Enhancing Student Intercultural Awareness Through International Field Education

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Glossary[1]

Term	Acronym
Australian Association of Social Workers	AASW
Coronavirus 2019	COVID-19
Council of Social Work Education	CSWE
Gender-Based Violence	GBV
Green-House Gases	GHG
Information Communication Technologies	ICTs
Internally Displaced Peoples	IDPs
International Committee of the Red Cross	ICRC
International Field Education	IFE
International Non-Government Organisations	INGOs
Multinational Corporations	MNCs
Non-Government Organisations	NGOs
Norwegian Red Cross	NRC
Papua New Guinea	PNG
Pre-Service Social Work Students	Students
Simulated Exercise Management Training Course	SIMEX
Situation-Based Learning	SBL
Sustainable Development Goals	SDGs
United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	UNOCHA
United Nations	UN
United Kingdom	UK
United States of America	US
World Health Organisation	WHO
World War Two	WW2

[1] Acronyms are commonly used in humanitarian work. I use acronyms in this thesis in the pursuit of brevity and provide them here for reference

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Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma. No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis. This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Annie Townsend

14 August 2021

PREPARING PRE-SERVICE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS FOR COMPLEX HUMANITARIAN CONTEXTS THROUGH AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHICAL-INFORMED EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

Abstract

This study is informed by an autoethnographic research sensibility, incorporating reflections from journals kept as a student and during my humanitarian and academic career. Identities created from these journals are used reflexively to initiate a pedagogically informed framework to prepare pre-service social work students for international field education experiences in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers. My framework offers strategies for social work education faculties to use to facilitate intercultural awareness, including intercultural pedagogy, situation-based learning, and practical hands-on experience through international field education. My framework is designed to help students during their international field education experiences to meaningfully engage, in an intercultural way, with complex humanitarian crisis drivers and the confluences of colonialism and globalisation and localisation.

Chapter One: Introduction

Kris: Hi Annie! I know it's been a while since we last had contact and I got all your messages/emails. Internet connection is bad at the moment- it's monsoon season and it's playing havoc with phone lines and internet connection. Everyone is saying it's the worst season ever. I was only able to speak to my mum for the first time a couple of days ago. I got all her messages too but couldn't send her any updates. I think if she knew the truth, she would be really worried about me. I started this field education experience thinking I could make a difference. I have been here for two weeks, and I haven't been eating or sleeping well. I hear distant gun fire at night-time, and sometimes it feels the sound is close by.

I went to find an open internet café on the weekend so I could do some catching up with my learning agreement - I feel so far behind. Only two cafes were open and each of them had a massive line and I waited under a tarp at the burn-out building next door. A few families have set up tents here. The tents are branded with Christian symbols like the cross. There seemed to be more children here than usual just looking after themselves. The military are watching everyone carefully now, no matter where you are from, and they are trying to ward off any potential street protests. The children are fascinated with the soldiers' guns and uniforms and ruthlessly tease the soldiers' bored faces.

I waited in the rain for a couple of hours and then the power went out in the whole street. Café staff had to quickly close-up-shop. The military went into overdrive and started shoving people - even kids. As the café staff were pulling down the awnings, all the UN workers piled out all at once to get into their vehicles, yelling at their drivers in English to put their cigarettes out and get back in the car. Some of the drivers had been at the local Buddhist temple when this happened, and I saw them running out looking panicked. It was just chaos and as the cars were started up, the wheels spun mud everywhere. Café staff were running after the UN workers trying to settle bills and get lattes paid for and the UN workers were yelling out 'keh ma hsay' over and over. I hear this

a lot. It means 'tomorrow'. I noticed once everyone had left, the young Karenni café owner just stood in the rain, shaking his head, looking frightened but smiling. I think this is the 'loss of face'?

To cheer myself up, I have joined the local soccer team. I was given a white tie for my wrist at our first practice game. I got a photo of me holding my arm up like everyone else I see doing. I got a few more followers on Instagram. For the whole day I was riding a big high.

But I still feel that something is missing…like should I be doing more? It all came to a head yesterday when a persistent child beggar who has moved here from the Chin state with his family approached me for money. They have made their home under a tarp near the city's main bus stop. Although they are poor, they seem happy enough. The child said his family had not eaten properly since they left their farm. I didn't know what I could do.

When he started to pull at my arm, I raised my voice at him. He ran off in tears. I feel my own behaviour should not be exempt from scrutiny and I am uncomfortable with not knowing how to do this without feeling overwhelmed. I feel the weight of it all on my shoulders. I am questioning over and over: what am I doing here?

Discovering My Journals

In 2019, my thesis had stalled. I was more interested in teaching social work than writing about it. I was starting to question whether my topic about working with students during their international field education (IFE) experiences in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers was going to be of interest to anyone but me. With due dates looming, I decided to spend a weekend cleaning my shed and, in the process, clearing my head. With the cold rain rattling the corrugated shed roof, I began opening my many large storage boxes, one by one, with the intent to empty them or file their contents.

In one of these boxes, I found an array of hand-written journals dating back to 2002. It was here, in the shed, that I began to binge read these dusty old books under the lemony light from the overhead fluorescent bulb, poring through pages that were nibbled by silverfish. Thinking I was making a final resting place for my journals, instead I journeyed back through the emotional landscape of being a student of social work undertaking my final, three-month, IFE experience to Timor-Leste. In my handwritten reflections, I rediscovered the nuances, stories, experiences, places, people, and feelings which made up the messy texture of being a student that led me into a decade-long foray into international humanitarian work.

The more I read, the more alive and vivid the memories became. In a moment of clarity, it hit me with a jolt that what I was reading and feeling moved by had informed my university role in preparing pre-service social work students (students) for IFE. I felt, at a visceral level, that it was time to revisit the impressions left by my student and professional experiences. I wanted to bring the implicit knowledge I had gained into conscious awareness so I could unpack the kind of learning experiences that can help students for successful IFE. A different direction for my thesis was beginning to emerge.

Introducing Kris

The opening vignette presents an illustrative example of some of the typical experiences that students will experience during their IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers. The challenges *Kris* faces are common to the experiences of students I have supported through field education supervision. Throughout this thesis, *Kris* represents personal communications to me from students during their IFE. Although a compilation rather than a single student, for the purposes of this study, I locate *Kris* as a student completing his final field education in Myanmar, a country in Southeast Asia.

The humanitarian context in which *Kris* is completing his field education experience is one where numerous crisis drivers are at play. This understanding challenges and contradicts the widely contested assumption that humanitarian contexts unfold through two consecutive phases, beginning with an emergency, which is then followed by the development and recovery phase. What *Kris* describes is an antithesis to what has been termed the humanitarian continuum (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010). Through Kris' eyes we see that Myanmar is a context where multiple crisis drivers interact and overlap all at the same time. There is also the perception that normality and recovery (such as thriving cafes and games of soccer) and even boredom, live side by side the unfolding of crisis drivers, albeit, short lived.

Typical crisis drivers in humanitarian contexts and described by Kris are, distinct changes to climate such as unusual rainfall and floods (Masson-Delmotte, Zhai, Pörtner, Roberts, Skea, Shukla, Pirani, Moufouma-Okia, Péan, & Pidcock, 2018). As a country situated in the Hindu Kush Himalaya regions, Myanmar is prone to adverse weather events (Chettri, Shrestha, & Sharma, 2020). Studies suggest that ethnic groups and Indigenous people are more at risk of climate change (Voss, 2020) than dominant or majority groups. This may explain why the young child and his family from the Chin state had to move to the city from their farm. Although the country is recovering from war, there seems to be ongoing civil conflict (Griswold, Scates, & Kadhum, 2020; Howe, 2019; Przybyla & Kathman, 2020). Poverty is evident (Sarker, Hussain, Assaduzzaman, & Failler, 2019) and so, too, is the presence of an over-zealous military, scrutinising the daily life of community comings and goings (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010; Oberoi, 2018). Local families have set up temporary homes, indicating internal displacement (Alexander, 2020). The tents they live in are funded by Christian organisations which may create tensions in communities that are largely Buddhist (Roepstorff, 2020). In this complex context, *Kris* is also seeing the impact of

humanitarian responses and he seems uneasy with the behaviours of United Nations (UN) staff. The picture *Kris* has painted shows how the hierarchy within humanitarian response systems creates power imbalances between local communities, local staff and the international staff who work in them (Melis & Hilhorst, 2020).

Kris has joined a soccer team for social contact and, without realising the significance of the wrist tie, he has shared a photo through social media of his arm held high, showing the wrist tie, to represent his short-lived, 'high' feeling. His actions, here, are questionable and it raises concerns about his intentions as a student undertaking such a significant endeavour to a complex humanitarian context where he is still struggling to understand some of the cultural nuances.

To undertake a successful learning experience in this context requires intercultural awareness. Without intercultural awareness, students like *Kris* are less likely to interact sensitively with those around him - his colleagues and the community. Furthermore, without intercultural awareness, *Kris* is unlikely to comprehend the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis drivers, their historical influences and the overlapping and interrelated nature of these crisis drivers which result in some of the more pernicious cycles of poverty for the local communities. The need for an increased intercultural awareness in preparing students for IFE experiences in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers is an argument I develop over the course of this thesis.

The Research Problem

In my thesis, I consider the problem of preparing students for IFE experiences in complex humanitarian contexts, asking: *During international field education in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers, what education is required to prepare pre-service social work students for intercultural awareness?*

Towards structuring a response to this overarching provocation, I have devised the following research questions (see Figure 1):

- What are humanitarian crisis drivers and what makes them complex?
- What is intercultural awareness pedagogy and how can it be used to enhance intercultural awareness for students during international field education in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers?
- How can an autoethnographic approach to research demonstrate complex humanitarian crisis drivers?
- How does field education pedagogy respond to the gaps in practice and knowledge of intercultural awareness in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers?
- What is situation-based learning and how does it prepare students for intercultural awareness during international field education in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers?

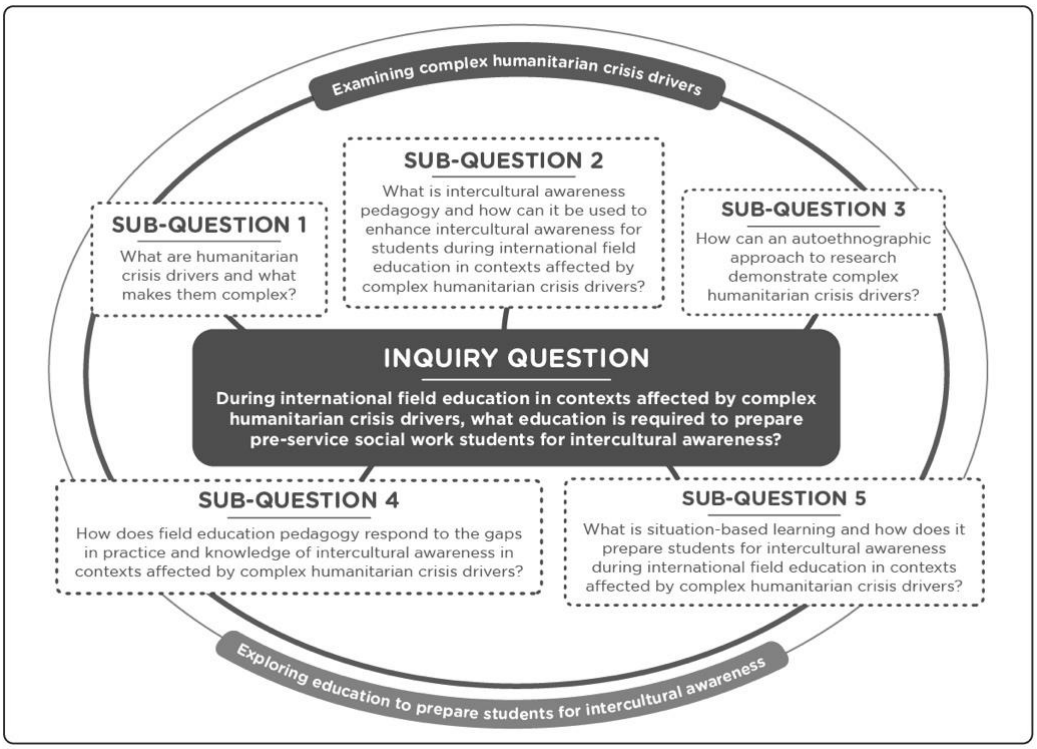

Figure 1. Research Questions

My Research Intentions

First, my intention is to make the case for social work education faculties to continue to offer international field education experiences in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers[2] and, thereby, set students up to have the foundational knowledge for future work. It is the humanitarian contexts unfolding now that define what the future work setting will look like for social workers. Existing literature shows the drivers of contemporary humanitarian crises are dramatically changing who, or what, is considered vulnerable (UNOCHA, 2019, 2020, 2021). Further, because of the confluence and overlapping nature of these drivers, it is anticipated there will be corresponding and enormous challenges for humanitarian response systems (UNOCHA, 2019, 2020, 2021).

[2] Chapter Two elaborates on what constitutes complex humanitarian crisis drivers.

My second intention is to demonstrate *what kind of education* is necessary to prepare students for IFE. As the world continues to witness increasing crises, disasters, and unrelenting poverty, I notice many students are filled with a desire to help in other countries. Despite their determination, I feel many students do not have the intercultural skills and experiences needed to be deployed to complex humanitarian contexts, even though humanitarian organisations are requiring more human resources on the ground than ever before (Alexander, 2020; Johnson, Idzerda, Baras, Camburn, Hein, Walker, & Burkle, 2013). I also consider there is a lack of investment in intercultural preparation for students embarking on IFE by social work education faculties.

One of my biggest concerns, as someone who works in humanitarian contexts, is the trend of acceptance of ill-prepared personnel entering the field which has opened the door to anyone with self-proclaimed 'good intentions'. I worry this is exacerbating the cause of the humanitarian situation. In a worst-case scenario, this could overcrowd a fragile space in the interest of taking 'humbling' selfies and spruiking testimonies of life-changing experiences, thereby glorifying humanitarian work for a self-serving purpose. I feel the descriptions of communities as 'poor but happy', such as *Kris* used in his description of the Chin family, only serves to contribute to the colonial undertones of humanitarian work and the self-appointed sense of duty of White, middle-class individuals to alleviate global suffering. A lack of intercultural awareness also contributes to some of the more damaging myths around humanitarian contexts - that they only exist in the realm of *Third world* and *developing countries.* These have become convenient labels, implying people living in these countries are 'not like us.'

If students are truly set on working in humanitarian contexts and if social work education faculties take their responsibilities to foster learning to produce graduates that are workforce ready seriously, then pedagogically-informed education frameworks that facilitate

intercultural awareness are crucial. Practically, this means taking action ahead of the impacts of humanitarian crises to ready social work students for these complex contexts and, in the process, help them to recalibrate their intentions so that harmful attitudes and practices can be identified and rectified.

Rediscovering my detailed stories of undertaking humanitarian work and recognising how my interactions with these experiences were informed by my cultural story[3] led to some serious conversations with my supervisors about whether I was *allowed* to use my journal entries because it initially felt like to me that it was *not research*. Could the revelatory content of my journals and the relational and embodied knowledge that was jumping out at me be considered rich research data? From these conversations, I realised I was not alone in such uncertainty and that this is often the starting point for autoethnographic research. My questioning and the deepening curiosity about my journals began the transformation of my thesis into a post-qualitative design approach (Basu, 2021; Carlson, Wells, Mark, & Sandoval, 2021; Ellingson & Sotirin, 2020; Holmes, 2020; Kerasovitis, 2020; Monforte & Smith, 2021; Rautio, 2021) and engagement with critically oriented theories (Brinkmann et al., 2020; Fullagar, 2017; Leavy, 2020).

Since embarking on autoethnography, my research is now about two journeys. I originally described my research as a journey in exploring my topic of how to prepare students for IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers. Now, I am critically exploring *the research process* and interrogating the established conventions which dominate my thinking and academic writing. I am finding my thoughts bending in new ways and my growth has become evident throughout. Importantly, my supervisors have encouraged me to reflexively use my voice and explore its possibilities.

[3] My cultural story is explored in Chapter Five

There have also been challenging times in the writing of this thesis. In working with an autoethnographic approach, I have had to wrestle the multiple ideas, themes, and findings from my journals into a logical and coherent order. I have also had to reconfigure my research to meet freshly implemented, neoliberalised university requirements for postgraduate research which has changed the way research is assessed. This means I have had the excruciating task of letting go of previous drafts and my resistance to change so I could meet these new requirements.

What Comes Next?

In Chapter Two, which is my literature review, I focus on the definitions and nuances of complex humanitarian contexts, as well as some of the contemporary ethical issues about humanitarian practice. I show the humanitarian crisis drivers which are unfolding now are informing what the future will look like and the kind of work that will be needed. I then examine the extent of humanitarian training and to what degree it prepares humanitarian workers for their work and enhances their practice in these complex contexts.

The theoretical paradigms of humanitarianism are charted in Chapter Three. The chapter offers a constructive critique of the complexities of humanitarian practice through three discourses: colonialism, globalisation and localisation. These discourses provide insights into the historical and structural layers intrinsic to complex humanitarian crisis drivers and how humanitarian response systems are impacted. I examine the literature to show how these three discourses contribute to conflicts, tensions and collusion which encroach on recovery for communities experiencing the impact of complex humanitarian crises.

In Chapter Four I explore a post-qualitative design approach (Basu, 2021; Carlson et al., 2021; Ellingson & Sotirin, 2020; Holmes, 2020; Kerasovitis, 2020; Monforte & Smith,

2021; Rautio, 2021) and autoethnography as the principal methodological approach to my qualitative study (Ellis & Adams, 2020). I examine my journey with reflexivity and journaling as a student undertaking IFE as well as the ethical concerns in the study. I introduce the reader to *Annie-student* to highlight my professional and personal growth through reflexivity and my readiness to embark in a career as a humanitarian worker.

In Chapter Five, I utilise a selection of my journal entries which capture my interactions with colonialism, globalisation, and localisation. Through *Annie-humanitarian*, I show how these discourses interrupt responses to humanitarian contexts I worked in. I argue that developing a critical understanding of these discourses in humanitarian contexts is crucial because they provide prerequisite knowledge of the highly nuanced and multi-dimensional nature of complex humanitarian contexts. Working in contexts informed by these discourses also requires well rounded intercultural awareness to be able to sensitively work with communities.

In Chapter Six, I re-introduce *Kris* to my study. *Kris* emerges through encounters with *Annie-supervisor*. In this chapter, I show that the situation for *Kris* has escalated, and a thorough intervention is required to help *Kris* progress through his IFE. Through a *Kris-Annie* exchange I show how the interaction I facilitated is informed by intercultural awareness pedagogy. I break this pedagogy down into a suite of pedagogical principles, arguing for the inclusion of reflexivity as one of these pedagogical principles. I also examine situation-based learning (SBL) as a tool to increase readiness for working in complex humanitarian contexts. Through my *Annie-humanitarian* identity, I provide an insider's knowledge of the some of the potential benefits of SBL to prepare for the complexities of working with the Indigenous Bantu communities in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps in Kenya in 2012. I argue for the uptake of SBL by social work education faculties as a pedagogical tool to prepare students for IFE.

In Chapter Seven, I bring together the components of my education framework I have developed over the course of my study, titled 'Intercultural Preparation for Pre-Service Social Work Students Undertaking International Field Education Experiences'. By sharing vignettes of working in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps through my *Annie-humanitarian* identity, I complete this chapter by showing how the framework helped me to develop a more sophisticated intercultural awareness of the dynamic nature of the complexities in this humanitarian context and the precarious tensions that play out daily for refugee communities.

The evolving nature of humanitarian contexts will define how the social work profession must continue to adapt to be effective. In my final argument, in Chapter Eight, I include a summary of possible directions for future practice and research. I believe humanitarian work needs a brighter future, and here I make the case for social work education contributing to ongoing teaching of and validation of social work and humanitarian practices.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to examine complex humanitarian crisis drivers and some of the ethical and paradoxical issues that occur in complex humanitarian contexts. This is to show how these drivers and issues are defining international field education (IFE) experiences and what future work contexts will look like for newly graduated social work students. I also examine how humanitarian training prepares humanitarian personnel for current and future humanitarian crises.

What Does This Chapter Look Like?

I have divided this literature review into four sections. In the first section, I examine the definition of complex humanitarian contexts and identify four specific crisis drivers which are based on my experiences as a humanitarian worker and the experiences of students during their IFE experiences. I demonstrate how these drivers have an ever-increasing cumulative effect. They are highly likely to co-occur which then promulgates an extreme sense of vulnerability and marginalisation in communities. In the second section, I examine how ethical and paradoxical issues contribute to the complexity of humanitarian contexts. In section three, I explore literature that highlights how humanitarian workers prepare for work in complex humanitarian contexts. This literature emphasises that preparatory training is critical to effective humanitarian responses. The literature shows how situation-based learning (SBL) prepares humanitarian workers for the changing dimensions and dynamics of humanitarian contexts. I conclude with a summary of the most important concepts from the literature that align with this study's aims.

Search Terms

To identify relevant literature, I used the search terms: international social work; international humanitarian contexts; humanitarian crisis drivers; disasters; climate change; people movement; refugees and asylum seekers; human rights; social work practices in humanitarian contexts and situation-based learning in humanitarian training and education.

What Literature Did I Use?

The literature review includes peer-reviewed research from: social work and international social work; human rights and social justice; migration law; policy development and political science; public health; economics; science and technology; world development; sociology; humanities and anthropology; and environment and science. I sourced grey literature such as government research reports, UN reports, and reports from International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs), and the publications of professional bodies. I also used a snowballing approach to find literature and conducted specific searches for articles that became of interest from other pieces (DePoy & Gitlin, 2016).

In this review, I forefront the views of authors to emphasise their credibility and their field of work. This approach helps to establish the foundations for a comparative analysis of the literature.

Definitions of Complex Humanitarian Contexts

Cox and Pawar (2013) and Dominelli and Vickers (2015) have offered specific social work definitions of humanitarian contexts. They described humanitarian contexts as human, physical, economic or environmental damage from an event, or series of events, which can overwhelm the capacities of communities. Cox and Pawar (2013) and Hugman (2010) proposed that there are many crisis drivers which spur on humanitarian crises. These include

war, conflict, people movement, migration, climate change and public health disasters such as pandemics. These crisis drivers overlap, creating the necessity for holistic, rather than linear responses. Holistic approaches work with communities before, during and after crises and they achieve a flexible mix of humanitarian, development, and peace approaches to increasingly protracted shocks (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010). Recognising these changing contexts and responding to the crisis drivers holistically, has become the new norm for today's multi-mandated humanitarian organisations which must continue to transform themselves along the wider aid system to be able to stay viable (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Rubenstein, 2005; Tull, 2020).

War and Conflict

According to Przybyla and Kathman (2020), in the last seventy years, global civil wars have been on the rise and these cause internal struggles with no immediate prospect for long-lasting improvements. Endemic to these wars are human rights abuses, disproportionate loss and suffering, the collapse of public health systems, the loss of access to clean water and food, and the mass movement of populations.

Howe (2019) proposed that political violence is the major cause of war and conflict, and its consequences can be seen in the escalating levels of displacement, hunger, and disease. During political violence, globally recognised standards such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at risk of not being realised. This is critically important to understanding complexity because, as argued by Howe (2019), without a global blueprint for measuring the standards of humanitarian responses, humanitarian organisations are unable to respond to conflict scenarios in a consistent and well-informed way.

According to Griswold et al. (2020), there is a lack of distinction between war and everyday life, and wars seem interminable. Recovery for communities within these complex

contexts requires specialised responses grounded in theoretical constructs from psychology and social work for both long-term and sustainable responses. Using narratives of migrants, social workers and other health professionals, Griswold et al. (2020) showed when recovery constructs do not facilitate collective safety, justice, restoration of identities and a trauma response (p. 38), long-term complexity continues with serious consequences for the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

Global health crises interact with civil unrest and political instability, exacerbating vulnerabilities for affected populations. For example, Lawrence (2020) argued that the unequal impact of pandemics interacts with the history of exploitation between rich and poor countries (p.64). In the current context of Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), economic and social tensions between countries will increase which, he contends, will lead to major conflicts. Lawrence (2020) also predicted that when the costs of managing the consequences of COVID-19 soar, leaders of wealthy countries will focus inward, that is nationally, and aim for even more conservative and neoliberal strategies, both on the home front and globally (p. 203). This will create ongoing uncertainty, not only for countries struggling prior to these crises but also for countries considered stable democracies.

Climate change intersects with conflict and makes situations worse. The Norwegian Red Cross (NRC) 2019 report highlighted how conflict harms structures and systems needed to help communities adapt and be resilient to climate change (Nicoson, von Uexkull, Haugen-Poljac, Henriksen, Syvertsen, & Tønnessen-Krokan, 2019). This means as climate change increases, countries and communities impacted by war and conflict will experience an increased vulnerability from an inability to plan, prepare for, absorb, and recover and adapt to adverse climate events.

Howe (2019), Przybyla and Kathman (2020) and Tull (2020) demonstrated that humanitarian responses must respond holistically across the complexities of war and conflict.

This means working across a range of areas such as the declining prevalence of democracies, ethnic and sectarian polarisation, resource stress from population pressures, the declining influence of the UN and the intergenerational vulnerability of communities.

Forced Migration and Displacement

Griswold et al. (2020) showed the numbers of forced migrations are at record levels since World War Two (WW2), when compared to other periods of conflict. Furthermore, as Alexander (2020) demonstrated, people displaced in their own countries as Internally Displaced People (IDPs) now make up two-thirds of the total amount of global displacement. Long-term challenges experienced by IDPs stem from political inaction in meeting global principles and standards. One example of this is the United States (US) government's response to Hurricane Katrina. In a normative study by Kromm and Sturgis (2008), findings revealed the US inadequately planned for affordable housing, relief funds and health care to enable residents to return home. Therefore, crisis responses were deficient because they did not address the short-term and unresolved poverty crisis spurred on by a large-scale event.

According to Murshid, Lemke, Hussain and Siddiqui (2020), Gender Based Violence (GBV) causes forced migration, especially where historical patriarchy, colonialism and racism prevail (p. 86). Vulnerable populations continue to be at risk of GBV during their journeys to safety (2020). Purkayastha (2018) highlighted the negative impact on newly arrived migrants of poorly resourced mental health systems in host countries. This is largely due to the dominance of the Global North Model[4] of migration which associates migrants with crime and criminality. Newnham (2017) brings to the fore other human rights concerns in a study of a small group of mothers seeking refugee status in Switzerland. This study

[4] The Global North and South phenomena are discussed further in Chapter Three.

includes how refugees experience contradictory and inconsistent policies, protocols, and standards, which render them powerless and identity-less.

According to Jolly and Ahmad (2019), the intersection of migration and climate change makes the livelihoods for people on the move even more stressful. 'Climate change migration' is a typology used in their study to describe climate change-induced displacement (p. 24). Other conclusions reached by these authors regarding the impact of climate change for migrating communities are that: between 250 million and one billion people will be displaced by environmental and climatic changes by 2050 (p. 24); of these, women and girls most vulnerable (p. 24), and that people are now more likely to be displaced twice by environmental disasters than they were in the 1970s (p. 25).

Climate Change

Climate Change is a major contributing factor in humanitarian contexts. It compounds complexity and exacerbates existing structural weaknesses. Some of the complexities due to climate change relate to its highly variable impacts across different contexts, and the variations of tolerance and adaption in communities. For example, Jolly and Ahmad (2019) contended that 'climate change does not recognise the geo-political settings and international borders and affects all parts of the globe without any set course' (p. 31). This is confirmed in another study, by Arriagada, Bowman, Palmer and Johnston (2020), which stated that any country, regardless of its economic stability, can and probably will experience detrimental impacts of climate change. Arriagada et al. (2020) argued, for example, that wildfires and heatwaves will become a norm for Australian society. Being a country in the Global North does not make Australia immune to climate change and the subsequent health and wellbeing effects. As evidenced by Arriagada et al. (2020), infants, the elderly, labourers, Indigenous groups, people with pre-existing conditions and those from lower socio-economic status are

at highest risk of smoke and heat-related illnesses (p. 111). Extrapolated from the findings of this study is the changing definition of humanitarian contexts: they are contexts which can erupt anytime and anywhere.

There are also skewed vulnerabilities of the impacts of climate change. Bell and Masys (2020) highlighted that many of the most vulnerable countries and populations are those which have emitted the least Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. In their examination of various case studies in the Pacific, Africa and South Asia, these authors demonstrated how these populations and countries have little access to financial resources to adapt and prepare for the future of climate change. This was described by Bell and Masys (2020 as 'Climate Injustices' (p. 63).

