Displaced Human Capital: Untapped Talent of Greater Western Sydney

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

.......................................

(G. Merete Bjørkli)

APPROVAL OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ETHNICS COMMITTEE

The Human Rights Committee at the University of Western Sydney granted approval for the interviews and survey component of this study (HREC Number 07/198).
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABBREVIATIONS</th>
<th>vii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Introduction to the study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Refugees, migrants and employment</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Significance of analysing refugee and migrant labour market situations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Purpose of this study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Hypothesis and research questions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Structure of the thesis and outline of chapters</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Economic theory and the development of a neoliberal ideology</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Neoliberalism put into practice</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Neoliberal policies and the Australian labour market</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Neoliberal policies and Australian public service delivery</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.1 The concept of governance</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.2 ‘Market based governance’ and the public choice theory</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.3 ‘New public management’ (NPM) or ‘managerialism’</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.4 Network governance, partnership and the social inclusion agenda – a neoliberal transformation</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.5 The Australian social inclusion agenda</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Labour market analysis – refugee and migrant labour market outcomes</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Employment situation of refugees and migrants</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Human capital theory</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 The segmented labour market theory</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 Concluding comments</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Neoliberalism and racism</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1 Race as a social construct</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.2 Discrimination and employment</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.3 Racial impact of neoliberal policy reforms</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.4 Racism and neoliberalism</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.5 Government fuelling racism</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Conclusion</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Qualitative versus quantitative analysis</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Justification of case study groups: African refugees</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Justification of case study areas</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 The stages of the research</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Refugee demographics (stage 1)</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Refugees’ experiences with the labour market (stage 2) and refugees’ experiences with service provision (stage 3)</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3 The evolution of services in Australia and its impact on refugees and migrants (stage 4)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Ethical considerations</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Conclusion</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4: LABOUR MARKET POLICIES FUEL LABOUR MARKET SEGMENTATION</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 National employment data</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Skilled refugees employment situation</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 The local labour market of Western Sydney</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Refugee and migrant settlement</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1 The migration program</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2 The refugee and humanitarian program</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3 Where do refugees settle?</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4 African refugees</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.5 Where do African refugees settle in NSW?</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 The case study group</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Why did the case study group settle in Auburn and Blacktown?</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 How important is their own network in finding employment</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Information sheet for refugees</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Consent form for refugees</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3: Information sheet for service providers</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4: Survey</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5: Service providers interviewed</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: 2006 Census data of the African Refugee Communities in Australia (Unemployment Rates, Participation Rates, Educational Qualifications, Median Age and Median Income) .......................................................... 79

Table 3.2: Percentage of the African refugee population that arrived in Australia between 1996-2006 .................................................................................................................. 80

Table 3.3: Highest Settlement of African-born Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by LGA, 1 July 2001 – 1 July, 2006 .................................................................................. 82

Table 3.4: Census Unemployment Rates Greater Western Sydney 2001-2006% ............................................................................................................................... 83

Table 4.1: Employment Situation of the Case Study Group ............................ 101

Table 4.2: 2006 Census data of the African Community (Unemployment rates, Participation rates and Educational Qualifications, Median Age of the community and Medium Income) .......................................................... 102

Table 4.3: 2006 Census data of the Iraqi and Afghani Community (Unemployment Rates, Participation Rates and Educational Qualifications, Median Age and Medium Income) .......................................................... 103

Table 4.4: Employment Statistics among African Humanitarian Entrants and Migrants in Blacktown LGA 2006 .......................................................... 105

Table 4.5: Settlement According to Migration Stream 1991-2009 .......... 108

Table 4.6: Refugee and Migrant Settlement in Western Sydney 1991 - 2009..109

Table 4.7: African Intake through the Offshore Refugee and Humanitarian Program .......................................................... 110

Table 4.8: Highest Settlement of African-born Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by LGA, 1 July 2001 – 1 July, 2006 .................................................................................. 111

Table 4.9: Number of African Migrants and Refugees Settled in Blacktown LGA .......................................................................................... 112

Table 4.10: English Language Proficiency among African Humanitarian Entrants in Blacktown LGA .......................................................... 113

Table 4.11: Research Participants by Country of Origin ............................. 115

Table 4.12: Research Participants Age* .................................................. 115

Table 4.13: Participants Length of Stay in Australia ................................. 116

Table 4.14: Degree and Experiences from Former Country ........................ 116
Table 4. 15: Careers in their Country of Origin ................................................ 117
Table 4. 16: Training in Australia ...................................................................... 117
Table 4. 17: English Fluency among those interviewed ..................................... 118
Table 4. 18: Employment Status in Australia among those interviewed .......... 118

Table 6. 1: Usefulness of Job Network Services ................................................. 170

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3. 1: Map of the Greater Western Sydney region .................................81
Figure 4. 1: Underemployment and Unemployment Rates 1980-2009  .......... 99
Figure 4. 2: Number of Permanent Visa Grants According to Migration Stream 106
ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMEP</td>
<td>Adult Migrant English Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMES</td>
<td>Adult Multicultural Education Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>CALD</td>
<td>Culturally and Linguistically Diverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMIA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now DIAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAC</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECCV</td>
<td>Ethnic Communities’ Council Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HREOC</td>
<td>Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>IHSS</td>
<td>Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy</td>
</tr>
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<td>JSA</td>
<td>Job Services Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSIA</td>
<td>Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>Non English Speaking Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Migrant Resource Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCOA</td>
<td>Refugee Council of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGP</td>
<td>Settlement Grants Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study analyses the impact of neoliberal ideology, theory and policies on the employment outcomes and employment experiences of a group of skilled and semi-skilled African refugees who have settled in Western Sydney since the 1990s. The rise of neoliberal policies in the last three decades has seen a ‘restructuring’ of the labour market and the cutting back and outsourcing of government services, which has made both refugees and also many migrants from developing countries an extremely exposed and vulnerable group in the Australian employment market.

This study has firstly aimed to analyse the effect neoliberal ideology, economic and social policies have had on these groups’ employment experiences and thereby also their understanding of their own labour market situation. They have settled in a labour market where success and failure has become purely correlated to one’s personal acquisitions of skills and qualifications. A world where overt forms of racial discrimination within employment settings rightfully has declined (Better, 2008), but where new and subtle varieties of racial discrimination instead have taken form (Giroux, 2008; Davis, 2007; Goldberg, 2009; Roberts and Mahtani, 2008, 2010).

Secondly, it has aimed to analyse if neoliberal policies themselves have been a factor leading to structural discrimination and thereby segmentation in the labour market. While individual and structural forms of racial discrimination have been found at a range of levels in the Australian labour market, no other Australian study has explored the link between refugees, neoliberalism, employment and structural discrimination.

A cross-disciplinary framework was therefore developed to come to terms with these aims. This framework included reference to labour market, race and governance theories. Despite these theories belonging to different disciplines, they were found to be an important vehicle to gain a full picture of what is going on within the Australian labour market.
The data for this study comprises interviews with skilled African refugees who have settled in the Western Sydney region within the research period. It also includes interviews with government officials and service providers working with refugees and migrants in the employment sector in the same region.
‘Please, please give me a job’, screamed a migrant sitting outside one of the employment agencies in Blacktown. The police had to come and take him away with force.

(Service provider, Blacktown)

1.1 Introduction to the study

This thesis analyses the link between neoliberal economic and social policies and the labour market experiences of a group of skilled and semi-skilled African refugees who have settled in Western Sydney, Australia since the 1990s. While many refugees have been found to possess significant human capital, they are highly over-represented in low paid and precarious employment alongside above-average levels of unemployment. This result stands in stark contrast to Australia’s record period of sustained economic growth (1996-2007) and Australia relative unharmed position after the global economic crises in 2008.

This chapter will begin by giving a short historical overview of refugee and migrant labour market situation in Australia. It will place this research topic into its academic context and conceptualise the research significance of this thesis. It will also present the research aim and research questions. The final section will give an overview of subsequent chapters and the thesis overall structure.
1.2 Refugees, migrants and employment

Through an extensive post-war immigration program which began right after the Second World War, Australia changed gradually into a multicultural and ethnically diverse country. Australian immigration before 1947 had predominantly come from Britain and Ireland (Collins, 2003: 62). While some ‘non-white’ settlement did take place in the 19th century, mostly of Chinese origin, the intake of such settlement in Australia was overall limited. It became further subdued from the beginning of the twentieth century with the introduction of the ‘Immigration Restriction Act’ also known as the ‘White Australia Policy’ (1901-1973), which acted as a deliberate barrier for ‘non-white’ settlement in Australia (Collins, 2003: 62; Jupp, 2007: 9). Similar racially motivated policies were in this period also found in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa (Bashford, 2010: 104).

The move towards a more multicultural society began right after the Second World War. Firstly with the intake of Eastern European refugees (Jupp, 2001: 65) directly followed by a massive recruitment program of migrants from continental Europe (Markus, Jupp and McDonald, 2009: 5). A weakening of the ‘White Australia Policy’ first took place from the 1960s onwards (Jupp, 2001: 67), leading slowly to this discriminatory policy’s formal abolition in 1973 (Jupp, 2001: 68). The first large scale intake of ‘non-white’ settlement to Australia though, did not take place until 1978 with the acceptance of Vietnamese refugees (Markus, Jupp and McDonald, 2009: 5). From the 1980s many Asian migrants moved to Australia under the family migration stream as well as under the new skilled migration program. With the extensive increase in the skilled migrant program from the mid 1990s, Australia ethnic composition changed even further. In 2007-2008 for example 16% of the main bulk of settlers originated from India, 11% from China then followed by a range of different nations (ABS, 2009). The intake of African and the Middle Eastern humanitarian entrants have further added to this ethnic diversity (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 60).

Employment has however always been a hurdle to many of these new migrants. Australia’s post-war skilled East European refugees for example mostly worked in
low skilled jobs regardless of their high levels of human capital (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a: 14; Iredale et al, 1996). Most of the NESB migrants who came to Australia during the post-war period (1950s-1970s) also worked in the lower section of the labour market (Castles and Miller, 2003; Collins, 1991). These migrants were, as Collins argued, recruited to Australia to fill unskilled jobs in Australia’s prosperous manufacturing industry, and thereby seldom were given any chance for upward occupational mobility (Collins, 1991: 78-87). These NESB migrants were thereby highly overrepresented in low skilled jobs in the segmented labour market (Collins, 2003: 63).

Today’s refugees also occupy the lower end of the labour market; hence nothing has really changed. Despite the fact that many refugees have also been found to be highly skilled and qualified, and the fact that we are living in a knowledge economy where skills and qualifications are sought after and highly regarded, today’s skilled refugees are still clustered in low skilled and lowly paid occupations regardless of former skill level (e.g. taxi-driving, security, cleaning, aged care, process work) (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2006: 203; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a: 13; Waxman, 2001; Constable et al, 2004). These refugee groups are today even worse off than in previous times (DIMIA, 2003; Kyle et al. 2004), and are among the most disadvantaged groups within the Australian labour market (Barraket, 2007: 2).

Recent studies have however also shown how these types of employment problems are by no means exclusive to refugees. Also among the many skilled migrants who have arrived under the ‘skilled migration program’ there are those who experience extensive downward occupational mobility (Hawthorne; 2008:15; Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 242; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a). While skilled migrants from western countries have done well and found jobs relevant to their former skills and qualifications (Hawthorne, 2008: 15) this has not been the case for all skilled migrants (Hawthorne, 2008: 15). Studies have found that also many skilled migrants from developing countries have been forced to take on low skilled occupations in order to survive financially (Hawthorne, 2008:15; Ho and Alcorso, 2004). Despite being both skilled and qualified and with a good grasp of the English language, purely recruited to Australia because of their skill level, many of these skilled migrants from developing countries still experience downward occupational mobility.
and problems within the Australian labour market (Hawthorne, 2008: 15; Ho and Alcorso, 2004). While it is true that many skilled migrants from developing countries have found skilled employment in Australia, many more end up in low skilled occupation regardless of their qualifications and skills (Hawthorne, 2008: 15; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Ho and Alcorso, 2006). Despite their high human capital, migrants are therefore still found to struggle with more unemployment and underemployment than the Australian born (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Chiswick and Miller, 2008).

The next section of this introduction chapter will place this thesis into its academic context and further highlight the significance of the topic studied.

1.3 Significance of analysing refugee and migrant labour market situations

An extensive amount of academic work has been carried out in Australia explaining refugee and migrant labour market outcomes. In the 1970s and 1980s much of labour market analysis was influenced by Marxist-based labour market segmentation literature (SLM). These type of Australian studies argued that migrants from non-English speaking background (NESB) became segmented in the secondary labour market according to classifications such as gender and ethnicity (Collins, 1978, 1991; Lever-Tracy and Quinlan, 1988). Prior skills and qualifications were therefore found irrelevant to these migrants final employment outcomes (Collins, 1991: 78-87; Castles and Miller, 1993). The labour market discourse was however also influenced by scholars that argued the opposite and thereby found labour markets to ignore factors such as ethnicity (Collins, 1991: 78-97; Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 237). The labour market discourse in Australia during the 1970s and the 1980s was therefore highly mixed and engaged, allowing room for different opinions and views.

From the late 1980s however a much more one-sided labour market discourse evolved in Australia which, in line with the latter argument above, saw the labour market to be blind to factors such as ethnicity or country of birth. This new labour market discourse became dominated by studies based on the ‘human capital’ theory (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Jupp, 2002). These studies argued that migrants’ labour
market outcomes were directly linked to the different migration streams human capital requisites (Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 238; Jupp, 2002; e.g Cobb-Clark, 2000, 2001; Cobb-Clark and Chapman, 1999; Richardson et al, 2001, 2002; VandenHeuvel and Wooden, 1999, 2000). Refugee and migrants’ labour market situation was now in comparison to the segmented labour market discourse of the 1970s and the 1980s, linked to their skills and qualification level, and thereby their perceived ability to create economic output quickly (Torezani et al, 2008: 136). Other statistical variables such as ethnicity and gender were no longer seen as important (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). Skilled migrants arriving under the skilled migration program were now found to be doing very well in much of the human capital based literature (Ho and Alcorso, 2004 e.g Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002). Humanitarian entrants in comparison were viewed as unskilled and thereby unproductive to the overall economy (Jupp, 2002; Ho and Alcorso, 2004).

More recently though there has again been some growth in studies that question why the impact of ethnicity and gender is no longer taken into consideration in many of these quantitative based studies (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a). Several studies have recently shown that the impact of ethnicity and country of origin still play a major role in refugees’ and migrants’ ability to succeed in the Australian labour market (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Constable et al, 2004). Structural barriers for these groups have therefore been found based on their visible difference and ethnicity, ethnic names, foreign qualifications and lack of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEC) standards among private recruitment agencies just to mention a few (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a: 1-2; Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 254; Junankar et al, 2004, Wagner, 2003, Berman et al, 2008; Booth et al, 2009: 21).

However none of these Australian studies has argued that neoliberal economic and social policies have been a factor leading to structural discrimination and racial segmentation. It is this task which this study aims to pursue. While refugees in particular but also migrants in general experienced discrimination within the employment processes prior to the major restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s, this study argues that this situation has worsened considerably for this group ever since.
1.4 Purpose of this study

The main aim of this study is therefore to explore if neoliberal policies within the labour market and within public service delivery is a cause of structural discrimination and labour market segmentation. This study is therefore questioning if neoliberal ideology fed by theories such as public choice theory, human capital theory and labour market flexibility theories has led to marginalisation of those who do not fit the norm in the society such as migrants and refugees. These groups might find it hard to access employment and specific services based on the fact that they are different. It will in this context analyse both policies impacting on labour markets and public services.

This study further explores how neoliberal thinking has also altered the way refugees and migrants view their own employment situation. It thereby explores the impact neoliberal thinking has on the refugees understanding of their own situation. The study therefore aims to gain insight into how the neoliberal discourse is part of constructing neoliberal subjects. They are living in a world where anyone should be able to succeed in the labour market as long as they have skills and qualifications (Becker, 1964). Added to these mental hurdles is the perception within the wider society that racism is no longer an issue (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: xiv) a world where overt forms of racism rightly has declined, but instead have been substituted with much more insidious and hidden forms of racism (Giroux, 2008; Roberts and Mahtani, 2008). A world where the normalised perception is that it is an economic necessity to limit or cut public spending, privatise public services and make everyone take greater responsibility of their own employment experiences. It will therefore explore how such neoliberal thinking has been part in altering the way these skilled refugees view their own employment situation and the hurdles they go through in the labour market.

Most governments are today aware of the negative effect market governance and neoliberal ideology has had on many communities within the society, and new
initiatives have come up to try to improve outcomes. This study is however questioning if enough is done to combat the many problems refugees and migrants go through in the employment market. It therefore provides a critical review of contemporary employment and social policies.

1.5 Hypothesis and research questions

From the research aims presented above was the following four research questions developed:

1. What are the labour market experiences of skilled African refugees in Western Sydney?

2. What are the relationship between their experiences and labour market and social policies?

3. How do refugees perceive and understand their own labour market situation?

4. Is enough done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market?

1.6 Structure of the thesis and outline of chapters

The following chapters will build on the research agenda outlined in chapter 1.

Chapter 2 will build the theoretical framework needed to understand the explicit links between neoliberal economic and social policies and the labour market experiences of skilled refugees in the Western Sydney region. This chapter will begin by giving an overview of the economic, political and historical influence of ‘the Chicago School of Political Economy’ and the development of a ‘neoliberal
ideology’. It will also include a literature review of how neoliberalism has played out in practice. This will be done by showing the effect neoliberal policies have had on the Australian labour force and on the Australian public service delivery. Chapter 2 will then move into outlining refugees and migrant’s employment situation in Australia, and the current academic discourse that examines these groups’ labour market situation. More specifically it will outline how the dominant neo-classical human capital theory and the segmented labour market theory explain these labour market outcomes. This chapter will also present some of the literature that has begun to link neoliberal policy reforms with structural racial discrimination.

Chapter 3 describes the research methods used in this study. It will explain in detail how this study was designed and carried out in practice and why a qualitative research method was chosen. It will also provide a justification for why the case study group and the case study areas were chosen. The four stages of the research will then next be presented. Lastly this chapter will provide a section on the ethical considerations of this study.

Chapter 4 will demonstrate how labour market segmentation works in practice. It will in this context especially look at the way such labour market segmentation is reinforced or challenged locally. The chapter begin by presenting some statistical material on the national unemployment trends and the effect of neoliberal labour market policies in general. This will be followed by a section on refugees and migrants labour market situation in Australia. This section will also analyse the labour market situation of the workforce in Western Sydney, with a special focus on the disadvantage clusters of Auburn and Blacktown LGA. It will then next present this thesis case study group followed by an analysis of this group’s settlement and employment experiences. This section will highlight why the case study group chose to settle in Auburn and Blacktown and also how they managed to find employment. Lastly the results will be compared with previous studies, followed by an overall conclusion.

Chapter 5 will in more depth analyse skilled African refugees’ labour market experiences and also how they perceive themselves in this process. It will
specifically examine the impact of hidden forms of racial discrimination, and the part neoliberalism plays in constructing a new reality.

Chapter 6 analyses neoliberal changes within public service delivery and its impact on skilled refugee’s employment experiences. It will analyse the market based foundation for many of the policies and programs that assist refugees and migrants into employment. This chapter will also analyse the experiences this case study group of refugees have with settlement services, training programs and employment programs.

Chapter 7 will present the overall conclusions to the research questions formulated in Chapter 1. It will also provide some policy suggestions.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The theoretical underpinning of this research will be presented in this chapter. To come to grips with the research questions\(^1\) presented in chapter one, a cross disciplinary approach is taken. The theoretical framework for understanding skilled African refugees’ labour market experiences in Western Sydney therefore includes theories from three different disciplines: governance theory, labour market theory and racism theory. This chapter will therefore aim to build the theoretical framework needed to understand the explicit links between neoliberal ideology, economic and social policies and the labour market experiences of skilled refugees in the Western Sydney region.

The literature review begins in section 2.2 with an overview of neoliberalism and the economic, political and historical influence of ‘the Chicago School of Political Economy’. This section is important as it provides the setting for understanding the concept of ‘neoliberalism’ and its influence on much of the academic theory that follows below. Section 2.2 also includes a literature review of the emergence of neoliberal policies in Australia, and the effect such policies has had on the Australian labour market. Section 2.2 will also provide a more detailed overview of the neo-classical theories that have influenced the development of public service delivery.

\(^1\)Research questions:
1. What are the labour market experiences of skilled African refugees in Western Sydney?
2. What are the relationship between their experiences and the neoliberal service system/neoliberal governance?
3. How do refugees perceive and understand their own labour market situation? Has neoliberal thinking influenced the refugees understanding of their own situation?
4. Is enough done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market?
The first part of this review therefore focuses on the change of governance modes that has taken place since the 1980s onwards. In other words it will give an overview of the transformation of the Keynesian welfare state model of the post-war period towards the market based governance structure of the 1980s and the 1990s. In this period the Australian government cut or outsourced a large part of its public sector to the private and third sector.

