology

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED:** Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.

2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is not required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made before the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY

(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

APPROVED

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

Major amendments required *(for reviewer):*

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature):*

Student number:

Date:

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES

Please request resubmission with an adequate risk assessment

If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

☐
HIGH

Please do not approve a high risk application and refer to the Chair of Ethics. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not approved on this basis. If unsure please refer to the Chair of Ethics.

☐ MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

☒ x

University of East London

☐ LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).

Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*: GGeorgiou

Date: 10th November 2021

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE:

For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UELs Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard

Appendix III: Request for Amendment to Ethics

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impact on ethical protocol. If you are not sure as to whether your proposed amendment warrants approval, consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee).

How to complete and submit the request	
1	Complete the request form electronically.
2	Type your name in the 'student's signature' section (page 2).
3	When submitting this request form, ensure that all necessary documents are attached (see below).
4	Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to Dr Trishna Patel: t.patel@uel.ac.uk
5	Your request form will be returned to you via your UEL email address with the reviewer's decision box completed. Keep a copy of the approval to submit with your dissertation.

6	Recruitment and data collection are **not** to commence until your proposed amendment has been approved.

Required documents

A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendment(s) added with track changes.	**YES**
	☒
Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example, an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information sheet, updated consent form, etc.	**YES** ☒
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	**YES** ☒

Details

Name of applicant:	**Sheila Ufot**
Programme of study:	**Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology**
Title of research:	**Exploring the Lived Experience of Immigration Reporting**
Name of supervisor:	**Dr Claire Marshall**

Proposed amendment(s)

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below

Proposed amendment	**Rationale**
Sample: Originally it was proposed that those currently required to report to the Home Office will be recruited. I wish now to recruit anyone with experience of immigration reporting.	It has proven difficult to recruit those who are currently reporting as it seems people are fearful about the impact on their current Home Office claims. During my attempts to recruit, I have been approached by others who are not currently reporting but are willing to talk about past experiences of reporting.

Amended Interview Questions	Questions were amended to account for those currently reporting and those with past experience of reporting to the Home Office. In addition, I adjusted previous questions and added questions to make them more in line with my research aims i.e., exploring the experiences of immigration reporting.
Amended Participant Invitation Letter	To account for both those currently reporting and those with past experience.
Amended Research Advert	To account for both those currently reporting and those with past experience.

Confirmation

Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and have they agreed to these changes?	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐

Student's signature

Student: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Sheila Ufot**
Date:	**16/11/2021**

Reviewer's decision

Amendment(s) approved:	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐
Comments:	Please enter any further comments here	
Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Trishna Patel**	
Date:	**16/12/2021**	

Appendix IV: Ethics Amendment Approval Form

University of East London

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impact on ethical protocol. If you are not sure as to whether your proposed amendment warrants approval, consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee).

How to complete and submit the request	
1	Complete the request form electronically.
2	Type your name in the 'student's signature' section (page 2).

3	When submitting this request form, ensure that all necessary documents are attached (see below).
4	Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to Dr Trishna Patel: t.patel@uel.ac.uk
5	Your request form will be returned to you via your UEL email address with the reviewer's decision box completed. Keep a copy of the approval to submit with your dissertation.
6	Recruitment and data collection are **not** to commence until your proposed amendment has been approved.

Required documents

A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendment(s) added with track changes.	**YES** ☒
Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example, an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information sheet, updated consent form, etc.	**YES** ☒
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	**YES** ☒

Details

Name of applicant:	**Sheila Ufot**
Programme of study:	**Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology**
Title of research:	**Exploring the Lived Experience of Immigration Reporting**
Name of supervisor:	**Dr Claire Marshall**

Proposed amendment(s)

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below

Proposed amendment	**Rationale**

Sample: Originally it was proposed that those currently required to report to the Home Office will be recruited. I wish now to recruit anyone with experience of immigration reporting.	It has proven difficult to recruit those who are currently reporting as it seems people are fearful about the impact on their current Home Office claims. During my attempts to recruit, I have been approached by others who are not currently reporting but are willing to talk about past experiences of reporting.
Amended Interview Questions	Questions were amended to account for those currently reporting and those with past experience of reporting to the Home Office. In addition, I adjusted previous questions and added questions to make them more in line with my research aims i.e., exploring the experiences of immigration reporting.
Amended Participant Invitation Letter	To account for both those currently reporting and those with past experience.
Amended Research Advert	To account for both those currently reporting and those with past experience.