Climate change will gain intensity, leading to serious weather events and patterns. Masson-Delmotte, Zhai, Pörtner, Roberts, Skea, Shukla, Pirani, Moufouma-Okia, Péan, and Pidcock (2018) showed some of these impacts include extreme and complex weather events, rising sea levels and diminishing Arctic sea ice. This is confirmed in a study by Eckstein, Künzel, Schäfer and Winges (2019). Critical messages from Eckstein et al.'s analysis of data since 1999 are that: high income countries of the North are feeling the impacts of climate change events more now than ever before (p. 1); periods of extreme heat will become more commonplace due to increasing global temperatures, exacerbating existing risks such as droughts and extreme rainfall or floods (p. 15), and that climate change impacts more on countries which are least responsible for the cause of the climate crisis (p. 22).

As global temperatures change, land areas are expected to change more quickly than oceans, and Northern-hemisphere countries will change more quickly than the tropics. Chettri et al. (2020) demonstrated the most significant changes to weather in South Asia will be in the Northern region of the Hindu Kush Himalaya, which extends across eight countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan. Chettri et al.

(2020) verified in their study that, with changes to global temperatures, there will be detrimental impacts on the health, function, and productivity of ecosystems which are all directly linked to human wellbeing.

Other studies indicated catastrophic impacts of climate change are expected for countries in the Pacific. For example, Edmonds and Noy (2018) showed there will be an increasing frequency of very hot days and a changing frequency and intensity of rainfall, causing both droughts and flash flooding in Pacific countries. Grecequet, Saikawa and Hellmann (2019) also showed that countries of the Pacific have, for the last two decades, had very few or no reductions in vulnerability. This will have far-reaching impacts, well beyond their national boundaries. Eckstein et al. (2019), Edmonds and Noy (2018) and Grecequet et al. (2019) asserted that if aggressive globally-based strategic policies based on science are not agreed to, the negative impacts of climate change in terms of the escalation of GHG emissions and climate vulnerability will continue for the long term, informing future complexities in humanitarian contexts.

Nicoson et al. (2019) highlighted the population groups most vulnerable to climate change are those populations who experience political and economic marginalisation, which includes women, Indigenous people and children (p. 10). These authors also showed there is an intersection between weak or failed institutions, protracted conflict, and vulnerabilities to climate change in geographic regions of Africa and South Asia.

Voss (2020) and Beltrán, Hacker and Begun (2016) each confirmed that human rights abuses stemming from climate change will be more evident amongst certain global regions and population groups. While Voss' study showed countries from the Global South will suffer more, Beltrán et al. (2016) identified that People of Colour have the fewest resources to cope with climate change, confirming climate change and racial injustice are deeply

intertwined. Both studies made the case for inequity to be addressed in a timely way to ensure future climate change events do not disproportionately impact these communities.

Sarker et al. (2019) contended climate change will impact on the population health of regions within the Bay of Bengal, with epidemics of dengue, encephalitis and malaria all affecting the delicate social fabric of communities in these countries. Sarker et al. (2019) argued there is already enormous damage to the coastal livelihoods around this region from a lack of mutuality of political policies between countries sharing waterways. This is further exacerbated by each country's weakening economies and human rights issues from ongoing war and conflict.

Public Health Crises

The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic in March 2020, the time of writing this thesis. COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus in the coronavirus family.

Betts, Easton-Calabria and Pincock (2020) demonstrated that refugees are among the most vulnerable to COVID-19, 85% of whom are from low to middle income countries. Using data from Uganda, Betts et al. (2020) argued that two of the main challenges in refugee camps are social distancing measures and the high levels of anxiety experienced by refugees who receive conflicting and often inaccurate information about COVID-19.

Using an analysis of experiences of Rohingya refugees living in Bangladesh camps, Truelove, Abrahim, Altare, Azman and Spiegel (2020) confirmed that refugees have little or no access to emergency care and regular immunisations, putting them at risk of increased mortality. This is largely because resources will be redirected into the COVID-19 response. Poole, Escudero, Gostin, Leblang and Talbot (2020) showed health infrastructure inadequacies, community displacement, crowded housing, malnutrition, overcrowding in

camps, inadequate water sanitation and hygiene, and stigmatisation will exacerbate the risk of COVID19 outbreaks.

Complexities from COVD-19 are also impacting humanitarian responses. Adom, Osei and Adu-Agyem (2020) demonstrated how movement restrictions impact the mobility of humanitarian workers, who are then less able to conduct important needs assessments in refugee camps, exacerbating an already escalating emergency.

Ethical and Paradoxical Issues in Humanitarian Contexts

Increasing Costs of Humanitarian Crises

According to *Global Humanitarian Overview 2019, 2020 and 2021,* costs of humanitarian responses have increased exponentially in the last decade (UNOCHA, 2019, 2020, 2021). The escalation of economic costs of disasters can be seen in the comparison of data before and since COVID-19. Under current COVID-19 pandemic conditions, 235 million people are now requiring humanitarian assistance. This is a 40% increase on 2019 estimates which, according to UNOCHA (2021), comes entirely from the impact of COVID-19. Faced with exponential growth of humanitarian needs, humanitarian crises, according to Alexander (2020), are receiving twelve times the amount of funding from donor governments and bodies like the UN and the World Bank. This is the largest ever recorded budget. However, according to Barbelet et al. (2020), regardless of the size of the current humanitarian budget, it is predicted the pandemic will bring considerable economic shocks to the humanitarian sector, meaning the sector will be unable to respond effectively, long term, to the exponential increase of populations requiring urgent assistance.

Humanitarian Bureaucracy and Relationships With Donors

Literature demonstrated that entrenched and dysfunctional humanitarian funding systems remain an ongoing issue. The problems in these systems directly impact on the delivery of predictable humanitarian assistance to affected populations. Humanitarian funding systems are informed by models that do not differentiate between simultaneous and sequential crises (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Rubenstein, 2005; Tull, 2020). Funds are, as Redvers (2017) and Hilhorst (2018) indicated, delivered through short-term funding cycles and rely on retrospective data of humanitarian crises to determine future cycles. Therefore, as these researchers implied, funding systems are not set up to respond effectively to the rapidly changing and overlapping nature of humanitarian contexts (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017).

Additionally, two-thirds of humanitarian funding goes through a small group of UN agencies and INGOs who dominate the market and have formed what is described by Parker (2018) as an oligopoly. Funds are distributed through this small group to governments in crisis contexts, rather than to local services who are the closest to the ground in understanding the needs of communities (Konyndyk, 2018; Parker, 2019). Funds can be used to justify harsh political regimes and can support the proliferation of war, which keeps the country locked into conflict and in ongoing dependence on humanitarian assistance (UNOCHA, 2020). This means affected populations tend to just survive from one day to the next.

Instrumental to effective humanitarian responses are donors. Spiegel (2017) described donors as individuals, foundations, and companies. The UN and INGOs partake in extensive fundraising campaigns with private donors to secure predictable funding. These campaigns use emotive terms such as ‘saving lives’, which according to Spiegel (2017), serve to appease donors and massage the public perception of donors as instrumental to alleviating global suffering. Similarly, donors will also preference funding some crisis over others. For

example, Redvers (2017) stated that donors preference sudden disasters such as earthquakes over ongoing crises such as a drought.

Donors are disinclined to consider locally-led responses as legitimate. This is particularly seen in the current context of COVID-19. Betts et al. (2020) argued that even though there are enormous logistical constraints experienced by INGOs in accessing communities during the pandemic, donors continue to provide funds to UN agencies and INGOs directly, rather than local services. Furthermore, as stated by Betts et al. (2020), a significant level of compliance measures is put into place by donors to meet the requirements of the humanitarian funding system. Most local services are unable to partake in these measures and this puts them at a disadvantage compared to their international counterparts. Kumar and Vidolov (2016) asserted that intensive media exposure of the UN and INGOs leads to an increase in pressure from donors to spend their funds quickly. In the extensive systems already in place, donors preference international organisations over local services because they can respond more quickly, in comparison to locally-driven responses. According to Hugman (2017), global reform is required to overhaul humanitarian funding systems that targets UN agencies, donors, and their behaviours, so they will act faster and with less bureaucracy and get resources into the hands of local service providers.

One common distinction between humanitarian organisations concerns the difference between single mandated and multi-mandated organisations and this difference contributes to another level of humanitarian bureaucracy (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Rubenstein, 2005; Tull, 2020). Mandates are contextual and depend on the type of humanitarian context. While multi-mandated organisations are NGOs that have lifesaving as well as reconstruction, peace building and development mandates, a single mandated organisation has a single focus on saving lives and will primarily work in Level 3 emergencies characterised by severe, large-scale crisis which are permanent in nature, rather than temporary (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016;

Rubenstein, 2005; Tull, 2020). Literature shows there are many concerns regarding the delivery of humanitarian assistance in both single and multi-mandated organisations (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017). Single mandated organisations will underestimate the capacity of local communities to offer appropriate solutions; they focus on implementing a humanitarian response without a holistic view to the de-escalation of the crisis and they will duplicate work when they see the same issues arriving, despite the country or context (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017). In contrast, multi-mandated organisations rely on local partners to deliver aid. Sub-contracting is one of the strategies used and concerns include: subcontracting aid in extremely dangerous situations, putting local workers at risk and, increased pressure on transparency and accountability of donor funds distributed to local partners, leading to an increase in mistrust and conflict risks between donors, organisations, and local partners. Multi- mandated organisations will also work with governments, and this can be seen by local populations in some fragile contexts as a threat to their stability and future (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017).

Nationalism and Populist Movements

Nationalism and populist movements are informing day-to-day practices in humanitarian responses. These movements overlap with other crisis drivers, generating forms of exclusivism and making it harder to resolve complex global problems.

According to Bell and Masys (2020), the co-occurrence of extreme weather events and the escalation of the movement of people gives rise to the high levels of populist parties and the prevalence of fear of newly-arrived migrants arising in mainstream societies which, in turn, threatens global security (p. 64). In another study, Manderson and Levine (2020) argued that discrimination, stigma and the closing of borders to manage COVID-19 also play

into xenophobic tendencies of nation states, contributing to a lack of global will in managing the pandemic and public health programmes.

Human Rights Watch (2019) demonstrated socio-economic dynamics promulgate political instability that can lead to the spread of right-wing populist movements. These nationalist movements are used to discriminate against vulnerable populations. Human Rights Watch (2019) also conveyed how the intensity of nationalism can be measured through latent or structural factors such as plummeting currencies, severe food and medical shortages and escalating costs of living (p. 3).

In a critical analysis of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) during the mass influx of migrants into Europe from the Middle East, Rizcallah (2019) concluded that serious human rights infringements conducted by today's governments serve as a litmus test for future responses to mass movements of people. Rizcallah (2019) implied that, from a legal perspective, many governments are at a tipping point: the marginalisation of refugees occurring through politics of power previously unparalleled has become fundamentally more important than moral leadership.

The Complex Future Ahead

Views about how humanitarian contexts will look in the future were similar across the literature reviewed. Van Dam (2020), Hilton et al. (2018) and Spiegel (2020) stated that humanitarian work will continue to be a product of its time, shaped by many complex global events as well as dynamic political, economic, and cultural and public pressures. According to Hugman (2017), some of these events will continue to be complex due to the domination of Eurocentric perspectives of humanitarian responses as well as the cultural White supremacy operating in these contexts (p. 121). Dominelli and Vickers (2015) described neo-

colonialism and military responses as informing disaster practice and that will, in the future, perpetuate unequal relationships in the field (p. 664).

Two studies share some insights into what the future will look like. They focus on the lessons learned by humanitarian organisations. The two studies are--a 2017 study of INGOs and other humanitarian health care operatives by Gillespie, Schwartz, Abelson, Kapiriri and Hunt (2017), and the Speaking Out Case Studies by Young (2016). Commonalities across the two studies regarding the kinds of threats implicit in future humanitarian contexts include- the difficulty in staying neutral or taking sides as a humanitarian worker; the unrealistic action of *fixing the world* in any kind of humanitarian response and, the constant state of flux in humanitarian work which is largely influenced by global politics, economics, and perceptions of the public of the humanitarian crisis. The Speaking Out Case Studies (2016) also emphasise the need for discursive and constructive engagement with the dilemmas outlined in the case studies, to better prepare humanitarian workers and organisations for the challenges in future humanitarian contexts.

Section Summary

Humanitarian crises can strike rich and poor countries. In the literature, there is a shared understanding of contemporary humanitarian contexts as driven by diverse and concurrent crisis drivers. While conflict still represents a major cause of humanitarian crises, there is also an increasing frequency of disasters caused by climate change which have worsened in magnitude. At the nexus of these crisis drivers, community vulnerability is exacerbated, resulting in an intensification of humanitarian needs. Many communities typically experience extreme deprivation, suffering, and dire poverty from the cumulative deterioration of basic services and livelihoods.

There are also internal pressures within the humanitarian response systems. For example, current funding systems are not designed to respond to the multi-dimensional and multi-causal nature of complex humanitarian contexts. Donors are not impartial but are swayed by public perceptions and will support some crises over others. Reporting mechanisms also preference international organisations over local services. The rise of nationalism and populist movements has major humanitarian implications. Predictions regarding future humanitarian contexts remain bleak and it seems that unpredictability is the rule of thumb in humanitarian contexts. I have illustrated a summary of this section of the literature review in Figure 2.

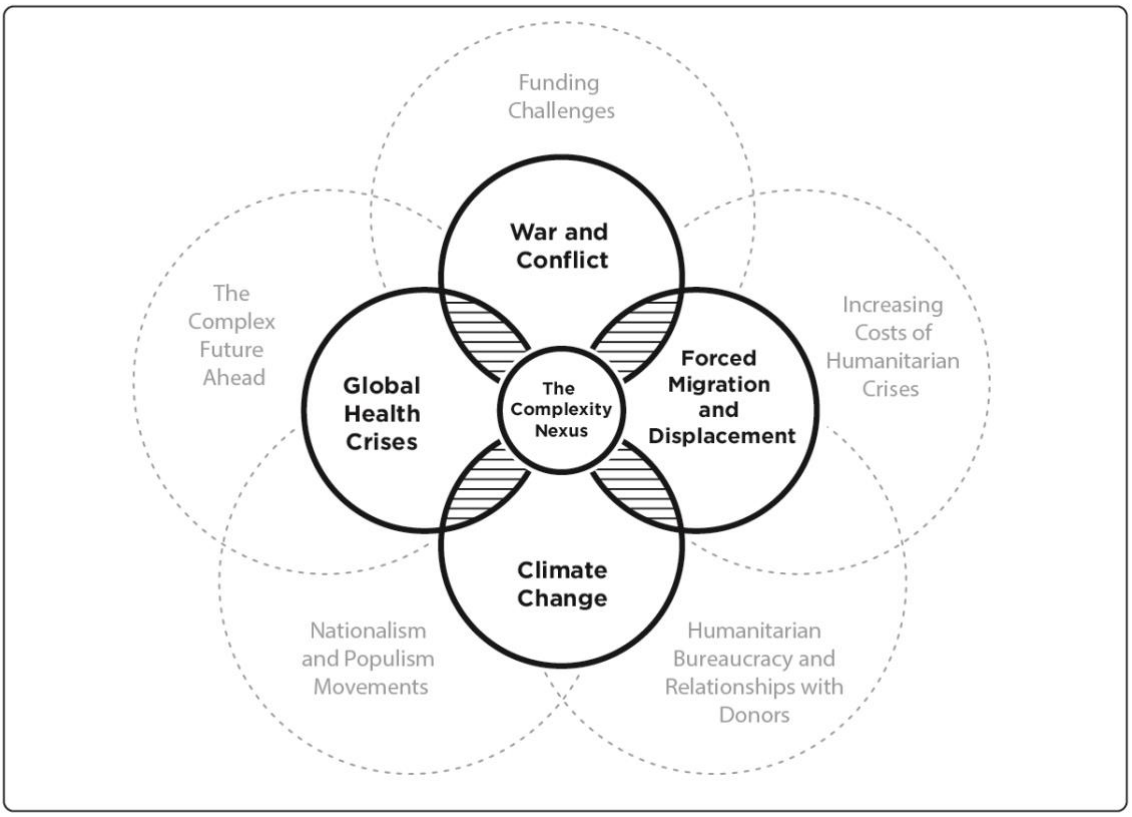

Figure 2. Complex Humanitarian Crisis Drivers and Ethical and Paradoxical Issues

Humanitarian Training Programmes for Work Readiness in Humanitarian Contexts

Humanitarian contexts and responses have become increasingly complex since the late twentieth century. The reviewed literature conveyed that humanitarian training programmes play an important role in strengthening knowledge and preparedness of humanitarian workers so they can respond effectively to complex crises, no matter where or when.

The Historical Overview of Humanitarian Training Programmes

Literature reviewed indicated humanitarian training is an evolving learning resource for humanitarian workers, largely informed by contextual factors. According to Burkle Jr, Kushner and Burnham (2018), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) led the first preparatory training in partnership with WHO, in the latter half of the twentieth century, primarily for medical and health personnel deployed to war and conflict contexts. On completion, opportunities were made available to upgrade the certification from attending the course to higher qualifications. By the end of the Cold War, the training course expanded to include staff from other UN agencies and NGOs and over time, personal security, and safety as well as negotiation skills were integrated into the modules. Since the late twentieth century, according to Burkle Jr et al. (2018), humanitarian training is influenced by the growth of partnerships between universities and humanitarian training organisations as well as the growth of evidence-based best practice in crisis situations.

Weighing up the Success of Contemporary Humanitarian Training Programmes

Hilton, Baughan, Davey, Everill, O'Sullivan and Sasson (2018) argued that seeking a vocation in humanitarian work needs to be continually interrogated so humanitarian work moves beyond colonial origins which contribute to the stereotype of affected populations

being vulnerable and needing assistance. Hilton et al. (2018) also argued that training has an important role preparing humanitarian workers for emerging ethical dilemmas faced in the field, as well as strengthening knowledge of humanitarian foundations.

Johnson et al. (2013) calculated that the number of people employed in international humanitarian work is growing at a yearly rate of 6% (p.369). To keep up with demand, the need for a high standard of professionalism and improved competencies in the field is warranted. The high demand for training also stems from analysis of responses and lessons learned in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. Analysis shows the need for a wide pool of skilled, local humanitarian workers to enable surge capacity regardless of affiliation with either local or international organisations. Johnson et al. (2013) also made a case for more predictable pathways for specialised and evidence-based humanitarian training, including the partnering of private training schools and universities to ensure there are shared understandings around competency-based professionalisation processes across the board (p.371).

Burkle Jr et al. (2018) stipulated that training must meet four requirements to keep pace with the contemporary complexities of humanitarian contexts (p. 12): Humanitarian training must be evidence-based; contribute to wider research on effectiveness; respond to ongoing evaluations, and it must periodically update its curriculum and content based on what is happening in humanitarian contexts and the experiences of humanitarian workers (pp. 8–12).

Weighing up the Success of Situation-Based Learning

A common theme emerging from the literature is the role of SBL in humanitarian trainings programmes. Evans, Hulme, Nugus, Cranmer, Coutu and Johnson (2017) suggested SBL is ideal because it provides prior exposure to the complexities in humanitarian contexts

and helps reduce the impact of situational risks for humanitarian workers and their colleagues, regardless of their level of experience. Using an electronic evaluation tool which coded 1008 'on the spot' observations of 63 participants by a team of evaluators in a 72-hour simulated exercise (SIMEX) (p. 259), findings showed that competencies of participants could be learned in the simulated exercises and, as indicated by Evans et al. (2017), these competencies improved during the programme (p. 258). However, the study raised questions around how many times a participant must engage in a task before they have grasped the skill.

Delgado Luchner and Kherbiche (2019) demonstrated that using real-life scenarios is the most efficient way to provide an evidence-based and 'schematic' representation of a typical humanitarian scenario in which participants hone their skills (p. 257). These authors also argued that regardless of the level of experience of humanitarian workers, new learning is always possible. Real-life scenarios build on new skills and help participants construct meaning in what they are doing. Delgado Luchner and Kherbiche (2019) also stressed that these scenarios must include examination of ethical dilemmas to help participants develop critical thought and analysis (p. 262). Their paper includes some important considerations of the constraints of organising training and the logistics of putting together real-life scenarios and role plays in training programmes.

Cranmer, Chan, Kayden, Musani, Gasquet, Walker, Burkle and Johnson (2014) conveyed SBL as a safe way to introduce and practise competencies to achieve best practice. Cranmer et al. (2014) strongly positioned skills and experience of facilitators as well as simulated exercises in their argument for participants' successful learning. Similar to the study by Evans et al. (2017), Cranmer et al. (2014) designed an evaluation tool in which participants receive feedback in 'real time', giving them a road map of what learning areas

need more attention (p. 73). The evaluation can be adapted to other training programmes (p. 73).

Subject Content in Humanitarian Training Programmes

The need for the learning of leadership and negotiation skills in humanitarian contexts is another theme emerging from the literature, along with a requirement that successful teaching in these subject areas must incorporate a holistic approach.

For example, in a public health study, Kimura (2019) confirmed that meta-leadership is a significant skill in working in humanitarian response and must be made widely available to all humanitarian workers. Successful meta-leadership requires high levels of self-awareness, decision making, contextual awareness, skills in connecting with key partners, and knowledge of the cluster of operational systems at the national and local level.

In a longitudinal study of national staff enrolled in humanitarian leadership training, Bollettino, Kenney, Schwartz and Burnham (2019) argued leadership skills are learnable when SBL works alongside the application of relevant learning goals, the utilisation of performance measures and relevant content. Bollettino et al. (2019) provided a protocol to measure three core leadership competencies of participants: self-awareness, the ability to motivate and influence others, and critical judgement (pp. 4–5). The protocol also shows typical complex humanitarian scenarios to strengthen participants' decision making and choices. These can help determine how participants work with populations and how their actions could have implications for their own and their colleagues' security (p .2). Bollettino et al. (2019) concluded that a wider group of humanitarian workers is needed in further research into leadership development to ensure reliability of results.

According to Grace (2020), high level negotiation skills are also required in humanitarian contexts. Using semi-structured interviews of humanitarian workers, the author

provided an analysis of six complex challenges which can unfold in a humanitarian context that identified the need for high quality negotiation skills. Grace (2020) made a case for a holistic approach to the development of negotiation skills. This includes using these skills in initial induction training, guidance documents and ongoing organisational training. The author also suggested a mentoring system and debriefing after negotiating experiences to ensure that learning becomes enmeshed with practice (p.38). This study prioritised humanitarian training across the entirety of a humanitarian worker's employment rather than as a one-off experience.

The Future for Humanitarian Training: Virtual Training Programmes

Abdelgawad, Noori and Comes (2018) argued a strong case for the availability of virtual training for remote-based humanitarian workers. These authors contended that scenarios through gaming are widespread and can be used effectively to prepare for uncertainties in humanitarian contexts. To prepare for this increased application, Abdelgawad et al. (2018) proposed that an automated scenario-generator system which stores a range of realistic scenarios would meet the current demands.

Similarly, Baines, Boetig, Waller and Jindal (2017) argued that scaled-up infrastructure to support virtual simulated training, peer-led web-based learning, discussion forums and tutorials are important considerations for sustainable capacity building of remote-based humanitarian workers. Such approaches provide humanitarian workers with the option of participating in training without having to leave the country in which they are working. Using an example of virtual training for Global Mental Health professionals, the study showed how specific psycho-social profiles and nuanced living conditions of post-conflict contexts did not compromise the sensitised learning and practice needed to operate effectively in these complex contexts.

Section Summary

The training of humanitarian workers as critically important for improved awareness of complex humanitarian crisis drivers is a common theme, regardless of the level of experience that humanitarian workers have. Training helps build confidence and skills of workers so they can work successfully in rapidly changing complexities of humanitarian contexts.

SBL offers opportunities for humanitarian workers to think through highly complicated and ethical problems as well as engage in learning about innovative approaches to these problems. SBL also provide opportunities to work with diverse teams and expert facilitators who are humanitarian workers themselves. Participants can collaborate with SBL across digital networks, providing immense prospects for global networking and learning. SBL can also measure competencies and provide important direction to participants concerning areas they need to improve. This helps them determine their own path forward in the learning experience of becoming a humanitarian worker. SBL scenarios act like rehearsals. They are rolled out in a schematic and experiential way to help humanitarian workers deal with the intricacies of real-life situations. This means humanitarian workers develop an appreciation of and tools for dealing with uncertainties, barriers and moral problems. Workers can then more effectively respond to situations where there may not be a 'best' way to proceed. SBL also provides exercises to practice leadership and promotes innovative skills to help develop solutions. Whether SBL could be considered as a pedagogical strategy for students embarking on IFE will be examined in Chapter Six.

Summary of Literature Review

Overlapping crisis drivers of war and conflict, mass migration, climate change, COVID-19 and racially-inspired human rights violations are some of the main crisis drivers

framing today's humanitarian contexts. During IFE, most of the messy experiences students will encounter are informed by these crisis drivers and by ethical and paradoxical issues. Humanitarian contexts will persist. Therefore, planning about how to recast the roles of humanitarian organisations and the personnel who work for them, including students undertaking international experiences is required. The review of literature indicated humanitarian training, SBL and specific subject content as critical to this planning for complexity. Whether humanitarian workers are new or veterans in the field, all three planning components contribute to ensuring humanitarian workers are workforce ready.

Chapter Three: The Theoretical Paradigms and Discourses of Humanitarianism

I begin this chapter with an explanation of the theoretical paradigms of humanitarianism. I then examine colonialism, globalisation and localisation as examples of contemporary discourses of humanitarian contexts which have emerged from and been informed by these paradigms. I identify key convergences within the literature that relate to these discourses along with the central drivers of each and their most salient impacts.

During international field education (IFE), students will encounter these discourses and their impacts so students must learn how to engage with their meaning and the major debates emerging from these discourses. My observations reveal that, when students interact with these discourses in a more informed way, they are able to comprehend the kinds of tensions that unfold for the humanitarian organisations that host them. For example, some humanitarian organisations struggle with aligning their genuine intentions with operational pressures and increased accountability to donors and the media. There can also be a quiet distrust in communities about the work the organisations are doing, from which questions ensue as to whether their actions are helping or hindering communities[5].

Theoretical Paradigms of Humanitarianism

Humanitarian assistance is dominated by two paradigms - the Classical Paradigm and, more recently, the Resilience Paradigm (Hilhorst, Desportes, & de Milliano, 2019; Tronc, Grace, & Nahikian, 2018). These paradigms help to explain the nature of humanitarian crisis drivers, as well as the systems and scope of humanitarian responses that include the creation of policy, principles and practice and the communities who receive humanitarian assistance

[5] In Chapter Five I examine my interactions with these discourses through the identity of *Annie-humanitarian*

(Hilhorst, 2018). These paradigms do not fall into two neat, homogenous groups. Neither does the dominance of a characteristic in one paradigm mean it does not exist in the other. The paradigms intersect in messy ways, giving rise to dynamic, contradictory, and challenging aspects of humanitarianism. I illustrate the interconnections of these paradigms in Figure 3.

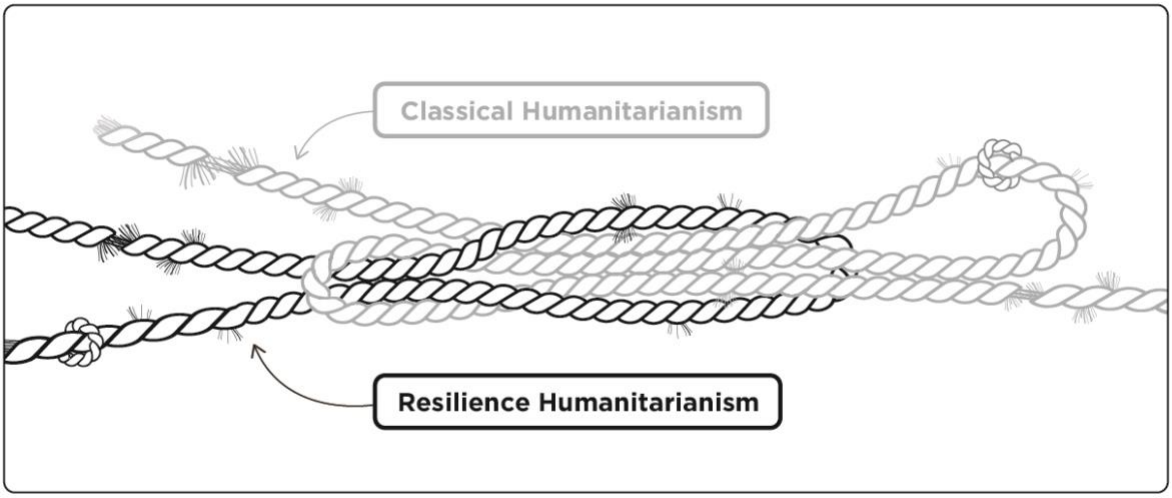

Figure 3. Theoretical Paradigms of Humanitarianism

The Classical Paradigm of Humanitarianism

Classical Humanitarianism emerged from the creation of International Humanitarian Law in the 1860s. This was a largely principled and ideological endeavour with the intent to reduce the impact of war through protection of civilians with humanitarian assistance (Hilhorst, 2018; Lie, 2020). Under this paradigm, humanitarian assistance is largely needs-based with decisions based on the four principles of humanity, impartiality, independence, and neutrality (Hilhorst, 2018; Lie, 2020). These principles have informed the establishment of the UN in 1945, distinct UN bodies and many UN conventions as well as a range of initiatives since the early 1990's to improve humanitarian assistance, donor relationships and

relationships with communities (Hugman, 2010). In complex humanitarian contexts, one principle can take precedence over another, depending on the nature of the crisis (Wieland, 2021). For example, neutrality may be more suitable when there are many lives at stake.