The following section 2.4 will then move into outlining refugees and migrant’s employment situation in Australia and the current academic discourse that examines these groups’ labour market situation. This discourse is dominated by two approaches; studies based on the neo-classical ‘Human Capital Theory’ and studies based on the ‘Dual and Segmented Labour Market Theory’. Human capital based studies emphasises that refugees and migrants’ labour market outcomes is the direct result of their human capital requisites (skills, qualification, English language skills) (Becker 1964; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002). The main argument presented in these studies is that those highly skilled and qualified will find it easier to tap into the employment market, and also get the better paid jobs. This approach therefore overlook outside forces such as the effect of discrimination (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). These ideas were based on Gary Becker and Milton Friedman overall view that discrimination would decline with free competition in the labour market (Becker, 1957: 5; Friedman, 1962: 108-118).

By way of contrast, the discourse based on the ‘Dual or Segmented Labour Market Theory’ explores exactly these processes that stop or hinders some groups from accessing the labour market. Many of the studies based on the segmented labour market theory were linking the effect of capitalism and labour movements with labour market segmentation (Collins, 1984; Reich, 1982; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b). The bulk of these studies were undertaken in the 1970s and the 1980s but they have rapidly declined in number since that period. More recent segmentation theorists have however begun to highlight the spatial unevenness in the way labour markets operate (Peck, 1996), and how this unevenness is part in creating labour market segmentation.
Some however, argue that the ‘Segmented Labour Market Theory’ do not adequately explain how some groups or individuals end up in the secondary labour market (Bohmer, 2005: 96-97; Roedinger, 1999: 10). Studies based on the ‘Segmented Labour Market Theory’ has been criticised for not taking into account the more specific processes by which these end up in the segmented labour market (Das Gupta, 1996: 6-7). Section 2.5 of the literature review will provide an overview of some of the more recent literature that has linked neoliberal policy reforms with racism. Scholars have already undertaken extensive research on the negative effect of neoliberalism on institutions and government policies in general (Roberts and Mahtani, 2008: 2; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Theodore, 2007). Recently there have however also been a growing number of studies highlighting the racial impact of many of these neoliberal policy reforms (Roberts and Mahtani, 2008: 2). This idea will also be presented in section 2.4 below.

2.2 Economic theory and the development of a neoliberal ideology

This section will give a general overview of the development of economic theory, thereby also outlining the economic, political and historical background to the expansion of neoliberal thinking.

Classical Economic Theory was the framework for economic analysis or macroeconomics from the mid 1770 until the Great Depression in the 1930 (Tucker, 2008: 197). The classical economic school was based on the work of the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) (Tucker, 2008: 197). Smith and the classical economic school pushed for a minimal role of the government in economic matters, as this would get in the way for economic growth, prosperity and the efficiency of the market (Herrick et al, 2005: 67). This school also saw full employment as the status quo (Snowdon et al, 2005: 37). This idea of non-involvement from the state

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2 The classical school included economists such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Malthus and John Stuart Mill and other who followed Richardian economics. (Snowdon et al. 2005:36, Keynes, 1936:3).
was based on the overall perception that any market would be able to restore itself. (Tucker, 2008:197). Tucker writes:

The classical economists believed in the laissez-faire “leave it alone” theory that our economy was self regulating and would correct itself without government interference (Tucker, 2008: 197).

By interfering with the market forces, the classical school argued that both economic growth and employment numbers would suffer. Interferences in the market forces such as unions and wage laws were therefore seen to be harmful and destructive to the economy as a whole (Tilly, 2004: 2). Their argument was that by artificially increasing minimum wages the economy would not work efficiently and this would depress labour market demand (Tilly, 2004: 2). While this non-interference approach might work in a period of economic growth it would not be so popular in times of recession. During periods of downturn in the economy, this approach meant the state would have to sit on the side line just watching as the economic turbulence unfolded. The essence of this is that the economy would have to recover by itself without any state interference. This method did of course become very hard to support during the difficult years of the ‘Great Depression’ in the 1930’s, a period with poverty and devastating unemployment numbers. In the US for example, the unemployment rate reached 25% during this period (Auerbach et al., 1998: 299).

It was also during this economic downturn that John Maynard Keynes critique of the classical economic school took form. His most influential work can be traced to his book the ‘General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money’ (1936). His critique of the prevailing economic theory quickly gained support both within academic and policy circles, as it offered a new and much more active approach from the government side.

While the classical economic school argues that economic growth and employment can only be fully achieved if governments do not interfere with market forces (Tucker, 2008: 197), Keynes disputed this. He argued in contrast that if governments did not intervene, the economy would decline (Tilly, 2004: 3). He thereby rejected the classical school’s approach which among other things involved cutting workers
salaries in down periods (Tilly, 2004: 3). Keynes approach therefore argued for governments to take a much more proactive role by utilising methods such as monetary policy (such as cutting interest rates) and fiscal policy (reducing taxes or expanding the states spending) (Tilly, 2004: 3). By introducing these new innovative policy measures he argued, people would have more money to spend on products and services (Tilly, 2004). This type of activities would get the economy moving again. He saw these measures as tools to assure full employment within a nation (Tilly, 2004:3). Government could for example initiate different infrastructure project to stimulate employment and economic growth. Keynes economic thinking is therefore often referred to as ‘demand side’ economics. His theory as presented above completely dominated the discipline of post-war (1950-1970) macroeconomics (Hoover et al, 1989: 142). He is therefore often argued to be the most prominent and influential economist of the twentieth century (Ingham, 2000: 7; McCann, 1998: 1).

In strong contrast to the difficult years of the great depression, the post-war period was a prosperous time, with an extraordinary growth rate of around 5 percent annually for the industrial world (Giguere, 2007: 41). With economic growth and the influence of Keynes economic theory, governments could spend on welfare and infrastructure projects (Tilly, 2004:3). A range of different welfare state models did therefore appear in the economies of the western world. Esping - Andersen labelled the Australian welfare state as a liberal welfare state model (1990), thereby contrasting it to the more generous welfare state model of the Scandinavian countries. In the Australian context this welfare model led to as Quiggin notes a reduction of income inequality and also a reduction in inequality of living standards (Quiggin, 1999: 40). It therefore was part of producing a fairer society for everyone in the Australian society.

In the 1970’s however this economic growth period came to an end and along with it the influence and dominance of Keynesian macroeconomics. It was a period with slowdown of economic growth, oil shocks, rising inflation and rising unemployment numbers (Tickell and Peck, 2003: 170 and Bessant et al, 2006: 139).
As Tickel and Peck write:

The social turbulence and economic uncertainties of that period may have caused many in the social-science community to question the fundamental of capitalism, but the ascendant mode of orthodox economic theory proposed and entirely different explanation: the economic difficulties of Western Europe and North America were consequences of government failure. Markets were not, according to this view, the cause of the problems of the 1970’s, they were the cure (2003:171).

The market was therefore not held responsible for this economic turbulence. Instead were Keynesian economics and bureaucratic welfare state model blamed and held responsible for these economic problems (Gonick, 1987: 45; Keast, 2003: 32). The welfare state model was attacked for being both inefficient and leading people to become dependent on welfare (Keast, 2003: 32). This criticism of the welfare state model and the Keynesian economic model did not just rise out of nowhere, but had its roots in the work of a group of intellectuals (Tickell and Peck, 2003: 170). These intellectuals created a range of doctrines aimed to attack the idea of what they referred to as ‘big governments’ and the bureaucratic welfare state model (Ong, 2006: 10). Such thinking often referred to as ‘neoliberalism’ therefore emerged as Harvey argues as a reaction to Keynesian macro-economics and the welfare state model of the post-war period (Harvey, 2005: 20-21).

So what exactly is neoliberalism? ‘Neo’ means new in Latin, so ‘neoliberalism’ can then easily be translated into the word new liberalism. Based on the name alone neoliberalism therefore must have a lot in common with the 19th century liberalism or laissez-faire economic thinking presented above. A range of other terms has also been used to describe the same phenomena such as ‘economic rationalism’ in Australia, the ‘Washington consensus’ or ‘Reaganomics’ in the US and ‘Thatcherism” in the UK.

By looking at the foundations of the classical school, it becomes clear that both schools have many similarities. Both the classical economic school and ‘neoliberalism’ believe in free market forces, and also argue that any society will
work better if the market is given full freedom (Cromton, 2008: 2). Olssen et al. summarises the classical schools postulates below:

In the classical model the theoretical aim of the state was to limit and minimize its role based upon postulates which included

1) individual egoism (the self-interested individual),

2) invisible hand theory which dictated that the interest of the individual also were the interest of the society as a whole, and

3) the political maxim of laissez-faire (Olssen et al, 2004: 136-137).

However this ‘new liberalism’ or ‘neoliberalism’ that was advocated for during the 1960s and the 1970s differed from the classical school on one important matter, active state involvement. However this type of active state involvement was very different from the active role of the state that the Keynesian economists had pushed for. From a neoliberal perspective, this state involvement should now only focus on supporting the free and unlimited market forces (Olssen et al, 2004: 136). Olssen et al writes:

Neoliberalism has come to represent a positive conception of the state’s role in creating the appropriate market by providing the conditions, laws and institutions necessarily for its operations (Olssen et al, 2004: 136).

This was something entirely new, the classical school had certainly not advocated for such an approach. The classical school therefore in contrast represent as Olssen et al notes a “negative conception of state power” (Olssen et al, 2004: 136).

To achieve this overarching goal of serving the market forces, the government only needed to be active in a few vital areas.
Cromton writes:

Thus the role of government should be limited to security, the defence of the realm and the protection of private property, together with the creation and maintenance of markets (Cromton, 2008: 2).

Providing public services to its citizens was thereby not a matter that the government should need to be involved in. According to neoliberal doctrines these types of services were better seen to be delivered by the private sector (Olseen et al, 2004: 136).

Cromton continues:

Other functions, including the provision of essential services (such as transport, water, energy and even health and education), are best carried out by private enterprises. (Cromton, 2008: 2)

The overall new aim was therefore to make the public state sector more efficient, and this could be done by privatising and corporatizing public services (Ong, 2006: 10). Harvey has probably provided the best and most all-inclusive definition of neoliberalism. His definition summaries all the aspects mentioned above. He writes:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state
should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit (Harvey 2005: 2).

Soss et al (2011) also highlights that there is a vital difference between Laissez-faire doctrines and neoliberalism. They writes that while Laissez-faire doctrines take it for granted that market relations emerge as a natural mode when people are freed from the distortion of the state, neoliberal doctrines in contrast highlight that markets much be actively constructed, markets behaviour must be learned and then deliberately extended into new areas. They write:

> Neoliberalism treats market rationality as a normative ideal to be pursued through applications of public authority and uses it as a preeminent standard for evaluating institutional designs and individual behaviour throughout the society (Soss et al, 2011: 21)

This argument is therefore in line with Olssens argument above, that neoliberalism represent an active state involvement, in contrast to the classical school (Laissez-faire) negative conception of state power (Olssen et al, 2004: 136).

Brenner and Theodore highlight that neoliberalism does not entail a rolling back of state regulations and the rolling forward of the market as such, instead they argue, it creates a reconstitution of state-economy relations in which the states promotes market based regulatory arrangements (2005: 102)

The transformation of the ‘classical economic theory’ into a neoliberal ideology did however begin well before the 1960s and the 1970s.
Richard Peet writes this process began in the 1920s and the 1930s, and took place at a range of influential research centres. He mentions:

- the Austrian school of economics in Vienna in the early 20th century,
- the London school of economics in the 1930s,
- the Institute of Economic Affairs,
- Centre for Policy Studies and Adam Smith Institute, all in London,
- the ordo-economic school of Walter Euchan and Franz Bohm and Freiburg and
- the Hoover Institute at Stanford University in California

(Peet, 2003: 9).

However Peet highlights that the intellectual capital of neoliberalism must however be the work of the Chicago School of Political Economy. He refers to some of the most influential names in this process as:


Neoliberalism can therefore be as associated with the economic model developed by Milton Friedman and other Chicago School scholars during the 1950s-1970s. Their economic model is also sometimes referred to as neoclassical economics (Andersen, 2009: 9).

Several of these names (especially Milton Friedman, Gary Becker and James Buchanan) will be given further attention in the sections below. These ‘Chicago boys’ as these were also referred to (Harvey, 2005: 22) was all very active and created a range of economic theories during the 1960s and 1970s that went far beyond the economic sphere. This period is therefore in the literature often referred to the Chicago Schools ‘imperialistic form’ (Peters, 2001: 15). This approach gave these Chicago economists the opportunity to explain a range of issues that had not normally been explained by economic theory. Peters writes:
neoclassical economics where deemed to provide a unified approach to the study of human behaviour and had been extended into areas that are traditionally the preserve and prerogative of political science, sociology and other social science disciplines (Peters, 2001:15)

In the context of this thesis, these scholars pushed the laissez-faire argument into labour market analysis through Becker’s ‘Human Capital Theory’ (1964) which has impacted strongly on the way labour market outcomes is explained and analysed. Their analysis also strongly impacted on how discrimination and racism is explained and understood as both Becker and Friedman viewed racism and capitalism as incompatible (Bohmer, 2005: 96). Lastly their analysis also gained major impact on public administration and governance through the work of Buchanan (1978) and other Public Choice theorists. Buchanan’s public choice theory became an influential tool in the attack of the welfare state model (Keast, 2003: 33; Dalton et al, 1996: 97).

Susan George argues, while the process began with economist such as Friedrich von Hayek and his students at the Chicago School of Political Economy, they would not have got anywhere without extensive and influential support (George, 1999). The neoliberals and their economic funders were therefore quick to develop a large network of elitist and powerful contributors. This network consisted of foundations, institutes, research centres, publications, scholars and writers. With all these resources George argues, they were able to push their doctrines relentlessly (George, 1999). This is also stated by Harvey et al. (2005:22) who argue that influential think thanks were put into place both in the United Kingdom and the United States to push this agenda. Even in Australia a range of think thanks and research centres was part in this process. Cahill (2004: 3) mentions several Australian research centres such as:

Institute of Public Affairs, the Centre for Independent Studies (CIS), the Centre of Policy Studies (CoPS), the Australian Institute of Public Policy (AIPP), the H. R. Nicholls Society, Centre 2000, Crossroads, the Tasman Institute, the Institute for Private Enterprise (IPE), and the Australian Adam Smith Club.
After the election of the Ronald Reagan administration in the US (1980) and the Margaret Thatcher government in the UK (1979), the Chicago scholars and their support network got the political support they had been longing for. For example Milton Friedman was in this period Ronald Reagan’s chief political advisor (Atzon, 2011: 111). Tickell and Peck (2003: 172) write:

In London and Washington, the principal circuits of neoliberal influence spilled out beyond the think-thanks and the seminar rooms and into the institutions of government.

In many ways the economic crises of the 1970s gave these the opportunity to overturn and dismantle many of the ‘key institutions, alliances and social truth that has characterized the post World-War II capitalist order (Glynn, 2006, Harvey, 2005)’ (Cahill, 2007: 222).

These neoliberal policies were also forced onto non-western economies. The Reagan administration for example played a large role in pushing this neoliberal agenda throughout the developing world. They did so by influencing international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Harvey, 2005: 29). Developing countries who had major problems with debt were given the option to accept payment rescheduling of their loans in return for introducing a range of neoliberal reforms in their own countries (such as cutting their welfare programs, introducing privatization and more flexible labour laws) (Harvey, 2005: 29). In other words by implementing deregulation, privatization and reducing their overall welfare expenditure, they were in return granted deeply needed debt rescheduling (Vestergaard, 2009: 216). Kaboub argues that the economic theory that has been used to justify these type of policies by the IMF and the World Bank is faulty and has therefore caused far greater damage to the developing world than it has done good (Kaboub, 2008: 221). He has not been alone in criticising the impact of these types of neoliberal policies on the developing world (Baiman, 2006; Kregel, 2004 seen in Kaboub, 2008: 221).

With the influence of the Thatcher government and the Regan administration these ideas and doctrines spread quickly throughout the world, including Australia. The
following section below will show how this economic ideology gained practical influence in Australia.

2.3 Neoliberalism put into practice

The concept of neoliberalism has been highly disputed and debated (Peck, 2010). Before starting to give an overview of neoliberal policies in Australia it is important to highlight that neoliberalism has been a highly uneven. Brenner and Theodore highlight in their study that the neoliberal project has varied greatly both geographically and socially (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 350-351). Tickell and Peck add to this by arguing that neoliberalism also changes and modifies itself with time and place (Tickell and Peck (2003:166). They therefore developed the concept of ‘neoliberalization’ to explain the different stages in this process, rather than referring to it as a hegemonic form of neoliberalism.

The first phase they named ‘Proto Neoliberalism’ which was the pre 1980s anti Keynesian work carried out in the neoliberal think thanks in the US (Tickell and Peck, 2003: 169-172). Much of the work carried out in this stage has been presented above.

The second phase Tickell and Peck refer to as ‘Roll Back’ neoliberalism, which involved the severe changes taken place in service delivery in the 1980s and the 1990s (2003: 169-172). As Peck highlights this stage refers to the dismantling of institutions, attack on labour, planning agencies, social services, public bureaucracy, funding cuts, organisational downsizing and privatisations (Peck, 2012).

The first section below will look at the effect of neoliberal policies on the Australian labour market. The second section will examine the effect of neoliberal policies on Australian public service delivery.

This chapter will also look at the third phase of neoliberalization, what Tickell and Peck refers to ‘roll-out’ neoliberalization (2003: 169-172).
2.3.1 Neoliberal policies and the Australian labour market

In the context of Australia, a range of neoliberal policies were introduced during the 1980s and the 1990s. These policies were put into place to support free trade and globalisation. The aims of these restructuring measures were to create a competitive global market place with a flexible labour force (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 72). These policies involved privatising and cutting public services, weakening Australia’s industrial relations laws and reducing the power of the trade union movement in general (Tickell and Peck, 2003: 172-173; Datta et al. 2006: 1, Cahill, 2007: 223-225). Such ideas were at the time without doubt popular, and gained broad support on both sides of Australia politics (Pusey, 1991; Sanders, 2002: 24).

In more detail, the attack on labour began already with The Malcolm Fraser’s Liberal government. As Cahill argues, this government dismantled many of the regulations and institutions that had previously controlled and protected the labour force in Australia (Cahill, 2007: 223) The following Keating Labour government continued this process by introducing enterprise bargaining which forces wages and conditions to be determined by the individual company rather than on a industry wide basis (Cahill, 2007: 223). The conservative Howard Government pushed this even further by introducing ‘The Workplace Relations Act’. Employment contracts were now reduced to a contract between employers and employees, rather than a collective agreement (Cahill, 2007: 223). As a result of these measures it became much harder for unions to act on behalf of the individual worker. In 2005, the final element came in the form of the notorious Workchoices’ bill. The post-war goal of ‘full employment and stable employment’ (Quiggin, 2005; King, 2003:155; Perkins and Angley, 2003: 7) were therefore left and replaced with another aim ‘control over inflation’ (Mitchell and Muysken, 2008: 4). This situation is well summarised by Perkins and Angly (2003: 7):

Full employment has been abandoned as a policy goal, and employment policy focuses instead on full employability and supply-side measures such as labour market deregulation, and increasingly punitive labour market programs.
The diminishing power of the trade unions in Australia (Bell, 2000: 55) made it easy for the Australian government to introduce such extreme labour market measures. But these extreme labour market measures has come at a great cost with major increase in the casualisation of the Australian work force, increased income inequalities and a rise in non standard employment arrangements. (Western et al. 2007: 413; Jamrozik, 2005: 172, Perkins & Angley, 2003: 1-5; Sawer, Abjorensen, Larkin, 2009: 74.). This type of non standard employment arrangement is often referred to as a precarious form of employment (part-time, temporary, contracted out, causal and self employment) in the literature. Rising unemployment also followed as a consequence (Jamrozik, 2005: 172, Perkins & Angley, 2003: 1-5; Sawer, Abjorensen, Larkin, 2009: 74). Australia was so keen to push through these extreme measures. Indeed it has one of the highest proportions of precarious employment in the OECD (Sawer, Abjorensen, Larkin, 2009: 75). Access to work, with decent pay, has therefore become more unequally distributed with the deregulation of the labour market (Sawer, Abjorensen, Larkin, 2009: 74). These policy changes have therefore had an unfortunate effect on many people’s lives in Australia. Sadly it has also had the worst effect on those already most marginal in the labour force (Creece et al, 2008: 276).