Confirmation

Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and have they agreed to these changes?	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐

Student's signature

Student: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Sheila Ufot**
Date:	**16/11/2021**

Reviewer's decision

Amendment(s) approved:	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐
Comments:	Please enter any further comments here	

Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Trishna Patel**
Date:	**16/12/2021**

Appendix V: Participant Invitation Letter

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: **Dr Tim Lomas, School** of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree it is important that you understand what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Who am I?

I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am studying for a Doctorate in Counselling Psychology. As part of my studies I am conducting the research you are being invited to participate in.

What is the research?

I am conducting research into the experience of immigration reporting in the UK for those required to do so by the Home Office. The research is particularly interested in exploring the lived experience of individuals. Therefore, understanding this experience from your point of view and in your own words is most important.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate in my research as someone who can help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve adults who have experience of reporting to the UK Home Office.

I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. You will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect.

You are quite free to decide whether to participate and should not feel coerced.

What will your participation involve?

- You will be asked to read and sign a consent form regarding your participation in the research.
- You will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately one hour. Questions will be related to the topic of UK immigration reporting and ask you to give personal accounts of your experience of this.
- Interviews will take place remotely (via Microsoft Teams or telephone) or face to face on UEL's university campus. Travel expenses will be paid for those who choose to participate on campus.
- Interviews will be like having an informal chat however, they will be audio recorded for the purposes of transcribing.

- Participation is voluntary, however for those who travel to the university campus, travel costs up to £12.60 will be reimbursed (i.e., cost of daily off-peak London travel zones 1-6).

I will not be able to pay you for participating in my research, but your participation would be very valuable in helping to develop knowledge and understanding of my research topic

Your taking part will be safe and confidential

Your privacy and safety will be respected at all times.

- You will not be identified by the data collected, on any written material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research. To ensure this, all information that may identify is removed (e.g., names, locations, contact details).
- You do not have to answer all questions asked of you and can stop your participation at any time.
- You will be provided with details of support services that can be used if needed following participation. It is encouraged that if you have been adversely affected in any way by your participation, you make use of these services for support.

What will happen to the information that you provide?

Your participation in this research will be kept confidential.

- Your signed consent forms, along with interview recordings and transcripts will be uploaded and stored on the encrypted UEL OneDrive and encrypted files will be backed up on the UEL H: Drive. This data will also be stored on a password-protected computer and kept in a locked filing cabinet upon completion of my studies. Data will be kept for a maximum of 5 years before being destroyed with a view to publish in an academic journal.

- All information that can identify you (e.g., names and other personal data) will be stored separately from anonymised data and interview transcripts. Identifiable information will be stored in a locked filing cabinet that I have sole access to.
- Other than myself, my supervisor and examiners will have access to my anonymised data for assessment purposes. Upon completion of my course, I aim to store the research on UEL's Research Repository, making it accessible to the public. I also wish to publish the data and therefore the anonymised data will feature in the publication.
- You will have 3 weeks after data collection to request to withdraw your data. After this period, it will not be possible to withdraw it as data analysis will likely have begun.

What if you want to withdraw?

You are free to withdraw from the research study at any time without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. Separately, you may also request to withdraw your data even after you have participated data, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Name: Sheila Ufot

Email: u0516093@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor **Dr Claire Marshall**. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: c.marshall@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: **Dr Tim Lomas, School** of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix V: Research Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

Research Title: Exploring the Lived Experience of Those Subject to Immigration Reporting in the UK

Researcher Details: Sheila Ufot, Trainee Counselling Psychologist

Student No: u0516093

Institution: University of East London, University Square Stratford Campus, 1 Salway Pl, London E15 1NF.