In Classical Humanitarianism, the humanitarian system is largely exogenous, meaning the interventions and funding come from outside the humanitarian context (Tronc et al., 2018). Such exogeneity invites involvement of a proliferation of MNCs which challenge core humanitarian principles and create controversies (Rubenstein, 2005) as well as an abundance of large charities (Gordon & Donini, 2015; Peters, 2019; van Dam, 2020) and military groups (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010; Oberoi, 2018). This raises concerns that these organisations perpetuate the 'colonial underbelly' in humanitarian responses (Loewenstein, 2015). Exceptionalism is the major backbone of this paradigm. This means funding is brief and designed around short cycles of response (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017). The Classical Paradigm also provides some insights into the unequal influence of Global North countries, a factor largely influenced by the upsurge of globalisation (Hugman, 2010).

The post-cold war period—and the humanitarian response to the 1994 Rwandan genocide—shed light on considerable shortcomings of the Classical Paradigm in terms of poor coordination, skills, and monitoring procedures of humanitarian agencies. This, according to Hugman (2010), led to an existential crisis of the humanitarian system based on which a deep restructuring took place. In this context, the Resilience Paradigm emerged; not as an all-out solution but as a set of ideas and practices which bounce up from and against ideas and practices from the Classical Paradigm.

Resilience Humanitarianism

Emerging in the 1990s and characterised by the notion that communities can rebound from disasters and use their resources to adapt is the model known as the Resilience

Paradigm of Humanitarianism (Hilhorst et al., 2019). Since its advent, this paradigm has informed major humanitarian reforms including the 2016 Localisation Agenda (Spiegel, 2017). The Resilience Paradigm has also given rise to controversial trends which have split the humanitarian community. These include the challenges around defining the extent of local responses and reducing the gap between disaster relief reduction and escalating humanitarian needs.

In the following section, I scrutinise the tensions between these two theoretical paradigms by examining the three main discourses surrounding them and how they contribute to complex humanitarian crises. In Figure 4, I have illustrated how these discourses, when intertwining with and overlapping the paradigms, create messy and chaotic experiences.

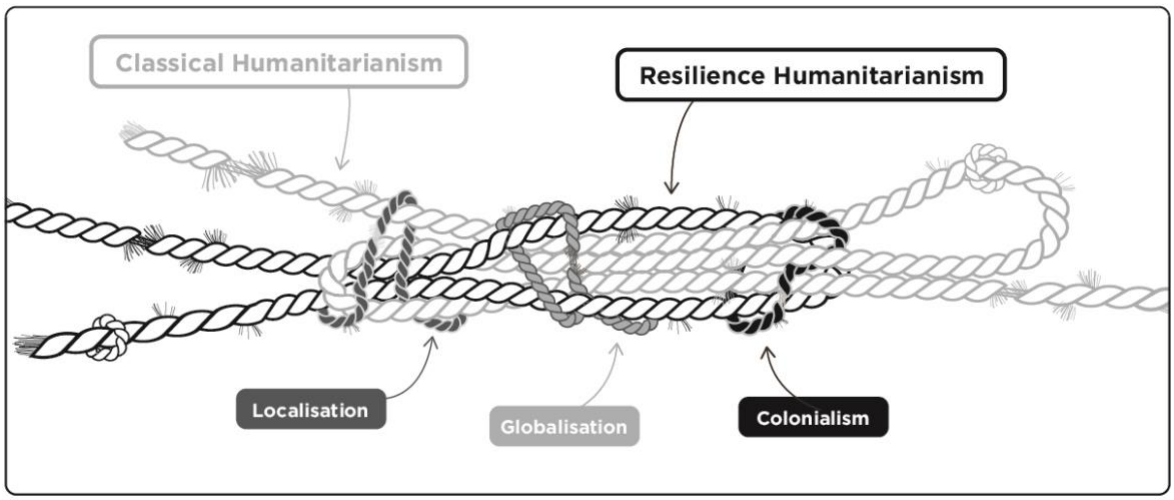

Figure 4. Illustrating the Overlapping Discourses in Classical and Resilience Humanitarianism

Colonialism

Locating Colonial Legacies in Humanitarianism

In recent years there has been a global resurgence of activist movements known as 'the colonial turn' (Dutta, 2018). This movement pushes back on the impacts of colonialism to challenge predominant racist, sexist, neoliberal and Eurocentric politics and mindsets. The premise of this movement is informing the call for an in-depth examination of practices which, in my opinion, perpetuate colonialism in humanitarian contexts.

Colonial undertones are evident in the largely hierarchal humanitarian system which has the UN at the top (Melis & Hilhorst, 2020). Historically, the system has always been governed by hegemonic Western practices, well before the creation of the UN system, and this history continues to have sustained impact on communities needing humanitarian assistance. For example, countries which have experienced colonialism are often receiving long-term humanitarian assistance from their erstwhile colonisers, as aid-providing countries. This demonstrates colonial powers remain economically and politically involved in countries they once controlled, as confirmed by Roepstorff (2020).

Colonial legacies are also perpetuated against refugee groups through international law mandates, with residual impacts felt for many years (Roepstorff, 2020). The original refugee protection mandates (The 1951 Refugee Convention) were established after WW2. One of the problems of the framework, states Roepstorff (2020), is that it does not characterise as refugees those who are fleeing circumstances other than those outlined through the conventions. Thus, the framework is imprecise and only provides a narrow scope of legal protection for today's involuntary or forced migration groups. At the same time, refugees are often publicised as 'helpless victims' (Roepstorff, 2020). This conveys the message that all refugees need humanitarian assistance and are better off being beneficiaries of international aid than not. In this study, Roepstorff (2020) calls for a thorough examination

of how colonial legacies are perpetuated through law mandates so that all refugee groups are afforded better and more equitable protection.

Perpetuation of Colonialist Attitudes Through the Media

In an historical analysis of humanitarianism, Peters (2019) postulated the 24/7 media portrayal of the charitable approaches of humanitarian organisations led to a surge of organisations and global fund-raising projects, with global competition among such humanitarian actors and the politicising of humanitarianism. In his argument, the author iterates that the 'feel-good ideology' of charity – championed through media releases and donor reports – masks the capitalist, neoliberal, and corporative actions of humanitarian organisations. This leads to an incongruence between the needs of people in crisis and the assumptions, approaches and skill set of humanitarian organisations.

Ivanovic (2019) argued the media merges colonialism with the language of compassion and other moral sentiments to justify colonialist actions. Balaji (2011) earlier provided an additional critique of the influence of media and how humanitarian organisations use imagery and evocative language to sell their missions. Using an analysis of selected media reports of the Haiti earthquake in 2005, Balaji (2011) argued populations needing humanitarian assistance are created by the media to initiate pity, reinforcing notions of privilege, power, and Whiteness. In disseminating humanitarian reports using images of human suffering with the intention of securing ongoing funds, the lived experience of crisis-affected populations is compromised, facilitating a form of 'othering' (p.54).

Matyók and Schmitz (2020) posit that humanitarian organisations use images of 'helpless victims' to publicise their intentions to 'fix' or 'make a difference' but these images do not convey the historical context in which the human suffering has occurred. Due to a lack of consultations and real dialogue with affected populations in peace building initiatives, the

dignity of crisis-affected populations becomes compromised (p.66). It also perpetuates racialised differences and power asymmetries between those who are affected and humanitarian organisations.

Faith Based Organisations and Colonialism

Despite the origins of modern humanitarianism located in Christian thought, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) in the last five decades have been an uneasy and inseparable ally of humanitarian initiatives, with their motivations and activities viewed with suspicion and denominated as ideological, rather than motivated by humanitarian principles (van Dam, 2020). What is ignored is the profound influence of early Christian based charities, including some of the social work, charity-based organisations such as Save The Children, established in 1919 which cumulatively provides more humanitarian assistance than many governments since its origins as a FBO (Mahood, 2008, 2009). FBOs also include the World Council of Churches which responded to Europe's displaced millions after the World War Two. The World Council of Churches continues to be motivated by its Christian faith, aiding largely poor and marginalised constituents (Roepstorff, 2020). Other factors such as, the competition for funds, the global shift towards emergency humanitarian practices and the expanding role of the media has led to a shunting of FBOs and an acceptance of secular humanitarian organisations as the norm (Roepstorff, 2020).

FBOs attract a significant level of donations because of their global reach with many FBOs adding their signatures to important internationally agreed mandates and justice agendas that govern humanitarian practice. This means they can lead large responses and successfully compete for space in an already overcrowded pool of humanitarian organisations. Some right-wing Christian FBOs are deeply rooted in communities through their Christian Witness mandates and engage in extensive networking with communities,

leaders, and governance structures more so than secular organisations. Wide networking allows for extremely vulnerable communities to be reached and life-saving basics to be provided such as food and water (Roepstorff, 2020). Many FBOs also play an important role in public education of humanitarian situations and advocacy of displaced people and refugees (Roepstorff, 2020).

One of the biggest criticisms of FBOs, according to Roepstorff (2020) and Lynch and Schwarz (2016), is their complicity in colonialism. These authors state that some FBOs use their mandates to promote their proselytising roles, with the aim to bring about religious conversion of vulnerable populations using humanitarian practices and resources. This is, according to Lynch and Schwarz (2016), antithetical to humanitarian principles of impartiality and neutrality, blurring the line between humanitarian mission and religious missionary. When highly vulnerable communities experience these religious pressures it leads to ongoing neglect of community livelihoods, culture, and customs (Lynch & Schwarz, 2016).

Perpetuation of Colonialism Through the Lack of Diversity in Employment and the Business Model of Humanitarianism

Data shows that the opportunities for employment in humanitarian organisations are unequally distributed between and within groups of internationals, locals, and volunteers with some nationalities, especially European, being favoured over others. Favouritism is also extended to staff from high income socio-economic backgrounds (Baillie Smith, Fadel, O'Loghlen, & Hazeldine, 2020). Both factors indicate a style of colonialism exists in the employment processes.

The availability of ongoing work is also largely influenced by the current business model of humanitarianism which is designed to minimise funds and downsize humanitarian

projects (Baillie Smith et al., 2020). The business model emerged over thirty years ago when there was a need for an increased accountability of humanitarian organisations. The call for accountability followed much needed critique of humanitarian efforts in the face of the incalculable human suffering and loss occurring from humanitarian crises at the time (Hugman, 2010).

There have been important in-roads made in expediating humanitarian assistance and, from my perspective, business models adopted by humanitarian organisations have led to important logistical arrangements in very complex settings. However, these models have been thwarted by the enormous growth in some UN humanitarian agencies over others, and by those organisations that are the most assertive in promoting their mandates (Parker, 2018). This might be more defensible if the mandates were shared across all UN agencies. Instead, they are inconsistent, and exclude local populations from meaningful involvement in INGOs.

Technocolonialism

The merging of humanitarian aid with business agendas signals the marketisation of humanitarianism. Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are critical to this shift. Technology holds implicit promise and enables successes that were considered impossible in the past. [6]

However, literature shows there is an underlying colonialist dichotomy of ICTs applications which privileges technical expertise. This perpetuates colonial dynamics which have been responsible for creating the problems they aim to resolve. Technocolonialism reproduces historical colonial power relationships for those populations experiencing displacement, migration, and settlement (Madianou, 2019). For example, during the

[6] In Chapter Five, I explore this in more detail using my journals.

collection of biometric data, the Rohingya in Bangladesh were provided with only one option to cite their cultural identity, which was 'Myanmar Nationals'. The colonial history and power asymmetries experienced by the Rohingya under Myanmar rule were not a consideration in the creation of the biodata tool. This example and others in this study reveal the inherent limitation of broad-scale data files to express anything other than what they are designed to do – collect aggregated data rather than nuanced details. Delivering this information as quickly as possible favours organisations over communities and helps to secure their reputations in the field.

ICTs can be compared to early imperialistic tendencies of humanitarian organisations in which experimental technologies and medical interventions were tested on compliant communities (Sandvik, Jacobsen, & McDonald, 2017). Using a broad taxonomy of harms in three humanitarian crises in Kenya, the Middle East and West Africa, this study demonstrated that a major ethical concern is the fall-out for populations who do not have the means or resources for recourse on the questionable usage of ICTs (p. 12).

Migrant vulnerability is exacerbated by a lack of privacy, evident when migrants have to identify themselves and share their status and information about their journey (Vannini, Gomez, & Newell, 2019). Sharing private information becomes critical currency for receiving vital resources and often migrants have very little choice in the matter. ICTs, as predicted in this study, will continue to be a vexatious problem in contemporary displacements of people.

Globalisation

Definition and Implications of Globalisation

Globalisation is defined as a double-edged sword (Adams, Dominelli, & Payne, 2009). On one hand, it provides economic and social opportunities but, on the other, it

contributes to neoliberalism whereby economic markets are driven by cost-competitive high yields. This can lead to state fragility, widespread poverty, and destitution. Central to these impacts are experiences of individual and community powerlessness (Adams et al., 2009).

Cox and Pawar (2013), Healy (2008), Hugman (2010) and Oberoi (2018) contend globalisation is implicated in the increase in global mobility which accentuates issues of difference and diversity; the increasing rise of the nation state which provokes a hybrid of post-national identities, nationalism, and complex experiences of forced migrants; a deepening divide between the rich and the poor, and the spread of capitalism and industrialism. Administrative/surveillance powers and militarisation have expanded, as has the extent of power of regulatory institutions such as the UN. Finally, globalisation is implicated in the advancement of communication and technology systems with little or no ethical decision-making framework.

Locating Globalisation in Complex Humanitarian Contexts

In complex humanitarian contexts, globalisation is connected to an increasing number of organisations getting involved in humanitarian responses, at all levels and from all sectors. Their recognition as a pervasive influence in the humanitarian ecosystem is growing. For example, according to Ramachandran and Walz (2015), a global maze of private contractors received a high proportion of donor funds during the Haiti earthquake in 2010. Inefficiencies in their spending structures, however, leads to poor levels of accountability and transparency to communities. This study also shows the influx of private contractors during this disaster undermines the capability of the Haiti government to look after its own population.

In her thesis, Rubenstein (2005) revealed Multinational Corporations (MNCs) are increasingly active in humanitarian contexts. To maintain their presence and longevity in the field, they promote their work in communities using the parable of the Good Samaritan.

However, Rubenstein (2005) demonstrates, heavy scrutiny is required to determine the extent to which MNCs are as socially responsible as the parable advocates. The reality is that MNCs work competitively to ensure ongoing investments from public and private donors. Additionally, MNCs provide funds directly to communities but the distributions are usually based on ineffective community consultations. Loewenstein (2015) also argued that, to maintain their competitive edge, MNCs collaborate widely with a range of organisations to gain access to external strengths and resources to help them maintain their stronghold in the humanitarian ecosystem. One example Lowenstein (2015) provides is the role of MNCs in Australia's humanitarian operations in offshore detention systems. In this context, MNCs collaborate with political elites and media to maintain a long-term presence. However, these collaborations, according to Loewenstein (2015), contribute to the human rights abuses of refugees.

Through political design, MNCs are largely led by countries of the North. Over time, they have leveraged production capabilities through the destruction of natural resources, exacerbating risks to climate change (Payne & Askeland, 2016). Affected communities are promised prosperity through the trickle-down effect but this is largely an illusion: local communities are more likely to suffer hardships because of the destruction. The interconnectedness between globalisation and local impacts is also recognised by Ife's (2016, p.179), argument that the local and global are intertwined and what unfolds globally will have a knock-on effect in local contexts.

Disparities Between North and South. What constitutes Global North and Global South are key debates in humanitarianism. The terms refer to comparisons of endemic poverty between countries and between and within communities (Balaji, 2011; Hilton et al., 2018; Townsend & McMahon, 2021). Global North countries have, according to these

authors, historically dominated humanitarian responses with the Global South on the receiving end of aid (Balaji, 2011; Hilton et al., 2018; Townsend & McMahon, 2021). As a result, mistrust builds between humanitarian organisations and the people unduly impacted by humanitarian crises (Melis & Hilhorst, 2020). The grounds for mistrust are evident in a study by Kumar and Vidolov (2016). Drawing on evaluative reports and high-profile humanitarian disasters since 2004, this study shows that humanitarian responses led by the Global North are paternalistic and highly bureaucratic. Consequently, local groups representing local populations are bypassed or alienated, highlighting the power differentials between humanitarian organisations and communities.

Perceived disparities between the Global North and South contribute to the lack of a globally coordinated response to climate change (Jolly & Ahmad, 2019). 'Climate Injustices' is a pertinent and contemporary discourse because it highlights how Global South countries continue to experience an increasing range of crisis drivers, such as high population density, shortage of resources, poor urban planning and armed conflict which, when overlapped with climate change, intensify mass movements of populations (Bell & Masys, 2020).

Through the domination of Global North countries in humanitarian responses, practices such as community capacity building has emerged as a widely used practice. Although the term conveys a community-led approach and a recognition of strengths within a community, humanitarian critique demonstrates that it is a largely a non-agentive approach built and adopted by international humanitarian organisations and other outside forces (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Scott-Smith, 2018).

Localisation in Humanitarian Contexts

Localisation is the third key discourse in humanitarian contexts I discuss. It has informed contemporary humanitarian practices under the Resilience Paradigm.

The History of the Localisation Agenda

The Localisation Agenda emerged from the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016. This led to the establishment of a multi-agency consortium of several hundred humanitarian organisations and the establishment of a charter for change, endorsed by a smaller group of INGOs who agreed to make critical changes in the way they worked with local communities. According to Spiegel (2017), the Grand Bargain Agreement established in 2016 created agreements with donors and INGOs to ensure that resourcing for locally led NGO systems was prioritised. This included donating 25% of global humanitarian funds to national and local responders by 2020 and an investment in local capacity building and preparedness. In the agreement, localisation is defined as an alternative humanitarian response which aims to improve efficiencies in humanitarian assistance through community consultation, to support local economies and to drive diverse local perspectives of how humanitarian contexts can be responded to (p. 6).

Critical to this reform is INGOs stepping back from their expert role and recognising they do not have the capacity to be the first on the scene in every global disaster. Under this paradigm, the doubling of humanitarian jobs that has been evident in the last ten years is predicted to continue, with mainly local staff employed as field personnel in their own home countries (Alexander, 2020).

There are also financial advantages for INGOs working under this agenda, namely that crisis response can be cost effective when it prioritises community's capacity to respond, adapt and bounce back. This has been coined the 'resilience dividend' (Korosteleva, 2020). Arguably, the perception of 'community affected' populations is also changing under this paradigm. The term 'beneficiary' is de-emphasised in policy documents and media announcements while terminology such as 'survivors', 'clients' and 'first responders' become

more commonplace (Hilhorst et al., 2019), although it can be said that this language has not changed enough (Townsend & McMahon, 2021).

Localisation: The Valuing of Indigenous Knowledge

According to Haque (2019), the Localisation Agenda forefronts Indigenous knowledge as a critical source of information in humanitarian contexts. It complements scientific knowledge in disaster risk assessment, policies, strategies, and plans. The Localisation Agenda has informed the global policy framework, The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk and Reduction 2015–2030. Similarly, another study illustrates that Indigenous knowledge and native expertise is essential in the management of climate adaptability and mutability (Jolly & Ahmad, 2019).

Pacific localisation is defined as the strengthening of national and local leadership, independence and decision making so that the needs of local populations in the Pacific region can be met. In this context, 'local actors' is a term central to the definition. Harris and Tuladhar (2019) argue this is in contrast with definitions originating in Northern countries which tend to focus on 'building capacity' (p. 42). Similar to Haque's research (2019) and Jolly and Ahmad's study (2019), Harris and Tuladhar (2019) acknowledge Indigenous knowledge, community strengths, ways of knowing, ritual and ceremony must continue to be recognised as a key strategy for ongoing localised management of and responses to climate change and disaster recovery and contributing to community resilience and family well-being.

Localisation: The Building of Relationships

To ensure a people-driven response and to help humanitarian organisations relinquish their gate keeper role, there are three imperatives for organisations to spur on local responses.

The first is the enshrining of the influence of affected populations at all levels of decision making. Next, developing independent channels for soliciting perspectives of crisis-affected people. Third, institutionalising a set of enabling changes to humanitarian operational practices, including changes to the financial donor systems, and ensuring cultural and ethnic diversity of personnel (Konyndyk & Worden, 2019).

In a study by Boden and Votteler (2017), localisation is defined as authentic engagement and dialogue, consciousness raising, social justice and political action. The analysis of local perspectives of young, Middle Eastern people in refugee camps in France shows that young people are more empowered and feel a growing sense of belonging in the refugee communities when humanitarian organisations use strategies which promote both hope and critical consciousness in their interactions with young people. Similarly, Matyók and Schmitz (2020) demonstrate that successful localised practice is informed through the empowerment of crisis-affected communities in making decisions about their own welfare. Successful localised practice also entails accepting communities as valuable resources in the quest to help them recover.

Current Debates of Localisation

Cynicism of Localisation. There is growing cynicism surrounding the Localisation Agenda. One argument holds that localisation is now plateauing as it merges into the everyday humanitarian vernacular (Alexander, 2020). Matyók and Schmitz (2020) indicate that, regardless of the agenda, labels such as ‘helpless’ are still part of retaining the status quo for international humanitarian organisations so they retain their contracts from one term to the next (pp.58–60).

Defining Localisation. What localisation specifically entails remains contested and does who and what constitutes local actors. For example, during COVID-19 responses in Bangladesh, localisation is demonstrated through local community health workers who provide community education, track, and monitor needs of communities, and influence social norms and behaviours through text messaging (Betts et al., 2020). In contrast, localisation processes can also be government led as demonstrated by the Indonesian government's prohibition of INGOs from entering Indonesia and providing humanitarian support in the aftermath of the 2018 Sulawesi earthquake (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019). This led to a strong drive towards Indonesia's ownership of the disaster response which fed into some of the nationalist tendencies of the government. An analysis by Human Rights Watch (2019) revealed a further form of localisation – the resistance by citizens in countries where autocratic rule and subsequent corruption persists. This report identified examples of localisation as local activism, such as democratic elections to oust an autocrat leader, public resistance in the streets and non-government bodies resisting the overreach of leaders.

These three manifestations of localisation show the deeply contextual and highly nuanced practices of localisation (Roepstorff, 2020). Without detailed exploration, the word 'local' oversimplifies these complex interactions. Oversimplification also ignores the cultural and socio-economic differences among local staff and the power hierarchies in which local actors are embedded. The lack of clarity about the meaning of local also leaves wide open who is targeted and not targeted in funding agendas which sets up the politicisation of funding.

The Trust Deficit Between Humanitarian Organisations and the Community. Despite some progression made with the goals of the localisation agenda, evidence points to the lack of trust increasing between communities and humanitarian organisations. Both Betts

et al. (2020) and Barbelet et al. (2020) show that when there are low levels of trust in a humanitarian response, the fundamentals of the 2016 Localisation Agenda - to dissolve the power held by INGOs and the UN by decentralising funding and resources - will be stalled. This leaves the impression that any progression around the agenda's goals is piecemeal, rather than progressive. Spiegel (2017) described how relationships between humanitarian organisations and local services have also been marred by power-driven relationships and the inequitable allocation of resources, recommending that the push from global policy reform be met in equal strength with long-term commitment by INGOs for change. Harris and Tuladhar (2019) added that countries of the North are, realistically, unable to relinquish the power they have held for centuries. While Barbelet et al. (2020) noted that INGOs do not seek relationships beyond a small circle of partner organisations. Though locally-led responses are shown to be more effective in war and conflict settings, the 'West is best' remains prominent, according to Tull (2020). Tull (2020) questions the effectiveness of contemporary humanitarian response systems, their domination by Western hegemony and whether they are fit for purpose in these contexts.

Blurred Responsibility of Governments. Another critique of localisation concerns the responsibility of the governments and their role to protect communities (Huq & Miraftab, 2020). Although governments around the world have the responsibility for disaster risk reduction and community preparedness, and this has become even more the case under the pillars of the Localisation Agenda, governments will often invest insufficiently because they are a party to the events that caused the conflict or crisis in the first place. Or, they may lack the resources to respond or do not prioritise emergency action. An example of this can be seen in the very populated refugee camps from the current Middle East crisis and the rapidly evolving nature of this crisis. In these contexts, governments in the countries hosting refugees

are unable to support them without external assistance. Consequently, refugees survive through precarious situations, fending for themselves on a day-to-day basis (Huq & Miraftab, 2020). This suggests the role of governments, whether of host countries or otherwise, has become increasingly blurred.

The Lack of Recognition of Localisation as a Humanitarian Principle. Other challenges around implementing localisation include the presence of stalwart humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence. These principles were established nearly twenty years ago and it is suggested they lack relevance for today's complex humanitarian contexts (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Hilhorst, 2018; Lie, 2020). Integrating the additional principle of 'subsidiarity' into the humanitarian principles has become a cogent argument (Gibbons, Roughneen, McDermott, & Maitra, 2020). Gibbons, et al. (2020) contend long-term humanitarian action needs to be people-centred and focus on resilience building in local communities so that the humanitarian system shifts from one of charity to one of justice. Subsidiarity also challenges the portrayal of disaster-affected people as victims; thereby legitimising the position that disaster-affected people have in the restoration of their communities.

Local Leadership. Another key debate is whether leadership of humanitarian responses by local staff in a humanitarian organisation constitutes localisation. According to a 2018 report on staffing (Knox-Clarke, 2018), humanitarian organisations have employed 570,000 humanitarian workers since 2017, an increase of 27% since 2015 (p. 13). The growth has been driven by an increase in local staff, with numbers of international staff remaining stable. This report indicates this trend is likely to continue in the future, with more local organisations and localised decision making. However, there is a great deal of uncertainty

over how long the shift in power and resources from international to local leadership will take. Also, whether the increased presence of local staff is a mere token gesture and not a strategy to ensure more diverse perspectives than the predominately Western ones influencing the organisation for centuries past, remains contentious (2018). In parallel with the numbers of local personnel employed by humanitarian organisations increasing, concerningly, humanitarian contexts have become riskier. The number of humanitarian workers experiencing attacks has doubled annually in the last ten years, with the majority of attacks being against local staff (Alexander, 2020).

Summary

Contemporary complex humanitarian contexts are informed by the theoretical paradigms of Classical and Resilience Humanitarianism. As much as these two paradigms reflect two faces of the same reality, they are also radically different; very rarely do they work in an unadulterated or independent way during complex humanitarian contexts. As a result, there are many multiple, entangled, contradictory, and multi-faceted challenges playing out anytime and anywhere.

There are three discourses capturing the complexities of these paradigms: colonialism, globalisation, and localisation. The literature I have drawn upon in this chapter has thrown a pandora's box wide open, demonstrating the extent of the impact of these discourses and how they undervalue local knowledge and expertise. For example, both the colonial legacy of paternalistic responses and the forces of globalisation demean already marginalised groups, fuelling conflict and economic disparities. Localisation has informed global policy as well as radical reform. The Localisation Agenda has been deemed necessary to address a hierarchical, Western-based, and bureaucratic humanitarian system and to prioritise Indigenous knowledge. I have found there is confusion and ambiguities around the discourse

which presents major obstacles to the aims of the agenda and shows obvious gaps between strategy formulation and implementation and the ensuing complexities this will likely entail.

Although there is much merit in utilising Hilhorst's three theoretical paradigms to highlight the nature of humanitarian crisis drivers, as well as the systems and scope of humanitarian responses (2018), there is a risk that in using these paradigms, I am oversimplifying humanitarian contexts and infer *all* humanitarian contexts are suitable as IFE opportunities for social work students, when, indeed, they are not.

There are other paradigms which take the analysis of humanitarian crisis drivers a step further (Howe, 2019; Lie, 2020) and these paradigms contribute to some important insights about the nuances of other humanitarian contexts. For example, in Level 3 humanitarian emergencies, the complexity of interactions between society, nature, and the unpredictability of social change plays out over a prolonged period (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010). The state governance in these contexts is usually very weak with the state having limited capacity or willingness to respond to or mitigate the threats to communities or provide any kind of adequate protection (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010). These paradigms characterise Level 3 humanitarian emergencies as permanent rather than temporary or short-term interruptions and there is, arguably, not one point in these contexts where people's needs stop being humanitarian (Howe, 2019; Lie, 2020). For example, in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Ethiopia, state, societal and community structures cease to exist because of a series of escalating shocks and emergencies that have unfolded over a decade or more. In Level 3 humanitarian emergencies, the predominant consideration is the rapid mobilisation of the humanitarian systems for populations who are at an extreme risk of suffering, disease, and death (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010).