Parallel to these changes, parts of Australian manufacturing industry also relocated their factories to countries where they could hire cheap staff and produce their products at a much lower cost than at home (Jamrozik, 2005: 70). The result of these changes was therefore a reduction in the availability of entry level jobs. These types of job had been the safety net for refugees and migrants who arrived in Australia between the 1950s and the 1980s. Refugees and migrants who settled in Australia from the 1990s onwards therefore found themselves in a totally different economic situation than the groups of migrants who arrived in Australia during the post-war years.
To understand the wide spread effect of neoliberal policies in Australia, a quote by Perkins and Angley (2003: 3-4) follows. In their view neoliberal policies have led to:

- widespread privatisation of public assets including electricity, gas, water, and public transport
- massive reductions in public sector employment across all levels of government
- extensive moves towards contracting out of government service delivery, for example in the Job Network
- adoption of compulsory competitive tendering
- vigorous pursuance of budget surpluses by state and federal governments
- deregulation of the financial system
- deregulation of the labour market
- reductions in tariffs and trade barriers
- moves toward deregulation of the university system
- introduction of the Private Health Insurance rebate to encourage greater use of the private health system
- development of the concept of Mutual Obligation and a more punitive attitude towards welfare recipients
- establishment of private prisons and correctional centres
- reduced progressivity of the taxation system.

### 2.3.2 Neoliberal policies and Australian public service delivery

Since this thesis is arguing that neoliberal restructuring within public service delivery is a cause of institutional discrimination within the employment processes, the following section will review the literature and theory that has impacted on public service delivery since the 1980s. More specifically this part of the literature review will explain how Public Choice Theory developed, its link to neoliberalism, how it led to major reform of the public sector, the impact of such transformation, and lastly, the transformation from market-based governance structures to network governance and the social inclusion agenda.
2.3.2.1 The concept of governance

Before reviewing the changes that have taken place within public service delivery, the term governance will be defined and put into context. Before the major restructuring of state and economy took place, the ‘governance’ concept was used to explain government and how governments exercise political power (Kjær, 2004:1). This term did however change meaning dramatically from the 1980s onwards. To get some idea of what the new concept of ‘governance’ was all about, a definition of Pierre and Peters will be used. Pierre and Peters (2001: 1) write:

Governance is the capacity of government to make and implement policy, in other words to ‘steer the society’.

The focus on most of the existing ‘governance’ literature is therefore also about the move away from hierarchical ‘bureaucratic governance’ structures of the post-war period (1950-1970) towards the neoliberal ‘market based governance’ model of the 1980s and the 1990s and lastly the ‘network type governance’ mode of the 21st century (Kjær, 2004: 19). The concept is however still diffused and even contested (Kjær, 2004: 1; Rhodes, 1997, 1998). In most of the public administration literature, the term, governance is associated with these three governance modes.

2.3.2.2 ‘Market based governance’ and the public choice theory

The bureaucratic hierarchical welfare state model had been put in place in many western countries during the post-war period. Despite its many positive social outcomes (Quiggen, 1999:40), the welfare state model came under heavy attack from the 1970s onwards, and began to lose its support. The main argument against the welfare state model was that its social services were not effective enough (Keast, 2003: 32-33).

This critique of the welfare state must therefore be linked to the work of the ‘Public Choice’ Theorists. ‘Public Choice Theory’ was the theoretical framework for the massive transformation that took place within public bureaucracy in the 1980s and
the 1990s (Pierre, 2008). The Public Choice Theory was theoretically grounded on the work carried out at the ‘Chicago School of Political Economy’ (Pierre, 2008). A small group from this school got together to resolve the perceived problem of ‘inefficiency’ within the public sector (Pierre, 2008). The arguments these scholars developed on this issue became as Peters argues a crucial factor in the expansion of the neoliberal ideology (Peters, 2001:15). To summarise, the Public Choice Theory’s importance can be credited to the fact that it provided the neoliberals with a theory to attack the existing bureaucratic welfare state model (Keast, 2003: 33). Public Choice theory is therefore as Staples argues a part of the neoliberal paradigm (Staples, 2006: 5).

James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock (1962), the main theorists behind the Public Choice theory, were two very important figures in this attack on the welfare state model. They did this by analysing the behaviour of government officials, civil servants and elected representatives. They argue that because all people are selfish, they will first and foremost look after themselves (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2007: 10; Dunleavy, 1991:3; Niskanen, 1971). The argument these scholars put together was that public servants and other government official would think about themselves or their departments first, and this would then get in the way from focusing on the interest of the common good (Niskanen, 1971). To summarise, such self-centred behaviour would then lead to inefficiencies within the public sector (Davis, 1996).

This group of Chicago scholars argued however that by bringing in the ‘competition incentive’ or market-based solutions into public decision making process, the individual bureaucrat would find it much more difficult to behave in an egocentric or self centred manner (Health et al, 2009). Berrios (2000: p. 27-28) notes:

Thoroughly grounded in laissez-faire individualism and free market economics, public choice theorist such as Buchanan (1997) and Tullock (1990) argue that government should play a limited role in the economy because the competitive market place produces goods and services more efficiently and more responsibly than government.
The theory this group of economist developed, thereby managed as Pierre highlights, to move laissez-faire economic thinking into political science and public sector decision making (Pierre, 2008: 3). With the emergence of the Ronald Reagan administration (1980-1988) in the US and the Margaret Thatcher government in the UK (1979-1990) these ideas became implemented into government policies. With strong political backing, the public choice theory was part in transforming the bureaucratic welfare state models into the market-based experiment of the 1980s and the 1990s. As Self (1993) argues, Public Choice theory therefore fitted well into the neoliberal policy objective of keeping the cost of running a state apparatus to a minimum.

With the push to spread their neoliberal ideology globally, many countries including Australia adopted the Public Choice Theory’s governance vision. While Public Choice Theory gained influence on public policy and administration world-wide, its main locations was and still is in the English speaking economies such as UK, New Zealand, Australia and the US (Staples, 2006: 5; Pierre, 2008: 7). It is also as Veggelund argues, an interesting observation that the critique of the welfare state model did not develop in the welfare states of continental Europe and Scandinavia but instead took off in the less expensive welfare state models of the Anglo speaking world (Veggelund, 2007: 49)

2.3.2.3 ‘New public management’ (NPM) or ‘managerialism’

Based on the Public Choice Theory but also ‘Agency Theory’ and ‘Principal Agency Theory’ a range of neoliberal policy reforms were therefore put into effect in Australia and other western economies during the 1980s and the 1990s (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2007: 20). Denhardt and Denhardt refer to these two latter theories, ‘Agency Theory’ and ‘Principal Agency Theory’, as a variation of Public Choice Theory (2007: 20). These neoliberal reforms had the overall aim of making the public bureaucracy more effective and inexpensive to run. In other words, they aimed to replace the bureaucracy of the hierarchical welfare state model (Keast, 2003: 32 see also Considine, 2001; Orchard, 1998; Hood, 1991).
These major reforms even got their own label; ‘New Public Management’ (NPM) (Keast, 2003; Hood, 1991, 1995). In some of the literature NPM reforms are also referred to as ‘Managerialism’ (Parker and Gould, 1999). Albin (1995: 138) summarises the impact of NPM in the following way:

Public Choice provided the much needed intellectual support for managerialist ideology. The simple fact is that managerialism is directed at changing traditional bureaucratic organisational incentives to reduce outputs and thereby lower taxes. The explicit assumption is that private sector incentive structures are far superior to those which are manifested by government. According to managerialist orthodoxy, government should be more like the private sector and thus expose to competitive market.

Australia began this process in the 1980s. While several of these reforms were implemented straight away, the major reforms within Australian public policy took hold in the 1990s (Van Gramberg and Basset, 2005: 2), heavily influenced by the ‘Osborne and Gaebler Report’, 1992 (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2007: 13). The main message of the Osborne and Gaebler Report was that public sector managers now should change their approach to “steer” but not “row” in the service delivery process (Denhardt and Denhardt (2007: 13). What they meant in practice was that government should no longer deliver services themselves (rowing), but focus its role on coordinating or steering in the service delivery process. It was all purely about making a more efficient service delivery system, and thereby in line with neoliberal thinking about smaller and cheaper government (Van Gramberg and Basset, 2005: 2).

As the state was no longer supposed to deliver the services themselves, the former services become outsourced and delivered by the private sector and/or NGOs. To be able to gain such contracts these organisations had to compete in a market based environment for a tender. NGOs or private companies with the cheapest bids would usually win these tenders. (Health et al, 2009). The aims of this NPM reforms was to create competition within all field of service delivery.
Kaboolian (1998: 190) summarises these changes as:

competition within units of government and across government boundaries to the not for profit and for profit sector, performance bonuses and penalties.

In the Australian context, National Competition Policy became an important policy device for withdrawing role of the state as a provider of public services (Van Besset and Gramberg, 2005:3).

From the mid 1990’s onwards, New Public Management reforms were put into practice in the area of public employment services in Australia. The services of the public employment agency the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) became outsourced to a range of private, community based and public organisation and branded as the ‘Job Network’ (May 1998-June 2009). This was a federally funded program but based on the neoliberal idea of creating quasi markets, with the overarching aim of making the employment services more efficient (McDonald and Marston, 2008: 114). It was purely about introducing competition, flexibility and choice within the service delivery processes. This major restructuring of the whole public employment service program was an astonishing move. No other country in the OECD (except the Netherlands) had gone to such length to privatise their public employment service (Eardley, 2003)³. By introducing and creating quasi market of employment services, they linked the purchaser in this case the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) with two groups of service providers. These service provider consisted firstly of the income support service the ‘Centrelink’ and secondly the many contracted ‘Job Network’ providers (McDonald and Marston, 2008: 104). Those who were looking for employment thereby become ‘clients’ in this market based experiment.

The massive privatisation of the ‘Job Network’ model did however become heavily criticised.

McDonald and Marston, for example, have even shown that the job network did not even live up to its economic rational expectation. They write:

Reregulation and bureaucratisation have increased both transaction costs and the administrative burden, leaving case managers at the front line with little time to focus on the needs of the job seeker. In turn, job seekers are given little information and are, more or less, placed with an agency on the basis of convenience and availability, not on the basis of quality. If things go wrong and the job seeker is dissatisfied, they have weak exit rights and limited access to independent appeal. In terms of the relationships between the purchaser and the providers, there is little evidence of trust and respect.

(McDonald and Marston, 2008: 114)

The model was also criticised for failing to assist those with multiple barriers to the labour market (McDonald and Marston, 2008) such as refugees (Torezani, Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2008) but also migrants settling in Australia.

The Job Network model has however gone through some recent changes from June 2009 and is today rebranded under the new heading ‘the Job Services Australia’. This model is however still based on the quasi-market model (McDonald and Marston, 2008). DEEWR is still the purchaser, while the many jobs network providers contracted to carrying out the service provision.

Even settlement services such as Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Services (IHSS) compete in market based environment for funding.

This massive contracting of government services and competitive tendering arrangement has resulted in a changing role of government. They are in this process caught up with monitoring and create bureaucratic rules to prove that these private organisations and the NGOs are not wasting the tax payer’s money. A range of accountability rules has been developed to assist in this process. This again has as Keevers et al. point out, had implication for the NGO sector but also private companies, who now need to spend a lot of their time, and economic resources on management and administrative functions (Keevers, 2006: 12). The outcome of this
massive creation of accountability rules is that these organisations have fewer resources available for their service delivery functions. (Keevers, 2006: 12).

Keevers et al argues further that it is not only the state itself that has become outcome focused in this process. The NGOs themselves has also taken on this approach. Keevers, Sykes and Treleaven write:

In this it is not only the State that has demanded outcomes but the organisations themselves have become performative in understanding their work this way (Keevers et al, 2006: 6).

They are referring to the way some charity organisations for example have become transformed into corporate organisations to find an income to carry out their charity work. Or instances were small community organisations begin to think purely in terms of funding and their organisations survival for the coming year.

2.3.2.4 Network governance, partnership and the social inclusion agenda – a neoliberal transformation

By the mid to late 1990s many problems began to emerge as a result of the neoliberal restructuring of the labour market and the transformation of the public service delivery. Peters (2001: 22) writes:

Large sections of populations had become structurally disadvantaged, working and living on the margins of the labour market; rapidly growing social inequalities had become more evident as the rich had become richer and the poor, poorer, companies were failing and underperforming; public services had been “stripped down’, and were unable to deliver even the most basic of services; many communities had become split and endangered by the rise of racism, crime, unemployment, and social exclusion

As mentioned previously, Tickell and Peck divided neoliberalisation into three different phases. The first phase they named ‘Proto Neoliberalism’ which was the pre
1980s anti Keynesian work carried out in the neoliberal think thanks in the US (2003: 169-172). The second phase Tickell and Peck refer to as ‘Roll Back’ neoliberalism, which involved the severe changes taken place in service delivery in the 1980s and the 1990s (2003: 169-172). Both these phases of neoliberalisation have been explained in detail above.

The third and current mode of neoliberalisation they refer to as ‘Roll Out” neoliberalism. What Tickell and Peck are referring to is neoliberal state building while at the same time sharing the market logics of earlier forms of neoliberalism (Tickell and Peck, 2003: 169-172). This new form of neoliberalisation therefore represents a milder or modified version of previous forms of neoliberalisation, and can be seen in the emergence of ‘third way’ policies (Argent, 2011: 11). Such policies aimed to repair some of the damage done by the ‘roll out face’ of neoliberalisation, though it shared much of the same thinking as previous forms (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Argent, 2011).

New terms have been developed in this process such as ‘network governance’, ‘partnerships arrangements’, ‘social capital’ and the ‘social inclusion’ agenda, to mention just a few.

Keevers et al (2006: 5) writes:

\[ \text{In more recent times, other discourses such as ‘new paternalism’ and network governance’ have arisen out of the neo-liberal and managerial discourse and are more specific to the sector, particularly shaping interactions between community organisations, government and communities.} \]

There is however a continuing debate in the literature about whether partnerships between governments and the third sector is, as Goodard (2006: 1) writes, “rhetoric or reality”. One side of the arguments is that these partnerships are still developed within the existing structures and frameworks of power, as Goodard (2006:1) notes “new rhetoric poured into old bottles”. The other side of the argument is that these new arrangement are not just empty talk but do involve a shift within social policy and funding arrangement for service delivery.
Similarly, there is no clear definition about the meaning of network governance’ means. Keevers et al (2006:14) write:

Network governance has elastic and multiple meanings and probably represents an ideal rather than a lived experience in Australian social policy.

............

Network governance offers the promise of participation, coordination and collaboration at a time when government prefer the “steering not rowing mode” model (Edwards 2001, 85), at the same time softening some of the competitive effects of neo-liberalism policy reforms.

Despite no real definition, partnership is about creating the possibility for collaboration between government agencies, NGOs and the private sector to solve problems that has emerged with the neoliberal restructuring of the economy in general. Some academics do however see partnership approaches as the way forward. In Australia, Considine (2005:2) for example argues:

This ‘Network governance’ paradigm (Kickert, 1995,Considine, 2001;2005; Rhodes, 1997) suggests a possible breakthrough in public administration and organisation theory by providing a means to tackle problem in a multidimensional and locally flexible way.

2.3.2.5 The Australian social inclusion agenda

Successful settlement of refugees and migrants is when they can participate in all aspects of Australian life, at an economic, social, political or cultural level. Of all the different settlement goals, employment is probably the most important. With regards to the many refugees and migrants that are struggling with employment and a decent living in Australia the social inclusion agenda could be a way of dealing with the massive problems these groups experience.
The term ‘social inclusion’ first emerged in Europe in the 1970s and the 1980s. It was a straightforward reaction to the major restructuring of the economy that was put in place in many Western governments during this period (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003: 10). With major deregulation within the economy, many lost their jobs, became long-term unemployed or fell outside the system altogether. Both the term social inclusion and social capital is therefore a mode to combat the many problems that has developed under neoliberal governance. As Daly and Silver (2008: 550) write:

Social capital and social inclusion are ways to deal with market failure (high unemployment despite economic growth) and state failure (poor governance)

The theory of social inclusion has its roots in the ‘third way’ policies carried out by The Blair government in the UK in the late 1990s and the theoretical work of Giddens (1998). The policies were designed to turn round some of the negative effects of neoliberalism and the massive NPM reforms carried out in Britain during the 1980s and the 1990s. Despite its noble aim, the success of these ‘third way’ policies has been mixed. Peters (2001:23) writes:

Some commentators see nothing new in the “Third Way”, regarding it as a return to ethnical socialism of “old Labour’. Other critics see it as a cover for the wholesale adoption of conservative policies of privatization and the continued dismantling of the welfare state. Still others suggest that the “Third Way” is nothing more than a spin-doctoring exercise designed to brand a political product as different from what went before. Utilizing the slogan “market economy but not market society”, advocates of the Third Way see it as uniting the two streams of left of center though: democratic socialism and classical liberalism.

In Australia there were at the same time very little interest in third way policies (Lyons and Passey, 2006; Barrakat 2008). Australia first began to show interest in the social inclusion concept after the Rudd Government got into power in 2007. This government has already began to implement a social inclusion agenda targeting the homeless, people with disability and mental health issues and also began the massive
work on closing the gap for Indigenous Australians (Messimeri, 2008:4). This is therefore an example of what Tickell and Peck (2003) refer to as neoliberal state building.

However there is nothing in the Australian social inclusion agenda that specifically target the many problems which refugees and also migrants from developing countries go though in their quest for successful settlement and employment in Australia (Messimeri, 2008:4). Many in this group experience multiple barriers in the Australian society such as finding employment, housing, gaining education and accessing social service delivery in general. Messimeri argues therefore that to date there has however been no specific mention in the social inclusion agenda about improving refugees and migrants disadvantage with regards to employment or settlement in general (Messimeri, 2008). She argues that the social inclusion agenda thereby lacks a ‘multicultural plank’.

The Ethnic Community Council of Victoria, also argues in a policy paper that a national multicultural policy should be the first stepping stone to ensure that migrants and refugees are included in all aspects of Australian life (ECC, 2009). Australia’s multicultural policy has seen since the 1970s been a very important platform for addressing problems for new migrants in Australia. However from the election of the John Howard Government in Australian in 1996 the policy has lost momentum. It has not been renewed since 2006. Neither the Howard Government nor the Rudd government has gone in the direction of including this policy into their overall agenda (ECC, 2009).

The following chapters is therefore questioning if these type of neoliberal policies presented above have hindered refugees from tapping into the employment market in particular and public services in general.
2.4 Labour market analysis – refugee and migrant labour market outcomes

Much interest has in the Australian literature been devoted to explaining refugee and migrant labour market outcomes. How their labour market situation is understood or analysed is however dependent on the theoretical position of the author.

Before going into labour market theory, an overview of refugees and migrants employment outcomes follows (section 2.3.1). Section 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 will next provide a review of the available labour market literature; the human capital theory and the dual and segmented labour market theory. Lastly section 2.3.4 will provide some concluding comments regarding these two theories.

2.4.1 Employment situation of refugees and migrants

Employment is a very important factor in achieving successful settlement among refugees and migrants (Phillimore and Godson, 20006: 1720; Valtonen 2004; Waxman 1998 and Block, 2000). Finding a decent job not only provides migrants and refugees with an income, it also gives an opportunity for them to socialise and meet people outside their own ethnic group, and thereby improve their overall English language skills (Block, 2000). For many it also gives them the opportunity to send money to help relatives that might be struggling back in their home countries (Dunlop, 2005: 10)

On the other hand, unemployment (and underemployment), with its financial problems generates a range of negative side effects. Firstly unemployment has proven to have impact on people’s mental and physical health and self-esteem in general (Taylor, 2002: 68 and 80; Veroff, Douvan and Hatchett, 1995: 80; Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003: 20; Lamb, 1997). It has further often been found to be the reason for marriage breakdown (Taylor, 2002: 68; Veroff, Douvan and Hatchett, 1995: 80; Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003: 20) and thereby also other domestic problems. Similar
effects have also been found among the many that are employed but trapped in insecure or precarious type of employment (Nolan, et al 2000; Taylor, 2002: 68).

Despite the fact that employment have been found to have such positive effects on refugee and migrants settlement outcomes, and our knowledge of the many negative effects of unemployment and underemployment, the sad reality is that many refugees still continue to experience severe problems in the labour market (high unemployment rates, low participation rates and underemployment) (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Dunlop, 2005: 11).

Since the first refugee intake right after the Second World War, refugees have been ‘relocated’ to the lower end of the labour market in Australia (Jupp, 2002; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2005: 204). It has therefore always been hard for refugees to find employment where they could use their skills and qualifications (Iredale & D’Arcy, 1992, p. 8; Dunlop 2005: 12). Many therefore had to forget their dreams of finding jobs in their own professions. Despite this downward economic mobility though, those migrants who arrived in this post-war period with full employment were as Jupp argues at least able to fulfil “their economic aspirations” (Jupp, 2002: 31). They found employment within the manufacturing industry could often purchase houses and thereby get their life financially back on track again (Jupp, 2002).