I have the read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information.

I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……..

Researcher's Signature

……

Date: ……..

Appendix VI: Debrief form

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF LETTER

Thank you for participating in my research study on exploring the lived experience of immigration reporting in the UK. This letter offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

What will happen to the information that you have provided?

The following steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the data you have provided.

- Your signed consent forms, along with interview recordings and transcripts will be uploaded and stored on the encrypted UEL OneDrive and encrypted files will be backed up on the UEL H: Drive. This data will be stored on a password-protected computer and kept in a locked filing cabinet upon completion of my studies. Data will be kept for a maximum of 5 years before being destroyed with a view to publish my findings in an academic journal.

- All information that can identify you (e.g., contact details) will be stored separately from anonymised data and interview transcripts. Identifiable information will be stored in a locked filing cabinet that I have sole access to.

- Other than myself, my supervisor and examiners will have access to my anonymised data for assessment purposes. Upon completion of my course, I aim to store the final research paper on UEL's Research Repository, making it accessible to the public. I also wish to publish the data and therefore the anonymised data will feature in the publication.

- You will have 3 weeks after data collection to request to withdraw your data. After this period, it will not be possible to withdraw it as data analysis will likely have begun.

What if you have been adversely affected by taking part?

It is not anticipated that you will have been adversely affected by taking part in the research, and all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise potential harm. Nevertheless, it is still possible that your participation – or its after-effects – may have been challenging, distressing or uncomfortable in some way. If you have been affected in any of those ways you may find the following resources/services helpful in relation to obtaining information and support:

List of relevant support services:

Advice Local https://advicelocal.uk/

Just enter a postcode and choose an advice topic to find tailored information for your area, including details of independent advice organisations who can help you get the advice and support that you need. Local advice can help you with questions relating to: welfare benefits and tax credits; council tax, including exemptions and discounts; debt and money advice; housing and homelessness; employment and work issues; disability and social care; and asylum and immigration.

Asylum Aid:

Tel No: 020 7354 9264 www.asylumaid.org.uk

Advice and assistance to refugees on their applications for asylum in the UK, conducting appeals against refusal or asylum, providing advice on related areas such as welfare rights and housing.

Asylum Support Appeals project (ASAP):
Advice Line: 0203 716 0283
www.asaproject.org
Access to free competent legal advice and representation concerning asylum support appeals at the Asylum Support Tribunal against decisions by the UK Border Agency decisions to stop or refuse support.

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group:
Tel No: 01293 657070

www.gdwg.org.uk
To care for and support any of the 150 asylum seekers detained at Tinsley House at Gatwick who request help. Visit and befriending, listening, caring and meeting small practical needs.

Migrant Help:
Tel No: 01304 203977 www.migranthelpuk.org
Advice and support to vulnerable migrants in the UK.

Refugee Action: www.refugee-action.org.uk
To assist refugees in conditions of need, hardship and distress, advice and support to asylum seekers who are dispersed without choice to the North West, East Midlands, South Central and South West Home office regions.

Refugee Council:
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
Gives practical advice and promotes refugees rights in the UK and abroad. Provides vocational training courses, English as a second language, support and orientation into UK work culture and job search methods, employment preparation courses, advice and guidance.

Samaritans:

Offer a safe place for you to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you. You don't have to be suicidal.

Telephone number: 116 123 (UK)

This number is FREE to call. You don't have to be suicidal to call them. They are available round the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Email: jo@samaritans.org

You are also very welcome to contact me or my supervisor if you have specific questions or concerns.

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Name: Sheila Ufot

Email: u0516093@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor **Dr Claire Marshall**. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: c.marshall@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: **Dr Tim Lomas, School** of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ. (**Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk**)