My humanitarian colleagues based in Yemen, who are veterans in the field, tell me that every day there are reports of civilians killed or injured when shells land on their homes

and snipers fire on their communities or landmines or other munitions explode. My colleagues talk with me about the varying risks which include the collapse of the rule of law and the ensuing human rights abuses, as well as risks around program implementation and the risk of humanitarian intervention inadvertently having a negative effect. These extreme contexts are not suitable for field education experiences because of the escalating unpredictable, unstable, and profound risk threshold.

Chapter Four: Developing My Methodology

For my study, methodology refers to how new knowledge is revealed. It also about my view of reality as the researcher and how my knowledge will impact on my study. In light of this explanation, my aims in this chapter are to firstly, position my study within a research paradigm. Secondly, I examine autoethnography as the primary qualitative research approach (Ellis & Adams, 2020). Next, I explore techniques to analyse the data from my journals-categorising themes, creating identities and reflexivity. Lastly, I weigh up the ethical concerns in my study and how I have responded to these.

The Paradigmatic Orientation of my Study

Before I began writing, my intention was to undertake a qualitative research design for my thesis. This was for two reasons. Firstly, qualitative research paradigms inherently reflects the values, beliefs and assumptions of the researcher (Leavy, 2020). Secondly, qualitative researchers *reflexively* engage with their values, beliefs and assumptions through the research process (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Both elements are deeply embedded in my professional practice. Most days I find myself intuitively working within a qualitative mindset. This helps me to engage in a continuous flow of reflection-on-action strategies which, in turn, strengthens how I engage as a social worker with clients, colleagues, and communities.

As I delved into qualitative paradigms it became more apparent that there are many ways of making sense of them and I had, unwittingly, opened a pandora's box. I found that each qualitative paradigm has its own theoretical frameworks, technical procedures, and analytical outcomes. As my research unfolded, it became increasingly difficult to locate or 'fit' my study into just one of qualitative paradigms I was reading about (Mertens, 2015). For example, my study is about my reality of humanitarian contexts (post positivism). I share

this reality by creating multiple vignettes, each with their own identity (constructivism). My values, experiences and background are also made explicit in both my journals and how I made sense of them (this is also constructivism). My intentions are also about proposing changes to how social work students need to be prepared for complex field education experiences (pragmatic). I am also writing about my struggles I experienced with my own cultural identity and how this played a role in my understanding of the complexities of humanitarian work (transformative) (Mertens, 2015). As I delved further into these four paradigms I felt I was falling down a rabbit hole, veering towards a disconnect between what the textbooks were telling me to do, what contemporary single-faced methodologically informed publications look like (St. Pierre, Jackson, & Mazzei, 2016), and the intuitive qualitative reflexive process I wanted to engage in.

As much as a specific qualitative paradigm provides important direction on how to organise and refine thinking (Brinkmann, Jacobsen, & Kristiansen, 2020; Leavy, 2020; Mertens, 2015), it was becoming more obvious that I was drawn to methodological *diversity* rather rather a singular paradigm. At the same time, I was managing a major restructure of my study due to the changes in university expectations of post graduate research. I also had to undertake a heavy reduction in data which had accumulated over two years during the stop-start process of my writing. Gradually, it started to feel like to me that the many iterations and the uncertainty, the different perspectives of earlier supervisors and the complexity of reconfiguring my thesis was, in fact, *integral* to the giant steps I was making in my learning and 'becoming' a researcher.

As I fast approached due dates for my research, I asked myself- *How do I capture the chaotic and messy unfolding of my study with a method of inquiry which aligns with how I work intutively and, importantly, includes the rigour that is needed in post graduate research?*

Discovering the post qualitative research paradigm towards the end of my master's journey has been an eye opening one and it is worthy of more exploration in future writing endeavours. Post qualitative inquiry questions the boundaries and the rational modes inherent in some qualitative methodologies which I found contradicted the expectations I had about qualitative research (Carlson et al., 2021). Rather than distinguishing between ontology and epistemology, the post qualitative view of these elements is intertwined. The term onto-epistemology is often used to describe the entanglement of being and knowing (Mamic, 2016). Kerasovitis (2020) also says the ontology of post qualitative research is described as flat, with the researcher, the subject matter and theoretical orientations forming a non-hierarchical assemblage. Reading about assemblages helped to clarify what was emerging for me in the research process and how I felt about my memories and the kind of place they would hold in my study. Although falling outside the scope of this study, engaging in further writing projects will help illuminate some of the more complex and nuanced aspects of assemblages that emerge from a post qualitative research design.

Here I evidence elements in my study that align with literature on post qualitative inquiry. Firstly, rather a methodological focus (telling me, the researcher what to do), post qualitative inquiry encourages the researcher to explore how knowing can be practiced responsibly and ethically but in a fluid, entangled, creative and sometimes uncertain way (Monforte & Smith, 2021). Secondly, post qualitative inquiry demonstrates how methodologies, such as those previously mentioned (Mertens, 2015), can merge and intertwine (Rautio, 2021). Retrospectively, I can see that I was creating methodologies as I needed to and with whatever context was emerging for me at the time.

Similar to my study and as conveyed in Chapter One, post qualitative inquiry also allows for the 'affective and leakages of the self' (Basu, 2021, p.333). [7] Lastly, even though there can be a dynamic shifting nature of inquiry which exists in post qualitative research, there is also the expectation that as the researcher, I will arrive at *new* knowledge, and this knowledge is *not* independent from my own knowledge and practice, but rather emerges from within the messy and chaotic writing process that I engage with. Clarity is critical and, in due of this fact, after many iterations where I experimented with ways to create clarity for myself and the readers of my study, I have incorporated elements like diagrams and vignettes and, wherever I saw fit, flagging concepts, ideas in a structured way so that I could bring the reader along with me as best as I could (Ellingson & Sotirin, 2020; Taylor, Fairchild, Elmenhorst, Koro-Ljungberg, Benozzo, & Carey, 2019).

What Does This Mean for My Study?

Using this information, post qualitative is the open door through which my study steps. Through post qualitative inquiry, I share my real-life experiences as a student, as a humanitarian worker and as a social work academic. I create a space for alternate ways of knowing by sharing my own unique experiences articulated through journals. I also draw on aspects of critical theory (Brinkmann et al., 2020; Fullagar, 2017; Leavy, 2020) so I can propose changes in how social work education faculties prepare students for IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers and in future work.

There are similarities with my study and Wilkinson's study (2020). Wilkinson revisits journals written ten years prior to her study. She also uses her journals to inform changes to

[7] In Chapter One, I delve into some of the complex, messy and emotional challenges in pulling together this thesis and making sense of my journals.

education pedagogy. In my study, I am using journals and twenty years of cumulative data from these journals to inform social work education faculties about pedagogy to prepare students for IFE. Like Wilkinson (2020), I am creating and situating my own personal narratives to help create a shift in how to support students. My study is part of an ongoing plan to continue to contribute to the development of autoethnographic research whereby journals are used retrospectively and reflexively to create data and inform new practices.

Defining Autoethnography

In my post qualitative study, I incorporate autoethnography to analyse and explore my journals. According to Humphreys (2005) and Adams et al. (2017), autoethnography emerged from ethnography and anthropology in the early 1970s. It has become the term of choice in describing studies of a personal nature and, as described by Ellis and Bochner (2006), the methodology 'dwells in the flux of lived experience' (p. 431). According to Ellis (2004) and Edwards (2021), the text of autoethnographic writing can employ different styles and this includes journals. From a post qualitative perspective, journals provide personal understandings of events and experiences and can include observations, reflections, photos, narratives, and creative interpretations such as prose and poetry (Hayward, 2020; Humphreys, 2005). Journals also provide a trail of events and thinking processes and therefore are exploratory in nature (Au-Yong-Oliveira, 2020).

What Do My Journals Look Like?

Most of my journal entries are hand-written notes written in blue or black ink, in A4 note-books that I purchased in the country where I worked. While some are jam-packed with photos, sketches, copies of emails, and mementos (such as Post-It notes on which I had written thought bubbles while at meetings or conferences), other journals are less bulky.

Some of my journals are falling apart at the seams, heavily stained, or eaten by silver fish. Others, remarkably, retain their original look.

The Dilemma: What Do I Share?

There are many anecdotes from my journals, as well as non-traditional forms of texts like poems, drawings, and photos, which I want to share but which have ended up making their way into my thesis and out again, much like a revolving door, because they did not fit the scope of my study. I have faced many dilemmas about what would be acceptable and what would be overindulgent. Using my research questions as a guide has assisted in the process of selection. Learning how to be brutally attentive to what I include and what can be considered for future research and publications demonstrates the emergence of myself as an autoethnographic researcher.

Why Am I Using My Journals in This Study?

It is important to me that readers of this study experience a resonance with the complexity of humanitarian work and the multiple planes in which they operate. In my journals kept in my early days as a student and, later, during my professional career as a humanitarian worker and then as a field education supervisor, I am, in the spirit of a post qualitative study, disclosing my own gritty truth about working in these contexts. In sharing the stories of students I have worked with, I want the readers to connect to the kinds of intercultural challenges that students will likely come across when they are undertaking IFE. According to Boylorn (2016) and Goodall Jr (2004), resonance and connection are the makings of good ethnographic story telling.

What Are the Techniques I Use to Analyse the Data from My Journals for This Study?

Categorising Themes

Although categorising themes is not a standard method of inquiry in post qualitative research (St. Pierre, 2018), I used this method to help make sense of an extensive array of journals I found on that rainy day in my shed. [8]Chang (2016) provides a description of important techniques which have helped me to identify initial themes in my journals. While reading my journals, I made notes along my texts to identify initial categories that emerged from the data. I gradually identified themes and selected vignettes based on these themes. I also include themes from my journals which have been informed by conversations I have had with my research supervisors. These interactions have helped to facilitate deeper reflection about my journal entries I did not uncover in my initial renderings (Charmaz, 2014).

Creating Identities to Facilitate Reader Resonance and Connection

As my themes emerged, I questioned whether the thematic content would engage those readers who were not familiar with humanitarian contexts and humanitarian work. The feedback I received from my supervisors was that my thematic analysis was thorough, but it was also very 'heavy'. This provided an important turning point in my study. Even though I was experiencing my own excitement with the discovery of my journals and the content within them, this did not necessarily translate to the same level of excitement for readers. What was missing, I believed, was an improved quality of resonance in my study, rather than in a few selected chapters.

Using this feedback, I created 'identities' from my journal entries to help readers connect to my topic (Boylorn, 2016; Goodall Jr, 2004). In Figure 5, I have illustrated these

[8] In Chapter One I describe the emotional experience of finding my journals.

identities. One of these is *Annie-student.* These journal entries were written in 2002 when I was a student in Timor-Leste, undertaking my final, three-month, social work IFE. During this experience, I received supervision from Ellen, a social worker who worked for an Australian university. My journals provide insights into my observations and interactions as a student while in Timor Leste, as well as insights regarding the reflexive relationship between myself and Ellen. In this study, *Annie-student* is used to convey these experiences.

I also use the identity *Annie-humanitarian* to transmit my experiences of working with INGOs and the UN in Southeast Asia, East Africa, West Africa, Central Africa from 2003 to 2014. *Annie-humanitarian* is utilised to demonstrate the complexities of humanitarian contexts and the discourses of colonialism, globalisation, and localisation[9]. In the latter half of my career, I worked as a consultant trainer to humanitarian professionals before their deployments to humanitarian contexts. As a humanitarian trainer, I share my knowledge and experiences of humanitarian contexts with training participants so that they are better informed of the challenges and ready to work in humanitarian contexts. The identity of *Annie-humanitarian* I share in this study also reflects my trainer experiences[10].

Annie-student and *Annie-humanitarian* journal entries are mostly in their original form. On occasion, I have had to carefully rework them for this study, so I could preserve the integrity of the experience, the time and place. This means the journal entries written by *Annie-student* and *Annie-humanitarian* are as close as possible to how I recorded them in my journals. I am also inviting the reader to connect to the concepts around humanitarian crisis drivers and discourses through *Annie-humanitarian* journal entries. These are heavy concepts for even the most veteran humanitarian workers to comprehend but they are essential

[9] This identity will be explored in Chapter Four
[10] This identity will be explored in Chapter Seven

knowledge for understanding the historical and contemporary influences which thwart successful humanitarian responses. To bridge the gap between the conceptual and practical understandings of humanitarianism, I use my *Annie-humanitarian* identity to inform the reader of the extent of these contexts and their long lasting, calamitous impacts.

Since 2013, I have worked as a field education supervisor of students during their three-month IFE experiences. *Annie-supervisor* is the third identity which emerges from my journals. In the opening pages to this thesis, I shared an IFE experience written by *Kris*. *Kris* represents a typical social work student undertaking IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers. His persona is based on students' personal communications to me while I supervised them during their IFE. The challenges *Kris* faces during his IFE are representative of those experienced by the 100 students I have supported. For the purpose of the narrative in this study, *Kris* is completing his final field education in Myanmar.

I also introduce the reader to *Kris and Annie* exchanges, a culmination of over ten years' worth of IFE teacher-student supervision encounters that inform my discussion as *Annie-supervisor*. They are used as a technique to reflexively consider the engagements with students in supervision about place, context, and culture. I draw on conversations from both face-to-face and Skype supervision sessions, as well as email exchanges to inform these vignettes and I use the process of reflexive journaling to capture some of the most salient themes. I use these exchanges to complement and fill the gaps in existing research on how to improve the intercultural awareness in students of complexities that unfold during IFE and to shift a troubling IFE experience towards a more positive one[11].

[11] The *Kris and Annie* exchanges will be explored in Chapter Seven through the emergence of *Annie-supervisor*.

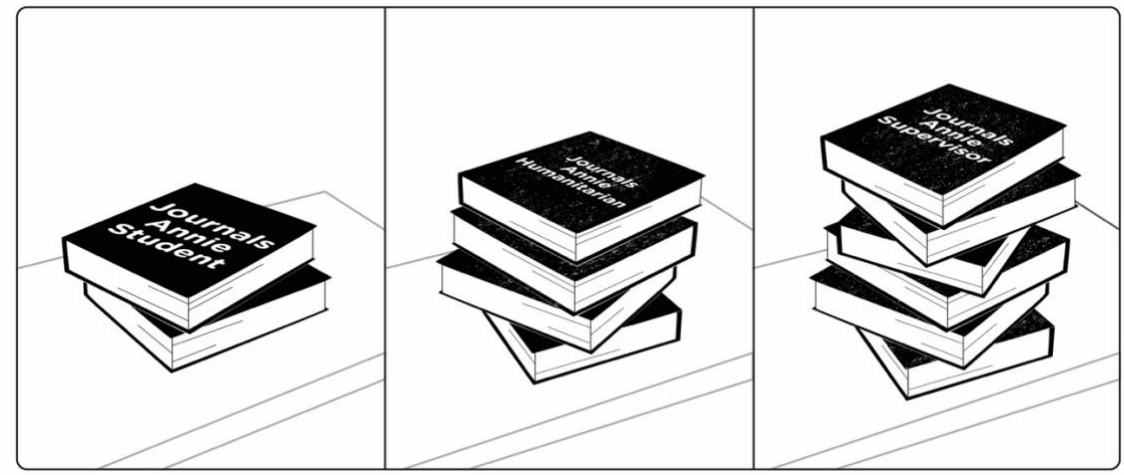

Figure 5: Identities Emerging from my Journals

Researcher Reflexivity

In sharing my identities, I provide an insider knowledge of being a student during IFE, my work as a humanitarian worker and the interactions between students and supervisors during IFE (Adams et al., 2017). Having insider knowledge comes with many risks. I am aware my biases could influence the way my research progresses. My study, therefore, blends autoethnographic writing with reflexivity with the aim to keep my bias and subjectivity in check (Peterson, 2015). Reflexivity also helps me make more explicit some of the meaning-making processes which might otherwise remain hidden and unchallenged (Alley, Jackson, & Shakya, 2015; Darawsheh, 2014; Etherington, 2017; Meekums, 2008). I also use my identities to reflect on the literature so I can stay true to my stories while still maintaining academic integrity.

Importantly, these identities inform the need for a shift in how social work education faculties prepare as well as support students for IFE so I am sharing new knowledge (Alley et al., 2015). I want to open the door to fresh insights into the complexity of humanitarian work and the experiences of students, and how social work faculties can support them. In re-

reading my journals and exploring themes, I am also, as explained by Meekums (2008), discovering new things that have been unexplained or unknown to me up to the point of immersing myself in the process.

In my autoethnographic study, it has been difficult to stay with one narratory self in each chapter, particularly in my literature review where my voice is more detached and impersonal. I am cognisant I have had to merge different voices as part of the knowledge construction process in my study which makes me concerned my chapters are disjointed rather than flowing into one fluid, continuous project. Through a reflexive approach (Peterson, 2015), I am learning that in my autoethnographic study, I need to coordinate many voices and this needs to be constantly negotiated, as is finding my own voice amongst the expert literature. I am not stepping into the research process laterally, but rather it is a messy and creative process. My confidence is strengthened by my supervisors' support of a messy research process, and I am sustained by these supervisory relationships.

Through reflexivity, I am also engaging in an ongoing internal dialogue (Berger, 2015) about various features of the research, and this includes the research question, the structure of the study, the multiple identities I bring and create in the research and how I might have influenced the research process. This means I am undertaking a rigorous process of ensuring my journals are valid and reliable data for this study (Darawsheh, 2014).

In using autoethnography as a tool to facilitate reflexivity, I am also engaging with the emotional content of my experiences. For example, when I am reading journals I wrote as a student, I can see I was overloaded with the day-to-day experiences, and it all seemed very different to what I had experienced before. Journaling helped me make sense of the new emotional experiences. It gave me the space to articulate the complexities I was personally and professionally experiencing as a mature-age student, on my own, away from family, my children, and friends, in a country I had never been to before.

Engaging reflexively with my journals is also a therapeutic process. I am reading about my values, self-efficacy, resilience, my strengths, and the different choices I made: these are all the things which have informed my sense of identity. I know that in my current work as a mental health social worker, engaging reflexively helps me to look at my practice through a critical lens so I can strengthen my understanding of my role while working one to one with clients (Etherington, 2017). In this study, I am discovering the reflexivity I use as a mental health counsellor helps to facilitate a richness and depth to the analysis of my journals. Meekums (2008) confirms that autoethnography, as a broad methodological approach, is consistent with reflexive practice in the fields of counselling, emphasising self-understanding, creativity, and immediacy of communication, while maintaining a critically subjective stance. All of these points demonstrate that I am invested in reflexivity as a tool which makes my positionality and subjectivity in this study more transparent, which is critical for a post qualitative study (Holmes, 2020).

I am cognisant that while incorporating reflexivity, I could fall into what Lynch (2000) describes as an 'epistemological hubris' (p.47) and assume that reflexivity in my study will produce outcomes that are exact. Lynch (2000) also posits that there are no apparent advantages to being reflexive in research unless something useful comes out of it or it brings the researcher closer to the unknown elements being researched. Over the course of my study, I have felt at times *too close* to the questions I am researching. I am social worker who has worked in humanitarian contexts and supported students in humanitarian contexts. I have first-hand experience of the challenges of working in these contexts as well as what students experience. Prior to this study, I had a strong intuitive sense of what students need. I have spoken about this with my supervisors and how to position myself in the research so that I am not making unequivocal claims about outcomes when this might not be possible.

There are other limitations of using reflexivity in my study. I have only just touched on my cultural positioning and this aspect of reflexivity feels very new to me (Probst, 2015).[12] I am not exploring other types of reflexivity which correspond to different types of philosophies described by Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas and Carricativo (2017). I am also not evaluating my reflexivity (being reflexive about reflexivity) – this falls well beyond the scope of my study. This opens the door to further investigations about these and other aspects of reflexivity in future writing.

Ethical Concerns and My Responses to These Concerns

Ethics approval was not required for this research because data for my study was generated from my journals. However, I have relationships with colleagues that I have portrayed in my journal entries, as *Annie-student* and *Annie-humanitarian,* so there has been a reticence in disclosing conversations and interactions I have had. I have had to weigh up whether the colleagues I am referring to would be comfortable with me retelling their story in journal form (Sikes & Hall, 2020). Wherever possible, I have alerted students and colleagues about my study and engaged in conversations with them about the potential for conflicts of interest which have been framed by Tolich (2010). In some cases, I have had to change a person's name to protect their privacy. I have also chosen to anonymise some countries because of the potential impacts this might have on relationships I have with host organisations in these countries. If needed, I have paraphrased interactions conveyed in my journals so that the details of context and person are not made explicit (Turner, 2013).

Even though *Kris*, and *Kris and Annie exchanges* are semi-fictionalised accounts, I have also had to consider the ethical implications of including interactions with students

[12] My cultural positioning is explored in Chapter One.

while I supervised them on the field education experience. In sharing these exchanges, it is important students do not recognise themselves in these accounts if they were to read them. Just like my relationships with Ellen, the foundation of the student-supervisor relationship is mutual trust. As a supervisor, I trust that students act in accordance with the university and membership body requirements. Conversely, students trust me to guide them through their field education experience through reflexive practice. During these experiences I am not just a teacher. I become a mentor, guiding students through the unfamiliar terrain of humanitarian work which is a world far beyond teaching in a university setting. Therefore, breaking this trust and this bond would be devastating for students and for my professional status which is guided by stringent codes of practice.

When I look back on my journals, there are many examples in which I reflect on the intensity of my supervision experiences with students. My journals expose my frustrations and angst with situations that have come about because of my role as a supervisor/mentor. It is ethically important for me in my study to ensure readers do not recognise students and for students not to recognise themselves in these interactions. Therefore, decisions I made about what to include were based on my relational care to the people, the communities, and the students I have worked with for a long time (Edwards, 2021; Ellis, 2007).

While my filtering process ensures confidentiality is maintained, it also means I have not been able to preserve some of the voices, language, emotional cadence, and unique characteristics of the contexts and people I interacted with. My invitation to bring the reader on board to relive the experiences with me, while being ethically minded, has presented as a challenge and I am cognisant the journals and vignettes I share are only one part of the full narrative.

In sharing my journals, I also defend the right to guard my own privacy and disclose only data I feel comfortable to disclose, just as I did as a student in Timor-Leste. Some of my

stories are painful to revisit and are not suitable for this study. Another pitfall I discovered in the autoethnographic process is an awareness of my vignettes being potentially self-indulgent (Edwards, 2021). As much as I was enthralled with the discovery of my journals in 2019, the adult I have become has found that some of my journals have been written by a self-absorbed, younger self.

Bringing Together Emic and Etic Perspectives

In summary, my ethical processes are informed by the ontological methods of balancing both emic and etic researcher perspectives and these have helped me to be aware of the ethical ramifications of my study and the reality that ethics in my study spans across the contexts and interactions of my journals (Berger, 2015). In my study I am choosing to share, within reason, my insider-emic perspectives of what it is like doing humanitarian work as well as supporting students during IFE. I am also drawing on external data of literature and research to analyse and interpret my insider-emic world. The weaving of my journals with the literature provides a framework for analysing and interpreting my central stories. From an outsider-etic perspective, I am making it known my concerns of the possible consequences of revealing information that has been shared with me by others.

My Journey with Reflexivity: The Emergence of My *Annie-Student* Identity

My journals have been informed by a reflexive process which began under the guidance of my university supervisor, Ellen. It was here the seeds for reflexive practice during my professional career were planted and, in this study, it is one of the enduring practices I use to help students during their IFE. At a basic level, reflexivity for students brings together thoughts, feelings, and actions as well as values and sense of self for examination. At a deeper level, reflexive practice shows how all of these inform and affect

interactions with others in a diverse array of situations and professional contexts (Houston, 2019).

To instigate the reflexive process, Ellen encouraged me, *Annie-student,* to journal about the people I was meeting and then, in my own words, capture the conversations I was having with them during my field education experience. I was hesitant at first because my only experience with journaling up until this point had been keeping a diary of the highs and lows of being a teenager so this became an uphill battle filling the pages while not really knowing the purpose. Even though I was like a sponge for new information during my IFE, I was not confident with how to write about all the new experiences which were pushing me out of my comfort zone.

Ellen invited me to share my journals during our weekly supervision sessions via Skype or over the phone. There were also times I emailed Ellen with extracts from my journals when telephone lines were down which, although not my preferred style, did help make sure we were consistent in our contact. Although I knew Ellen previously from university as a social work tutor, I developed a deeper sense of Ellen's values and how to engage in social work thinking through our supervision sessions. This meant I was more willing to take risks in using journals. Ellen's sincere curiosity about my field education experience set up a comfortable relationality between us. What was becoming more evident to me over the course of my IFE was my deepening appreciation of the benefits of reflexive encounters in supervision in which my journals were used as a tool.

How My Journaling Changed Over Time Through Reflexivity

In this section I use the identity, *Annie-student,* to demonstrate my engagement with reflexivity during my IFE. Figure 6 is an illustration of my reflexive interactions with my supervisor.

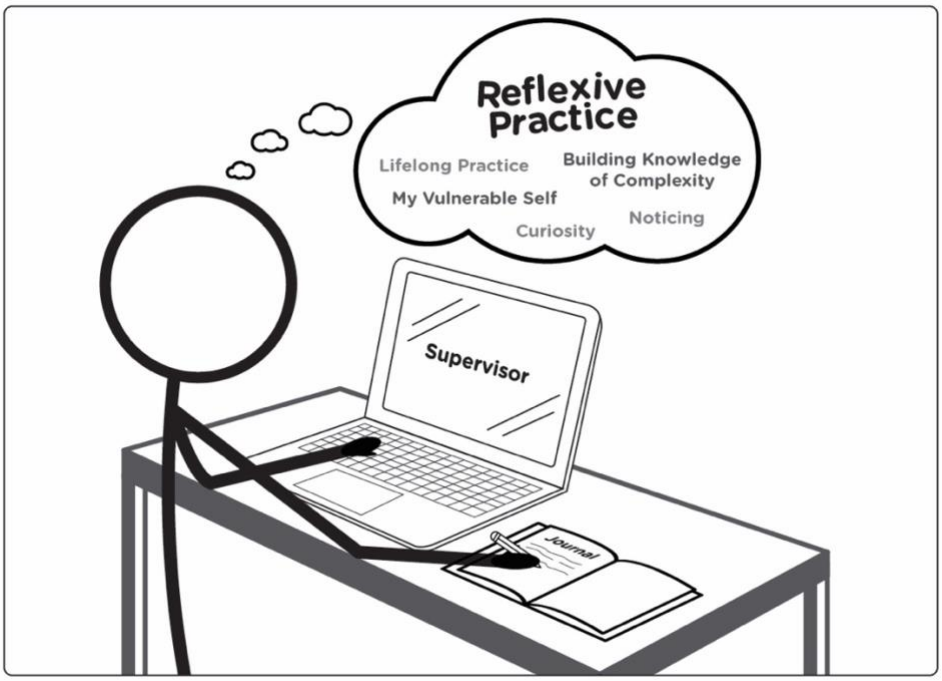

Figure 6: My Engagement with Reflexivity During my International Field Education Experience

Noticing. One of the first journal entries I made was meeting my colleague Josephine, a local social worker who managed a small NGO in Timor-Leste. In my first entry, I noted the day, the time, her full name and then a few lines to describe what we talked about. I emailed this to Ellen. She responded with questions to help facilitate more of an interactive dialogue with her in our next supervision session.

The questions Ellen asked helped me to pick up on the sensory experiences of my interactions I was having and explore why meeting Josephine was becoming integral to my field education experience. As such, I was able to capture the moment by moment 'noticing' of context, place, culture, and people. I can now see, when I look back on my journals, that I was beginning to think like an ethnographer during my IFE (Yeager, Castanheira, & Green, 2020). Through the reflexive process, I was able to return to the experience many times over,

recollect what had taken place and replay the experience in my own mind, picking up on cultural nuances that I had missed at the beginning. My next journal entry, as *Annie-student*, conveys this reflexive shift from being a passive observer to a more active one.

> *While travelling long distances to remote villages I am enthralled with Josephine's relational and story-telling approach, and I feel I am in a different kind of learning space when I work with her. She integrates cultural relevance, plots, and themes into each story and then I notice she uses my reactions as cues to go even deeper. Sometimes Josephine breaks out in traditional songs and invites everyone in the vehicle to sing with her* (Townsend, 2020).