While refugees, as mentioned, have always found it hard to find Australian jobs concomitant with their skill level and qualifications, this situation has not improved in recent years. On the contrary, their employment situation has worsened (DIMIA, 2003, Kyle et al. 2004). Barraket argues that their employment situation have become so bad that many refugees but also some migrants in Australia now are at risk of full “labour market exclusion or exclusionary transitions” (Barraket, 2007: 2). Those refugees who are lucky enough to find a job are often segmented in a labour market with little or no chance of upward mobility, and this often regardless of these groups’ former employment or skills from their prior occupations (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2005; Iredale et al, 1996 and Constable et al, 2004). Colic-Peisker and Tilbury shows in their study that many skilled refugees and culturally and visibly different migrants in Australia are relocated to the
secondary labour market and find jobs such as cleaning, taxi driving, age care, security and construction (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2005: 11-12)

Even amongst the many migrants from the ‘skilled migration program’ there are many who struggle with finding employment after arrival in Australia. While skilled migrants from western countries are doing well, Hawthorne (2008:15) points out that this has not been so for skilled migrants from developing countries. Hawthorne’s study shows the ranking order for 1996-2001 arrivals to securing early professional employment within the first 5 years in Australia was high from migrants from western countries (60% for skilled migrants from UK and Ireland, 58% from South African, 48% from the UK and Canada and 46% from Northwestern Europe (Hawthorne, 2008: 15). For skilled migrants from other parts of the world their changes in securing professional employment dropped significantly. She found that many degree qualified migrants from developing countries and mentions the Philippines, India, Vietnam, Other South/Central Asia ended up finding employment by taking on low skilled jobs (Hawthorne, 2008: 15). This shows that despite being both skilled and qualified and with good English skills (as is the requirement for coming to Australia under the skilled migration program), many skilled migrants from developing countries still experience downward occupational mobility. This phenomenon has in the international literature been referred to as the ‘Brain Drain’ from the developing world (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). Junankar and Mahuteau also (2005) also notes, while many skilled migrants have found jobs in Australia, the quality of their jobs have gone down since 1997 (Junankar and Mahuteau, 2005). They define ‘good jobs’ as a job that reflects the immigrant’s qualification and previous occupational ranks, and where they are satisfied with their job (2004: 16).

The massive unemployment and underemployment rate that exists especially among refugees, but also appears among many skilled migrants from developing countries is not only an Australian problem either but is a phenomenon taking place in most OECD countries (OECD, 2006: 38). The OECD argued in a recent report that integration of new migrants into the local economy has deteriorated in many western countries (OECD, 2006: 11). The paradox is therefore that while migrant’s skills and qualifications overall are higher than ever, their employment outcomes have worsened (OECD, 2006: 38). Unemployment, underemployment and deskillling have
therefore become a major problem both within refugee’s communities and migrant communities in general.

What stops skilled refugees and migrants with skills from finding employment in Australia is a complex and intricate matter and some mapping has been done exploring the many difficulties refugees and migrants go through in the labour market such as lack of recognition of overseas educational qualifications, discrimination in the employment market, lack of local work experience, the lack of work-related network and lack of English language skills (Waxman, 2001; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Iredale et al, 1996; Constable et al, 2004).

A range of studies has been devoted to explain refugees and migrant’s labour market outcomes in the literature. How the question of labour market outcomes has been approached is however dependent on which labour market theory they align too. The dominant view has in recent years, been to approach their labour market outcomes through the lens of the neo-classical human capital theory (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Jupp, 2002).

The following sections below will provide an overview of how the Australian and the international labour market literature explain these groups’ labour market outcomes.

2.4.2 Human capital theory

The Human Capital Theory has become the starting point for much of the research that aims to explain the differences in the economic integration of immigrants (Bevelander and Lundh, 2007:4). It has even been referred to as the foundation of neoclassical labour market analysis (Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 238; Quiggen, 1999: 1). It will therefore be the starting point in this analysis of labour market outcome among African refugees and migrants settling in Australia.

The roots of the Human Capital Theory can be found in the work of Becker (1964) and Mincer (1974) from the ‘Chicago School of Political Economy’, which as seen
previously is a well known institution for its contribution to neoliberal scholarship (Peters, 2001:68). Garry Becker one of the most well known of the Chicago School theorists, developed the concept of ‘human capital’ in 1964 (Becker, 1964). Skills and qualifications were according to Becker seen as a form of capital or human capital as these requisites could be transformed into money. Becker’s argument is based on the idea that employers will hire the applicant who is best skilled, and that this person will be paid according to how much human capital he or she hold (Becker, 1964). Based on this logic, those who are highly skilled and qualified will find it easier to tap into the employment market and also get into better paying jobs than those who are unskilled or less skilled.

This framework has dominated labour market analysis both internationally and in the Australian context. From the 1990s onwards, Australian labour market discourse became dominated by the human capital approach (Ho and Alcorso, 2004, Jupp, 2002) Examples of human capital based studies in Australia are therefore quite extensive in this period (Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002). These studies have emphasised the importance of migrants and refugee’s former education, skills and qualifications as their basis for success in the Australian labour market.

The method used by many of the Australian studies has been to use the migrant’s visa category as a measurable indicator for their perceived ability to succeed in the labour market (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). By using statistical data from the Longitudinal Study of Immigration (LSIA), these type of human capital based studies quantified migrant’s labour market outcomes according to their visa type. These studies clearly states that the migrants coming under the skilled migration group are doing well because of their high human capital requisites, on the other hand refugees and family visa entrants low labour market outcomes is explained based on their lack of the same requisites (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; e.g Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002). This argument also got strong political backing (Vanstone, 2004, Ruddock, 2002), and influenced much of the recent immigration program (Ho and Alcorso, 2004).
Ho and Alcorso critically argue what is lacking from this type of research is the impact ethnicity and country of birth also has on these groups employment outcomes. They further note that reference to birthplace and ethnicity has been limited or not included at all in these studies (Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 245 e.g. VandenHeuvel and Wooden, 1999: 116; Richardson et al, 2001: 9; Cobb-Clark and Chapman, 1999: 24 and Cobb-Clark, 2001).

The many problems refugees and migrants experience in the labour market is therefore, according to the human capital theory, explained by their lack of human capital. It can be attributed or explained with lack of education (they got their degree in a third world country with lower educational standards), lack of English language skills, lack of local labour market experience, or lack of job seeking skills. In other words, refugee or migrant’s inability to succeed in the labour market can therefore be explained as a direct result of their own shortcomings. For example, Wooden’s study examined employment experiences among Iraqi and Iranian refugees settling in Australia (1991). He emphasised their lack of English language skills as a major employment obstacle, while down playing ethnic discrimination. He writes:

> it can only be concluded on the basis of the available evidence that if there is any persistent disadvantage for refugees in the labour market, it does not result from ethnic discrimination. Instead it results because they have not been able to sufficiently improve their communication skills and hence are not as valuable to employers as other workers (Wooden, 1991: 34).

Wooden (1994) argues again in another study that any difference in employment outcomes between migrants in general and non migrants is a direct result of their productive capabilities only. Wooden (1994: 220) writes:

> Differences in pay, occupational status, probability of employment, and so forth, between immigrants and natives reflect differences in the average productive capabilities of the two groups.

The human capital theorist has therefore often been referred to as taking a ‘colour blind stand’ – in the sense that it sees a person’s ethnicity or colour as irrelevant to
their overall labour market outcomes (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b; e.g Evans and Kelley, 1991).

Many refugees who settle in Australia do lack English-language skills and qualifications that are relevant to their employment prospects in Australia. They also need time to adjust to their new labour market. Humanitarian migrants low labour market outcomes might therefore partly be explained by the fact that this group is lacking in some sort of human capital. Or the fact that they are not as Colic-Peisker and Tilbury argue: carefully filtered for their “human capital” through the visa points test (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 63), which is the case for skilled migrants.

Humanitarian entrants therefore as a group have lower level of qualifications and English skills than the skilled migration streams. However these groups too are, as Colic Peisker and Tilbury (2007b: 63-64) remind us:

apparently selected for their “resettlement potential” (Iredale et al., 1996), a phrase that indicates an informal application of “human capital” principles in the humanitarian stream.

Since 1979, Australian refugees have also been selected on the ground of their resettlement potential. Pittaway writes:

Australian officials visited refugee camps and centres, and along with officials from UNHCR, selected people to come to Australia. Government officials were urged to select those refugees most likely to resettle successfully in Australia. These were the young, the healthy, the well educated, and people with a family support system already established (Pittaway, 2002)

There are therefore many within refugee communities who also have skills, qualifications and English language skills, including African refugees (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). Several have also been here long enough to understand how the system works but are still disadvantaged in the labour market even after the
controlling for all these human capital variables. As some of the more critical studies of migration in Australia have pointed out, there are many refugees who come with skills and qualifications but still end up underemployed or unemployed (Colic Peisker and Tilbury 2007a; Constable et al, 2004).

The human capital argument can either not explain why so many migrants from the skilled migration stream also experience severe problems in the employment market. Even among the skilled visa group there are many skilled migrants from developing countries who are struggling to find employment and employment according to their skill level (Hawthorne, 2008; Ho and Alcorso, 2004). Despite the Australian government’s acceptance of a human capital based immigration program, these migrants are still faced with a situation of underemployment or unemployment in the Australian labour market (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Hawthorne, 2008).

The clear weakness of the human capital approach is that it assumes that everyone is similar. It does however not relate very well to a multicultural or gender mixed environment, where people have different employment experiences based on their gender or ethnicity, and who because of these differences might become subject to discrimination in the labour market. The human capital theory has on this ground been severely criticised as it represent a perfect world where discrimination is not happening, and as a result this theory often end up with blaming the victims themselves for their poor labour market outcomes (Collins, 1991; Galabuzi, 2006: 43).

Taking into consideration skilled refugees and migrants poor labour market outcomes, other forces outside refugees own control sphere must also play a part in stopping these highly skilled and qualified refugees and migrants from tapping into the employment market.

The human capital school has however tried to understand about why discrimination sometimes can take place in the employment market. Even Becker himself was aware that discrimination can occur in the employment process, however he chose to explain the issue of discrimination as a ‘taste’ preference (Becker, 1971: 15). He explained the problem with discrimination in the labour market with that employers
have a ‘taste’, in the meaning preference for some people (Becker, 1971: 14-15). Some customers, employers or employees might not like or feel comfortable with people from a specific ethnic or gender group, and on this ground these people would not be preferred or hired. Since fewer people are hiring these ‘rejected people’, they can be hired to a cheaper price. According to the Becker logic, employers therefore would have to pay more for this specific ‘taste’ as they would lose profits by not hiring the discriminated group who could have been hired for a much lower price. This type of thinking therefore views discrimination as an economic problem or an economic commodity not a social ill. In this sense the employers who do not want to hire these cheap migrants would lose revenue, as they will have to hire the supposed ‘wanted type of people’ at a higher price (OECD, Employment Outlook, 2008: 150). Because it therefore is more expensive to discriminate, the human capital main argument presumes that discrimination will diminish over time (Friedman, 1962) as cited in Bohmer, 2005: 83). Colic Peisker and Tilbury write:

The neo-classical approach relies on competitive market theory which holds that the market is blind to ethnicity/race and functions on the basis of a single rule, maximization of profit, consequently minimizing prejudicial actions by employer (Evans and Kelly, 1991; Fugazza, 2003). In other words, if people have skills the market requires, they will be hired (2007b: 76).

If the market was performing in its optimal sense, then discrimination would not take place (Becker, 1957, 1971). According to the human capital theory the whole thing therefore comes down to a failure in the market (Kogan, 2007). The surreal argument that labour market discrimination would diminish over time as a result of market forces stands as a testimony of the influence the ‘laissez-faire’ argument has had on the development of labour market analysis.

Another maybe softer explanation that is often mentioned in the human capital literature was later developed by Phelps (1972) and Arrow (1972) who argues that discrimination sometimes does occur when employers look at a group’s average characteristic instead of focusing on the individual requisites. The economist refers to this as statistical discrimination.
None of the human capital based studies does however have a very good explanation for why discrimination occurs in the labour market processes, and no solutions to what can be done to reduce these type of problems, except leaving the market to its own devices. On the contrary the majority of these types of studies put the blame back on the people who have problems with finding employment, as they are the one that don’t have what it takes to succeed. Many did also criticise Becker because of this “taste” based argument. In fact as whole new theory emerged as a reaction to Gary Becker and Milton Friedman’s labour market analysis (Sousa-Poza, 2001:1).

The reason why I have given such an in-depth presentation of the human capital school is firstly because, as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, that most of the academic literature on migrants and refugees labour market outcomes in Australia in the 1990s have been dominated by this neo-classical argument (Jupp, 2002; Ho and Alcorso, 2004).

The former Australian government led by John Howard even went so far as to close down any independent research institutions on migration from the mid-1990s (Jupp, 2002:72 and 78), thereby indirectly restricting funding to more independent research. They did at the same time increase funding to human capital based research which was more in line with their own agenda (Jupp, 2002, Ho and Alcorso, 2004).

The human capital or neoliberal idea is that the employment outcomes among refugees and migrants are based on their own human capital. It does not take into consideration that we live in a world where structural and even overt forms of racial discrimination exist. Many skilled refugees and skilled migrants from developing countries have problems just tapping into the employment market, let alone finding skilled employment. Many are therefore unemployed or underemployed. The OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurria explained this world wide phenomenon very well in his comment:-

Many workplaces not only have a glass ceiling but also a glass door, which keeps out women and ethnic minorities (Gurria, 2009).
I agree with Ho (2004: 96) that human capital provides the opportunity to create a straightforward argument, but fails to highlight the many structural barriers that hinder some groups in the society from tapping into the employment market.

2.4.3 The segmented labour market theory

The next approach to analyse refugee and migrant labour market outcomes which is analysed in this literature review is to focus on the ‘dual’ and ‘segmented labour market theory’. This theory focuses on the structural barriers that hinder some groups from tapping into the labour market. The following section will therefore try to outline how the ‘segmentation’ literature explains refugees’ and migrants’ labour market outcomes. This theory has been influenced by two schools, ‘The Institutionalists’ and the ‘The Marxists’ (Sousa-Poza, 2000: 1).

The arguments put forward by the neoclassical school as discussed in the previous section, ignores the wider social context and the structures that stop some people from entering the labour market (McGovern, 2007: 224-225). Literature based on the dual and segmented labour market theory therefore emerged as a reaction to the neoclassical argument put forward by Becker and Friedman in the 1960s (Sousa-Poza, 2001:1).

Institutionalists such as Doeringer and Piore (1971) argued that the constant variations in the labour market outcomes among men and women could not be explained purely by referring to neoclassical human capital theory (1971). A similar argument was also developed to explain the difference in the employment results among migrants and non-migrants (Piore, 1979). He used the framework to highlight how many migrants become segmented in the dual labour market (Piore, 1979).

To explain these disparities in labour market outcomes, Doeringer and Piore (1971: 165) divided the labour market into two different parts – the primary and the secondary labour market. The primary labour market consists of stable employment with good wages, career prospects and social protection, (Koniordos, 2005: 94). The
dual or secondary labour market on the other hand consist of low skilled jobs, low income, insecure jobs with no career prospect, high turnover and little social protection (Koniordos, 2005: 94). These two labour markets exist next to each other but there is scarcely any upward mobility between the two segments of the labour market (Piore, 1979: 165).

Doeringer and Piore’s dual labour market theory did however quickly come under a lot of criticism. Doogan (2009, 149) summarises the situation in the following way:

The idea of primary and secondary labour markets drew critique from all quarters, notably from the left in the critique offered by Blackburn and Mann (1979), but neoclassical economist were also unhappy with the idea of the ‘two wage level of equilibrium’ and in the mid 1970s the theory fell out of favour as it was deemed to be incompatible with neoclassical economics.

However with the major neoliberal restructuring of the economy that took place in the 1980s and the impact this had on the employment market, a new interest grew within the field of segmented labour market theory (Doogan, 2009: 149). Much of this new literature had its theoretical roots in Marxist theory and was developed by Marxist based researchers in the US such as Gordon, Reich and Edwards. In Australian these types of Marxist theories were developed by Collins (1984) and Castles et al (1986). Both Collins and Castles studies used the segmented labour market theory to analyse the poor employment outcomes among migrants and others disadvantaged groups in the Australian labour market. Collins argues that labour market analysis in the Australian context was not only a matter of comparing migrants versus non migrants as had been done in Europe (e.g Castle and Kosac, 1973 cited in Collins, 2006: 9). This is why Australian researchers became so interested in Marxist based theories rooted in the segmented labour market theory. The theoretical inspiration for much of this literature was based on the work of Reich (1973) and Gordon (1972) and (Collins, 2006: 9)

Applying this type of segmentation literature to the Australian labour market, Collins (1978) found segmentation within the Australian labour market based on gender and ethnicity (1978). Collins study shows that Immigrants of non-English-speaking
background (NESB) were found in distinctly lower end of the labour market compared to Australian born population and even migrants from English Speaking background (ESB) (Collins, 2005:9; Collins, 1978). Collins among others saw NESB migrants coming to Australia as labourers, and then become trapped in this type of jobs. In line with Marxist tradition, his study argues NESB immigrants were required as a latent ‘reserve army’ to Australian capitalism (Collins, 1984 cited in Collins, 2006). These Marxist based studies were also focusing on the impact capitalism had on labour movements, and how this led to discrimination and disadvantage of these new migrants from non English speaking background (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007: 77; Castles et al, 1992; Collins, 1991; Ho and Alcorso, 2004). From a Marxist perspective, these groups provided the capitalist system with cheap labour to fill up the lower end of the labour market (Collins, 1991; Castles and Miller 2004; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2006: 206). If you were a migrant from a non English speaking background then you were more or less trapped into distinctively lower segments of the labour market (Collins, 2006).

However from the early 1990 onwards severe changes took place in the Australian labour market that altered this analysis above. Many countries including Australia began to compete in a race on attracting skilled and qualified migrants to fill up the skilled labour market shortages that had emerged with the restructuring of the economy. This shift in immigration policy led to an increase in highly skilled and qualified migrants in Australia. Many of these new migrants from developing countries were now professionals with good English languages skills (Collins, 2006: 12). Not all of these NESB migrants ended up in the lower segments of the labour market either as some of these also found themselves in good and well paid professional jobs (Collins, 2006: 12).

It became much more difficult to argue for a clear cut Marxist analysis of the labour market. These new groups of skilled migrants found jobs in a range of different sectors. They did not all end up in the blue collar jobs as most of those refugees and migrants who had arrived in the post-war period (Collins, 2006). For a long time, there was hardly any mention of the dual labour market or the more Marxist based segmented labour market theory in the Australian or international literature.
Some academics however have not given up on the theory. Marxist theorists such as Collins argue that even with the present, tight and fine-tuned immigration program, is still about ‘immigrant labour’ (Collins, 2006: 13). Even through changes has taken place within the immigration system; he continues to argue that immigrant’s still remains an imported reserve army even though some are highly skilled and qualified (Collins, 2005: 13). Even though the Marxist argument is not as clear cut as in the 1970s the theory might still have some value. Australia’s immigration experience is still, according to Collins (2006:13):

...a racialised one, albeit one in which the processes of racialisation are dynamic, uneven and often contradictory.

There have in recent years been a few new studies that have revisited the dual and the segmented labour market theory in Australia.

Alcorso and Ho (2006: 13) for example recognises that despite the change in policy towards skilled migration a

“persistent patterns of occupational clustering in low-paid production and labouring jobs remain” among these groups (Alcorso and Ho, 2006).

Colic Peisker and Tilbury is also referring to the segmented labour market in their study of employment outcomes among a group of skilled ex-Yugoslavian, Middle Eastern and African refugees. They argue that in Australia there exist a segmented labour market or ‘dual labour market’ where racially and culturally visible refugees and migrants are offered unattractive jobs despite their skill level, and this even more so for refugees than migrants in general (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2006). They support the segmented labour market argument of Castles et al, (1992) and Collins (1991) which focuses on “labour movements in response to demands of international capital” (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 77). They argue that skilled refugees in return end up in the segmented labour market, performing unskilled labour and trapped to this role after arrival (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 77). In other words they become a reserve army of labour (Castles et al, 1992: 89, Collins, 1991).
Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2007b: 77) write:

Likewise, the humanitarian intake in Australia ensures that profit-seeking capital has access to a supply of labour to cover undesirable jobs that the local population shuns, as often reported in the Australian media over the last few years (see Steketee, 2004; Horsburgh, 2005). Our findings of the lower levels of employment of refugees and their employment in jobs below their qualifications support this interpretation – they are disadvantaged generally, and within that disadvantage there are degrees of disadvantage resulting from “visible difference”. This may lead ultimately to what Portes and Zhou have described as segmented assimilation, leading, over time, to “permanent subordination and disadvantage” (1993: 96) for certain ethnic groups.

Our evidence supports a "political economy of labour migration" interpretation for the differential outcomes, based on both structural and interpersonal racism, rather than a neo-classical explanation which holds that the job market is "blind to ethnicity".

There has however both in Australia and internationally been a decline of research based on the dual and Marxist based segmentation theory.

Peck argues that more contemporary segmentation theorists has moved away from the crude forms dualism and the clear cut marxists analysis of Gordon, Reich and Edwards (Peck, 1996: 57-58). Peck defines Doeringer and Piore’s forms of segmentation theory as the first generation of segmentation theory (1996). The second generation he refers to as the Marxist based theories of Gordon, Reich and Edwards (Peck, 1996). Peck refers to more contemporary forms of segmentation theory as the third and fourth generation of segmentation theory. These generations of the theory have in contrast more multi-casual explanations for labour market segmentation. He classifies the third generation theories as studies focusing on:
a) Segmentation of labor demands, for example, the technical requirements of different labour processes, stability of different product markets, labour control strategies used by employers, and effects of industrial structure.

b) Segmentation of labor supply, for example, the role of the household division of labor in shaping labour market participation, stigmatization of certain social groups as secondary workers, processes of occupational socialization, and the influence of labor unions in restricting the labour supply to certain occupations.

c) Segmentation and the state, for example, the structure of welfare provision and its eligibility rules, industrial relations and labour contract regimes, the structure and emphasis of the education and training system

(Peck, 1996: 60-61).

Peck also developed a framework for a fourth generation of the segmentation theory (1996). What is different from this form of segmentation literature is that it focuses on the importance of the local labour market in labour market segmentation.

Bauder continues this argument, and writes:

Workers are segmented not only by class, gender and ethnicity, but also their place of residence (2001: 40).

Fagan and Dowling have done some interesting research on how central place is in shaping labour market but also labour market segmentation in Greater Western Sydney region (2005). As mentioned previously, the focus of this thesis is the labour market experiences of refugees living in the Wester Sydney, a growing region struggling with job shortages (Fagan and Dowling, 2005).

Fagan and Dowling study (2005) argue that the higher than normal unemployment rates and deep-rooted social inequalities for this region has been understood as a problem of:

lack of globally-competitive industries; poor networking with global impulses for change; lack of local leadership; or particular sets of absences at the
They demonstrate in their study that very little has been done to coordinate urban infrastructure provision or commercial land development with employment policies targeting this region. Instead they continue, has the market forces has been allowed to rule freely by creating a range of new business parks, and placing emphasise on local entrepreneurship, and highlight that labour market policies for this region has ‘taken a neoliberal turn’ (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 72). Fagan and Dowling argue that the rationale behind such minimalist interference logic has been that this approach would create job growth to Western Sydney region (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 73). They found that they have in many ways succeeded with this; there are today more employment opportunities in this region than previously. The problem however is that the many of these job does not necessarily go to those who live in this region. Despite an overall job growth of employment opportunities for this region as a whole, some areas such as Auburn and areas of Blacktown still experience significant unemployment. Fagan and Dowling therefore argue that many within these vulnerable areas experience problems accessing jobs based on labour market segmentation (2005) and highlight the importance of place in creating labour market segmentation. They write:

Labour market segmentation is affected strongly by the local availability of transport and social infrastructure, such as education and training, childcare and even affordable health services and housing. These remain predominantly government-provided services (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 80).

They continue:

Outer suburban labour markets remain deeply segmented according to social dimensions such as age, gender and ethnicity and this strongly affects both levels of access to employment for Western Sydney residents ... and their experiences of unemployment) (Fagan and Dowling, 2005:77).

They thereby conclude that this neoliberal policy agenda been poorly equipped to deal with the many inequalities resulting from such a neoliberal policy agenda, while
the real problems of labour market access has not been addressed (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Fagan and Dowling did however find that labour market segmentation was not affecting the whole of western Sydney equally, and that some areas experienced substantial levels of unemployment.

2.4.4 Concluding comments

While most of the neo-classical human capital based studies see discrimination in the labour market as more or less as irrelevant or as a result of imperfection in the market forces, the ‘segmented labour market’ theories gives room to explore how discrimination take place within the structures of labour market institutions. The labour market is still very much divided into different segments, where many people from the developing world still prevail among the lower segments of the Australian labour force (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Ho and Alcorso, 2006). As seen from the literature above, place also has an important role in the shaping of labour market segmentation. This study therefore agrees with the conclusion of much of the resent segmented labour market theory articles.

However one of the weaknesses of the segmented labour market theory is as Peter Bohmer argues an absence of an explicit theory of racism. He argues that racism theory provides the needed information why they find themselves in the segmented labour market in the first place (Bohmer, 2005: 97-97).

Bohmer writes:

the segmented labour market theory is a complement but not a supplement to the theory of racism (Bohmer, 2005: 96-97).
Bohmer claims that a more insightful explanation of racial inequality in income and employment can be found by also synthesising labour market segmentation theory with racial dynamics. While the segmented labour market theory provides an avenue to analyse racial discrimination in employment he argues, it does not explain why many end up disadvantaged (Bohmer, 2005: 96-97; Roedinger, 1999:10). Moreover, it does not explain why some visibly and culturally different migrant succeed in the labour market whilst other fail.

Roedinger argues that Marxist based segmentation theorists such as Reich Gordon and Edwards in the US highlights that racial discrimination benefits employers and capitalism in general, but emphasises that this type of analysis is more an ‘empirical observation’ rather than an explanations of why racism occurs (Roedinger, 1999:10). This is supported by Das Gupta (1996, 6-7) who argues that the segmented labour market literature does not account for the processes by which these groups end up in the segmented labour market.

While analysis based on the segmented labour market theory has been declining both in Australia and internationally, a new research focus has begun to map racism or racialisation within neoliberal policies. While racial discrimination within the employment processes can be explained by referring to the segmented labour market theory, ‘Racism Theory’ can also provide an insightful explanation for these group labour market outcomes. This next section will therefore link the concepts of ‘racism’, employment and ‘neoliberalism’.

2.5 Neoliberalism and racism

Racism in a present day scenario often possesses contradictions (Collins, 2006: 13). It is relatively commonplace to see ‘successful’ persons from an ethnic or minority background within professional circles. While at the same time, it is even more

4 Found in [http://academic.evergreen.edu/b/bohmerp/marxracism.htm](http://academic.evergreen.edu/b/bohmerp/marxracism.htm) 18th June 2009.
common to see trolley pickers, car washers and cleaners from these same minority groups.

### 2.5.1 Race as a social construct

Concepts such as race and racism are socially constructed. Its meaning has therefore changed considerably over time (Galabuzi, 2006: 29). Race and racism is as Davis (2007: 349) points out:

> ‘inextricably linked to historical, political and economic moments’.

There is therefore a totally different type of racism today, then at the end of the century when the ‘White Australia policy’ was first put into life. While discrimination in the past was straightforward and overt, discrimination today is harder to find and often more subtle in form (Better et al, 2008: 68). In the present environment is therefore overt or blatant forms of racism are less common (Better, 2008: 68).

While overt forms of racism still exist within Australian society, only small segments of the population adhere to it in an outright manner. Very few people will therefore actively label themselves as ‘racist’, as such behaviour is no longer socially acceptable. For example, Dunn’s work shows how only around 12 percent of Australian respondents actively labelled themselves as racist (Dunn, 2003: 8). Overt and blatant forms of racism have therefore become perceived as a thing of the past. Better (2008: 68) summarises this view when she writes:

> it is no longer ‘cool’ in most part of the society to make racist jokes, to voice racial prejudice, and it is now illegal to overtly discriminate in employment.

This has fed the impression that racism is no longer an issue of concern (Davis, 2007: 349) or a thing of the past (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006: 653). This argument is also supported by Bonilla-Silva who argues that the dominant view among ‘whites’ and even some academic circles in the 1990s, is that racism is not as
crucial as it was in the past (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: xiv). According to Bonilla-Silva, racism and prejudice are either not as often discussed today as they were a decade ago. He notes that;

The dominant view among whites and among some academic quarters in the 1990s (and still is) is that whites have become more tolerant than ever and that racism although still a problem, is not as central factor that it was in the past (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: xiv).

Some conservative intellectuals in the US, have even gone so far as to argue we are living in a ‘post racial society’ (D’Souza, 1996). Bonilla-Silva does however stress that this is under no circumstances the end of racism. Instead he argues a new ideology has emerged – the ideology of ‘colour-blind racism’ (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: 25). He defines colour-blind racism as ‘racism without racists’ (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: 31). He classifies this colour-blind racism into four frames: abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism and the minimization of racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: 26).

This study is not trying to deny that overt forms of discrimination do exist; however this type of discrimination is less accepted within the society in general and especially within the labour market. However as Better et al (2008: 68) writes:

racism in the workplace is still as widespread but less overt.

Tilbury and Colic-Peisker (2006) for example argue in their study that many of the employer’s and employee representatives interviewed in their study do not like to use the term racial discrimination, and mostly denied that discrimination is an issue in the labour market (2006: 656). Instead they found that most of their interviewees preferred to see it as a lack of language proficiency (2006: 656). Tilbury and Colic-Peisker did however quote a few employers that were more open about this issue. One of the recruitment companies for example put it like this;
As a recruitment company - *that’s why they utilize recruitment companies the majority* of time because we are able to...get around that maybe easier than they are themselves personally (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006: 656).

Tilbury and Colic-Peisker found that many of the employers and employee representatives in this study instead transferred any issue of discrimination to their clients, to the market, to more or less relevant requirements such as soft skills, to other staff or to the potential applicant (2006: 659).

While Tilbury and Colic-Peisker found that while these employers were aware that such thinking leads to unfair results, they were not willing to do anything to correct these problems (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006: 670). Tilbury and Colic-Peisker study is therefore a clear example of how racial discrimination has become camouflaged among employers based on market based or neoliberal thinking. The market forces must be allowed to operate freely. Tilbury and Colic-Peisker write:

> Within a neo-liberal framework, employers argued they should be allowed to choose employees freely, and should not be compelled, through affirmative action policies, to accept diversity (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006: 670).

This literature review is focusing on the structural or institutional forms of discrimination within the labour market processes.

The theoretical difference between institutional and structural discrimination is however unclear, so many choose to use these terms synonymously (Kamali, 2008:6). Institutional and structural discrimination has also been used synonymously with systemic discrimination (Craig, 2007: 92).

This study will therefore try of explain these concept by using the definitions of Pincus (2003) and Kamali (2008). Both divide discrimination into three different classifications; individual discrimination, institutional discrimination and structural discrimination.
With individual discrimination Pincus refers to:

the behaviours of individual members of one groups that is intended to have a differential or harmful effect on members of another groups (Pincus, 2003: 2)

With institutional discrimination he is referring to:

the polices of majority institutions and the behaviours of individuals who implement these policies and control these institutions that are intended to have a differential or harmful effect on less powerful groups (Pincus, 2003: 2)

There is however no consensus on in the literature as whether institutional discrimination has to be intentional. Kamali defines institutional discrimination slightly differently from Pincus’. Kamali (2008: 6) writes:

Institutional discrimination takes place because of institutional policies, routines, norms and functions, as well as those individuals with power and influence who control these organisations.

Both do however agree that the definition of structural discrimination is race and gender neutral. Pincus writes:

the policies of majority institutions and the behaviours of individual who implement these policies and control these institutions that are intended to be race/gender neutral but which have harmful effects on people of colour and women (Pincus, 2003: 2)

Kamali (2008: 6) adds to this and defines it as:

Structural discrimination is about the institutional order, arrangements and organisations of a society that often indirectly and unintentionally discriminate against individuals and groups with ethnic background to those of the majority society.

Kamali (2008: 6) continues:
It is based on established ideologies, patterns of behaviours, and procedures that may not aim to discriminate but practically excludes some groups from having access to work and other opportunities.

These definitions will be revisited later in this thesis.

2.5.2 Discrimination and employment

Evidence that institutional and structural discrimination are a problem within the Australian labour market can be seen from a number of studies.

Discrimination is common within the job market processes because of the reluctance of employers to hire people because of physical appearances and ethnicity (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2006: 8; Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 254; Junankar et al, 2004; Wagner, 2003; Berman, 2008).

Booth, Leigh and Varganova’s study also found overwhelming racial discrimination in the Australian job market based on job-interview rejections – a huge proportion of ‘ethnic’ named applicants were excluded in comparison to Anglo named applicants\(^5\) (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009: 21). Their study compares employer attitudes to Anglo-Saxon Australian, Indigenous Australians, Chinese Australian, Italian Australians and Middle Easter Australians (2009: 1). Their study found for example that a person with a Chinese sounding name, living in Sydney, had to put in 92% more job applications than a person with an Anglo sounding name to get the same number of callbacks (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009: 13)

Discrimination has also been found based on the perception among many employers that foreign qualifications and foreign related work skills are not up to Australian

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\(^5\) Both, Leigh & Varganova, 2009 study shows that job applicants with Chinese and Middle Easter names have to submit at least 50% more job application in order to get the same number of callbacks as Anglo Australian applicants (p.21). In comparison their study found almost no discrimination against the Italian applicants (p. 21)

Discrimination also continues to flourish within recruitment agencies because these private agencies are not obliged to apply Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies (Junankar and Mahuteau, 2004; Constable et al, 2004).

Cross cultural issues are also often seen as irrelevant within the job interviews process and psychometric tests (Constable et al, 2004; Dunlop: 2005). As a result, well intentioned but weak anti-racism legislation provides little support (Dunlop, 2005; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2006).

However there has been no study examining the link between neoliberal changes within service delivery leading to structural discrimination within the Australian employment processes.

### 2.5.3 Racial impact of neoliberal policy reforms

Much academic research has shown the negative effect ‘neoliberalization’ has had on institutions and government policies in general (Peck and Tickell, 2002, Theodore, 2007). For example several studies has already done extensive work exploring the many effects neoliberal reforms has had on education and health policy in Australia and internationally. Connell (2002) for example argues that neoliberalism has led to a

> steady decline of interest in “equity” issues in education, accompanied by an erosion of the “idea of education as a common good” (2002: 324).

New research, mostly international, has however also begun to map the racial impact of these neoliberal policy reforms (Roberts and Mahtani 2008: 2).

In Canada academics such as Galabuzi have done work on the link between neoliberalism immigrants, racism and employment (2006). His study shows that
racialised groups within the Canadian society, refugees and immigrants but also women have “born the brunt of economic restructuring and austerity” (Galabuzi, 2006: 10). He argues that neoliberal reforms have led to growth in more ‘precarious work’ such as part time, casual and contract based employment. This type of employment is often low paid, unsecure and with poor working conditions (Galabuzi, 2006: 10). He continues that this has intensified previous gaps of racial and gender inequality (Galabuzi, 2006: 10). The effect of these changes is as Galabuzi writes an:

increased segmentation of the labour market along racial lines, the racialisation of poverty, the racialisation and segregation of low-income neighbourhoods, and intensified social exclusion (Galabuzi, 2006: 10)

Racial impact of neoliberal changes taken place within public service delivery has however also begun to appear in academic discourse. Louise Humpage for example has analysed refugee settlement and education policy in New Zealand, and found systematic discrimination within New Zealand’s institutions. Her study shows how neoliberalism discriminates against refugees through the use of supposedly neutral goals, rules, procedures and categories (Humpage, 2001). She writes (2001: 34):

Differential access procedures and monoculturalism within an institution often mean that minority groups cannot gain access to these resources, and therefore experience discrimination and disadvantage. This inequality may occur even when people—collectively or as individuals—within the institution are not racist in terms of their attitudes and when the institution itself has adopted policies of biculturalism or multiculturalism, acknowledging and valuing cultural difference.

2.5.4 Racism and neoliberalism

The majority of research on the topic of racism and neoliberalism has been carried out in the US and Canada. In comparison very little of this type of critique has come from Australia. Dana-Ain Davis’s work for example links neoliberalism with racism in the US. She writes:
Neoliberalist practices pull into orbit a market of ideas about a lot of things including the family, gender and racial ideology. It is, as Lisa Duggan (2003) notes, “saturated with race” (xvi) using capitalism to hide racial (and other) inequalities by relocating racially coded economic disadvantages and reassigning identity-based biases to the private and personal spheres.

......

Racism is modified by perpetuating the belief that it is incoherent and is not a real feature of contemporary life. Of course what neoliberalism doesn’t do is pay attention to the way race matters for example, in occupation and economic attainments (Davis, 2007: 349).

Some authors also argue neoliberalism has led to a decline in overt forms of racism. Henry Giroux for example argues that in comparison to earlier times, today’s racism are more subtle but therefore also more dangerous and insidious (Giroux, 2008). As Giroux writes

    Success is attributed to entrepreneurial genius while those who do not succeed are viewed either as failures or utterly expendable... neoliberal racism either dismisses the concept of institutional racism or maintains that it has no merit (Giroux, 2008: 65).

Publications proclaiming the unfounded “End of Racism” stands as a testimony to the misconception the market will fix all problems - including racism (D’Souza, 1996).

Dana-Ain Davis (2007: 350) writes:

    Under neoliberal racism the relevance of the raced subject, racial identity and racism is subsumed under the auspices of meritocracy. For in a neoliberal society, individuals are supposedly freed from identity and operate under the limiting assumptions that hard work will be rewarded if the game is played
according to the rules. Consequently, any impediments to success are attributed to personal flaws. This attribution affirms notions of neutrality and silences claims of racialising and racism.

Robert and Mathani (2008: 2) therefore argue that it is important not to see neoliberal racism as only the result of neoliberal policy reforms, but also think about racism as an organizing principle of society that neoliberalism reinf orms and modifies. This also leads to a change in the way people view racism but also the way refugees and migrants understand their own employment situation.

While neo liberalism and the human capital school of thought are supposed to be colour blind (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 76), maybe this colour blindness complicates things for many refugees and migrants. The idea that one size fits all might result in exclusion among many who do not fit the norm in the society.

2.5.5 Government fuelling racism

There is however been a strong undercurrent in this colour-blind disguise often played up by leading politicians. Many have therefore argued that there has even been an intensification of racism during the last few years. There has, as Kuhn argues, been a:

cascade of moral panics and racist campaign against Aborigines, Arabs, refugees and Muslims” since the mid 1990s (Kuhn, 2009:54)

Many of the lesser skilled Australian born have become victims of the neoliberal projects – lost their full time jobs or find themselves in precarious and unsecure employment situations. Anger can therefore easily find its roots within these segments of the population. At the same time leading politicians from major political parties have been pandering to anti-refugee sentiments from at least the early 1990s. John Minns argues:
by doing so this provided “simplistic solutions for the many grievances and insecurities which have emerged from the ‘reform’ of Australian capitalism over the last two decades” (Minns, 2005:10).

Several studies in Europe has found that such forms of racism have been used deliberately as a tactic not only to win electorates but also to sell their neoliberal economic policies (Roemer et al, 2007: 158).

This rhetoric is again compounded by the large migration numbers arriving from developing counties to the Western world. This has led to some racial attacks towards specific ethnic groups within the Australian society such as the Cronulla riots in 2005.

2.6 Conclusion

The neo-classical human capital theory which argues people with skills and qualifications should do well in the labour market, was found insufficient as a framework to analyse the experiences of skilled refugees and even skilled migrants in the Australian labour market. As many critical voices of the human capital theory have already pointed out, the human capital theory presents an artificially successful narrative of skilled migrant employment outcomes (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). Neoliberal rationale imply that migrants who possess skills and qualifications will be able to find jobs according to their skill level, while the reality is that many skilled refugees and migrants from developing countries are nowhere near to this assumption in comparison with their Australian born counterparts (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). While possessing human capital requisites can contribute to better labour market outcomes, it only presents a small part of the story. This theory was therefore found insufficient to analyse groups who differ from the norm and who therefore face far more complex labour market situations than Australian born. While some skilled migrants from developing countries rightfully do find success, there are a disproportionate number who do not.
The main problem with the human capital theory and human capital based literature is its ignorance of the many ways discrimination play’s out as a labour market barrier. This ignorance can be traced all the way back to Becker (1957: 5) and Friedman’s (1962: 108-118) idea that racism should decline with free competition in the economy. By claiming this they also started the dangerous trend that began to link labour market outcomes with individual traits or individual shortcomings (Friedman, 1962: 108-118; Becker, 1957, 1964). Australian human capital based research is no exception to this, and has adopted this approach full heartedly (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 76; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Evans and Kelly, 1991; Fugazza, 2003). Taking into consideration the domineering role human capital based research has had in Australia, this has resulted in a ‘silencing’ (Goldberg, 2009b; Davis, 2007) of any concerns connected to disadvantaged groups with regards to discrimination in the labour market.