Ellen wanted to know more about how Josephine worked with the community, so she asked me, 'what is different about how Josephine works that you have not seen so far in this context?' Here, I share with the reader, my response as *Annie-student:*

> *Josephine holds ground in difficult situations. This is usually with mix of assertiveness, sharp intelligence, and kindness. She does not speak on behalf of any marginalised group unless she is given permission to do so. I am learning how to slipstream behind her. She obviously knows her communities well and she leads all the necessary introductions and setting of goals. This is how things get done in this culture and this is in stark contrast to international staff recruited from the Northern countries of Australia, the US, and the United Kingdom (UK)* (Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry conveys I was noticing how Josephine was interacting with the local communities and that it was in stark contrast to international humanitarian workers. Her work was culturally nuanced and sensitive to the needs of the communities. Through reflexivity, I was starting to understand the questionable actions of international humanitarian organisations and the detrimental impact their actions and behaviours had on affected communities.

Curiosity. In the early weeks of my IFE, I expressed to Ellen that I was worried about offending my Timorese colleagues. I had already blundered my way through a couple of embarrassing situations such as mispronouncing names or not knowing enough about the independence movement in Timor-Leste history. I did not want to make the same mistakes. The reflexive process enabled me to take some more risks and engage with my colleagues in an authentic and curious way (Yeager et al., 2020). Engaging in curiosity helped me to put my worries aside, and as Ellen would say, 'get myself out of the way'.

During a shared meal, I asked Josephine to tell me about her motivations for doing her work. Asking this question revealed more than what I expected.

> *Josephine finished school year six, which is very common for young girls when you were brought up during the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste. Josephine had a little bit of training from some disability organizations in town. However, a lot of what she was doing comes from her own analysis of the situations for people with disability. She also has her sister with epilepsy and an intellectual disability. Her mother has a serious long-term neurological disease. Over her lifetime, Josephine can see that her sister and mother were always being treated differently and she knew that this wasn't right and there were many witch doctors that tried to give treatment to fix them. She said to me today 'they are my family, and they deserve to be a part of the community and they deserve to be treated well'. This is what fuelled Josephine and started her work in the disability field* (Townsend, 2020).

In this *Annie-student* account, I am beginning to understand the microcosms of local practice. Local practice is informed by family, community values, culture, and history. To be local is to be self-contained. Local practice is also fluid. It shifts and changes when challenges present themselves and when 'new practices' are needed to replace the 'old', for the sake of the welfare and wellbeing of individuals and families. Therefore, as a concept, local is also difficult to define, which is confirmed in the literature (Roepstorff, 2020).

My Vulnerable Self. Reflexivity also became a tool to examine feelings of being vulnerable (Kress & Frazier-Booth, 2018). It all arrived for me like shattering glass, about one month into my field education experience to Timor-Leste when the lives of my extended family imploded. The trigger for the traumatic events was the revelation around the cultural identity of my family and the breaking open of family secrets that had been held firm for decades[13]. For days, I received what felt like non-stop phone calls and text messages from siblings about a series of traumatic events that were unfolding for them. I was overwhelmed and I felt at a loss over what I could do, being so far away. My journals convey the confusion and disorientation I was feeling. I was strongly drawn to the idea of returning home and enveloping myself back into the lives and familiar routines of my own children and partner who had always been my armour from the pain and drama of my siblings' lives.

In a supervision session, Ellen and I spoke about what had happened. The reflexive process that followed provided a refuge in the middle of a storm. In this *Annie-student* account, I share some questions Ellen emailed to me. These questions demonstrate the kind of exploration I engaged with so that I could begin to construct different meaning from the difficult, complex, and emotional experiences that were emerging for me (Dorsett, Larmar, & Clark, 2019; Fook, 2004).

> *Who is your family? From this definition of family, who makes you feel strong? After a crisis how do you work with people to enable their return to balance whereby balance includes more than just human relationships? What does cultural agency mean for you? Do you believe all people, even if they are different than you, should always hold their own cultural agency for decision-making, even in a crisis?*

This became a turning point in my engagement with reflexivity. What I found revealing through this stage of the reflexive process was achieving a balance between looking

[13] My cultural story is explored in Chapter Five

outwards to what was happening around me, and the journey inwards and to my subjective experience (Larsson, 2019). Reflexively, I was also able to recognise my emotions in these personal situations, name them and unearth the assumptions that underpinned my reaction to them (Gardner, 2019).

As a mental health practitioner, I know that safety is critical for deep explorations of self and cultural identity and it requires deep listening. Ellen emulated this with her interactions with me. It steered me on the path to developing what Bromfield and Capous-Desyllas (2017) describe as a deeper cultural consciousness about self, culture and the cultures of my colleagues and communities I was spending time with.

Building Knowledge of Complexity. Critical to one of my field education goals was to engage in a style of reflexivity so I could build new knowledge about humanitarian work and how it responds to the increasing inequalities and the factors that perpetuate these inequalities (Brydon, 2012). This was important for me to build a future in this field of work. With Ellen, I engaged with a suite of social work strategies which provided a critical lens for understanding the complex dimensions and discourses of humanitarian work and my reactions to them (Macfarlane, 2016; Payne, 2014; Pease & Nipperess, 2020; Tilbury, Osmond, & Scott, 2010).

In an *Annie-student account,* I describe the level of inequalities I was seeing. They were not just visible every day but there was a sense of longevity about them. I found it difficult to reconcile the inequalities and their impacts.

> *It is a daily observation I am making that everywhere there is a lack of funds to respond to the volume and complexity of the humanitarian needs of people with disabilities here in Timor-Leste. The gap widens even more as key donors cut off their contributions. But the hotel rooms and cafes remain full of humanitarian workers and everywhere the roads are spilling out with aid convoys. It is a complexity that is so difficult to resolve*

> *when the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, are just not seen* (Townsend, 2020).

However, in another *Annie-student* journal entry, written some time after, I demonstrate I am less overwhelmed and more able to show my skills in reframing and reconstructing my experiences.

> *I have been reflecting on my own lived experiences of inclusion and exclusion and the differences at times in my life when I have felt valued and included as opposed to opposed or excluded. Everyone has experienced some form of discrimination or exclusion, at least to some degree. Reflecting on this has helped me to better relate and identify with disability as a human rights issue.* (Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry shows how reflexivity enabled me to reconstruct some of the experiences I was seeing and to view the complexities through a critical lens. This was crucial to gaining new knowledge and meaning for my IFE. Experiencing this shift in my learning left an indelible 'memory' about the value of the reflexive process, inciting a deeper appreciation of what it means to learn and what it means to think critically.

Reflexivity as a Life-long Practice. The working culture within humanitarian organisations favours reactivity over reflexivity. However, my engagement with reflexivity as a student set up the foundations for ongoing reflexive practice during my humanitarian career. I felt ready to continue to work, for the long term, in the fast-moving, short-termism and knee-jerk working environment that is inherent in humanitarian contexts. I was also more prepared to not be undone by the heightened sense of needing to move fast when there are escalating humanitarian needs, without forsaking the need to think and respond reflexively.

My journey with reflexivity also prepared me for much later in my career when working with students during their IFE. Just as Ellen did with me during my IFE, I use

reflexivity with students to locate the different complexities in humanitarian contexts and to uncover some of the deeper historical and systemic causes of these. Similar to my own IFE experience, unexpected personal situations can arise which can create a sense of unease and suffering for students. My reflexive practice helps me to work with students reflexively and safely facilitate their deeper understanding of the experiences rather than leave them at risk of becoming undone during their IFE (Gardner, 2019)[14].

Conclusion

In my post qualitative approach and engagement with critically oriented theories (Brinkmann et al., 2020; Fullagar, 2017; Leavy, 2020), I set out to explore how social work education faculties can prepare students for IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers and their future work. With an autoethnographic sensibility, I provide data which has emerged from my journals kept during my time as a student and then during my professional career as a humanitarian worker and as a field education supervisor. I have created two identities from my journals- *Annie-student* and *Annie-humanitarian*. The journal entries I include are as close as possible to their original form. I have also created a third identity, *Annie-supervisor* and two semi-fictionalised accounts - *Kris*, and *Kris and Annie exchanges* - to capture the importance of intercultural awareness and the ways to prepare students for complexities through intercultural awareness. Reflexivity has informed the content of my journal entries and the identities I have created, helping to contribute to data that is informed by both etic and emic perspectives. In this chapter, I have also weighed up the ethical concerns of using my journals.

[14] I explore reflexivity with *Kris* Chapter Six

Chapter Five: Autoethnographic Explorations of Humanitarian Discourses

Introduction

Understanding humanitarian contexts requires a diagnosis of the associated complexities. To summarise my study so far, I diagnose some of these complexities through an examination of crisis drivers and demonstrate, in Chapter Two, how these collide and overlap. Chapter Two also shows that, in any given context, these crisis drivers are mired by other intricate, intersecting risks. These risks include funding challenges, the changing amalgam of humanitarian organisations, humanitarian bureaucracy and the rise of populism and nationalism. The expectation expressed in the literature is that these crisis drivers will continue to escalate as the future unfolds.

The complexities of humanitarian contexts are also understood when they are grounded in humanitarianism paradigms. The paradigms are a contested space, however, highlighting contentions and opposing lines of argument. In Chapter Three, I use the discourses colonialism and globalisation and the shortfalls of the Localisation Agenda to bring to the fore some of these contestations such as the systemic, structural, and widespread nature of injustices within the humanitarian response system.

During international field education (IFE), students will encounter these discourses and their impacts. Therefore, students must learn how to engage with the meanings and key debates emerging from the discourses. In this chapter to follow, I utilise my *Annie-humanitarian* identity to demonstrate the complexities of the three central humanitarian discourses - colonialism, globalisation, and localisation. My *Annie-humanitarian* identity acts as a lens to show the contentions and challenges a humanitarian worker can face in humanitarian contexts and how I engage with them. Through my journal entries, I invite the reader to step into the *insider knowledge* that I acquired in working with these discourses (Adams et al., 2017; Boylorn, 2016; Goodall Jr, 2004).

In keeping with the definition of a post-qualitative research design in this thesis (Basu, 2021; Carlson et al., 2021; Ellingson & Sotirin, 2020; Holmes, 2020; Kerasovitis, 2020; Monforte & Smith, 2021; Rautio, 2021), I begin with an exploration of my own cultural identity. I reflect on how my identity has influenced the reflexive exploration of my *Annie-humanitarian* accounts.

Cultural Identity

White ideology, power and privilege runs rampant in the systems of humanitarian responses and my journals show I was highly sensitised to their impact. My sensitivity is largely due to the struggles I experienced with my own cultural identity. I am a third generation Australian-Kiribati woman: my great-grandmother, Mana, was from Kiribati.

In the early 1990s, my godfather - great grandson to Mana and a science academic from Queensland - undertook extensive field research for the National Museum of Australia. The aim was to contribute to the push to have Pacific Islanders recognised as a distinct ethnic group in Australia. A side effect of his research was that it, sadly, disputed the story long running in our family that Mana was an island princess who married a landowner from Queensland. It revealed that Mana and her eight siblings were forcibly removed from Kiribati in the mid-1800s in a colonial practice known as *black birding*. Against her will, she was one of thousands taken on slave ships and brought to work on sugar cane plantations in Queensland and New South Wales (McIlroy, 2020).

I was brought up in a conservative, Christian family. I was brought up as White but in the background was the myth of Mana. For most of my childhood, my parents distanced themselves, and me, from the findings of my godfather's research as well as stories of my Pacific Island family. This silent and buttoned-up attitude in my family resulted in a lifetime of cultural identity displacement and ensuing mental health struggles which have unravelled

members of my family. 'Acculturative stress' best captures the accumulative discombobulation accompanying the loss of ethnic distinction and connection to Kiribati as our country of origin. Hearing this experience being given the name of intergenerational trauma was very useful to me. It was like I was given a pair of goggles that revealed the hidden code written into the lives of myself and other family members. I could now peer into the history of my family and see the tracks that trauma had worn into their normal state of being.

My journals written by *Annie-humanitarian* remind me that, ironically, the things that brought me bone-weary sorrow about my family were the very things that connected me with the communities I worked with in complex humanitarian contexts. My insight into trauma meant I recognised evidence of its traces in the lives of people I worked with. The influence of this insight was distilled in my pursuit of decreasing social injustices and improving the lives of historically underrepresented and marginalised communities in humanitarian contexts. *Annie-humanitarian's* journals capture the struggles and challenges I experienced as well as how I work with and empower historically oppressed communities to effect change.

Contemporary Colonialism in Humanitarian Contexts

Meeting Alexandro, the director of a disability NGO in Timor-Leste, was a significant turning point in my understanding of colonial legacies in humanitarian responses. I returned to Timor-Leste in 2003 to work for a small NGO which focussed on advocacy and rights for people with disabilities. Alexandro and I worked closely together in coordinating the Disability Working Group and, for the six months I was there, we came to value each other's skills, knowledge, and professional wisdom.

Alexandro's vision was to change the way disability was seen in his country. I had already learned, in my IFE to Timor-Leste, that advocacy for people with disabilities was a

radical concept. People with disabilities were often regarded with mistrust and ridicule and are typically isolated from their villages. Children with disabilities tend to miss out on going to school. Black magic was prevalent in some of the regions and people in these areas with disabilities were seen as bearing a curse because their families had done something wrong. Alexandro and I travelled through some of the most remote, mountainous areas of the country to offer help, advice, and support. One of the biggest issues we grappled with at the time was being able to design wheelchairs that could be used in the dense jungles of the highlands (Townsend, 2020).

One evening, after particularly strenuous travel, I sensed there was something on Alexandro's mind. After a few minutes of silence, he mused: *'Will my country ever heal? Why do we need the UN so much? Where has the money gone? We are not helpless - but we need to stand on our own two feet'* (Townsend, 2020). This exchange set the scene for me to critically engage with the challenges and limitations of humanitarian response systems and, what I came to understand as, the embedded colonial legacies.

In humanitarian contexts, contemporary colonialism is largely informed by the UN system (Melis & Hilhorst, 2020) and by foreign policies of Northern countries systematically suppressing and exercising domination over countries of the South (Balaji, 2011; Hilton et al., 2018; Townsend & McMahon, 2021). The impact is that affected people, like Alexandro, lose their trust in humanitarian responses because they feel they have little say in the assistance that reaches them (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Melis & Hilhorst, 2020). Colonial legacies are one of the structural reasons why affected people feel that the services provided *for* them are not designed *with* them using *their* input and according to *their* needs (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Hilhorst, 2018; Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Matyók & Schmitz, 2020; Roepstorff, 2020; Scott-Smith, 2018; Townsend & McMahon, 2021).

When I replay Alexandro's conversation in my mind, I can recall his frustration at being thought of as 'helpless'. Research literature says colonialism largely assumes that affected populations are vulnerable and need assistance. This label and others, like 'helpless', 'powerless' or 'victim', ascribe a level of dependency and lack of agency to communities impacted by a humanitarian crisis. These labels also mute the voices of affected communities, reinforcing notions of the 'White saviour' who goes in to help without authentically engaging with the affected communities (Adams et al., 2009; Balaji, 2011; Bell & Masys, 2020).

Colonialist tendencies can also present in how an international humanitarian organisation is managed. In one of my *Annie-humanitarian* journal entries, I describe a team manager I worked with in Indonesia in 2004 who was from the US. On one hand, my manager was charismatic, energetic, experienced, and very likeable. On the other hand, he seemed to take a lot of shortcuts and I only started to see this the more I worked with him. His shortcuts involved taking ideas from one country's project he worked on to the next country's project. This copycat approach meant the programmes did not convey the cultural and nuanced differences of each community. I describe him in my journal as a 'viceroy' and an 'old relic' and all he needed was a 'pith helmet' to complete the image of a colonial conqueror (Townsend, 2020). This journal entry conveys the alarm I was feeling with a feature of colonial legacies whereby there is a lack of diverse views that are informed by the community, by local knowledge including Indigenous knowledges and by local staff. These are all needed to drive innovation in humanitarian operations and assistance (Alexander, 2020; Baillie Smith et al., 2020; Haque, 2019; Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Jolly & Ahmad, 2019; Spiegel, 2017).

Colonial legacies are also exacerbated by institutional barriers that elevate non-resident colleagues, often from the Global North, over residents from the Global South (Baillie Smith et al., 2020; Knox-Clarke, 2018; Konyndyk & Worden, 2019). In one *Annie-*

humanitarian journal entry, I recall a conversation with a Black, South American woman who worked for a large INGO as a doctor. The love of her work was obvious and her work was secure for as long as she wanted to continue to work for the INGO. Deep down, however, she was carrying a sadness and anger about being overlooked for management jobs she really wanted to step into. She felt she could contribute to important long term strategic changes in humanitarian systems through these managerial positions. It took her some time to see that what was happening was a preference for White managers from countries of the North (Townsend, 2020). My journal entry illustrates that neo-colonial legacies in which the international experience is taking place extend to the treatment of staff as well as aid recipients (Baillie Smith et al., 2020; Knox-Clarke, 2018; Konyndyk & Worden, 2019).

Although the journal entry is dated over five years ago, the theme conveyed is indicative of today's loud outcry from many humanitarians from the Global South for an increased diversity of staff working in humanitarian organisations. Since the murder of George Floyd in the US and the anti-racism protests that have swept the world since 2020, a much-needed racial reckoning of the humanitarian system has come to the fore. I see evidence of an intensifying focus on the deeply ingrained and systemic racist attitudes and discrimination against people of colour working in the humanitarian system (Baillie Smith et al., 2020). However, organisations making the transition to being anti-racist can only happen if there is a decisive shift to recognise the manifestations of oppression profoundly entwined within the discourses of colonialist legacies.

My *Annie-humanitarian* journals also show examples of colonial concepts embedded in some humanitarian reports I came across during my humanitarian career (Townsend, 2020). Two main features in humanitarian reports are colonising in their rhetoric. First, decontextualised quotes from affected people are widely included in these reports. This puts a focus on their 'gratitude' in receiving the support. Secondly, humanitarian reports convey a

hierarchy of knowledge that is exported from the Global North, such as political theory, international and diplomatic history and security studies and the literature that speaks to this hierarchy (Balaji, 2011; Peters, 2019). Without accepting and respecting local knowledge, these reports will continue to promote the dominant account as the normative one. This becomes highly problematic, particularly when there is little awareness of how these reports privilege humanitarian organisations over local communities (Townsend & McMahon, 2021).

Technocolonialism

In the last decade, as I note in my *Annie-humanitarian* journals, I have seen an increase in the quality of communication between affected populations and donors, INGOs and the UN through online applications (apps) such as OpenStreetMap, YouTube, Ushahidi and Twitter. Messaging apps such as Whatsapp, Viber and Facebook are also widely used when INGOs want to contact communities during a crisis, to manage coordination of tasks in hard-to-reach places, or where there are high security concerns. In 2018, I describe in my journals the very new concept of 'humanitarian wearables'. These are smart devices that can be placed on bodies for many purposes in humanitarian contexts, including tracking and the protection of the health, safety and nutrition, reproductive health and increasing security of affected people (Townsend, 2020). Since that journal entry three years ago, these devices have begun replacing the wristbands and identity cards used by refugee organisations for decades to help give refugees better access to food and assistance.

However, there are concerns regarding how ICTs operate in humanitarian contexts. For example, when emergent issues are dealt with using the hyper speed and pace of technology, ICTs are likely to replicate the colonial legacy of humanitarian work (Madianou, 2019; Sandvik et al., 2017). Other contemporary problems include the lack of protection of information and privacy rights of vulnerable moving populations (Vannini et al., 2019) and

increasing risks of INGOs using fraudulent information from electronic databases. This is largely attributed to the pressures to garner information for funding purposes and to maintain reputations in a large and competitive field (Madianou, 2019).

While I was working in Nepal in 2018, drones were used widely by large INGOs. For about a week, I ventured out with a human trafficking INGO to collect data on the movement of young girls across the India-Nepal border. In this activity, I saw the advantages of drones; they are inexpensive and relatively easy to use, they can access hard-to-reach places and collect data without having to put humanitarian workers at risk. We were able to quickly get real-time data on a complex situation. For me, as an ICT luddite, I found using drones to be incredibility seductive and I believed them to be a brilliant means of capturing rich sources of data (Townsend, 2020).

However, I since found that with the rapid rise of diverse ICTs in humanitarian contexts, there are concerns about the absence of critical analysis of this technology and the data it produces. Such concerns are supported by Sandvik et al. (2017). Attending a conference on ICT innovations in humanitarian contexts, I noted in my *Annie-humanitarian* journal that one of these concerns is that the creation of new technology to expediate humanitarian responses is often outsourced to external partners, meaning the designs inevitably fall into the hands of organisations predominantly from the Global North. When humanitarian organisations do not sufficiently engage in critical thought about the direction of this outsourcing arrangement's viewpoint or the real and cascading impacts on affected communities, affected communities are treated as merely passive beneficiaries of the organisations' services (Townsend, 2020).

In another journal entry by *Annie-humanitarian*, I use Post-It notes to show the kinds of reflexive questions I was asking myself about ICTs in humanitarian contexts:

> *How can humanitarian organisations integrate decolonial approaches to create safety for affected communities when using ICTs? Just because we can implement a particular technology…should this be happening? What is the harm that might arise from the digital intervention? Would humanitarian organisations ever include reparations if things went wrong?* (Townsend, 2020).

Legitimacy Of Charity Models and Faith Based Organisations

FBOs are increasingly involved in humanitarian responses, and from my experience as a humanitarian worker, they enjoy large teams of committed volunteers, plenty of donations and access to communities (Townsend, 2020). Currently, there is a vast expansion of these organisations and their activities launched by the snowballing immigration influx into European communities over the last four years (Lynch & Schwarz, 2016). There are, it must be emphasised, some FBOs who are deeply rooted in communities and are well informed about the social contexts. They are legitimate local sources of knowledge and contribute to community solidarity (Roepstorff, 2020). In Sudan in 2008, I worked extensively with UK-based Islamic Relief Worldwide who demonstrated a deep social commitment, coherent vision, and cultural sensitivity. They had convenient and important social connections which, my *Annie-humanitarian* self observed, created significant change in communities experiencing cyclic poverty from war (Townsend, 2020).

However, colonialism is also evident in the rescuing, hand-out, and proselyting roles of other FBOs (Gordon & Donini, 2015; Lynch & Schwarz, 2016; Mahood, 2008, 2009; Peters, 2019; van Dam, 2020). For example, while I was working in West Sudan, in 2009, hundreds of children in Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) were each given US$1 by a large FBO. They were targeted as orphans that needed rescuing. From the perspective of *Annie-humanitarian,* this served to contribute to the already concerning orphan industrial complex

which commodifies children and results in an increase in child exploitation and trafficking (Townsend, 2020).

I describe in my journals, from the perspective of *Annie-humanitarian*, what it was like, in 2003, to be seen as White-looking when I first arrived at a remote village in Oecusse, Timor-Leste, which shared a border with Indonesia. This journal entry demonstrates the damaging legacies of FBOs.

> *Even though we were greeted with lots of smiles Alexandro told me today that a lot of the villagers are scared of me, and they don't know how to deal with me because I look very strange. They have heard that white people like me, come to the villages and take the children to the convents to live and they don't come home* (Townsend, 2020).

What this journal entry shows is one of the many difficult juxtapositions in humanitarian work. Humanitarian workers, like *Annie-humanitarian*, can work with the very best intentions and be conscious of not leaving behind a damaging footprint. However, this journal entry also revealed that humanitarian organisations including, as in this case, Christian-run charities led by nuns, had already left behind an indelible fear of harm in communities which was likely to be felt for a long time.

Globalisation

Unpredictability of Global Funds

Unpredictable funding is one of the key features of a humanitarian response system and is influenced by many global factors (Barbelet et al., 2020; Betts et al., 2020; Gillespie et al., 2017; Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Konyndyk & Worden, 2019; Redvers, 2017; Rubenstein, 2005; Tull, 2020; UNOCHA, 2019, 2020, 2021; Young, 2016). Variations of public perceptions of global crises can contribute to the varying availability of funds (Gordon & Donini, 2015; Redvers, 2017).

When funding becomes scarce, fragmentation occurs (Barbelet et al., 2020; Betts et al., 2020; Gillespie et al., 2017; Konyndyk & Worden, 2019; Parker, 2019; Young, 2016). As noted in my *Annie-humanitarian* journals, I find the fragmented response to affected people difficult to comprehend because there is no yardstick or clear rationale to explain the fluctuations. While working for a small NGO in South-East Asia after the Boxing Day Tsunami in 2004, I coordinated a programme which provided weekly cheques to IDPs seeking protection. Cheque amounts would vary from one week to the next. The result left IDPs feeling even more vulnerable and isolated. They were dependent on the cheques to pay for basic expenses they could otherwise not afford because of the devastating impact from the tsunami and the intergenerational poverty spurred on by centuries of marginalisation (Townsend, 2020).

In another journal entry written while I was Timor-Leste, I share a conversation with Alexandro about his mother who was diagnosed with a progressive neurological disorder which made it very difficult for her to care for herself. This *Annie-humanitarian* journal entry shows the desperate situation when there are no funds to sustain a person's sense of dignity and well-being.

> *Funds to cover the costs of the medication for Alexandro's mother are difficult to find for the family members looking after her. On top of this, the medication amounts need to be tinkered with constantly because Alexandro's mum has built up a tolerance to her medication. She is on the same prescription from twelve months ago because getting a prescription renewed is too expensive, so her dosage has not changed since then. She received a donated wheelchair from the convent, but it is not suited to the terrain where she lives. On top of this, she needs a whole team to look after her, to help her with her speech, exercise, and help with moving from her bed to her kitchen and these services are just not here* (Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry demonstrates my growth in understanding the blind spots in humanitarian systems. Currently, humanitarian systems are set up to help people in the short term; which is what funding structures are designed to do (Hilhorst, 2018; Redvers, 2017). Where the system is failing is in the delivery of longer-term care. Religious charities step in with offerings of well-meaning solutions but, like the wheelchair, they are reactionary and/or compassionate responses, rather than a specifically localised one (Gordon & Donini, 2015; Lynch & Schwarz, 2016; Mahood, 2008, 2009; Peters, 2019; van Dam, 2020).

There are also pre-existing social-development factors such as poverty, race and gender that impact on funding, as confirmed in the literature (Adams et al., 2009; Balaji, 2011; Beltrán et al., 2016; Howe, 2019; Jolly & Ahmad, 2019; Kromm & Sturgis, 2008; Krumer-Nevo, 2017; Matyók & Schmitz, 2020; Murshid et al., 2020; Nicoson et al., 2019; Roepstorff, 2020). Hugman (2017) argues that lingering human rights abuses in humanitarian contexts widen the divide between what is funded and what is not. Here, I convey my similar concerns when working in Sudan, in 2009. In my journal, I reflect on the acute levels of vulnerability to human rights abuses, particularly for Indigenous populations, and the perpetual constraints around the delivery of longer-term assistance.

> *The protection needs of the Indigenous populations of women and children in this region, arising from Sudan's policies of Islamisation, have been largely exacerbated by the lack of recognition of the Indigenous nomadic groups and the genocidal activities which have occurred over many centuries. The division between war and peace has become extremely blurred and donors are not keeping up with the level of complexity here. Without ongoing donor support, it has unleashed this vicious cycle of poverty. But the donors we work with are so risk averse. They don't want to change how and to whom they give funding* (Townsend, 2020).

My *Annie-humanitarian* journals also convey the dependency of humanitarian organisations on donors. Donors can be fickle and funds they provide are dependent on how

the crisis is portrayed and whether there is enough pressure from wider forces for them to intervene (Redvers, 2017; Spiegel, 2017). It is reported in the literature, for example, that when the media stoke the fires of pity and use evocative language to communicate the tragedy, donors feel the pressure to respond (Balaji, 2011; Ivanovic, 2019; Matyók & Schmitz, 2020). The situation in Sudan was very much an example of a 'forgotten crisis'. My sense was that the lack of donor support for Sudan was spurred by the fear of right-wing, Islamist-led, violent, extremist movements at the time. Donors from Western countries seemed scared of investing in these contexts because of the optics this would create and the potential for these optics to mar the reputations of humanitarian organisations (Townsend, 2020).

Funding complexities also unfold depending on whether crises are running simultaneously or sequentially. While simultaneous crises occur in many parts of the world within a narrow time frame, sequential crises suggest they are largely protracted, with a cascading and cumulative effect occurring over a long period of time (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Howe, 2019; Human Rights Watch, 2019; Redvers, 2017; UNOCHA, 2019, 2020, 2021). In these protracted crises, which feel like they are going on forever, short-term assistance is the only option. For extremely vulnerable communities who have already experienced terrifying and life-threatening situations, this has deleterious impacts which continue to be felt by future generations (Tull, 2020).

One example is the current context in the refugee camps in Bangladesh and the experiences of the Rohingya populations. While still experiencing the traumatic aftermath of historical human rights violations, and then the treacherous journey to Bangladesh for protection, the refugees now must cope with difficult living conditions in the camps (Adom et al., 2020; Poole et al., 2020). In more recent months, as I have noted in my journals, conditions have worsened because of COVID-19. Pandemic safety measures are falling short

of what is needed because poverty, hunger, inequality, violence, and displacement exacerbate one another in pernicious feedback loops. My *Annie-humanitarian* self describes the situation for the Rohingya in Bangladesh as '*a crisis, within a crisis, within a crisis*' (Townsend, 2020).