However as many studies has already shown, racial discrimination is still very much part of contemporary Australian society, and this often acts as a barrier to refugee and migrant opportunities to tap into and securing decent employment (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Berman, 2008; ). Much of this type of racial discrimination is primarily hidden within the labour market processes. The dual, and especially Marxist based segmented labour market theories, were therefore found more suitable as a framework to analyse these groups’ problems with racial discrimination within the Australian labour market (Castles et al., 1992; Collins, 1991; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 77). The labour market is still very much divided into different segments, where many people migrating from developing countries still prevail among the lower segments of the labour market (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b). This study agrees with the segmented labour market theory that extreme forms of capitalism lead to structural discrimination and thereby segmentation. It also agrees with the more recent forms of segmentation theory that highlights the local aspect of labour market segmentation.

This study did however find that the segmented labour the theory, on its own, does not really address the many processes which leads to structural discrimination and thereby the racialisation of the Australian labour market (Bohmer, 2005: 96-97; Roedinger, 1999: 10). While these type of studies highlight how racial discrimination
and segmentation support employers it is often, as Roedinger and Das Gupta argue, more an empirical observation and not an explanation for the many processes where such racial discrimination takes place (Roedinger, 1999: 10; Das Gupta, 1996: 6-7).

This study will therefore supplement some of the arguments from the segmented labour market theory with arguments from Critical Race Theory. Some of this research actually links neoliberalism with racial discrimination (Giroux, 2004, 2008; Davis, 2007; Goldberg, 2009, Robert and Mahtani, 2010). Racism per se has not so much declined, as it has changed its nature. Better argues that overt types of racism have predominately become substituted with more subtle and hidden forms of racism (Better et al, 2008: 68). She also asserts that while racism in today’s work places is still as widespread as previous, it has become much less overt (Better, 2008: 68). Davies calls this type of racism as ‘muted racism’ - referring to more covert forms of racism taking place through any societies’ institutional practices. (Davies, 2007: 347). Clear examples of this in the Australian context when migrants are not even able to get to the interview stage during the employment process as a result of their ethnic name alone (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009: 21).

Giroux points out how this camouflaged or hidden form of racism has contributed to much more insidious forms of racism (Giroux, 2008). Similarly Dana Ain Davis emphasises the danger of this type of racism. Rejecting racism as a barrier therefore hinders groups suffering from such discrimination from seeking solutions to their problems (Davis 2007: 349-350). Pontoretto also highlight this issue:

Racism has evolved and mutated into newer, more insidious expressions that are often undetectable by the victims and denied by the perpetrators (2006: 39).

There are still considerable segments of migrant and refugee-based communities who have been in the country for years, have local skills and qualifications and work experience, but still find they still struggle within the Australian labour market (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007:68-9; Flanagan 2007; Junankar and Mahuteau, 2005). Purely based on existing human capital theory rationale, these individuals are left on the wayside, often feeling they have failed themselves or that something is
wrong with them. This neoliberalist colour-blind rational might therefore have a strong impact on the general refugees mental and emotional state in Australia. Neoliberal ideology has been a major factor behind modifying the meaning of race in our society (Giroux, 2005, 2008; Davis, 2007: 249).

However neoliberalism in itself is built on racism, or as Duggan argues, ‘saturated with race’ (Duggan, 2003: xvi seen in Davis 2007: 249). Robert and Mathani continue this argument and claiming neoliberal ideology has modified the meaning of racism to such an extent that it has altered the way race is experienced or understood within the wider society (Robert and Mathani, 2008: 3). In the context of this thesis, has labour market discrimination become so subtle or camouflaged that many refugees and migrants are not even sure themselves if they are victims of discrimination.

The following chapters will build on the theoretical framework presented in this chapter. Much has been written about discrimination in the Australian labour market and how this has impacted on refugee’s labour market situation. What is lacking from this labour market discourse is the discriminatory effect neoliberal restructuring has had on refugees and migrants labour market outcomes. Australian research lacks work that critically explores the racial impact of the neoliberal policy reforms that has been implemented since the 1980s and the 1990s. It also lacks research that explores the impacts these neoliberal changes have had on the personal self-image. A cross theoretical framework was therefore developed as an alternative base to understand racial discrimination within the labour market built on labour market segmented theory and compounded by arguments from critical race theory and governance theory. By linking three different research disciplines together, it enables a more detailed analysis to investigate if structural discrimination is taking place and if enough is being done to combat the problems many refugees and migrants are facing within the labour market.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

The previous literature and theory chapter positioned this research within labour market theory, racism theory and governance theory. Despite these theories belonging to different disciplines, I will argue they are interlinked. It is difficult to understand this group’s labour market situation without taking into consideration the major neoliberal changes that has taken place within the labour market and within public service delivery.

This chapter outlines the thesis research design and methods. De Vaus (2001) argues social scientists must ask two primary questions when approaching new research; firstly ‘what is going on?’ (descriptive analysis) and secondly ‘why is it going on?’ (explanatory research). Increasingly, Sharp (2007) notes a new main question is sometimes added: ‘what can be done about this?’ (policy research).

This thesis research design was formulated with these three fundamental questions in mind. Since this thesis research problem is the employment quandary experienced among middle-class African refugees, the following research questions have been developed:

[What is going on?]

1. What are the labour market experiences of skilled African refugees in Western Sydney?

3. How do refugees perceive and understand their own labour market situation?
[Why is it going on?]

2. What are the relationship between their experiences and neoliberal economic and social policies?

[What has been done and what can be done about this?]

4. Is enough done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market?

In order to investigate these research problems, the research design involves structured and semi-structured interviews with 20 skilled and semi skilled African refugees. In addition to the refugee sample, the research also includes semi-structured interviews with 20 service providers (including government officials) working with refugees and migrants on employment and other settlement matters.

Individual case histories or narratives of the skilled or skilled refugees are undertaken to investigate their explanations with regards to:

- Employment;

- The services utilised;

- How they perceive themselves in this process; and

- How they see the support from others in their community and the society in general.

Individual case histories of the different service providers and government officials are also undertaken to find out about their description of:

- What is happening with regards to settlement of refugees in Australia;
• How they see the services and programs available; and

• How important networking or network governance might be to assist in this situation.

The main case study areas investigated are the two local government areas\(^6\) (LGAs) of Blacktown and Auburn in Western Sydney\(^7\) - both areas with a high concentration of refugees and migrants.

The empirical investigation for the research is broken down into four stages. These four stages will be explained in more depth in section 3.5 in this chapter.

The four stages are shown below:

Stage 1: African refugee demographics;

Stage 2: African refugee’s experiences in the labour market;

Stage 3: African refugee’s experiences with service provision, employment services and training available; and

Stage 4: Policy analysis of existing policies regarding skilled refugees and migrants.

Before I start outlining these different stages, the following two sections will first provide an overview of the choice of research design and a justification for why African refugees were chosen as the case study group. This section will also justify the selection of the case study areas and describe the time line for the study.

\(^6\) Sydney Statistical Division is divided into 42 Local Government Areas.

\(^7\) Greater Western Sydney includes the 14 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of: Auburn, Bankstown, Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith and Wollondilly.
3.2 Qualitative versus quantitative analysis

The majority of research on migrants and refugee employment outcomes in Australia utilises quantitative research methods. These studies are theoretically grounded within neoclassical human capital theory (Jupp, 2002; Ho and Alcorso, 2004) and the majority of these studies are based on data from the Longitudinal Study of Migration (LSIA) (e.g. Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002, 2004). According to the human capital school, there is a clear correlation or link between a person’s human capital (education, work experience and English language skills) and his/hers ability to succeed in the labour market (Mincer 1974; Becker 1975). This theory was explained in some detail in Chapter 2. A quantitative based study divides the problems studied into variables that can be easily quantified, studied and analysed. Many of these studies have used migrants’ visa category (skilled, family and humanitarian) as a variable. By utilising such an approach quantitative evidence is generated showing how well skilled migrants are doing in comparison to the other migrant groups (family and humanitarian entrants) (see, for example, Cobb-Clark 1999; Lehn 1998; Vanden Heuval and Wooden, 1999). However by only focusing on the factors that are easily quantified, several issues might be overlooked. A range of factors need to be considered in order to understand what is happening in the Australian labour market. What many of these studies are lacking is therefore room to analyse social processes outside migrants and refugees control such as gender or ethnic discrimination in the labour market (Ho and Alcorso, 2004).

This does not mean that quantitative research methods cannot be used to investigate these social processes. Research on social processes such as discrimination in the labour market is sometimes carried out by combining qualitative research techniques with a quantitative component. The quantitative element is often done by survey design supplemented by in-depth interviews. An Australian and a British study demonstrate how social processes can be investigated through a combination of quantitative (survey) and quantitative research techniques.
1. Colic Peisker and Tilbury’s Australian study (2007a) for example designed a survey to investigate discrimination in the employment processes among 150 skilled and semi skilled refugees from the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East and Africa. The survey was carried out face-to-face with the help of six bilingual research assistants.

2. Another example of survey research on refugees in the labour market is Alice Bloch’s 1999 study (1999). Bloch explored the labour force participation and training needs of 180 refugees in Newham, England. Her study recruited six interviewers, two from each of the case study communities to help with the empirical investigation;

What both these studies demonstrate is that conducting surveys with refugee communities is very time consuming and requires considerable resources.

Initially this PhD was also set up as a combined quantitative and qualitative based study. A survey was designed to investigate the social processes which take place within service delivery and their impact on refugees’ employment situation. The idea was to get a sample of around 100 refugees and investigate their experiences with employment, training and services in Australia through a survey format and then, similar to the two mentioned studies, combine the survey data with in-depth interviews.

Looking back I totally underestimated the many obstacles and the amount of work needed to provide this type of research on a vulnerable and often exploited group in the society. I had no idea of how hard it was going to be to get access to refugees to interview.

I also totally underestimated attempts at access into a hostile NGO sector that had no idea who I was or where I came from – (from a political perspective). A lot of fear and mistrust exists between the government and the third sector especially during the Howard period8 (Staples, 2006: 9-10). Speaking out against government could mean

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8 The Howard Government was elected in 1996 and stayed in power until 2007.
government funding could be cut (Staples, 2006: 8). So I was faced with a fearful refugee community and an initially hostile NGO sector.

I started the quantitative component of the study by conducting a pilot of the survey in Auburn and Blacktown. In Auburn, feedback indicated the survey format did not work well for the target group. It was too long, complicated and therefore took too long to complete. In Blacktown, I managed to get in contact with an African bilingual case worker at the local Migrant Resource Centre who offered to hand out these surveys during consultations with African refugees. Like Auburn, feedback also indicated the survey was too long and complicated with many reluctant to complete it. Some refugees claimed to have completed a similar survey recently - the caseworker said a DIMIA survey was recently carried out which paid participants $20 for their time. When these same refugees saw my survey, and noting the lack of financial remuneration, they believed the case worker might be taking the money herself. They were reluctant to fill out the survey. The case worker therefore gave up and instead put me in contact with key people within the African community.

After many unsuccessful attempts to contact enough people to participate in the survey and even take part in focus group discussions, I realised I was not going to get enough results from the survey that I had designed. As an alternative I began conducting in-depth interviews with members of the African community who I had been referred to by several settlement workers.

Interviews and case histories proved to be a much more successful process taking into consideration my limited resources and the circumstances associated with the population. Case workers from different communities gave me several contacts, which I pursued for interviews. This method provided me with links to people in the community, who again referred me to new groups of people with similar experiences. The fact that I was referred to interviewees by someone they knew and trusted, turned out to be a great advantage. One Iraqi case worker told me:

The Iraqi refugees will not tell you about what they really think if you hand them a survey or go to interview them; they tell you what they think you want to hear. Many are scared and do not really want to talk to researchers. They
are scared you come from the government and therefore could make life hard for them. However if you are referred or come together with someone they know that might open up avenues for trust that other ways might be blocked (Iraqi Case Worker, Migrant Resource Centre).

While this research primarily focuses on African refugees, this case worker’s comments are probably valid for any refugee community where issues of trust are vital. Qualitative interview techniques are therefore a method that is often applied in research where issues of ‘trust’ play an important role (Mcilwaine, 2005: 13; Block, 1999).

Initially, I did follow the core parts of the original survey with the hope that I would get enough participants to do a statistical comparison. However, I soon learned that I got much more information by allowing interviewees to talk freely about their experiences. The first part of the study was structured while the main bulk was based on a semi-structured interview format which allowed the refugees to provide input outside the structured approach. Narrative analysis provides room to hear marginalised individuals opinions and voices - voices that often can become silenced in quantitative research (Boje, 2001). It also provides qualitative research with some kind of legitimacy as it gives the interview subjects a chance to be part of the research design of the project. This point has been reinforced by other researchers of refugees and migrants. Korac (2003) argues, for example, that qualitative techniques using interviews and/or focus groups discussion are a better way to collect information because it gives the subject a better chance to express their experiences.

This thesis therefore ended up focusing on qualitative techniques to uncover the subjective world of the refugees’ own experience and was found to be more appropriate for gaining information about problems refugees face – taking into consideration the limited resources available to the researcher.

Montgomery (1996) argues how refugees feel about their own experiences is just as important as objective indicators of adaptation such as employment, income and socio-economic mobility. More qualitative research can therefore be a great supplement to existing quantitative research on migrants and employment in
Australia (e.g. Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002). Qualitative narrative analysis provides deeper insight into why some groups find it hard to tap into the labour market, and how this is experienced by individual refugees. This opportunity to express themselves is often lost in quantitative research.

While qualitative methods can be a great supplement to existing quantitative research, it can also be a great critique of this type of research. This is also reflected on by Korac and Gilad, they note how qualitative interview techniques can also be a critique of the ‘top down’ approach to integration. She writes:

*The refugee situation is generally framed, in Indra’s words (1993: 763), by an asymmetry of power and voice between the state, on the one hand, and the refugees on the other. Qualitative interviewing is an important way of learning from refugees because it permits fuller expression of refugee experiences in their own terms* (Korac and Gilad, 2001: 14).

Quantitative survey design is critically reflected on by Bonilla Silva. While conducting surveys might be useful for gathering general information, it is a limited tool, as argued by Bonilla-Silva, for examining how people explain, justify, rationalise and articulate racial issues (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: 11). These types of issues cannot be explained simplistically by ‘yes’ and ‘no’ answers in a survey (Bonilla-Silva, 2006: 11). This type of research therefore needs to be supplemented with in-depth interviews or focus groups.

Refugee employment is a very complex matter, and conducting interviews provides the interviewer with rich material and description of the problem under investigation. Shoshanna Sofaer writes:

Qualitative research methods are valuable in providing rich descriptions of complex phenomena; tracking unique or unexpected events; illuminating the experience and interpretation of events by actors with widely differing stakes and roles; giving voice to those whose views are rarely heard; conducting
initial explorations to develop theories and to generate and even test hypotheses; and moving toward explanations (Sofaer, 1999: 1101).

This study also includes 20 interviews or narrative stories with settlement workers and government officials working with refugees in Greater Western Sydney. By interviewing cross sections of actors (settlement workers government officials) working with refugees, several interpretations are provided to shed light on the phenomena under study. This type of research gave the settlement workers chances to highlight important issues involved in the settlement of African refugees in Greater Western Sydney. They provided input into the research design and provided much knowledge and background information in the development of this study.

I do however understand the limitation of doing a qualitative study, and that it cannot claim to be statistically representative. However what the study can claim to do is to highlight some problems that one group in a community has with one specific phenomenon.

**3.3 Justification of case study groups: African refugees**

Refugees have been chosen as the focus of this study because they are the most disadvantaged migrant group in the labour market today (DIMIA, 2003: 66; Kyle et al, 2004: ii). Many refugees find it very hard to get access into employment and are at the brink of becoming excluded from the labour market all together (Barraket, 2007). Those who are lucky enough to find employment are often trapped in the secondary labour market regardless of former skill levels or qualifications (ARMS, 2001; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b).

While migrants and refugee that arrived in the post-war period had problems utilising their skills and qualifications, they were at least able to find employment (Jupp, 2002). However refugees who arrived in the 1990s and later were faced with new sets of obstacles which did not hinder the progress of earlier generations. Today they are faced with a vastly different labour market, where jobs are ‘casualised’ and
insecure. They are also confronted by negative changes to service delivery that took place as a result of government cost cutting measures in the 1990s.

Refugees therefore present a unique case study to explore what has gone wrong with service delivery and employment creation since the 1990s. Primarily this study hoped to interview a cross section of refugees from all the major refugee communities Iraqi, Afghani and African refugees. These major changes in service delivery have impacted on all refugees, not any specific national or ethnic group.

However several factors led to the selection of the African refugee community:

a) Firstly at a practical level, due to the time consuming aspect of conducting the interviews, and the difficulties I had with recruiting enough people to participate, it was decided it was most practical to focus on only one group (the African refugee community). Using one group made the process of establishing a network of contacts more straightforward;

b) The large influx of African refugees that has settled in Australia in recent times. While a small intake of African refugees settled in Australia in 1980’s, the number increased quickly during the 1990’s and reached its peak in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 with 70% of the overall humanitarian program coming from Africa (Harte et. al 2009: 3). It is one of the newest emerging communities in Australia.

c) Despite that many within the community have both skills and qualifications (see table 1 below), considerable focus has been placed on the community’s so-called inability to integrate into Australian society. Some prominent negative statements has come both from senior ministers such as Kevin Andrews⁹ (ABC News, 3rd Oct, 2007) and law academic Associate Professor Andrew Fraser (Sydney Morning Herald, 16th July, 2005) of Macquarie University in Sydney.

⁹ Former Minister Kevin Andrews argued that the reason why the government decided to cut the African refugee intake was that the African community had been slow to integrate into the Australian society.
The majority of Africans coming to Australia from countries such as the Sudan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Liberia and the Congo arrived under the ‘humanitarian’ program, even though a small number have arrived under the ‘skilled’ and ‘family’ migration program. They are by no means a homogeneous group - some are highly skilled while others did not even have the opportunity to attend a school.

Some members within one family might have come through the humanitarian program others might have come through the skilled migration program. The division of the migration streams is not always as clear cut as often portrayed.

d) The disproportionately high unemployment rates they are experiencing in the Australian society. The table below shows the unemployment and participation rates among African refugees sourced from 2006 census data. It also shows a large proportion of humanitarian entrants possess higher educational qualifications.

Table 3.1: 2006 Census data of the African Refugee Communities in Australia (Unemployment Rates, Participation Rates, Educational Qualifications, Median Age and Median Income)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Unemployment rate %</th>
<th>Participation Rate %</th>
<th>*Education (Diploma or higher education %)</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
<th>Weekly Medium Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>$488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudanese born</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>$231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>$413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>$214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>$342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>$707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>$324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kongo</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.

Source: Modified data from the Community Information Summary – Department of Immigration and Citizenship - 2006 Census data. 
e) The majority of the community also arrived at the time when the major restructuring of the economy and services had already begun. The largest influx of African refugees arrived in Australia arrived between 30 June, 1997 to 30 June 2007 (see table 3.2 below).

Table 3.2: Percentage of the African refugee population that arrived in Australia between 1996-2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudanese born</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.9 %</td>
<td>82.0 %</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>23.0 %</td>
<td>41.2 %</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.


f) Even though they come from different nationalities and have different customs; there are certain historical and even cultural similarities that exist between people from Africa.

The final sample therefore ended up with 20 interviews with refugees and migrants from Sudan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Liberia, Congo, Nigeria and Ethiopia. Two respondents had come through the skilled and the family stream migration, but their experiences had been similar to most of the refugees interviewed. As one of the interviewees said

I and two siblings came under the humanitarian program, while my brother came under the skilled migration program.

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10 Before the decision was taken to only include refugees and migrants from Africa, I also conducted two interviews with refugees from the Middle East, and interviews with 2 Iraqi settlement officers.
This sample also ended up focusing on refugees and migrants who had some kind of education when they arrived - 12 years of schooling or more.

3.4 Justification of case study areas

The selected case study area for this study is Western Sydney. This study defines ‘Western Sydney’ as the fourteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) of; Auburn Council, The Hills Shire, City of Blacktown, City of Blue Mountains, City of Hawkesbury, City of Parramatta, City of Penrith, City of Bankstown, Camden Council, City of Campbelltown, City of Fairfield, City of Holroyd, City of Liverpool and City of Wollondilly. This area is often referred to as the Greater Western Sydney region (see figure 3.1 below).

**Figure 3.1: Map of the Greater Western Sydney region**

Source: Extracted from Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 73.
This investigation selected two local case study areas within this region to analyse how policies associated with refugee communities play out in practice. There were three main reasons why these LGA’s were chosen:

Firstly, Auburn and Blacktown LGA were chosen as case study areas because of their high concentration of refugee settlement. For example, the four Western Sydney LGAs of Fairfield (19.0%), Liverpool (10.6%), Auburn (9.0 %) and Blacktown (8.5%) combined settled 47.1% of NSW refugee population between 1991- 1996 (see table 4.33). Employment policies for this region should therefore be of high importance.

Secondly, these LGA’s also has the highest settlement of African humanitarian entrants in NSW. The table below shows for example that 25.1% of African refugees in NSW settled in Blacktown, while 15.9% settled in Auburn. These two LGA’s have therefore settled the highest percentage of African refugees in NSW (see table 3.3).

Table 3. 3: Highest Settlement of African-born Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by LGA, 1 July 2001 – 1 July, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Numbers of settlers</th>
<th>Percent of total African Humanitarian settlement in NSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Blacktown</td>
<td>1526</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Auburn</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Holroyd</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parramatta</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Thirdly, Auburn and Blacktown were chosen because of the high unemployment figures in these LGAs. The western Sydney region has long struggled with a job shortage problem (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). While the situation has improved for the region as a whole, Fagan and Dowling found massive unemployment rates in specific localities such as parts of Auburn and Granville, Cabramatta-Fairfield, parts of Liverpool, parts of Campbelltown and west Blacktown (Fagan and Dowling,
2005: 79). They emphasised that the unemployment rates for these clusters are around 20% (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 79). Below are the census unemployment figures for these whole of these LGAs. The statics shows that most LGAs in Western Sydney are behind the Sydney metropolitan average. Only Baulkham Hills, the Blue Mountain, Camden, Hawkesbury, Penrith and Wollondilly can compare with the Sydney Metropolitan Area (SMA) in this aspect. For example, in 2006 was unemployment rates in Auburn LGA was 9.1%, Blacktown LGA was 6.8% while the unemployment rate for the Sydney Metropolitan Area was only 5.3% (2006 Census).

Table 3. 4: Census Unemployment Rates Greater Western Sydney 2001-2006%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baulkham Hills</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacktown</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holroyd</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollondilly</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Metropolitan Area</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data extracted from the Western Sydney Employment Study (Urban Research Centre, UWS) [http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/57617/Western_Sydney_Employment_Study.pdf](http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/57617/Western_Sydney_Employment_Study.pdf)

3.5 The stages of the research

As mentioned earlier, the research design is divided into four stages. The following sections will explain each of these stages.
3.5.1 Refugee demographics (stage 1)

Stage 1 involves an analysis of immigration and refugee data. Its aim is to provide a statistical overview of African refugee settlement in Greater Western Sydney. This part of the study was based on desktop research. This information was sourced from the Settlement Database\textsuperscript{11} (DIMIA\textsuperscript{12}), the Longitudinal Study of Immigrants to Australia (LSIA) and census data and other DIMIA web resources and publications. The analysis is looking precisely at the African refugees’ age, educational level, employment status and occupation in both their country of origin and in Australia.

This part of the research also provides a statistical analysis of the methods used in many recent studies of immigration in Australia which have focused on comparing migration streams.

3.5.2 Refugees’ experiences with the labour market (stage 2) and refugees’ experiences with service provision (stage 3)

Stage 2 and 3 of this thesis looks at the employment experiences among skilled or semi skilled African refugees living in Greater Western Sydney and their experiences with services and training organisations. The interviews are based on a mix between structured and semi structured interview formats. All the interviews were carried out between June 2008 and March 2009.

\textsuperscript{11} ‘The Settlement Database’, is an internal database made by the ‘Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs’ (DIMIA) to supply statistical data for government and community agencies involved in the planning and provision of migrants’ settlement services.

\textsuperscript{12} DIMIA is an acronym for ‘The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs’ \url{www.immi.gov.au/}
The sample

Semi structured interviews were conducted face to face with 20 skilled or semi skilled refugees from Africa. Individual case histories or narratives of these skilled refugees were collected to investigate their settlement experiences with regards to employment, the services utilised, how they perceived themselves in this process and how they see the support from others in their community and Australian society in general.

The targeted sample groups for the interviews are refugees of working age, with good knowledge of the English language and educational levels from high school and up and for those who live in Greater Western Sydney region. The sample is therefore not representative as such for the whole African community, but gives a good indication of the problems many skilled and semi skilled African refugees and migrants experience when entering the Australian labour market.

The sample for the study therefore does not claim to be representative but rather purposive. It was focused on refugees with human capital. Refugee communities consist of a mix of people and backgrounds. They cannot, therefore, be generalised into one homogeneous group.

As Minichiello et al writes;

“The aim is not to strive for a representative sample but to identify purposive cases that represent specific types of a given phenomenon (Minichiello et al., 1995: 13-14).

The given phenomena in this context is the problems that the skilled and semi-skilled African refugees and migrants are encountering in their search for employment and their inability to get help accessing employment.
The number of refugees interviewed in this research is not large, however their opinions is still of importance and can give important insight into the social dilemma being investigated.

**Sampling**

Sample techniques for selecting participants are based on the ‘snowball’ technique and group representation through the refugees own network (Hay, I. 2005). Snowball technique specifically means that by talking to refugees or people who works with refugees they might recommend you to talk to someone else with appropriate experience, who again might recommend you to someone else. The good thing about snowball techniques is that not only the researcher’s knowledge has been used to gather appropriate informants, but also the knowledge of the interviewees in the study (Dunn, 2005: 79-105).

For example, I met a refugee at a migrant resource centre, who referred me to someone else she knew. Most of them referred me to between 2 to 3 people. Not all of them were willing to participate in the interviews, but I usually managed to get at least one interview out of each of the contacts they provided me with.

Even though the sample is not as big as I wanted, I went to great lengths to obtain the interviews. There were several obstacles experienced during this thesis which made the interview process hard. Many of the refugees interviewed in this study are often on call with regards to casual employment, and therefore many of the interviews were cancelled at the last minute. Many were not sure who I was and what my intentions as a researcher may be.

I therefore experienced, on many occasions, last minute interview cancellations because interviewees had been called in to do contract work or had to attend to last minute commitments. I therefore had to reschedule and try meet up with them on another date.
Many were also fearful and therefore not willing to participate. I remember one woman, who got me to meet here twice, and then only to cancel at the last minute.

How the interviews were conducted

When I contacted the refugees, they were able to choose where they wanted to meet. I was very flexible and tried to work around their schedules as much as possible. Several of the interviews were done in interviewee’s homes, others carried out at migrant resource centres, language training locations or coffee shops.

The interviews took between 60 to 90 minutes each. The interviews followed the original survey structure which asked questions on country of origin, age, qualifications and employment history. The first part of the research was therefore structured.

It then moved into several semi structured and some open-ended questions that was classified according to themes. These questions allowed the refugees to express their opinions and experiences.

The themes for the semi structured and open ended interview questions evolved around topics of refugee employment, employment services, training availabilities, their own network, how they see themselves in this context (in the context of the problems they encounter with regards to finding employment), local employment initiatives and the importance of the network around refugees in penetrating labour markets. The literature identified the themes and research questions that were addressed in the interview questionnaire.

While it is important to prepare the interview questions and thereby have a plan for the way the research is going to unfold, it is also very important to listen to what interviewees say.
As Cloke, et al. (2004:152) argues it is important to have the:

innate flexibility to permit and encourage encounters with the unexpected.

Before I began any of the interviews, the refugees were told about the purpose of this study, provided with an information sheet, reminded that they could withdraw any statement at any time and that they would not be identified through the study in any way. They also were also told that if they had any problems with the way I conducted the interviews they could contact the UWS Ethic Committee. I also asked for permission to record the interview. If they objected, as some did, I took notes with pen and paper\textsuperscript{13}. All the recorded interviews have been transcribed.

Another problem I encountered is that many within the African community feel a bit ‘over researched. This was reflected by a few of the settlement workers and some of the refugees interviewed. This issue is discussed in more detail in the ethics section below.

Conducting interviews with vulnerably groups is a complex matter. To succeed in any interview with vulnerable groups you need to make them feel at ease – making sure they don’t see you as a threatening figure. In other words, a researcher would not go to a refugee interview ‘power dressed’ as you would in an interview with a bank manager. It is important for you to expose some of your own weaknesses. One strategy I did utilise was to talk about myself and my own experiences as a migrant in Australia – talking about my 3 children and other issues in the society as a way of making them relax. This is also been alluded to by others doing research on minority groups. Dunbar, an African American writes:

Self-disclosure on the part of interviewees is especially important when he or she is interviewing people of colour, because, like other marginalized individuals, people of color tend to regard outsiders with suspicion. Years of

\textsuperscript{13} Only two of the interviewee objected on having their interview tape recorded. In this two case I wrote down the interview on a nota pad.
misrepresentation and misinterpretation have legitimated skepticism and distrust. The question most often asked of interviewers by interviewees of colour is ‘Who are you? The second most frequently asked question is “Why should I talk to you? This is clearly understandable if the researcher has not provided the interviewees with any reason they should psychologically disrobe in front of strangers (Dunbar et al, 2002: 291).

Secondly, perhaps being a woman might have helped in this interview process. Women are often seen as less threatening than a man.

3.5.3 The evolution of services in Australia and its impact on refugees and migrants (stage 4)

The final step in this study analyses the evolution of public services in Australia, and its impact on available government policies and programs. This examines the extent to which these policies and programs have been successful in assisting refugees and migrants with tapping into employment in Australia.

This part of the study is based on analyses of the interviews with the refugees and migrants, but also delves into the observations made by service providers and government officials working with refugees and migrants in Greater Western Sydney. The interviews carried out with the service providers were semi-structured and open-ended. This allowed the interviewees to talk freely and express their opinions regarding settlement of African migrants and refugees in Greater Western Sydney. This process also made it possible to learn more about how the partnerships between government, NGOs and the private sector are working and operating at the local level. Details of the service provider interviews are described below.
Interviews with service providers

The service provider sample consists of a mix comprising a whole range of groups and their representatives. In total semi structured interviews were conducted with 20 service providers working with the settlement of African refugees in Greater Western Sydney. The data includes interviews with the following service providers and government officials including:

- social planners at Local Government Councils;
- bureaucrats from DEEWR;
- staff from various Migrant Resource Centres;
- Australian Centre for Languages (ACL) staff;
- Centrelink;
- NSW AMESs,
- TAFE and
- STARTS.

A full list of the interviewees is included in Appendix 2.

The semi structured interview questions for service providers included questions regarding labour conditions of refugees, employment services and skilling options. It also looked at policies that exist to support new arrivals into employment and what is done at the local level to combat these problems. All these interviews were carried out between June 2008 and March 2009.

Sample techniques

In order to establish links and build up trust with people working with refugees in the NGO sector, I started participating in skilled refugee employment forums at Auburn. I also got involved in the Migrant Employment and Training Working groups which consist of service providers working with refugees and migrants. This group is an employment advocacy group for refugees and migrants. This was educational and also provided me with unique insights and information. People within the NGO
sector are very busy, often underpaid, but despite this were still very helpful in providing information for this study.

**How the interviews were conducted**

With regards to interview with service providers, I contacted the organisations myself, and asked if they were willing to participate in an interview. This part of the research was easy and straightforward. The participants were recruited at the employment meetings I attended, but also based on ‘snowball’ techniques.

These interviews were around 60 minutes in length. I also told these interviewees they could withdraw any statement at any time and that they would not be identified in the study.

**The interview format**

The interviews followed a semi structured format which provided a flexible structure. By following this format, service providers were able to bring up new questions during the interviews.

I did however go to the interview with an interview guide (see appendix 1). It is generally beneficial for interviewers to have an interview guide prepared. Lindlof and Taylor (2002, 195) defines an interview guide as an informal:

> grouping of topics and questions that the interviewer can ask in different ways for different participants.

Interview guides help researchers to focus an interview on the topics at hand without constraining them to a particular format.
3.6 Ethical considerations

The researcher is aware of the power imbalance (Mackenzie, et al, 2007) that exists between the researcher and the refugees participating in this study. However to justify the research method, the researcher has used the refugees own stories as the basis of this research. As Korac and Gilad (2001: 15) writes:

*One of the ways to reduce the potential of treating refugee subjects as ‘data generating objects’ is the use of qualitative interviewing to secure their active involvement in the construction of data about their lives.*

The interviews were therefore partly structured, partly semi structured which allowed the refugees to provide input and correction. Open ended or semi structured questions therefore gives room for the refugees to have their voices heard.

The researcher has followed the UWS Ethic Committee’s guidelines during the interview process. Before commencing the interview, an explanation was provided to the participants regarding the thesis and its aims, and the topics the questions would be focusing on. I also explained that they could stop me anytime if they felt uncomfortable with the interview topic. I also explained in line with the Ethic committees guidelines that they could withdraw any statement at any time. I also showed them the ethics approval number, and said that if they had any problems with the way I conducted the research they could contact the UWS ethnic committee (see Appendix 1).

Written consent was also required as part of this process. For one interviewee this presented a problem. Some were scared that if they signed their confidentiality might be jeopardised. In this one case I assured them that no name would be revealed and that the focus would only be on his employment experiences.

Written consent was always asked before recording the interviews. Two respondents were willing to do an interview but did not want their interview to be recorded. In these cases I made notes using a note pad.
The researcher is also aware of the many ethical problems that arise when doing research in a cross culturally context such as exploitation, damage to the ethnic community or presenting misleading research results (Liamputtong, 2007)

For example within this cohort, many were reluctant to participate in any interviews as they were also worried about the many reports and news reports that have negatively targeted the African community. Many feel they don’t get much back from the research that they had participated in earlier. This issue is described by Pittaway and Muli (2009): 9

Many refugee communities in Australia are expressing their frustration at the number of times they are interviewed by service providers, students and academics, and how little benefit they see from their input. They particularly mentioned that what they say is seldom acted upon, leading one participant to passionately exclaim ‘We have a voice – hear us’. Another talked about ‘silent scream’.

Those who did participate in this study did want to have their voices heard with the hope that something could be done to improve their situation. This thesis therefore presents an avenue for their voices to be heard without me interfering too much with their stories.

I suspect that with research on vulnerable groups such as refugees it is a matter of earning trust, and when someone shows up from nowhere like myself, they are not really sure of my intentions. It would probably have been much easier to gain trust and acceptance if I was African myself or at least had been well known and active within the NGO sector in Australia. I guess many of the interviewed would wonder what a person from Norway would know about the struggle that Africans have to deal with in their everyday life in Australia. As one of the interviewed said referring to the Job Network staff dealing with African refugees:
They (the Job Network staff) all come from wealthy homes; all had good life, and have the idea that if you work hard you will succeed. What do they know about the experiences and hardship that refugees go through.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

While this comment was not directed at me as such, it gives an indication where they are coming from. However being an outsider does not necessarily have to be so bad for the final outcome as the researcher in a way is outside everything, outside the African Diaspora and in a way outside the Australian way of life as well, and in this context you don’t take things for granted but instead question everything.

3.7 Conclusion

Much academic debate has been devoted to comparing qualitative and quantitative research techniques. While this study acknowledges the advantages of doing a combined quantitative and qualitative study, I have discovered that this is not possible for a single under-resourced PhD student to accomplish.

While the research design started as a combined quantitative (survey based) and qualitative study, it moved more and more towards a pure qualitative based study. Trial and error moved me into this direction. It is the most appropriate method given the resources and time available, for undertaking research on a vulnerable group in the Australian labour market. It was a steep learning curve involving considerable stress.

While quantitative based studies can easily be reported, we risk as Sofaer (1999: 1102) notes:

If we focus research only on what we already know how to quantify, indeed only on that which can ultimately be reliably quantified, we risk ignoring factors that are more significant in explaining important realities and
relationships. Qualitative methods help providing these rich descriptions of a phenomena.

The following chapters will describe the insights gathered by the method and the research design outlined above.

The first stage, reported in Chapter 4, involves a small statistical analysis of government statistical sources. It also highlights that within the African refugee and migrant community there are people with skills and qualifications that are not able to utilise their skills. This is the only quantitative section of this thesis.

The second and third stage involved the development of a survey (see Appendix 3). However as the survey did not work as well as the researcher had hoped, the survey questions were instead incorporated into the structured and semi structured interview format. The interviews turned out to be very successful and provided in-depth knowledge of their experiences with services, employment, and training, and how they see themselves in this process and the support of their network.

The final stage is a policy section which was undertaken mainly via desktop research, the interviews with the services providers and government official and also case studies of two local government areas which have large numbers of refugees. Also this part provided the research with insight into new and unexpected knowledge and was vital to the final outcome of the thesis.
CHAPTER 4: LABOUR MARKET POLICIES FUEL LABOUR MARKET SEGMENTATION

4.1 Introduction

The human capital theory does not reflect the harsh reality of skilled and educated refugees settling in Western Sydney. This group continues to experience significant downward economic mobility and labour market segmentation, irrespective of their former skills or qualifications.

As seen from the literature chapter, several studies highlight that skilled refugees and migrants experience a range of outside barriers that stops them from finding sustainable employment. Factors such as lack of work experience, lack of English language skills, lack of social networks, problems with getting their qualifications recognised, and a lack of access to social services and discrimination (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007:72; Berman et al 2008; Waxman, 2001; Iredale et al, 1996; Constable et al, 2004; Lamb, 1997; ECCV, 2009; Berman et al, 2008; Carrington et al, 2007; Flanagan 2007: 52).

This chapter will however explore if neoliberal labour market policies also have contributed to labour market segmentation for the group under study. It will first analyse the effect of neoliberal labour market policies from a national perspective. It will then move into analysing the spatial unevenness in the way labour markets work. This chapter will reference the work of Jamie Peck and other labour market segmentation theorists (Peck, 1996), who highlight that labour markets are also highly dependent on local factors. Fagan and Dowling study explicitly link labour market segmentation with labour market policies for the region of Western Sydney. They argue in the case of Western Sydney, that employment policies have been left thoroughly in the hands of the market forces (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Fagan and Dowling found that while this approach rightfully led to a growth in regional jobs for
the regions as a whole, it failed to address the real problem of labour market access (2005). They found that several areas or clusters within Western Sydney continue to struggle with massive unemployment numbers and highlight that more needs to be done to support these residents (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). While national statistics show that precarious casualised employment has grown steadily over this period, high unemployment rates become clustered spatially and among vulnerably groups in the society.

This chapter begins by presenting some statistical material reflecting the national unemployment trends. Section 4.3 will then next give an overview of refugee and migrant’s overall labour market situation in Australia. The following section 4.4 will focus on the general labour market situation in Western Sydney, with a special focus on the more disadvantage clusters within Auburn and Blacktown LGA. An overview of settlement of refugees in NSW is also included in section 4.5. Section 4.6 presents a range of data on the case study group, including country of origin, age, length of their stay in Australia, degree and experience, career in former country, training in Australia, English fluency and employment status in Australia. Section 4.7 analyses the case study group settlement and employment experiences. This section will especially focus on why they settled in Auburn and Blacktown and how they managed to find employment. Finally section 4.8 will compare the results of this research with the findings from previous studies. Lastly section 4.9 will present this chapter’s overall conclusion.

4.2 National employment data

Neoliberal policies have had major implications on not only the type of employment available within the Australian society but also on workers labour market conditions in general. By moving away from the post-war ideal of full employment, neoliberal changes led to a strong rise in the national unemployment rate in Australia, which climbed from around 2% in the 1950 and the 1960s, to 7-8% in the 1970s and the 1980s, and reached the height of around 11% in the 1990s (McConnell and Smith, 2003: 152). These high unemployment figures have however significantly declined since their peak in the 1990s. The current unemployment figure (March 2012) is for
example only 5.2% (ABS, 6202.0). This should indicate that the Australian labour market is rather healthy and balanced. The only problem in this scenario is that the majority of jobs created since the 1990s has been modelled on labour market ‘flexibility’ models (Aly, 2010: 52), which in reality is nothing more than as Aly argues the ‘neoliberal euphemism for the casualisation of the work force’ (Aly, 2010: 52). Employment growth in Australia since the 1990s has therefore mostly been part-time or casual based (McConnell and Smith, 2003: 152). It is however also important in this context to note that most of the part-time employment in Australia is casual employment (Vasko, 2009: 107). It is as Vasko argues an underdeveloped concept in Australia to have permanent part-time work options (Vasko, 2009: 107).

This focus on labour market flexibility has led to a rise in non standard employment arrangement (Sanders, 2003; Western et al. 2007: 413), also sometimes referred to as precarious employment. The deregulation of the labour market has therefore hindered many groups in society from finding and securing jobs, building a career or gaining a decent wage. Australia has also, by international comparison, gone a long way in implementing stringent labour market flexibility models. In Australia, one in four employees are currently hired under casual unsecure employment contracts (Venn, 2009: 26; OECD, 2010: 56). Venn shows that this type of casual unsecure employment contracts in contrast is only estimated to be around 5% of the workforce in most other OECD countries (Venn, 2009: 26).