What COVID- 19 has also done is exposed the limitations of the top-down business model of funding in the Rohingya refugee camps. As explained by Tull (2020), when a humanitarian response operates from this funding model, it is not flexible or agile enough to adjust to the complex changing realities and this affects a community's access to essential services and resources. This current financing model emerged well over a century ago, yet contemporary humanitarian donors still operate under this model (Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Rubenstein, 2005).

In the Rohingya refugee camps, I note, what is also evident is COVID-19's unequal impact due to entrenched systems of colonialism (Townsend, 2020). The poverty experienced by the Rohingya is largely constructed through the context of being denied a deep cultural relationship with their country and culture for centuries amid the historical British mismanagement of its colonies (Truelove et al., 2020). These experiences resonate deeply in *Annie-humanitarian*. Loss of land, culture and identity informs my cultural story and the impacts have been felt across three generations of my family.

The Globalisation Paradox

Globalisation provides some understanding of the complexity in humanitarian contexts and some important critical examinations of globalisation forces are offered in social work literature (Griswold et al., 2020; Oberoi, 2018; Payne & Askeland, 2016). What is happening in contemporary movements of populations, for example, is no longer a problem for 'other parts of the world' and, as Ife (2016) implies, the local and global are intertwined

(p.179). This is the globalisation paradox, whereby what unfolds globally has a knock-on effect to individuals, families, and communities (Adams et al., 2009; Cox & Pawar, 2013; Healy, 2008; Hugman, 2010).

The knock-on effect is conveyed in studies by Chettri et al. (2020), Grecequet et al. (2019) and Sarker et al. (2019) that draw on climate change to exemplify the effect. These studies demonstrate that climate change will not be contained within country borders: its debilitating effects will exacerbate the destabilisation of other countries within their region. The mass exodus of populations from the Middle East to Europe is also revealing the extent of globalisation, global economic and social inequalities, including inequalities in some of the most economically stable countries (Huq & Miraftab, 2020).

Another globalisation paradox occurs in countries that have possessed great wealth in the past but are now considered to be extraordinarily vulnerable to climate change. Studies also show that climate change will impact on the health of infants, women, the elderly, labourers, and Indigenous groups, regardless of whether the country is a Northern or Southern one (Arriagada et al., 2020; Eckstein et al., 2019).

In 2011, I completed a major research study for an NGO on the impact of globalisation and climate change on rural Indigenous women in a drought-stricken rural town in ‘outback’ New South Wales, Australia. Australia is generally regarded as a Global North country. The town’s Indigenous populations, who were the most marginalised, were experiencing the brunt of climate change, with their traditional farming lands no longer a viable source of food or income for them. Literature indicates climate change will impact on the most marginalised groups, which includes Indigenous populations and People of Colour (Beltrán et al., 2016; Voss, 2020). The complexities felt in this town, such as poverty and loss of work, are indicative of similar towns in Northern countries experiencing climate change (Arriagada et al., 2020; Eckstein et al., 2019). As a Global North country, Australia is falling

short of aggressive policies which act on climate change and this is conveyed in the literature (Eckstein et al., 2019; Edmonds & Noy, 2018; Grecequet et al., 2019). In this outback town, Indigenous families were also being impacted by the closing of coal mines. Further, they were inordinately affected by the regional water crisis from the drying up of rivers after years of drought and the politicisation of water distribution. My *Annie-humanitarian* reflections demonstrate how the NGO I worked for tried to stem the tide of some of the worst impacts of globalisation and climate change, through measures like social inclusion and empowerment.

> *Globalisation and climate change has meant that the Indigenous women feel unable to participate meaningfully in decision-making processes regarding the future of their families. A lot of the Indigenous women are single parents. Families have broken up because of the interrelated crisis of drought and the closing of mines. The Indigenous women feel denigrated, and they feel a loss of dignity in their own eyes as well as from others in their communities. If the NGO funds structures like mobile phones and access to more computers and education, this will promote better communication between each other, and Indigenous women will be able to bring all their ideas to the table and make important decisions with the welfare of their families at the forefront of their minds. But mobile phones and computers are not considered to be a form of assistance by donors. Their perspective is that every second child seems to have these already in this community and therefore the definition from a donor's perspective of what a community 'needs' are based on incorrect perceptions* (Townsend, 2020).

What this journal entry shows is not just the impact of globalisation and climate on a rural country town in a Global North country but, also, the damaging impacts on marginalised communities when their voices are not heard amongst the din of donors and their perceptions around how 'needs' should be defined are ignored.

Paradoxically, during COVID-19, wealthy countries are now having to rely on aid. Literature suggests this is likely due to the historical shortcomings of humanitarian responses which originated in the North (Lawrence, 2020), as well as the far-reaching impacts of

neoliberalism (Adams et al., 2009; Baldwin, 2020; Newnham, 2017; Peters, 2019). A stark reminder of this divide is occurring in the US. A social work colleague of mine is currently working for a US-based NGO which previously provided humanitarian assistance to the Haiti earthquake in 2010 and is now shifting to a domestic response. The NGO delivers free COVID-19 test kits, as well as funding for state-run contact tracing services, food and hygiene kits and financial aid to over 400 sites in the US (Townsend, 2020). This example demonstrates how COVID-19 is redefining vulnerability, whereby countries of the North were experiencing the fall-out and deepening historical social and health inequalities well before COVID-19 exploded in poorer countries. Furthermore, as Lawrence (2020) predicts, during COVID-19, leaders in wealthy countries will likely adopt policies of economic containment to keep chaos at bay. This will have an ongoing repercussion on humanitarian crises located in similar regions.

Nationalism and Populist Movements

Another example of the connection between globalisation and humanitarian contexts is the rise of nationalism and populist movements in nation states as a reaction to unprecedented migrant flows (Manderson & Levine, 2020; Purkayastha, 2018; Zaviršek, 2017). For example, my humanitarian colleagues in Poland and Hungary tell me the influx of refugees from the Middle East into Europe since 2015 has given huge momentum to radical populism in both countries which capitalise on existing prejudices against migrant minorities (Townsend, 2020). As stated in the literature, this gives rise to new, hardy, xenophobic platforms which obstruct humanitarian operations (Bell & Masys, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; Zaviršek, 2017). This means migrant populations must navigate xenophobic as well as geographic territory to enter and safely live elsewhere (Bell & Masys, 2020; Beltrán

et al., 2016; Human Rights Watch, 2019; Manderson & Levine, 2020; Newnham, 2017; Oberoi, 2018; Purkayastha, 2018; Rizcallah, 2019).

In the last three years I have worked in five countries, all of which are or have been governed by populist leaders. In these contexts, populism accounts for the many complex challenges around humanitarian coverage and the ability to reach people in need. Another commonality in these countries is they have all experienced an increased level of refugees who are seeking safety and security. In each of these countries, the actions from governments towards refugee groups and other minorities have served to elevate the popularity of the leaders and win government. Leadership has been won from the denigration of human rights which has marginalised these groups even further (Rizcallah, 2019).

Some communities who are ruled by populist leaders feel they are being heard and listened to after decades of experiencing marginalisation and poverty. In one of my journal entries, I have written the following about a colleague I worked with who was from a country governed by a populist leader.

> *Paulino said to me she feels safe under the new country president. He has made promises to citizens, and this is why Paulino and her friends voted for him. 'We expect our country to be better off under this rule' she said to me. 'There will be less drugs on the street because drug users will now be jailed or sentenced to death. I know my family will be safer with these promises'* (Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry conveys two sides of the one coin. On one side, populist rulers promise of a new life, wealth, and safety for families, and this reaches deep for many who have experienced intergenerational marginalisation. On the flip side, populist leaders create fear, and, in this case, the fear rhetoric is about drug users and other criminals and how they will impinge on the freedom and safety of families. The promise to jail drug criminals or

sentence them to death is concerning, but it is a promised policy that is delivered under the guise of a popular leader's stance and influence.

As *Annie-humanitarian,* I describe how difficult it was for me to reconcile these two sides of the coin and to engage sensitively with Paulino and other staff I worked with who felt they benefit from the country's politics. In my journal, I describe how this *'pushed up against my values'* and I struggled with building relationships with staff in authentic ways (Townsend, 2020).

Corporatisation of Humanitarian Responses

MNCs and other corporate organisations dominate contemporary humanitarian response systems. One of the complications emerging from their power is their lack of engagement with the formal humanitarian system. MNCs tend to adopt a lone wolf mentality. This means they would rather go out on their own than engage ethically with established INGOs and communities (Loewenstein, 2015; Payne & Askeland, 2016; Ramachandran & Walz, 2015; Rubenstein, 2005; Spiegel, 2017).

Reflections emerging from my *Annie-humanitarian* journals demonstrate that MNCs have emerged from changing and unpredictable confluence of humanitarian contexts which INGOs often struggle to access and get to in time. MNCs often come with large teams of logistical and security teams, usually comprised of ex-military personnel and equipment so they can reach remote places. While I was working in Southern Darfur in 2009, leading UN agencies accused foreign oil exploration MNCs of stoking old feuds. From the oil companies seeking to protect their local operations by introducing large security teams into areas already weighed down by conflict, more internal displacement of vulnerable communities occurred (Townsend, 2020).

I recently reached out to my humanitarian colleagues for stories on how MNCs have supported a humanitarian response. One colleague working in PNG shared the following experience. She said that, during the PNG earthquake in 2018, many highland areas were affected and these areas were very inaccessible for most INGOs. There were a lot of large mining, oil, and gas companies working in PNG at the time. She said the ability of INGOs to respond to the emergency was largely facilitated by the presence of this private sector. They were willing and able to provide the logistical support and leadership that the humanitarian community could not. The scale of the response, with the MNCs' assistance, was much greater and more expansive than it could have been otherwise (Townsend, 2020). This story illustrates the transformative potential when organisations and services across the humanitarian ecosystem work holistically to establish a common purpose. However, this seems to be the exception rather than the rule.

Localisation

While working in Timor Leste in 2003, my understanding of localisation was strengthened by my interactions with and observations of Christina. Christina was the director of social services. She worked extensively across the NGO sector in Timor-Leste and was a highly respected leader in her community. Together with Alexandro, she established a nation-wide disability working group which provided the necessary structure to ensure ongoing investments in disability services.

One morning, after driving by the new ATM machine outside the local bank in Dili, the capital of Timor-Leste, Christina mentioned she felt incredibly saddened by the person who had to sit behind the wall all day long, with no air or sunlight, picking people's cards up, counting money and then passing it out through the ATM machine. Even though no person

was required to sit behind the wall of the ATM, I was moved by her feelings for a person she had never met, and who actually never existed.

For me, this experience gave a deeper insight into the value of working with a person who had lived in Timor-Leste all her life. Her deeply cultural and nuanced understanding of caring for her community was evident in this interaction. In my humanitarian journal I noted, '*This is what local work looks like'* (Townsend, 2020). By working with Christina, I learned, as the *Annie-humanitarian,* the importance of finely tuning my responses by inquiring about the local perspective and asking, '*What can I do to learn what this community might need?'* (Townsend, 2020). This simple reframing meant the onus of being informed was transferred onto myself as an advocate and an ally wanting to support a community.

The Building Blocks of Local Practice

The concept of localisation has been around since the 1980s and there is a myriad of examples from the literature which demonstrate the building blocks of effective localised responses (Bodon & Votteler, 2017; Gillespie et al., 2017; Jolly & Ahmad, 2019; Konyndyk & Worden, 2019; Matyók & Schmitz, 2020). Authors such as these show localisation is built through community participation processes, community ownership of projects and community members owning their stories of survival and resilience. There are other building blocks of localisation that became apparent to me as *Annie-humanitarian.*

Belonging. A sense of belonging is essential to survival for communities in humanitarian contexts. While working with Alexandro and Christina, I spent one month in the highlands of Timor-Leste in a village of about four hundred Mambae people who are one of the Indigenous groups. Here, I draw on my journals for context.

> *The village is sectioned out into different family groups, but people can also live close to immediate family as well. In the village is a big centre for the Chief where local meetings are held. Not far from here was a soccer field and a school which are both important parts of community life. Every afternoon, everyone goes down to the local river to wash or swim. It's cooler by this time, so everyone is relaxed. Men drink cachaca and the children play and sing. Last night I was getting ready for bed in a room in a house when I was interrupted by all these people coming and I realised that I was sharing my room with about eight other people for the next four weeks* (Townsend, 2020).

This experience taught me about the interrelatedness of family, extended family, community, garden, church life and work. I learned that people in this village context did not go out to work unless family, community, garden, and church - all the elements that make up the experience of belonging - were taken care of first. This experience is firmly embedded in my sub-conscious, informing my expectations of what humanitarian workers and students undertaking IFE need to learn and know regarding the meaning of community.

Indigenous Knowledge. Another building block to understanding local practice in humanitarian contexts is Indigenous knowledge and it is one of the cornerstones of the Localisation Agenda (Haque, 2019; Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Jolly & Ahmad, 2019). Choate et al. (2020) defines Indigenous knowledge as a group of knowledges that are largely heterogeneous and emerge across Indigenous communities as well as within them. Muller (2020) posits that Indigenous knowledge is a diverse body of knowledge which is spread throughout different peoples in many layers. Chilisa et al. (2017), Hart (2010), Kildea and Kumar (2018) and Winter (2019) say that Indigenous knowledge is sourced through people's close relationship with the environment; through a strong focus on people and entities coming

together to help and supporting one another; and through the spiritual relationship to land. This latter is called Racial Indigenism by Kildea and Kumar (2018).

My time with Alexandro and Christina provided me with opportunities to observe Indigenous knowledge. After my month in living in the highlands of Timor-Leste, I was presented with a woven tais[15] as a gift and given heart-felt speeches. The Mambae community where I stayed were extraordinary story tellers. My journal entry shows my engagement with the farewell rituals.

> *Everyone here tells amazing stories because they don't have a phone to stare at all the time- although this is changing quickly. They used fire and smoke and body paint in the ceremony and many leaders in the community made some beautiful speeches about how much it meant to them that I had come there and stayed with them. I just lived the way that everyone was living there, which I made a very conscious effort to do* (Townsend, 2020).

Another journal entry conveys this meaning of land and place for Indigenous Mambae communities in the highlands.

> *If extended families are okay, and the church or the community don't need anything, then you can go to work. For me so many people I know put work even before themselves, especially living in Australia. If you live in the highlands, your main job is to look after your garden. Your garden will have all your food and every day you need to be thinking about planting food for the future. Everything grows so well in the volcanic soil. You can make money from planting cachaca, cassava and taro as well* (Townsend, 2020).

In some humanitarian contexts, modern practices push up against traditional local knowledge. In 2008, I went to Sierra Leone to work on the Ebola programme with a large INGO. In Sierra Leonne, funerals are immersed in traditional practice. Families come

[15] Traditional hand-woven material

together for weeks after a funeral and engage in family rituals, cooking food and dancing. During the epidemic, funerals became associated with practices which enhanced transmission of the virus, so funerals were banned by the government. This dichotomy between what had traditionally been done, and what the government was asking communities to do, created divisions between communities, leading to a growing disquiet in the communities. It also triggered a deeper pain of feeling overpowered that was indicative of the war a decade earlier. I wrote the following as *Annie-humanitarian*:

> *Funerals are a spiritual bridge between the living and the dead. They are important gatherings where community members from all over meet and talk about important issues like land disputes, heritages, and other transactions. So, when cremations were made compulsory by the government during the Ebola epidemic, it contributed to the build-up of mistrust towards us as outsiders, and we were seen as government officials monitoring the new law.*
>
> *Over time we learned that the deeply held resentment could be traced historically back to the civil war period when communities were cut off from each other. When the government made it law to cancel funerals, they did this without engaging and involving the communities. Communities felt a familiar sense of disempowerment from being cut-off from all the social connections that they need to thrive in their communities. This led to spiralling resentments against the government with communities pushing back against these laws. Ebola is now out of control and spreading to some of the most marginalised of communities* (Townsend, 2020).

What this journal entry shows are the deeper and invisible contextual and historical factors which hold a community together. When a humanitarian crisis hits, such as an epidemic, some local practices that connect community members to each other are considered a threat to the greater whole. Putting a stop to local practices creates a sense of uncertainty, confusion and resentment which then contributes to the escalation of the humanitarian crisis. To work locally,

therefore, requires an acute sensitivity to the historical stories underpinning a humanitarian crisis.

Activism. Activism is another form of localisation and examples of this are evident in the literature (Human Rights Watch, 2019). In 2018, while I was working in Nepal, the Localisation Agenda was at fever pitch and the desire for change was led largely by young Nepali university graduates who had witnessed the questionable actions of INGOs following the 2015 Nepal earthquake. 'Participation Revolution' marches were organised across the country, calling on the government to prepare for Nepal's emergency system to be better equipped to respond to future crises.

As I observed, the marches demonstrated the growing assertiveness of economically vulnerable countries like Nepal and their ability to shape and own their localised responses, rather than being bombarded with outside influence and directives. In my journal, I reflect, as *Annie-humanitarian,* on the powerful shift in humanitarian responses in Nepal to a more localised response: *'In the Nepali context the Localisation Agenda provides the right to question how international humanitarian response systems have come to dominate and replace local people in the first place'* (Townsend, 2020). My reflections here demonstrate my growing alignment with one of the emerging understandings of local practice. That is, to practice locally means to recognise the historical hold that Western humanitarian responses have had in humanitarian crises and the increasing need from communities to push back against these forces (Roepstorff, 2020).

The Challenges in Working with and Understanding Local Perspectives

Through Alexandro and Christina, I learned about the value of time and consistent approaches to working with people with disabilities who were the most marginalised and

isolated population group in the country. This journal entry, written as *Annie-humanitarian,* captures the hard truth about localisation; that it can take years to build relationships with local communities, even when you are a member of the community. Here I share a conversation that Christina had with me about, Francisco, a disabled gentleman she was working with:

> *I've been seeing Francisco for more than seven years now, and it's been a slow process. When I first met him, I told him that there's nothing wrong with you. He was worried about being looked at and of course this did happen. I said to him 'This will happen Francisco, but you know what, if you're out there every day and they see you a lot they are going to stop looking at you as much because they've seen you'*
>
> *It has taken 4 or 5 years of working with him, going back, going back, going back, until he did start coming out into the community more, and he did start listening and believing me a bit more. He has gotten to the point now where he is linked with a disability NGO in town, he makes these beautiful wooden carvings. Sometimes he gets taken down into the town but sometimes he goes in himself, and he sells them to the tourist shops.*
>
> *So, do they listen when you just come just once? Probably not. But if that message is repeated and at the community level you try and educate the community so that the community are more welcoming and trying to engage people with disability, then I think, over a longer period of time this can have a positive effect* (Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry confirms that creating change in contexts where there is dire poverty takes time, knowledge of culture and local leadership and it is best facilitated by local leaders themselves (Konyndyk & Worden, 2019). Local leadership builds hope and empowerment for local communities (Bodon & Votteler, 2017). It is authentic dialogue that has become the mainstay for long term change (Matyók & Schmitz, 2020).

In another *Annie-humanitarian* journal entry, I noticed other nuanced insights into local practice. In this journal entry, I describe a meeting with a group of Australian surfers

who became part of the humanitarian response in Nias after the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami and the extent to which this small group of surfers was embraced by local communities. This journal entry conveys the largely positive experience where local and international were closely intertwined.

> *Their Bahasa is great because they have been coming here for years to surf. They know the islands and climate well and some of them have families with young kids. They have set up an office in a local school and the principal is connecting to them families, village chiefs, and elders. They can distribute food and supplies quickly because everyone knows where the school is. They can move quickly around the islands on their surf boards too* (Townsend, 2020).

However, working from a local perspective as an international humanitarian worker also comes with unique challenges. My journals convey there were times I was largely an outsider to the remote communities where I worked and sometimes there is very little you can do to bridge the outside-insider divide. This journal entry is from my work in Kenya in 2014.

> *I haven't had an easy week this week. We have had to do so much driving and walking. We arrived in one of the villages that is completely traditional. I found that my presence there was a big problem. I am seen as a strange person walking into the village and the kids and babies cry a lot because a lot of them have never seen a white-looking person and they just cry. The village dogs were also scared of me - whenever I got near one of the dogs it would bark out at me and circle me around and around* (Townsend, 2020).

While in some communities in Kenya I was seen as an outsider, there were also other communities that viewed me as an expert.

> *Sometimes the Chiefs would arrange a time to meet with me and ask me why I thought there was something wrong with a family member, or why the water supply was low or why someone was not getting better after a week's bed rest. But I could not do or say anything here. Being asked for opinions is often tiring and the community is expecting so much from me and my colleagues* (Townsend, 2020).

These last three journal entries demonstrate that a localised response cannot be captured as a singular humanitarian response and there are many pathways to enabling a localised response (Roepstorff, 2020). The journal entries also demonstrate that after a disaster, new responses come on the scene which have previously been unheard of. Relationships between local populations and humanitarian organisations can be productive but they can also be fraught with tensions and mistrust.

Promises and Failings of the Localisation Agenda

Localisation also needs to be considered in the context of the Localisation Agenda which came to the forefront of humanitarian responses in 2016 (Haque, 2019; Spiegel, 2017). Initially, it was designed as a solution to the shortfall of humanitarian funding but, over the last four years, the agenda has come to include how to respond effectively and appropriately to communities in need. Despite the reform process, evidence is emerging from the literature of the increasing lack of interest, knowledge, and sensitivity from INGOs to engage with and support local responses to disasters (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Korosteleva, 2020).

I recall one event that demonstrates the lack of sensitivity to local knowledge and the disjuncture between international and local humanitarian workers that continues under the Localisation Agenda. In 2018, while in East Africa with an INGO, a local woman from a village we were working with died after giving birth. She was an outsider to the village and arrived only months before, on her own, with no other family. The matter was brought to the attention of INGO management who were largely Western internationals. I remember sensing rising panic in the managers because they did not know what to do. Three local staff, including one of the office cooks, calmly got together and arranged a visit to the home and provided some funds for cremation and food for the next few days. Later, the community was able to organise adoption of the child for the long term by another family (Townsend, 2020).

What my story demonstrates is how, even after a global reform process, there can still be little interface between international and local workers. Again, this demonstrates how local workers and services are the ones best placed to come to the assistance of communities (Tull, 2020).

Another challenge of engaging in the Localisation Agenda is the level of control Global North countries have over local programmes and how they employ an exclusive, Western way of doing things centred on scientific reductionism. This devalues and underestimates that different forms of knowing can stem from the relatedness with nature, the earth, with self-knowledge and life experiences (Townsend & McMahon, 2021). The humanitarian system has been slow to shift from its Western origins and it continues to rely on outside experts rather than alternative forms of knowing (Tronc et al., 2018). One of my journal entries sadly conveys this as well as my own acquiescence with Western ways.

Three years after the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, I worked in a largely international team in Banda Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia, with a large INGO. Our project involved working with small communities by rebuilding the rice paddy irrigation networks. Our brief was to create a maths formula for the distribution of water. This would help to explain the dynamics that goes on in the distribution of water in the whole network of paddies. The model took account of variables such as the amount of water flowing into the system, the rate of evaporation and the size and elevation of the paddies.

After one week of studying the paddies from the air and ground, we realised our model was seriously flawed. It did not consider a major factor that governed the rice irrigation system that had been in existence for centuries in Aceh and other parts of Indonesia. This factor was the deep knowledge communities had about ethical co-operation and social responsibility. I wrote in my journal:

> *When water was scarce in previous times when disaster had struck, people upstream would share water equally with those downstream because they had helped to build the irrigation system in the first place. The system would fail if the paddy owner at the top of the hill took more water than what was fair* Townsend, 2020).

This journal entry shows that attaining local and historical knowledge and embedded cultural knowledge of paddy systems was not, initially, an integral part of the process in helping the communities with rebuilding back their lives. These views were secondary to more scientific and Western thinking processes (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Hilhorst, 2018; Kumar & Vidolov, 2016; Matyók & Schmitz, 2020; Roepstorff, 2020; Scott-Smith, 2018; Townsend & McMahon, 2021). Partaking in Western ways of doing things is emmeshed in humanitarian response systems (Hugman, 2010). This event became another turning point in my career, pointing to the need for ongoing critical exmaination of humanitarian programmes and whether they were causing more harm than good. It was a humbling reminder to me of the dominant Western presence in humanitarian contexts and how Western ways of doing things can be seductively 'right' and the 'best' way of doing things.

Summary

In this chapter, I examined three discourses of colonialism, globalisation, and localisation as key in humanitarianism using journals entries from the perspective of *Annie-humanitarian*. My examination demonstrates how these discourses inform complexities in humanitarian contexts.

Students need both practice and knowledge to understand the challenges they will experience when interacting with these discourses. Students cannot simply just fall into humanitarian contexts through their IFE, regardless of their good intentions and desires to

help. In the next two chapters, I propose how social work education faculties can prepare students for these complexities through a framework of intercultural pedagogy, SBL and IFE.

Chapter Six: Framework Part One: Building Intercultural Awareness

Hi Annie! It's me, Kris, again! When are you available to talk? We need to make some supervision times. I know I should have been more pro-active in organising these times with you- I am in this slump. Just know I want to do well but I am scared of failing.

Flooding has also shut the school down, so I am not seeing any students or families which leaves me feeling like I am not doing much at all. I spoke with the school social worker who said that many village families have had to leave for the cities because of flash flooding on their farms. Children who are coming to school seem to be unwell and have this persistent cough. But there really is nowhere else for them to go while their parents try to find work.

INGOs are inundated with calls for help. Our school has been set up as a distribution centre and I am involved here with this programme. The social work organisation Save The Children (STC) is the lead agency. There are other Christian charities here now and the sound of their helicopters means they have organised another weekly bible drop to some of the remote villages.

I am spending a lot of time alone in my apartment looking out the window at the burnt-out shells of buildings that have been destroyed by bombs or grenades from years ago. Different military groups sit in their vehicles or camp here most days, watching and waiting. For what? I don't really know. People are too tired to protest. Malaria outbreaks mean people must rest more.

I have tried to reach out to the expat community because I am not good on my own. I got invited to a costume party the other day via the expat face book group, and the theme was 'paupers and lepers'. It was held in an expat's house in the old British raj area. Big house- probably the biggest I have seen here. SUVs were lined up outside three rows deep. Lots of local kids around too, offering to clean the cars for kyats (coins). I left the party early. Felt unsettled

by it all-watching expats dressed as 'paupers' giving coinage to kids who have nothing-it's just wrong.

The civil war between the Indigenous groups is still here, every day, and I can see the tiredness in everyone, and nerves are frayed especially when new military convoys are close by. Htun the school social worker said her brother-in-law, a Karenni landowner and farmer, disappeared without a trace. He has been trying for years to get his family's land back since the new military take over and Htun thinks this is the reason for his disappearance. His land has been in his family for generations but, since the war, land contracts have been destroyed. One of my friends from soccer, Arkar, has a similar story but doesn't feel safe talking about it. After the wrist tying ceremony the other day to welcome me to the soccer team, Akar said 'this means we are all like brothers now.' I hope he knows he can trust me.

I can't keep pretending that everything is ok. I do not know how to let my colleagues know this. We are all so polite with each other and I don't want to embarrass anyone. Zin the school principal is ex-military, and there is this uneasy relationship between Zin and Htun. The other day I saw Htun leave in tears.

When we come together for meetings, I am confused most of the time. Zin asks me for my opinion constantly. He is asking more of me than what I can give. I tried to tell him I am not the person with all the answers, but it didn't go down too well, and I think I have insulted him which is the last thing I wanted to do.

Like I said in my last email to you, I feel the weight of it all on my shoulders. Should I come home?

Introduction

From 2007 to 2009, I was a member of the International Social Work Committee of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW). During this time, we put together a

discussion paper for social work education faculties on the benefits of international experiences for pre-service social work students (students). Our paper contained well-intentioned statements that focused on graduates being more globally minded and ready to make a difference in an increasingly complex world. We argued for the enormous potential in faculties offering direct experiences of complexity through international field education. When they are successful, these field experiences offer students ways to think differently about the origins of humanitarian challenges and about why they persist. They also offer critical insights to help students recognise their own positions and where they stand within a pernicious, enduring system underpinned by its colonial past.

When reflecting on the committee's processes, there is one lesson that still resonates with me. The document had broad and inspiring statements but there was an absence of a straightforward and practical plan on how to bridge the divide between the knowledge of humanitarian complexities and the practice of intercultural awareness students need during their IFE experiences. Without a practical plan, the IFE learning experience for students is far from successful. Students are likely to carry many of the stressful memories with them well beyond the IFE experience. Even now, I feel most university faculties do not connect visions of international experiences to the education of students enabling students like *Kris* to confidently work across this divide. This may be because faculties are struggling to find a starting point.

According to Wolf and Goldkind (2016), social work teachers must evolve their practice to help students make the connection between complexity in practice and knowledge. Arguably, there is an openness to experimenting with models and methodologies which allows for genuine interaction. However, without appropriate, *pedagogically informed* teaching, students find it difficult to comprehend the diverse, disarrayed, real-life challenges occurring in the social work practice realm. Because the learning no longer feels relevant to

them, students switch off, which is likely what happened for *Kris*. What can be extrapolated from my autoethnographic data, and the literature, is social work students, like all personnel working in complex humanitarian contexts, need learning opportunities that facilitate their practice and knowledge. These learning opportunities should occur both prior to and during the field education experience.

Following an explanation of intercultural awareness pedagogy, I unpack the experiences of *Kris. Kris* represents the typical experiences students experience during their IFE and emerges through my *Annie-humanitarian* journals, as I introduced in Chapter One. In *Kris'* correspondence at the beginning of the current chapter, we learn more about the humanitarian context in which he is working and how things have escalated for him. I then make the case for an urgent intervention shaped by a suite of principles to inform a pedagogical intervention which enhances intercultural awareness.

Intercultural Awareness Pedagogy

What is Intercultural Awareness Pedagogy?

Intercultural awareness pedagogy is driven by global complexity, social justice movements and the need for students to develop a critical consciousness about the world and their place within it (Roofe & Bezzina, 2018; Roofe, Bezzina, & Holness, 2018). In the classroom, intercultural awareness pedagogy provides students with learning opportunities to help them engage with and develop an appreciation of diverse cultures, including their own (Roofe & Bezzina, 2018). Kearney (2019) says that intercultural awareness pedagogy teaches students about the social and historical backgrounds of a context and prioritises perspectives local to the context. An intercultural awareness pedagogy also pushes back on contemporary, neoliberal agendas within education institutions so that a more humanitarian approach is privileged (Acker & Nyland, 2018). Song (2016) demonstrates that an intercultural awareness

pedagogy is a holistic one. This means that classroom learning about multi-culturalism, post-modern, social construction theories and explorations of local-global constructs is combined with experiential learning experiences abroad, field education and other global engagements.

Critical to the success of intercultural awareness pedagogy is the building of relationships between students and faculties. Both Grosfoguel (2005) and Kearney (2019) demonstrate that relationships help to facilitate empathetic learning, challenge belief rigidity, encourage cognitive and personal flexibility and strengthen students' critical analyses of privilege, often including their own, won through exploitation and domination by global and colonial powers.

Unpacking Kris's Experience

Kris stands at a tipping point amidst a range of cumulative risks which are compounding his experience. First, *Kris* is witnessing the impact of the humanitarian crisis around him. The literature indicates that the humanitarian context of Myanmar is typical of other humanitarian contexts unfolding globally. For example, *Kris'* correspondence with me above and in Chapter One reveals overlapping crisis drivers of: war (Howe, 2019; Przybyla & Kathman, 2020); looming floods from the changes to the monsoon season (Chettri et al., 2020; Masson-Delmotte et al., 2018; Nicoson et al., 2019); people movement from either changes to climate or ensuing internal conflict or both (Griswold et al., 2020; Jolly & Ahmad, 2019; Murshid et al., 2020); health issues linked to climate changes (Chettri et al., 2020; Sarker et al., 2019); and, internal displacement (Alexander, 2020). There are several factors pressing up against these crisis drivers. There is the active presence of international humanitarian organisations who convey imperialistic tendencies (Harris & Tuladhar, 2019; Hugman, 2010; Melis & Hilhorst, 2020; Parker, 2018; Scott-Smith, 2018; Tronc et al., 2018) and different military groups (Dominelli & Vickers, 2015). There is also the heavy presence

of reputable Christian charities like STC (Mahood, 2008, 2009) alongside other Christian charities engaged in questionable actions and possible proselyting programmes (Gordon & Donini, 2015; Lynch & Schwarz, 2016; Roepstorff, 2020). The day-to-day consequences of Myanmar's colonial history for the community is also evident (Roepstorff, 2020) and there is community upheaval for the Indigenous Karenni people and other minority groups (Nicoson et al., 2019). *Kris* has described the extraordinary wealth of the expatriate community, in contrast to the levels of poverty in the local populations (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Healy, 2008; Hugman, 2010; Oberoi, 2018), and there are tensions between local colleagues (Matyók & Schmitz, 2020).

Kris is also struggling to connect with his colleagues and explain his experience to them in a way that can be understood. Culturally, he does not have the language for this or other skills to communicate his sense of isolation and the confusion he feels about his role. Without the support of the community around him or connection to his colleagues, *Kris* has become less resilient. His well-being is impacted negatively and although learning opportunities are presenting themselves, he has lost a sense of purpose; not just during the IFE but also in how he pictures his future. Fox (2017a, 2017b) recognises these kinds of risks associated with isolation during IFE. Isolation can produce a sense of separation between students and colleagues or clients in the cross-cultural setting and this appears to be happening for *Kris.* Distance of the field setting can also lend itself to a real or perceived decrease in support and resources from the home university. Students like *Kris may* feel an increasing pressure of succeeding in their placement while concurrently balancing other, non-negotiable, learning requirements that form part of their degree. From my experience, when students lack support during their preparation for the complexities in IFE, they do not call for support during their IFE. This ultimately impacts on their professional learning and personal

wellbeing and is what I worried about when *Kris* reached out. Figure 7 illustrates *Kris's* experience of unbearable burdens.

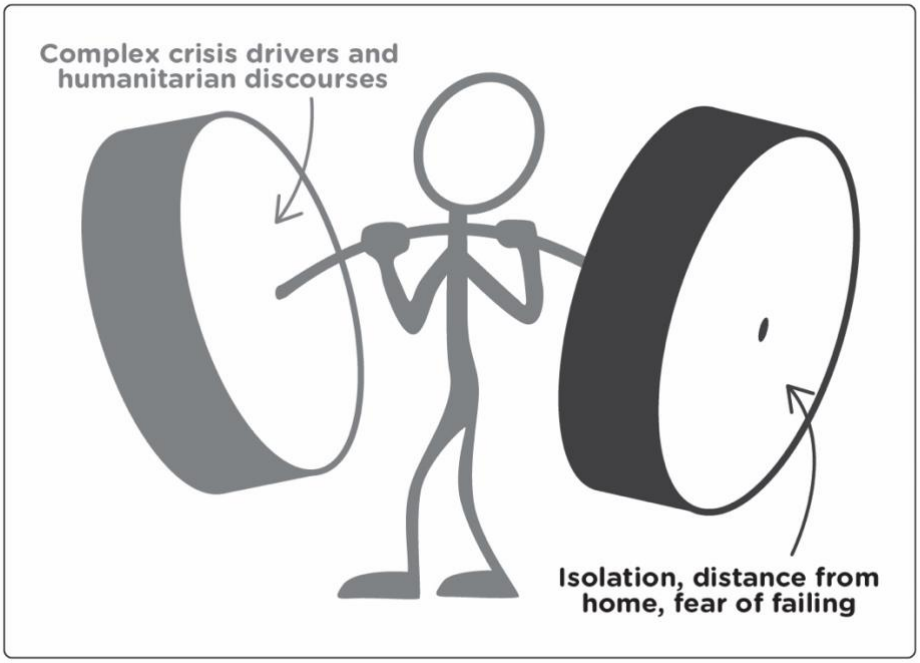

Figure 7: 'I feel the weight of it all on my shoulders'

Building a Pedagogical Intervention for Intercultural Awareness

It is obvious *Kris* needs additional mediation and guidance. In response to *Kris*'s story, I offer some key principles to inform a pedagogical intervention. Such an intervention is to prepare *Kris* for the complexities and to strengthen his intercultural awareness during his IFE and to ensure improved learning outcomes for him.

The intercultural awareness pedagogy in my framework is informed by the principles of reflexive practice, cultural awareness, lifelong practice, and relationality (Figure 8). These principles have emerged from my own lived experience; first, as a student navigating my way through IFE, and then as a humanitarian professional. They have also emerged from my observations of, and interactions with, students during complex humanitarian contexts both as

a humanitarian professional and as a supervisor. Here, I use the identity of *Kris* to demonstrate why these principles need to inform an intercultural awareness pedagogy.

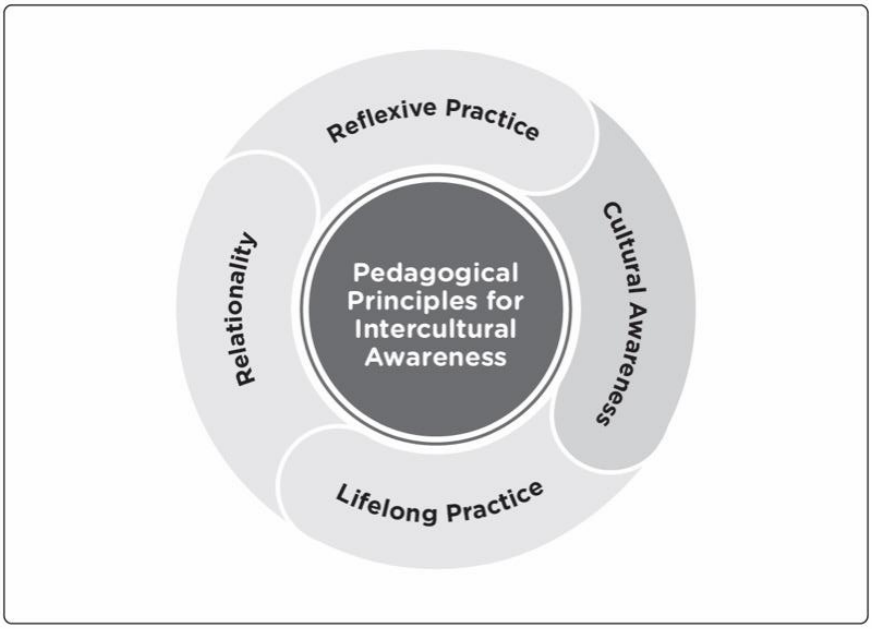

Figure 8: Pedagogical Principles for Intercultural Awareness

Reflexive Practice. As illustrated through my *Annie-student experiences,* the importance of reflexive practice during IFE cannot be over-stated. In Chapter Three, I used my *Annie-student* journals to deconstruct my experiences of reflexivity and development of skills such as noticing and curiosity (Yeager et al., 2020), as illustrated in Figure 6. Through reflexivity, I was able to respond to stressful situations that made me feel vulnerable (Kress & Frazier-Booth, 2018) and to construct alternative meaning for myself from these situations (Dorsett et al., 2019; Fook, 2004; Gardner, 2019; Larsson, 2019). I began to build on my knowledge of complexity by practicing critical thought (Macfarlane, 2016; Payne, 2014; Pease & Nipperess, 2020; Tilbury et al., 2010). Reflexivity also provided the foundations for being able to continue to work in complex humanitarian contexts in a way that was informed

by a deeper sense of my cultural self and my cultural story (Bromfield & Capous-Desyllas, 2017).

Reflexive practice is a process whereby students like *Kris* can deconstruct and unearth deep assumptions about IFE intentions, as it allowed me to do as a student. This is necessary for *Kris* because his original intentions are either unknown or not made sufficiently explicit which is holding him back from fully engaging in his field education experience. Without a reflexive understanding of his cultural self, *Kris* is also at risk of partaking in cultural reductionism and colonial attitudes in humanitarian contexts. Some open dialogue is needed so *Kris* can explore what cultural identity means for him (Brydon, 2012). A pedagogical intervention, informed by reflexive practice, will help *Kris* develop a deep and critical awareness of his own cultural self and his position in relation to damaging attitudes like 'othering' that are common in a context like this.

Through reflexive practice, there is also an opportunity for *Kris* to deconstruct his experiences and reconstruct new learning (Fook, 2004). Learning about how his insights can influence and transform his practice will help *Kris* imagine what IFE could be like, what he might do differently in the future and what new understandings about himself and others he could bring to IFE and humanitarian situations. It is obvious that this IFE experience for *Kris* has become an emotional one. He is worried about failing. He is experiencing a deep sense of disconnectedness from those around him, and he is also physically wrung-out from not sleeping or eating well. Reflexive practice can help a person recognise and name uncomfortable emotions and reactions to these emotions and to express emotions and reactions in ways that can be understood (Gardner, 2019).

Cultural Awareness. As both of *Kris'* emails to me I have quoted indicate, *Kris* has interacted with the local community through soccer. However, his descriptions suggest he is

not interacting sensitively enough with his colleagues. He appears to act like a passive observer and regard his time spent with colleagues and community members as random interactions that do not hold any meaning for him. Potentially, these interactions could be opportunities for *Kris* to explore what he does not know about particularity around culture.

At this point in time, *Kris* does not seem to sit well with the idea that everyone carries culture and that culture is not simply a construct applied to others but is relational and fluid. Culture embodies heterogeneity, carries temporal qualities and cannot be singularised (Brydon, 2012). A pedagogical intervention which teaches cultural awareness is crucial for *Kris* to help him excavate the elements that make up his own and others' cultural self. He can then learn to navigate the cultural differences he is seeing and feeling with openness, awareness and curiosity (Dorsett et al., 2019).

Kris also indicates in his email that he is interacting with the Karenni community who are an Indigenous group. They have shared with him a wrist-tying ceremony which is essentially an Indigenous ritual of welcome. But it also holds other nuanced meaning, depending on who has gifted the tie. While it is clear from his emails that that he feels a connection with his teammate by wearing the wrist tie and hopes for a stronger connection through it, I was curious about whether he had any different knowledge about the wrist tie. The importance of building awareness of Indigenous knowledge in humanitarian contexts for students undertaking IFE is critical (Chilisa et al., 2017; Choate et al., 2020; Kildea & Kumar, 2018; Muller, 2020). Recognising this, Indigenous knowledge frameworks are stipulated as essential to the development of new social work curriculum content (AASW, 2015a, 2015b) and therefore must have a place in student preparation for IFE.

Kris is also working in a context where colonialism has once been evident. The long-term impacts are felt by the Karenni populations, including one *of* Kris' work colleagues. Choate et al.'s (2020) suggestions of ways in which Indigenous knowledge can be enacted in

a pedagogical framework include the centralisation of topics such as colonisation and genocide. This is to promote critical reflection on the historical practices of colonialism and on the harms of this practice to enable students to acknowledge and address them (pp.3–4). All of these would have helped *Kris* be more cognisant of the intergenerational trauma that is likely to be playing out for his Indigenous colleagues.

Lifelong Practice. *Kris* seems to be struggling with the idea that learning is lifelong. This can impede lifelong self-examination and reflection about key aspects of culture, cultural identities, and histories that are necessary for acquiring and implementing intercultural awareness (McAllister, Whiteford, Hill, Thomas, & Fitzgerald, 2006). A pedagogical intervention informed by the principle of lifelong practice is, therefore, critical to help *Kris* learn intercultural awareness skills. Lifelong intercultural skills which would be useful for *Kris* include suspending judgement, tolerating ambiguity, understanding multiple truths in cultural contexts, and developing cultural humility. Learning about and practicing these skills is essential to help *Kris* develop a more robust and resilient practice during his IFE and for the longer term.

Relationality. Building trust and connections with others is critical during IFE (Fox, 2017a, 2017b; Grosfoguel, 2005; Kearney, 2019). However, building relationships and a sense of relationality is difficult in an IFE because there are many cultural differences that students will encounter: cultural shock is common for students. Practical concerns such as the fear of insulting hosts or language barriers or worries from home - all which *Kris* has mentioned - can all impact on a student's experience of relationships and building relationality.

Kris can develop relationality through listening, observing, remaining open to situations, and holding back from judgements or evaluation (Fox, 2017a, 2017b; Grosfoguel, 2005; Kearney, 2019). In *Kris'* emails, there is very little evidence of some of these important building blocks. As a result, there is a widening disconnect between himself and his colleagues and the community hosting him.

How Do These Principles Help to Invigorate Intercultural Awareness for Students?

These principles provide compass points for social work field education supervisors to help facilitate a more enriching learning experience for students like *Kris* and to inform reflections and conversations during supervision. As *Kris*' supervisor, I used these principles to inform our supervision sessions. The principles worked together to contribute to a turning around of what was a largely negative experience for *Kris* into a deeper learning experience.

Here I provide some extracts from *Kris-Annie* exchanges. As specified in Chapter Three, my methodology chapter, these are representative of the kinds of interactions I have had with over 100 students during their IFE experiences over a 10-year period, and do not relate to one particular student or conversation.

In these exchanges, *Kris* is engaging with me, *Annie-supervisor*, over Skype. This is one of our final supervision sessions and I am wanting Kris to demonstrate his growth in understanding the importance of intercultural awareness skills. Like with most supervision encounters with students who are undertaking IFE, *Kris* and I talk about the 'living' that happens around the field education experience. In my opinion, this is often a good indicator about how the student is faring in the field education experience. In our session we talk about a weekend soccer competition that *Kris* played in.

Kris-Annie Exchange One

In the first exchange, I call on Kris to use his senses to describe the details of context, place and people (Yeager et al., 2020).

> *Annie: How did you travel to the village for the soccer competition? What did you notice? What did you hear? What did you smell?*
>
> *Kris: On the first day of the comp, we travelled by local ka (bus). I am still getting used to bargaining for a seat on the bus amongst the din of so many voices with everyone trying to get the attention of the ticket seller. It's all fun now, rather than stressful. The ka took the coastal road that I wasn't familiar with, and the ocean was this deep dark blue and I could hear the waves crashing against the rock walls at each bend in the road. As we travelled along the road, I noticed many of the Indigenous fishing villagers were working on the sand, fixing bamboo boats and reattaching their bag nets. They were using hot coals to soften the bamboo and it smelt like peanuts. I asked Akar why this was happening. He said the prawn season is coming and the fisherman were getting their boats fixed since the last storm.*
>
> *Annie: Kris, can you tell me about the uniqueness of the experience at the soccer competition? What did you notice, feel, smell? What gave you the impression that you were somewhere different to any other experiences you have had?*
>
> *Kris: We arrived at the greenest, smoothest soccer field I have ever seen. Big crowds of Karenni had already started to assemble well before we arrived, and everyone was excited and happy to be there. Even some of the soldiers I had seen around the place were there, dressed in their best longyis, holding their kids on their shoulders, eating fresh pineapple. When you see soldiers every day in the city, you never think of them as fathers with children. We had a bit of time before the games started, so we went to the local water hole to swim. This family I didn't know insisted I leave my belongings with them while I went swimming, so I knew I was going to be ok. There is this familiar smell of incense and rain - it's everywhere, and I find it really soothing.*

This exchange shows *Kris* is actively observing what is around him and is describing colours and textures. He is curious and asking questions. He is looking closely, perceiving details and nuances; evident in his description of the soldiers with their children and what they were wearing and eating. We could assume that things that were hidden to him at other times are now more obvious to him. This was conveyed in his comment about soldiers being fathers. *Kris*' description of being on the bus and arriving at the village demonstrates that he is thinking like an ethnographer (Yeager et al., 2020). He is piecing together the segments of context and place which, we can assume from his two earlier emails, had been a confusing puzzle for him. In this exchange, *Kris* talks about how the smell of the rain and incense are not just becoming familiar to him but are soothing. This suggests *Kris* is carrying less worry and is becoming more robust in day-to-day interactions (Gardner, 2019). Bargaining for bus seats, taking different bus routes, knowing his personal belongings were ok are signs that a student like *Kris* is feeling easier in the situation, even though there are still so many different experiences unfolding for him every day.

Kris-Annie Exchange Two

In the second exchange, I invite *Kris* to engage with me about vulnerable moments he experienced during the soccer competition, other than the pre-game jitters that are a common experience for competitors. I was curious to find out how open he was about feeling vulnerable (Dorsett et al., 2019).

> *Annie: Were there times during the soccer competition that you felt you were opening up to new experiences?*
>
> *Kris: At the end of the competition, we went to get our trophy. The winning team must dance up to the stage, one by one, and that was more nerve-wracking than*

the soccer final because people here have rhythm. I knew that I am not the best dancer - I dance like my dad. So, we had this hilarious process of dancing up there to the stage. But I forgot to wait until my name was called - which is the usual thing and I got to the stage too soon. I remember thinking 'what have I done?' The last thing I wanted to do was insult my teammates. Then they started laughing and the crowd cheered, and I started laughing. The crowd began to chant "Kris, Kris, Kris".

This encounter with *Kris* shows how comfortable he is with the unexpected, whether that is with local rituals or expectations from people around him. It is revealing the level of trust *Kris* that has in himself to get through things that he still finds new: he is not perturbed by the risk of feeling embarrassed or embarrassing others. It also reveals the mutual trust between *Kris* and the community. It is likely the culture shock and fear that *Kris* was expressing in his initial communications with me is shifting for him and he is experiencing a growing sense of belonging and safety (Fox, 2017a, 2017b; Grosfoguel, 2005; Kearney, 2019). Feeling vulnerable was not the end of the world for *Kris.* Rather, the experiences of vulnerability got him out of his comfort zone and offered itself up as important learning for him (Kress & Frazier-Booth, 2018).

Kris-Annie Exchange Three

In the final encounter, I invited *Kris* to tell me about what has changed for him and whether he could reconstruct the field education experience in a different light (Dorsett et al., 2019; Fook, 2004)

Annie: *What has changed for you, Kris, as a student?*

Kris: Even though I am White, I feel I can safely go to villages on my own now to check up on school students who aren't coming to school and talk with the

families and spend time with them. I take my time in getting to know people. Tea drinking is how you start any conversation in someone's home, and I am enjoying these small interactions so much more now. We all sit at these low tables on plastic chairs. Families know who I am, and they can place me.

Annie: I am curious about the white wrist tie. I am wondering whether you know a bit more about this? What can you tell me?

Kris: My white thread has come to mean more to me now. Wrist tying has become a bit touristy and has ventured away from its original meaning. But my wrist tie has connected me to my teammates - we are like brothers, and we are connected through the tie. When Akar gave the wrist tie, he said he trusted me, but I wasn't quite sure what this meant at first. But I am finding he is more comfortable with me now and feels ok to share some of his personal traumas.

In this final encounter, what is obvious is the way that *Kris* is building connections to the community and developing close friendships. It is likely that *Kris* is recognising the deep, instinctual need and capacity for human connection and belonging. It seems *Kris* is being seen, valued and understood, and feels looked after. Even though the humanitarian context stoked distrust and amplified divisions in the communities, which then contributed to his feelings of alienation and eroded his trust in the learning experience, he seems to have developed a deeper consciousness about himself and the cultures of his colleagues and communities he is spending time with (Bromfield & Capous-Desyllas, 2017).

Summary

The *Kris-Annie exchanges* show *Kris*' increased intercultural awareness. He can name his Whiteness and it appears he has less worry about how his Whiteness gets in the way of connecting to the community. He has a better understanding of the Indigenous practice of

wrist tying and, by using his senses more actively, he is noticing more about Indigenous perspectives of place. He feels safer and more established in the community because he understands he has a place within it. This has opened more doors for him to get to know the families of the school where he works. There is also a shared cultural humility between Kris, his soccer team, families, and other community members, which all enhance a sense of renewed purpose for Kris. He is more relaxed and can laugh at himself for not knowing how to do things in a cultural way (such as dancing). At the same time, he feels enthralled with the uniqueness of the experience he is having.

Situation-Based Learning

Critical to my framework is being able to teach about the complexities of humanitarian contexts to students. As a pedagogical tool, SBL works by situating the student at the forefront of the learning experience. SBL gives students access to innovative ways to enhance their confidence and to be engaged in critical thought about the discourses of humanitarian contexts. This will then increase the likelihood of successful learning outcomes for them. The literature supports SBL as the preferred design feature for humanitarian workers who participate in training during their careers (Cranmer et al., 2014; Delgado Luchner & Kherbiche, 2019; Evans et al., 2017; Hilton et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2013).

In the next section, I provide examples of my experiences with SBL and the difference it made to my learning and understanding of complexities of working in Kenya for three months in a Countering Violent Extremism programme in 2012. I begin by providing the context for the training and for the programme. I use my *Annie-humanitarian* identity here to show why the training was necessary as well as insights into the context for the humanitarian programme. I then draw upon *Annie-humanitarian* to convey my interactions with SBL and how it prepared me for working in a complex humanitarian context.

The Reason for the Training

The training was organised for staff of some large INGOs to prepare them for working in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps in Kenya. Working in the camps was a high-risk context and preparation was needed to ensure safety of workers, to ensure safe delivery of aid and to make some inroads in healing some of the issues that had been created by other humanitarian organisations (Townsend, 2020).

Historical and Contemporary Complexities in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps in Kenya

The two camps, Dadaab (in East Kenya) and Kakuma (in Northwest Kenya), were established in 1991 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) with the Kenyan government, with extensions being made in 2011 for Somalian refugees fleeing civil war, famine, and drought. There were many historical tensions between Kenya and Somalia, particularly since the 1984 Kenyan-led massacre of Somalian communities living in Nairobi. These tensions continued to play out in the refugee camps with Kenyan police and other authority groups committing serious abuses of Somalian refugees living in the camps. The number of Somalian refugees outnumbered the number of Kenyans living in the townships, exacerbating tensions, and it was generally unsafe for Somalians to seek work in the townships, leading to chronic poverty in the camps.

There were well over 300 humanitarian organisations working in the camps and there was a lot of competition for space between the organisations. Although at times it felt there were too many staff, ironically, humanitarian responses were not making any obvious changes. Since the camps were first established, Christian charities had maintained a large presence. Many of their Christian symbols were prominent on their vehicles and offices and

the uniforms their staff wore. Local chiefs asked for the symbols to be covered up or removed when humanitarian workers came to the camps but some organisations refused to do this. This led to an increase in attacks on humanitarian workers and ransacking of humanitarian offices. Many humanitarian organisations deemed the camps unsafe to work in and they removed their staff. This left a lingering mistrust between communities living in the camps and the humanitarian organisations which continued to work in the camps (Townsend, 2020).

The Humanitarian Programme

The humanitarian programme I was involved with worked with the Indigenous Bantu communities in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. At the time, Somali Bantu youth were drawn to violent extremism for several reasons. The programme helped them to reintegrate into the Somali Bantu communities. The programme also worked with Somali Bantu women who were heads of the households. Previously, when there had been an attack or when an attack was imminent, Somali Bantu women would hide information out of fear for themselves if they were to disclose it. This would later be detrimental to the community. Once Somali Bantu women felt safe, however, they were able to relay important information with regards to potential violent extremism in the community, particularly around instances of youth recruitment (Townsend, 2020).

My Reflections of the Situation-Based Learning Experience

Reading the reflections on the two-week, live-in training in my journals, I can see clearly what elements enhanced my learning during the training (Townsend, 2020). My learner ‘buy-in’ was attributable to the very organised and realistic humanitarian contexts created by training facilitators, role players, and volunteers.

From the moment we arrived at the training facility, we were instantly made to feel we were at the local airport near the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. We had our passports checked and visas confirmed. Those who did not have the proper documentation caused our trip to the refugee camp to be delayed and this created some divisiveness in our team. Once all documentation was approved, we then travelled via an aid convoy to the INGO headquarters where we would be based. On the way, there were border crossings and another check of documents by local police who were recovering from an alcohol-fuelled party the night before. This further delayed our arrival at the camp and, as a team, our patience was tested (Townsend, 2020).

Once we arrived in the camps, there were several scenarios rolled out each day. Each scenario emulated issues we would likely confront during our three-month project. This included scenarios where we had to manage our personal safety, our organisation's accountability, relationships with communities, decision making, leadership and negotiation issues. There were also intercultural challenges such as from different language and cultural norms as well as ensuing tensions between international and local staff. The work we did in this training mirrors what the literature says about the kind of content that needs to be delivered in humanitarian training (Bollettino et al., 2019; Grace, 2020; Hilton et al., 2018; Kimura, 2019).

Even though the training was conducted at an old, rural, college campus in Victoria, Australia, set up to teach farming techniques (with old barns, sheep-shearing stations, farm machinery and vineyards), the simulation exercises worked because the resources, the scores of volunteers and training staff made it all seem very real. For example, volunteers assisted the training organisation by acting out roles such as refugees, other humanitarian workers, police, vehicle drivers, translators, local politicians and power brokers, and community leaders. Training staff were experienced humanitarian workers with adult education

qualifications who gave lectures based on relevant and up-to-date information. The training organisation seemed to have the balance right between the semantic aspects of realistic practice and how to teach about complexity (Townsend, 2020).

The training organisation used digital technology to enhance the scenarios and our learning. As the literature (Abdelgawad et al., 2018; Baines et al., 2017) says, digital games brought us face-to-face with crossfire in an unfolding of violent conflict over a 'one-month' period at the refugee camp. In real time, the game took us a total of two hours to complete. It was designed to help us explore the trade-offs and challenging decisions that we, as humanitarian workers, were likely to face while responding to an immediate crisis occurring within the confluence of other crisis drivers. As learners, we had to choose between limited resources and competing pressures to alleviate suffering in the refugee communities in the most ethical and sustainable ways. The detail needed to make this one-month event so real would have been difficult to emulate through role plays. The digital game served its purpose well by enhancing our skills and confidence is being able to manage such incredibly difficult situations (Townsend, 2020).

The face-to-face and digital SBL learning process over the programme's two weeks worked because it closely mimicked the humanitarian context and the challenges that were unfolding. Consequently, we knew what to expect before we left for Kenya. It also tested core competences that were needed for our project and helped us, as a team of humanitarian workers, practice being proactive in managing the complexities of the humanitarian work that we were likely to face (Bollettino et al., 2019; Cranmer et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2017).

Social work Education and Situation-Based Learning

Significant Gaps

Despite broad access to SBL to prepare for complex humanitarian contexts (Burkle Jr., et al., 2018), there are significant gaps in social work education faculties' utilisation of SBL to prepare students for IFE. Social work education faculties must, therefore, do more to shift their teaching from the dominant method of role plays towards teaching that incorporates deeper and more nuanced experiential learning using SBL (Scourfield, Maxwell, Zhang, De Villiers, Pithouse, Kinnersley, Metcalf, & Tayyaba, 2019). Although the ultimate SBL experience, according to Katz (2019) and Kourgiantakis et al. (2019), is similar to that of my humanitarian training described above - whereby SBL is facilitated through clinics or centres, with actors playing roles - there is very little evidence of this kind of experience being exercised to its full potential by social work education faculties.

What do Social Work Education Faculties Need to Know About Humanitarian Training?

There is much for social work education faculties to learn from the SBL that is used in humanitarian training. SBL teaches participants to be reflective, especially when their engagement in a scenario where everything appears to go wrong occurs in a low-stakes environment (Hilton et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2013). Through trial-and-error learning, participants gather the necessary and nuanced professional experiences and skills in a safe and supportive environment without the real dangers accompanying some of the complex situational risks (Cranmer et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2017). They create teachable moments. They engage students to the point where they temporarily suspend disbelief, giving them an experience closer to the 'real life' they are likely to come across in humanitarian contexts. Students are provided or engaged with feedback processes during crucial times in their preparation (Burkle Jr et al., 2018; Cranmer et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2017). When a

preparation programme incorporates SBL, it situates student learning then builds on or scaffolds what needs to be learned. Delgado Luchner and Kherbiche (2019) describe this as the schematic intent of humanitarian training. Scaffolded learning experiences promotes and strengthen higher-ordered cognition, such as problem solving, as well as purposeful and creative thinking.

Practical Considerations for Situation-Based Learning

Since participating as a trainee in 2009, I have had the opportunity to teach with an Australia-based humanitarian training organisation. This allows me to see how humanitarian scenarios are put together and the logistics, resources, time, and energy required to train humanitarian workers. My *Annie-humanitarian* journals describe the logistical exercise of organising humanitarian trainings as a 'do or die experience' - trainers are pushed to their absolute limits in creating realistic scenarios. Recently, accreditation of humanitarian trainings has helped to align all humanitarian training organisations with global standards (Burkle Jr et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2013), filtering out those organisations which have become addicted to the adrenaline rush of staging 'bigger than Ben Hur' productions. My experience attests to the value of social work education faculties forming relationships with accredited humanitarian training organisations to prepare students for IFE. Happily, universities are beginning to recognise training organisations as an exciting and accessible resource (Burkle Jr et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Key components of my framework are emerging in my study. They include intercultural pedagogy and a suite of principles which inform this pedagogy. I have also demonstrated the benefits of SBL for learning about and preparing for humanitarian

complexities. SBL bridges the gap between knowledge and practice and potentially helps students be more informed about intercultural challenges they will experience during their IFE.

Chapter Seven: Framework Part Two: Building Intercultural Awareness

In the previous chapter, I employed my *Annie-supervisor* journals and *Kris-Annie exchanges* to examine a suite of principles to show how they can help students like *Kris* engage with the complexities of international field education (IFE). The principles I refer to are reflexive practice, cultural awareness, lifelong practice, and relationality. I also used my *Annie-humanitarian* journals to demonstrate how situation-based learning (SBL) can be utilised as an effective strategy to teach students about complex humanitarian contexts. SBL has been an integral element to humanitarian trainings for some time and offers itself up to social work education faculties to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice.

In this chapter, I explore the final component of my framework - international field education. I make two arguments. I argue for the situating of international field education as critical learning pedagogy. I then argue that international field education prepares students for a future whereby complex humanitarian contexts will inform practice.

How does International Field Education Work Progress Learning?

The Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), which oversees curriculum design in social work education, recognises that social work field education is a signature pedagogy which meets Shulman's three criteria (Ledger, Hillman, Harreveld, & de Warren, 2017). In this section, I review these criteria and I demonstrate how IFE meets them.

The first of these criteria is the *concrete operational acts of learning* and this includes showing, demonstrating, and modelling (Nuttman Shwartz & Ranz, 2017). Henley, Lowe, Henley and Munro (2019) provide some insights into a concrete operational workflow design for students undertaking IFE to Cambodia. The design helped students increase their efficacy during IFE by breaking down the IFE into goals, tasks, and achievements, with each step building on the previous one. The workflow design also had the added benefit of informing

the host organisation of university requirements for completing the IFE. In the design, supervision was prioritised too. Students could step from one task to the next and, at the same time, have room to respond to unexpected situations. Successful learning for students was not only attributed to the extent of the concrete activities during the IFE but it was also integral to their preparation prior to the IFE. Some key activities in the preparation included: robust discussions on theoretical approaches of community empowerment; exploration of relevant literature; examination of specific issues related to the host community; and the development of resources to share and inform future practices of the host organisation (p.70).

Shulman's three criteria for signature pedagogy (Ledger et al., 2017) include *deeper learning* opportunities. Here, students take greater risks in applying their learning to new situations. Also included is *implicit learning,* where students reflect on their personal values and beliefs and those of the profession, as well as ongoing personal reflections regarding racial and ethnic identity which helps students understand how much power and privilege they possess. It is within these last two dimensions that we see the benefits of IFE as experiences which prepare students for intercultural awareness. For example, deep learning for students undertaking international experiences is conveyed by Das and Anand's (2014) study in which students from India and the UK learned about the diverse traditions across both country contexts. Das and Anand (2014) attributed the students' deep learning to their physical immersion in the experience, students' access to critical reflection, the inclusion of students in all aspects of learning, and supportive faculty-student relationships.

In their study, Cleak, Anand and Das (2016) imply that IFE is a deep learning opportunity which can help students unpack the causes and impacts of poverty, inequality, marginalisation, and oppression. Nickson, Baker, and Winkuaru (2019) describe IFE as experiences which build new learning opportunities about contrasting world views of social welfare systems and diverse ways to tackle social problems. Their study demonstrates crucial

learnings for students about how to engage with local staff to build new knowledge about practice approaches and how to engage in cultural supervision from the host agency. Critical to this study is the opportunity for students to implicitly explore personal motivations and personal experiences such as experiences of race and racism in their lives.

How does International Field Education Prepare Students for Future Complex Practice?

One of the key arguments in my study is that complex humanitarian contexts are unfolding now and informing what future practice will look like for social work students. Although the findings reviewed in Chapter Two do not act as a crystal ball, it is obvious that, with the confluence of crisis drivers, humanitarian contexts will increase rather than recede. This means that IFE plays an important role in preparing students for this future which is unfolding now and shaping what social workers will be expected to do and where they will be practicing.

Studies show that after their IFE students feel more prepared to work in areas of complex humanitarian situations such as working in areas of poverty, working with vulnerable groups, and in the protection of children, women, refugees and other vulnerable groups. These studies show students were then able to engage in global social justice debates which emanate from forces both within and beyond their countries of origin (Cleak et al., 2016; Das & Anand, 2014). Other studies show that IFE provides students with experiences in applying rights-based theories and engagement in important ethical issues which are predicted to be complexities of the future such as volunteer tourism, universal rights, parochialism, and the preservation of local culture (Cleak et al., 2016; Das & Anand, 2014; Nickson et al., 2019; Nuttman Shwartz & Ranz, 2017).

Kris: Engaging in International Field Education to Prepare for Future Complex Practice

During his field education experience to Myanmar *Kris* had the opportunity to work with an NGO to design a research tool to help understand local power dynamics in a small provincial village. In this village, where some areas in the village had clean water and seeds and others did not have access to these. *Kris* said to me:

> *Seeds are the fabric of community life in the rural communities here in Myanmar and communities cannot survive without seeds. During the civil war, different military groups forced many rural people to come to the cities to fight. They did this brutally by killing off seed supplies in the farming villages through fire and ransacking of villages. Rural farmers had no other option but to join the war to be able to look after their families.*
>
> *Since the collapse of the military regime, the process of reconciliation is about making sure that farmers can return to their homes and to their families and begin planting again. But for many farmers, they have to sell their farms to large global corporations for the sake of their children, and their children's children.*
>
> *The research tool we use helps us to get beneath the formal and visible structures to reveal the history of the causal and systemic factors of other abuses, stemming back to Myanmar's civil war. The research tool also helps us to locate the current challenges for farmers. The tool acknowledges that for many of these farmers they feel responsible for destroying the land's spirit or 'nats'.*
>
> *The tool we use highlights* that *seeds have become symbolic of more than just food security. Having ownership over seeds is deeply personal and a source of healing from the war and a symbol of the future. If there is a lack of equity in the distribution of seeds, it feels for many villagers that the war is still here* (Townsend, 2020).

What this example shows is that field education provides opportunities for students like *Kris* to acquire a deeper knowledge and understanding of long-term dynamics of

complex humanitarian crisis drivers and how this can play out in communities. This example also shows the knowledge that *Kris* gained is being able to respond sensitively to the situation through a deeper understanding of local practice, culture and history. We can extrapolate that experiences like this will set students up well to work in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers, unfolding now and informing what the future will look like.

Bringing Together the Components of my Framework

Figure 9 below provides a schematic summary of my framework, 'Intercultural Preparation for Pre-Service Social Work Students Undertaking International Field Education Experiences'. Working from left to right in Figure 9, the first cog in my framework represents international field education in complex humanitarian contexts. The second cog is a preparation programme for field education in complex humanitarian contexts which is informed by situation-based learning (SBL). The funnel in my framework represents an intercultural awareness pedagogy. This pedagogy funnels the four principles - reflexive practice, cultural awareness, lifelong practice, and relationality – to be mixed by the cogs and induce intercultural awareness in students. When all cogs are working together, they offer holistic, pedagogically rich, and more nuanced teaching. This enhances the readiness of graduates to be more interculturally aware during and beyond their international field education experiences.

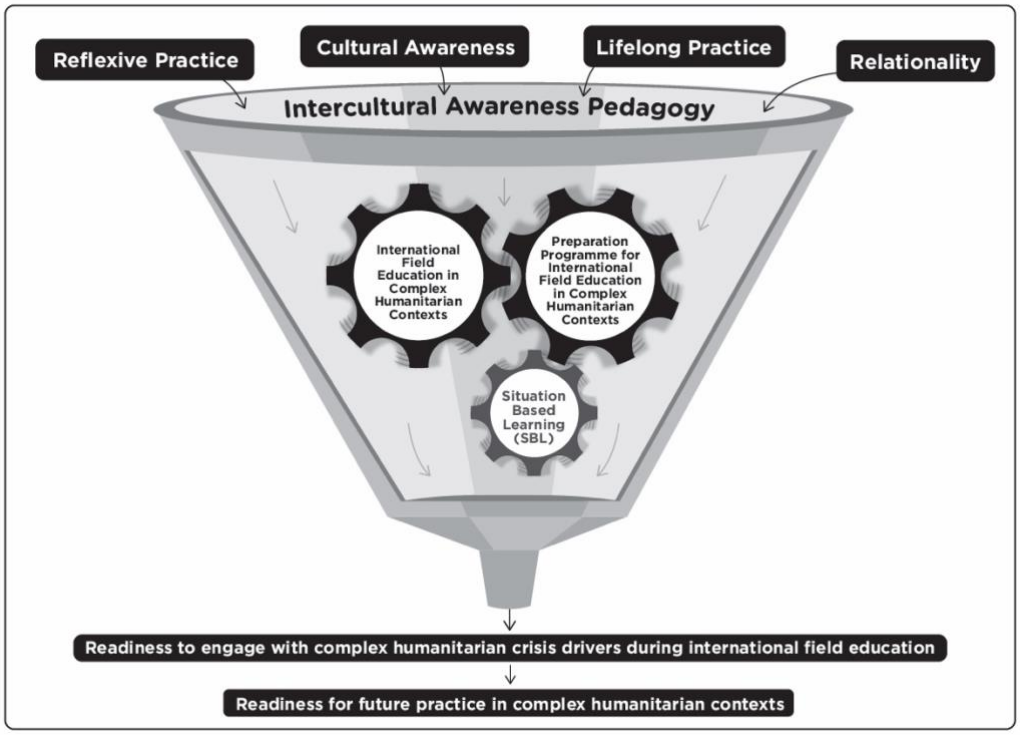

Figure 9: Intercultural Preparation for Pre-Service Social Work Students Undertaking International Field Education Experiences

The Strengths of my Framework

The strength of my framework is in responding to concerns raised about IFE that have been examined through various studies. Table 1 summarises these concerns and indicates how my framework addresses them.

Table 1: Relevance of my Framework to Issues Raised in the Literature

Concerns from the literature about International Field Education	**How my framework seeks to address these gaps**
The lack of investment in preparation (Cleak et al., 2016; Henley et al., 2019; Nickson et al., 2019) and the rectifying of practical matters before and during IFE (Bogo, 2015; Henley et al., 2019; Townsend, 2018).	In my framework, I have included a Preparation Programme which uses SBL to enhance learning about the complexities students will experience during their field education experience.

The integration of IFE into the wider social work curriculum (Nickson et al., 2019; Nuttman Shwartz & Ranz, 2017);	My framework is built on the premise that IFE cannot simply be an add-on to the social work curriculum. Rather, it is one part of an holistic framework that feeds into the wider social work curriculum.
Engaging students in critical thinking during the experience (Cleak et al., 2016; Das & Anand, 2014; Fox, 2017a, 2017b; Nuttman Shwartz & Ranz, 2017)	My framework is built on principles of an intercultural awareness pedagogy which engages students in ways of thinking and reflecting about their experiences during IFE and for lifelong practices.
The care and support from faculty staff and from other students (Bogo, 2015; Fox, 2017a, 2017b; Nickson et al., 2019; Townsend, 2018).	Just like the relationship I had with my supervisor during my IFE to Timor-Leste and my relationships with students since then, my framework prioritises the importance of relationships between field education staff and students to help engage them with the transformative potential of learning experiences during IFE.

Demonstrating my Framework

In this next section, I demonstrate an example of how the elements in this framework prepared me for working with the Somali Bantu communities in Kenya in 2009[16]. My work in this programme was one of the most challenging humanitarian experiences of my career. However, I experienced a deep readiness for the experience and its many levels of complexity because of the appreciation for and cumulative practice with individual components included in my framework.

Remembering What I learned During my Humanitarian Training

My first entry demonstrates how I drew on learning from the humanitarian training and the SBL experiences.

[16] I explored this programme and the training I received in Chapter Six

Last night we arrived late to the camp with very little sleep. It's 'soup hot'. I am sweating profusely and, similar to what I remember from the SBL scenarios, we are just getting on with getting our rooms and personal effects ready first. Self -care is one of our priorities. I have a small room, but it will be my home away from home for the next three months. To keep myself safe, I have my grab bag ready and it's at arm's reach in case we need to be evacuated.

My next journal entry conveys the knowledge I had of the communities and how the humanitarian responses were faring. The sensitivities of the context were explored at length during our humanitarian training and SBL scenarios were set up to help us comprehend the precariousness of the humanitarian situation.

Several humanitarian organisations have left recently, and this has left huge gaps in the delivery of aid. A few FBOs from the US have a strong presence here, but despite their access to ongoing funding, they do not have the best reputations and some of their offices have recently been ransacked. The feeling in the camps is a growing distrust of international humanitarian workers.

We have a meeting shortly where we will meet some of the local leaders and we will have an opportunity to engage with them about what is happening for the community. We will also ask for their perspectives about the young people and whether anything more concerning has developed in the last few days.

Being Reflexive and Interculturally Aware

After two weeks of being in the camps, I was spending more time with the Somali Bantu women in their meeting centres. My next entry demonstrates my reflexive and intercultural awareness skills.

It is always the women's role to make tea and welcome mzungu (white person) and the ritual goes on for a long time. Every Somali Bantu woman is assessed by her ability to make tea and it is the yardstick for elegance. Making tea is like a courting ritual … the flick of a veil, the way the woman holds herself, the way

> *that she elegantly pours the tea. This is done by women with children slung casually on their backs or tugging at their brightly colored dresses of swirling reds, yellow and blues. Every woman is judged on her glass of tea.*
>
> *In working with Somali Bantu women, I am learning about the importance of their pottery. Women sing and pray as they make the bowls, and the mosaic designs are modelled on the day and night colors of the desert. The bowls are so imperfect and that is their charm. They are made based on a philosophy of* wabi sabi*: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect. Today I was coached in the making of tea and there was so much laughter as I clumsily made something barely drinkable* (Townsend, 2020).

In these accounts I applied reflexivity to my observations. If I did not bring reflexivity to these encounters, then perhaps I would not be able to realise the true importance of the tea-making ritual. Perhaps I would have ogled the shiny lustrous bowls and ignored the cultural and historical significance of them and the much bigger part they play in the ritual landscape. This would have been a grave oversight. Reflexivity enabled me to capture nuanced interactions and notice differences in cross-cultural contexts (Dorsett et al., 2019; Yeager et al., 2020).

In my *Annie-humanitarian* journals, I described that being invited back to make tea was also significant. This demonstrated the building of trust between the women and me, which was significant to successful outcomes of the evaluation project. Over time, I was introduced to other Somali Bantu women's networks and kinship links. These are formed across socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race and religion. I attribute the welcoming I received into their communities to my growing understanding of intercultural awareness skills and the practices of Indigenous knowledge (Chilisa et al., 2017; Choate et al., 2020; Kildea & Kumar, 2018; Muller, 2020).

Reflexivity and intercultural awareness were also critical to understanding the history of the Somali Bantu and the many levels of oppression experienced in Bantu communities. In my journal, I ruminated on the history of the economic and political marginalisation and colonial domination of the Somali Bantu, as well as the contemporary post-colonial transformation processes embraced by Somali Bantu communities living in Kenya. Being able to see the context through a critical lens informed a deeper sense of the context and awareness of the different and conflicting factors at play (Macfarlane, 2016; Payne, 2014; Pease & Nipperess, 2020; Tilbury et al., 2010).

As well as helping me position myself respectfully and with authentic curiosity in my interactions with the Somali Bantu women, the process of reflexivity helped me to be conscious of my grief for my Kiribati ancestors (Brydon, 2012). The personal examination of my Kiribati heritage through reflexivity also lessened my sense of being a stranger because I could empathise with centuries of oppression (Brydon, 2012). Thus, reflexivity was dually instructive. While gaining a greater understanding about the refugee context of the Somali Bantu people, I also gained a deeper sense of my cultural self and my cultural story (Bromfield & Capous-Desyllas, 2017).

Sometimes I was not allowed to attend meetings with the Somali Bantu and I did not know why. But I learned to sit comfortably with the discomfort of things not going to plan and this is a critical feature of reflexive practice (Gardner, 2019; Kress & Frazier-Booth, 2018).

Tuning into Relationships

The following journal note written by my *Annie-humanitarian* self captures my growing understanding of what the literature describes as the reconstruction of self (Dorsett et al., 2019; Fook, 2004; Gardner, 2019; Larsson, 2019). I wrote in my journal: *I am not an "insider" amongst the women. There is a distance because of the differences in language, ethnicity and kinship. I am also not completely the "other". I think I am somewhere in between'* (Townsend, 2020).

During the project, two Somali Bantu teenagers were involved in an episode of gun violence which created an enormous sense of shame in the community. For a while after, I had to put on hold any more questions and return to the relational skills of being a respectful and empathetic observer, paying attention to how the Somali Bantu women defined their world at this time (Dorsett et al., 2019). Through reflexivity and intercultural awareness, I learned to remove myself from the equation, take a step back and approach my work without ego or political inclinations (Dorsett et al., 2019; Gardner, 2019). Intercultural awareness and reflexivity, therefore, required me to listen actively and adapt swiftly, and to position the people I support in my work more authentically.

Conclusion

Field Education as a pedagogy holds enormous promise to prepare students for future work where complexities are unfolding. My framework, 'Intercultural Preparation for Pre-Service Social Work Students Undertaking International Field Education Experiences' includes field education opportunities working alongside other components. In my framework, these components work together to provide a holistic approach to preparing students for IFE in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers where the overlapping nature of crisis drivers and humanitarian discourses play out. The constitution of

my framework has been informed by my student experiences, my professional career as a humanitarian worker, and my work with students undertaking IFE as their supervisor.

I have highlighted, through my story of working in Kenya, how the accumulation of humanitarian training, situation-based learning, reflexivity and intercultural awareness enhanced my practice and provided the necessary ‘compass points’ to guide me though the sometimes difficult and unfamiliar terrain in this complex humanitarian context.

Chapter Eight: Concluding Comments

Summary of the study and its response to my research questions

In this study, I asked the question: *During international field education in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers, what education is required to prepare pre-service social work students for intercultural awareness?*

I began the study with a critical analysis of existing literature on complex humanitarian crisis drivers. Humanitarian contexts are protracted, multi-causal and all-encompassing in nature, involving a high degree of political, economic, and cultural breakdown and social dislocation. Humanitarian contexts also include Level 3 humanitarian emergencies which have a permanence to them and are defined by the level of suffering, disease, and death (Cox & Pawar, 2013; Hugman, 2010). Regardless of whether these contexts are Level 3 or otherwise, they are defining what the future looks like. I demonstrated how the convoluted nature of complex humanitarian crisis drivers, past and ongoing injustices and oppressions in humanitarian responses and the forces of colonialism, globalisation, and localisation exacerbate vulnerabilities of affected populations in humanitarian contexts.

Using a post-qualitative design approach (Basu, 2021; Carlson et al., 2021; Ellingson & Sotirin, 2020; Holmes, 2020; Kerasovitis, 2020; Monforte & Smith, 2021; Rautio, 2021) and engagement with critically oriented theories (Brinkmann et al., 2020; Fullagar, 2017; Leavy, 2020), writing this thesis has facilitated deeper understandings of humanitarian complexities. In it, I draw on twenty years of journaling and exchanges with students to convey the kinds of complexities that unfold in these contexts. I used reflexivity with my journals to show the challenges of working in these contexts as well as how to work in these contexts in an impactful way. I created two identities from my journals, *Annie-student* and

Annie-humanitarian, to illuminate some unique perspectives of humanitarian contexts that cannot be conveyed solely through examination of the literature.

In the thesis, I also created a third identity, *Annie-supervisor*. As *Annie-supervisor*, I take up *Kris* and *Kris and Annie exchanges* to show how to engage students during international field education and strengthen their intercultural awareness. I use this identity to highlight the sorts of intercultural challenges that can arise in relation to international field education experiences in contexts affected by complex humanitarian crisis drivers (excluding Level 3 humanitarian emergencies), and the gaps students experience between their existing knowledge of complex humanitarian crisis drivers and the kinds of intercultural practices that are most impactful in these contexts. Through *Kris* and the *Kris-Annie exchanges*, I demonstrate some typical tipping points during international field education experiences and the importance of intercultural awareness in helping students change a messy and stressful field education experience into a largely positive one.

Central to my thesis, I offer a framework which enhances student intercultural awareness during international field education. My framework can be used in preparation for and during international field education experiences. The framework is a holistic one and its impact can be most felt when all components work together. It encapsulates intercultural pedagogy informed by four principles and a preparation programme informed by situation-based learning.

Regarding situation-based learning, I suggest social work education faculties find the sweet spot between role plays, at one end of the spectrum, and a massively staged production, at the other. Although the reality is that university budgets are limited and faculties are time poor, there are many options available for universities to offer effective situation-based learning experiences for students undertaking international field education. For example, humanitarian training organisations already have strong relationships with universities.

Students can now study relevant subjects with humanitarian training organisations in which the content is converted to situation-based learning pedagogy. Humanitarian training organisations also have an array of accessible online training programmes. These important developments are worth considering by social work education faculties so they progress preparation for students undertaking international field education.

My framework also confirms the positioning of international field education for students. On its own, international field education does not guarantee that students come to appreciate the level of complexity in these contexts as well as the different cultural traditions, ways of thinking and approaches. My framework, therefore, takes an holistic approach to ensure students can attune themselves, in an intercultural way, to the complexities that play out during international field education.

I propose the terminology 'Field Education in Complex Humanitarian Contexts' be used as an alternative discourse to international field education. This terminology is more inclusive and recognises not only international contexts but also domestic field experiences. For example, Australia has complex humanitarian contexts in rural and remote regions. Revision of the terminology, therefore, incorporates the field education that is offered to students by Australian social work education faculties in areas such as outback regional towns in New South Wales or Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. From my experience as a field education supervisor, international and rural field education share many contextual similarities and learning challenges for students. Further research is required which explores these areas. This includes tracking the comparative effectiveness of my framework for students who are undertaking rural and remote field education as well as those students undertaking international experiences.

Until social work faculties are properly resourced to implement my whole framework, there is flexibility within it for them to implement one or more components, as I have done

over the course of my academic career. I propose that my framework acts as a blueprint which alerts social work faculties to those areas which need to be included or strengthened. I also acknowledge that some social work education faculties are already moving in the right direction and are successfully operating from an intercultural pedagogy perspective and incorporating satisfactory field education preparation programmes.

The Impact of COVID-19 on International Field Education Opportunities

COVID-19 is, arguably, a moment of reckoning for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is also a moment of reckoning for social work faculties who are offering Field Education in Complex Humanitarian Contexts and want to continue to do this soon. Most weeks, my students ask me when I think borders will open again so they can embark on an international experience: they look forward to what these experiences bring.

My humanitarian colleagues have informed me that, given the risk of importing the virus, they are unable to deliver life-saving resources to vulnerable groups. Humanitarian organisations are working remotely in efforts to ensure continuity of practice and meet the necessary upscaling of humanitarian engagement to forestall crises, without having staff on the ground. Approaches are almost exclusively desk-based, and activities include literature reviews and information gathering which draws on programme and partner reporting, as well as semi-structured interviews with stakeholders. I argue that this context of COVID-19, makes Field Education in Complex Humanitarian Contexts potentially more accessible for students and opens a door to those who think the experience is largely currently unattainable.

I recently proposed for a university struggling to find field education options during COVID 19 lockdown that, if properly resourced, a ‘working from home’ experience could still provide students with a nuanced understanding of humanitarian contexts. It would reduce students’ time away from the familiar comforts of home, family and friends that would

normally occur when completing a remote field education experience. In recent conversations with professional bodies, there is a shared awareness that education and field education experiences need to be flexible in the current pandemic context. This awareness contributes to a growing understanding that today's typical humanitarian social worker is more, as I describe in a previous study (Townsend, 2018), like an 'uber-style' social worker who, without leaving their own backyard, will be able to extend care at any time, from any place, to anyone, anywhere (Townsend, 2018).

Implications For Future Research

I recommend that future research be undertaken in the following areas:

1. The longitudinal impacts of my 'Intercultural Preparation for Pre-Service Social Work Students Undertaking International Field Education Experiences' and how my framework is able to evoke rich learning experiences for students and address the continuous learning and transformation that is needed to be an effective, interculturally-aware social worker in a rapidly changing world.
2. The ongoing application of First Nations' world views in preparing students for intercultural practice within complex humanitarian contexts and enabling deep reflection about decolonisation and cultural humility, building on my recently published study (Townsend & McMahon, 2021).
3. The wellbeing of students undertaking Field Education in Complex Humanitarian Contexts and the effectiveness of my Five Stage Acclimation Framework for Success (Townsend, 2018).

Final Word

In Chapter Four, I introduced the reader to Josephine, my social work colleague from Timor-Leste, through my *Annie-student* journals. Working with Josephine provided me with a deeper understanding of intercultural awareness than I received within the four walls of a classroom. Through her story-telling and relational approach to teaching and learning, Josephine demonstrated her expertise, her vulnerabilities, as well as an historical perspective of the humanitarian context and how to work sensitively with communities within these contexts. She did not relentlessly emphasise the misery of working in these contexts but demonstrated how things could be better and how human dignity could remain highly visible with effective, community-focused practice. If this had not been revealed through Josephine, I think I would have been disengaged from field education involvement and my experiences as a humanitarian worker would not have been fully realised.

In this study, I have emulated Josephine's story-telling and relational approach, bringing my personal and professional experiences to life through stories from my journals. My intentions are to bring about new knowledge and insights into how social work faculties can continue to strengthen the preparation of students for future practice so they become well prepared and interculturally aware pre-service practitioners.

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