ABS official statistics also show that as much as 13.6% (2009) of all employees in Australia are unemployed or underemployed14 (ABS, 2010, Cat. 6105: 7). This substantial increase in this precarious type of employment in Australia (temporary, part-time, contract, casual and self employed based employment) has also had meant that there is now more poorly paid jobs lacking employment security, than in previous times. While unemployment rates have improved, the standard or quality of jobs created has unfortunately not improved with it (Aly, 2010: 52). Several studies in Australia has also shown that precarious or non-standard employment arrangement has led to greater job insecurity (Burgess and Campbell, 1998; Campbell and Brosnan, 1999), lower pay, less hours, limited access to work training and reduced
changes to build a career (Campbell, 1996). Watson therefore argues that many become trapped in these casual employment type jobs, leading to social disadvantage for those concerned (Watson, 2004). He argues this comes as a result of lower pay, less access to work training and also poorer working conditions in such precarious types of employment (Watson, 2004). In a study carried out in Australia in 2005 for example, only 34.3% of employees without leave attainments undertook work related training during the last year, compared to 57.6% of all full time workers (OECD, 2005: 116).

The following figure below shows the rise in the underemployment numbers among both men and women since 1979. For both women and men current underemployment percentages are much higher than the underemployment numbers experienced 30 years ago (see figure below). It has however become dramatically worse for women.

**Figure 4. 1: Underemployment and Unemployment Rates 1980-2009**

![Graph showing underemployment and unemployment rates from 1980 to 2009](image)

(a) Break in male and female underemployment series at May 2001. (b) Trend data.


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14 An underemployed worker is a part time worker who would like to work longer hours.
The labour market trend as seen in the table above reflects two periods when the unemployment numbers rose rapidly, with a period of recovery in between, then finishing with a steady fall in national unemployment rates after the mid 1990s. This national recovery of employment, however, has coincided with growth of precarious/casualised employment.

Those who have suffered most in this restructuring process, as also seen in the international literature, are therefore the lesser skilled in the society and those groups who might face discrimination within the labour market process (such as women and racialised groups) (Datta et al, 2006: 1, Galabuzi, 2006:10; Creece et al, 2008: 276; McDowell and Christopherson, 2009, Das Gupta, 2006). Precarious employment growth has therefore in the international literature become referred to as a highly racialised and gendered phenomenon (Das Gupta, 2006: 318; Galabuzi, 2006: 10). Vulnerable groups such as refugees and new migrants have therefore paid the highest price for the type of neoliberal changes taking place within the overall labour market structures.

In the Australian context it has however been hard to find data to prove this overall point. However with the limited statistics and research available on the topic, it shows that refugees in Australia are highly overrepresented among casual, short-time and other precarious types of employment (Dunlop, 2005: 12; Lamb, 1997: 4; Flanagan, 2007: 84; ARMS, 2001: 6; Berman, 2009: 30; RCOA, 2008; RCOA, 2009, RCOA, 2010). This result also often takes place regardless of their former skills, qualifications or prior employment situation (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b). They also experience very high unemployment figures compared to the rest of the population.
The research results from this thesis show similar findings.

Table 4.1: Employment Situation of the Case Study Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underemployed</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(would like to work more)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own business</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview results

Colic-Peisker and Tilbury’s study of fifty African refugees also clearly supports this argument. Their study shows that 32% of the skilled Africans in their sample was unemployed, 36% worked less than 10 hours a week, while approx. 16% worked between 11-20 hours a week. Only a very small percentage of their sample where found to be working in a full time position (less than 5%) (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a: 11).

4.3 Skilled refugees employment situation

As seen from the data above, do many skilled African refugees with skills and qualifications become trapped in the segmented labour market. What stops skilled refugees and migrants from finding employment has also been given quite a bit of attention in the more recent Australian literature. Research has found that many experience problems with getting their qualifications recognised, problems with gaining local work experience, a lack of work related networks and experiencing different forms of discrimination (Waxman, 2001; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Iredale et al, 1997; Constable et al, 2004).
Australian Human Capital based research has analysed refugees and migrants labour market outcomes according to classifications such as education, skills and qualifications. Many of these studies even went so far as to analyse migrants and refugees labour market outcomes by focusing on refugees and migrants visa category alone. This has resulted in a stigmatisation of refugee visa groups as the low employment achievers, while simultaneously, “praising” migrants from the skilled migration visa groups for their superior employment outcomes (Ho and Alcorso, 2004). However, the reality is that many skilled refugees and skilled migrants struggle in the Australian labour force. Ho and Alcorso therefore suggested that more emphasis instead should be placed on comparing skilled migrant’s labour market outcomes with the Australian born community (2004).

Table 4.2 shows that many refugees have high human capital requisites, but experience massive unemployment rates.

**Table 4.2: 2006 Census data of the African Community (Unemployment rates, Participation rates and Educational Qualifications, Median Age of the community and Medium Income)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Unemployment rate %</th>
<th>Participation Rate %</th>
<th>*Education (Diploma or higher education)</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
<th>Weekly Medium Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>$ 488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudanese born</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>$ 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>$ 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>$ 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>$ 342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>$ 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kongo</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Diploma level or higher qualification includes Degree level or higher, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level.

Source: Modified data from the Community Information Summary – Department of Immigration and Citizenship - 2006 Census data.

Table 4.3 shows similar results for the Iraqi and Afghani refugee community.

**Table 4.3: 2006 Census data of the Iraqi and Afghani Community**  
(Unemployment Rates, Participation Rates and Educational Qualifications, Median Age and Medium Income)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate %</th>
<th>Participation Rate %</th>
<th>^Education (Diploma or higher education)</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
<th>Weekly Medium Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>$488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>$238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>$234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Modified data from the Community Information Summary – Department of Immigration and Citizenship - 2006 Census data.  

Studies based on the segmented labour market theory have however argued that the high unemployment rates indicate that skilled refugees and skilled migrants become trapped in the segmented labour market (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2006; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b; Ho and Alcorso, 2006; Collins, 2006). Institutional and structural forms of discrimination have been found to be vital in this segmentation process. For example studies has emphasised that discrimination still occurs based on their physical appearances and ethnicity (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2006; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Junankar et al, 2004; Wagner, 2003 and Berman, 2008). Discrimination has also been found in the job market where ethnic named applicants were excluded from the interview stage in comparison to Anglo named applicants (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009). Further discrimination has also been found based on employers perception that foreign qualifications and experiences are not up to Australian standards (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Junankar, 2004; Wagner, 2003 and Collins, 2008). Others have again found that cross cultural issues has been found irrelevant within the jobs interview process and psychometric tests (Constable et al, 2004 and Dunlop, 2005). Tilbury and Colic-Peisker also highlight how cultural...
racism embedded within the market structures also acts as a labour market barrier (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006).

This chapter goes a bit further and argue that neoliberal policies within the labour market in-itself has created labour market segmentation, thereby staggering these groups labour market outcomes.

4.4 The local labour market of Western Sydney

Most of the refugee population living in NSW are clustered around a few Local Government Areas in Western Sydney (see table 4.6). This is a region that has for a long time been a place struggling with higher than normal unemployment rates and social inequalities in general. Several studies have highlighted how important place are in shaping labour market segmentation (Peck, 1996 and Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Fagan and Dowling study show that very little have been done to fix this Western Sydney problem. Instead they found that the labour market forces have been allowed to operate without restraint by attracting big businesses, creating business parks and pushing for self employment (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 72). They highlight further that in the middle of this has very little been done to help for the more disadvantaged groups and areas within Western Sydney (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). While there is less unemployment in this region as a whole (Fagan and Dowling, 2005), several areas have not benefited from such a policy line. Fagan and Dowling’s main argument is therefore that, even though there has been an overall growth of employment opportunities in Western Sydney, some local clusters continue to experience very high unemployment rates (ibid, 2005). They found high unemployment rates in Auburn and Granville, Cabramatta-Fairfield, parts of Liverpool, parts of Campbelltown and west Blacktown LGA (Fagan and Dowling, 2005: 79). These areas have an unemployment rates reaching around 20% (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Fagan and Dowling therefore conclude that many within these vulnerable areas experience problems accessing the available jobs (2005). They thereby highlight the importance of place in creating labour market segmentation and that these areas still remains deeply segmented according to classifications such as gender, ethnicity and age (Fagan and Dowling, 2005).
Auburn LGA is a clear example of this phenomenon. Auburn LGA has an overall higher than normal unemployment rate, while being surrounded by a massive job growth (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Many residents living in Auburn is therefore watching this job growth, while at the same time being unable to tap into or access any of these jobs.

Blacktown is another example of a Local Government Area struggling with high clusters of unemployment. At the census night there were for example 1,960 Africans Humanitarian entrants living in Blacktown LGA in Greater Western Sydney (over the age of 15). Over 22 percent of these humanitarian African entrants were unemployed, while the participation rate was 45.5 percent (see table 4.4 below). Of the employed, 30 percent were working in part time employment. Much of this form of employment can therefore be assumed to be casual based (Vasko, 2009: 109). A large component of the African refugee population are therefore struggling with employment related issues.

### Table 4.4: Employment Statistics among African Humanitarian Entrants and Migrants in Blacktown LGA 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African Humanitarian Entrants</th>
<th>Total African Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population over 15 years</td>
<td>1,960</td>
<td>5,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation Rate</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time work</td>
<td>199 (29.8%)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time work</td>
<td>402 (60.3%)</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2008, Census Data for Blacktown LGA.

### 4.5 Refugee and migrant settlement

The section below will give an overview of the national refugees and migration numbers. This section provides background knowledge of the size of the refugees and humanitarian program with a special focus on the African refugee community. It
will also highlight where they settle in NSW. This part of the research is based on the analysis of quantitative data from the Settlement Database (DIMIA), data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and other government sources.

4.5.1 The migration program

The current Australian migration program consists firstly of the ‘skilled’ and ‘family’ migration program. Secondly, it consists of the ‘refugee and humanitarian program’ which is by far the smallest migration component. While the skilled migration intake has sky-rocketed since the mid 1990s, the humanitarian intake has been steady around 11,000-13,000 a year (Access Economics, 2008:5). In the period between 30 June 1991 and 1 July 2009 only 12.2% of the total permanent immigration intake arrived under the Refugee and Humanitarian Program (see figure 4.2 below).

Figure 4.2: Number of Permanent Visa Grants According to Migration Stream

Source: Extracted from ABS: 3416.0. Perspectives on Migrants, 2009
4.5.2 The refugee and humanitarian program

According to the United Nations a refugee is:

Any person who owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country (United Nations Definition of a Refugee, 1951 Convention).

The Australian refugee and humanitarian program is divided into an onshore and offshore component. The offshore component provides protection to people who seek refugee status outside Australia, and is by far the largest component. The onshore component on the other hand provides protection to applicants who seek protection after arriving in Australia either on temporary visa’s or through unauthorised means such as by boat entry.

The offshore component includes migrants coming under ‘Refugee’\textsuperscript{15} and ‘Special Humanitarian’\textsuperscript{16} visa types. African humanitarian entrants have arrived under the offshore component. Most of these come under a 200 or 202 visa.

\textsuperscript{15} ‘Refugee’ visa group is for people who are subject to persecution in their home country, who are typically outside their home country, and are in need of resettlement. The majority of applicants who are considered under this category are identified and referred by the UNHCR to Australia for resettlement. The Refugee category includes the Refugee, In-country Special Humanitarian, Emergency Rescue and Woman at Risk sub-classes” (DIAC, Fact Sheet 60).

\textsuperscript{16} ‘Special Humanitarian’ visa is ‘for people outside their home country who are subject to substantial discrimination amounting to gross violation of human rights in their home country. A proposer who is an Australian citizen, permanent resident or eligible New Zealand citizen, or an organisation that is based in Australia, must support applications for entry under the SHP” (DIAC, Fact Sheet 60).
4.5.3 Where do refugees settle?

Table 4.2 shows the total migration in each Australian State according to migration stream for the period 1991-2009. It shows that NSW has been one of the main destinations for humanitarian entrants settling in Australia, with as much as 39.7% of all humanitarian entrants in this period settling in the state of NSW alone. That is in real figures 95,323 humanitarian entrants settling in NSW alone (DIMIA Settlement database, see table 4.5).

Table 4.5: Settlement According to Migration Stream 1991-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migration Streams</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Humanitarian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Skilled</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>10,586</td>
<td>2692</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>13,295</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>27,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Territories</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>304,792</td>
<td>95,323</td>
<td>3246</td>
<td>334,983</td>
<td>25,127</td>
<td>763,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43%)</td>
<td>(39.7%)</td>
<td>(43.5%)</td>
<td>(35.5%)</td>
<td>(40.5%)</td>
<td>(38.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>5,492</td>
<td>1485</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5638</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>13,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>94,148</td>
<td>19,849</td>
<td>1069</td>
<td>138,093</td>
<td>6764</td>
<td>259,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>31575</td>
<td>18,557</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>58,704</td>
<td>3730</td>
<td>112,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>5682</td>
<td>3,014</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6,105</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>15,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>184,025</td>
<td>74,895</td>
<td>1628</td>
<td>239,897</td>
<td>15,979</td>
<td>516,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>70,704</td>
<td>24,254</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>147,183</td>
<td>8,392</td>
<td>251,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>707,165</td>
<td>240,107</td>
<td>7,460</td>
<td>943,911</td>
<td>61,895</td>
<td>1,960,538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Settlement Database (accessed 10 July 2010).
Refugee settlement in NSW is also a very clustered phenomena and most refugees end up in a few local government areas (LGAs). For example, 64.7 percent of the humanitarian entrants that have settled in NSW have settled in the ‘Western Sydney’ region (Settlement Database, see Table 4.6 below). This study defines ‘Western Sydney’ as the fourteen Local Government Areas (LGAs) of; Auburn Council, The Hills Shire, City of Blacktown, City of Blue Mountains, City of Hawkesbury, City of Parramatta, City of Penrith, City of Bankstown, Camden Council, City of Campbelltown, City of Fairfield, City of Holroyd, City of Liverpool and City of Wollondilly. The four Western Sydney LGAs of Fairfield (19.0%), Liverpool (10.6%), Auburn (9.0 %) and Blacktown (8.5%), settled 47.1% of NSW refugee intake in the 1991-2009 period. Employment policies for this region should therefore be of high importance.

Table 4.6: Refugee and Migrant Settlement in Western Sydney 1991 - 2009 (According to LGA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Humanitarian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Skilled</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>10,841</td>
<td>8,624 (9.0%)</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>7722</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>27,917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>12,660</td>
<td>2,901</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5,013</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>21,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baulkham Hills</td>
<td>6,076</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11,862</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>19,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacktown</td>
<td>14,677</td>
<td>8,150 (8.5%)</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>14,872</td>
<td>1,967</td>
<td>39,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>21,198</td>
<td>18,126 (19.0%)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2,896</td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>43,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>13,819</td>
<td>6,578</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>16,174</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>37,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holroyd</td>
<td>8125</td>
<td>4176</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9265</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>22,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith</td>
<td>3879</td>
<td>1041</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3474</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>9,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>5385</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4102</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>11,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>10,701</td>
<td>10,145 (10.6%)</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>6,683</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>28,361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.4 African refugees

The African refugee and humanitarian intake was highest between 2003-2005, when as much as 70% of the overall humanitarian intake came from the African continent alone (DIAC, Fact Sheet 60). It has however since been reduced to around 33% (DIAC, Fact Sheet 60). The main African refugee countries in 2003-2005 were predominantly Sudan, but also Liberia, the Republic of Congo, Burundi and Sierra Leone (Harte, 2009). The main country of origin of the humanitarian program in 2008/2009 was Iraq, followed by Burma, Afghanistan, Sudan, Bhutan, Ethiopia, the Republic of Congo, Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone (DIAC, Fact Sheet 60).

The following table below shows the intake of offshore humanitarian entrants from Africa in the period 1992/93 – 2007/2008. It shows that 51,688 humanitarian entrants have come from Africa alone in this period.

Table 4.7: African Intake through the Offshore Refugee and Humanitarian Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>Asia(3)</th>
<th>America</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Middle East(1)(2)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>4,875</td>
<td>3,207</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>6,258</td>
<td>3,204</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-96</td>
<td>6,843</td>
<td>2,392</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-97</td>
<td>4,131</td>
<td>2,084</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td>5,307</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>4,724</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,457</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,457</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>3,421</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,733</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,733</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>3,437</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>1,998</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>7,992</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DIMIA Settlement Database (accessed 4th of July 2010)
4.5.5 Where do African refugees settle in NSW?

The different refugee communities also settle in different locations. The main settlement of African refugees in NSW has been in Blacktown and Auburn LGA (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Highest Settlement of African-born Humanitarian Entrants in NSW by LGA, 1 July 2001 – 1 July, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Numbers of settlers</th>
<th>Percent of total African Humanitarian settlement in NSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.Blacktown</td>
<td>1526</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.Auburn</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.Holroyd</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.Parramatta</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blacktown LGA has the highest number of African settlement in NSW. At the census night in 2006, Blacktown LGA counted 6,813 African born, of which 2,472 were humanitarian entrants (Census data for Blacktown LGA 2006).

Table 4. 9: Number of African Migrants and Refugees Settled in Blacktown LGA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Humanitarian countries</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other African countries</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total African countries</td>
<td>3,292</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>6,813</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census data 2006, Blacktown LGA.

There is however very high unemployment rates within these communities. It also shows that despite the fact that several also have skills and qualification from their own countries (Table 4.6), the majority struggle with low weekly income, unemployment and low labour market participation rates. This is however not only an African problem, as simular labour market outcomes has also been found among other humanitarian entrants.

Language barriers have also been emphasised as a major labour market problems within African refugee communities. There is however many who speaks the language well. The following table below shows how the community rates their own language abilities.
Table 4.10: English Language Proficiency among African Humanitarian Entrants in Blacktown LGA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Speaks English Only</th>
<th>Very well or well</th>
<th>Not well or not well at all</th>
<th>Proficiency not stated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1,162</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1,160</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1,625</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2006 Census data for Blacktown LGA.

Humanitarian entrants are also predominantly younger than most other migration streams. Access economic found that 43% of humanitarian entrants are in the age group 0-14 compared to 19% of the Australian born (Access Economics, 2008: 7). They also found that humanitarian entrants are underrepresented among those who are 35 and older (Access Economics, 2008: 7).

### 4.6 The case study group

The following section will present the case study group from the thesis and also pinpoint some of their experiences regarding settlement in Australia. It will highlight their country of origin, age, length of their stay in Australia, degree and experience, career in their former country, training in Australia, English fluency and employment status in Australia.

The refugees and migrants sample in this study came mostly from Sudan and Sierra Leone, with a lesser number coming from Congo, Liberia and Somalia. Two interviews were also completed with refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan prior to
decision was taken to focus on African refugees. The final sample consists of 18 skilled African refugees (12 men and 8 women) and 2 interviews with two skilled Afghani and Iraqi refugees.

There is a large difference between a refugee and that of a migrant coming through the skilled migration program. However, in the case of the skilled refugees and migrants coming from war-torn regions, I would argue that there is little difference in their overall employment experiences. McKay (2008) supports this argument when she claims migrants and refugees from war-torn areas, share many similar experiences. This will relate to their reason to immigrate but also for their labour market experiences (McKay, 2008: 11). For this reason this sample consists of a mix of both skilled refugees and migrants. The majority within this sample though have arrived under the humanitarian program.

The majority of the refugees and migrants who were interviewed came from Sudan and Sierra Leone representing the real proportion of the recent wave of Africans settling in Australia. The rest came from Ethiopia, Congo, Somalia, Liberia and Nigerian. There is however more men in the study than women. It was in many ways harder to find women to participate in this study. See table 4.11 below.

This study is focusing on the group of African refugees and migrants who are highly skilled and qualified. While there are many African refugees who might not have recognizable ‘human capital’ attributes, there are also many within these communities who are highly skilled. This chapter focuses on these skilled and semi skilled groups labour market experiences.
The table below shows which countries the sample groups originated from:

**Table 4.11: Research Participants by Country of Origin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data.

Table 4.12 outlines the current age of the participants. The majority of the participants were aged between 30 to 40 years old, when they first arrived in Australia. The youngest participant in the interviews was 23 while the oldest was 55 years old.

**Table 4.12: Research Participants Age***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(at the time of the interview)*

Source: Interview data.

Most of the participants in this study had been in Australia for quite some time, so they have considerable experience with the local labour market and available services. The person who had stayed in Australia the longest, had arrived 14 years ago, and the most recent came 4 years ago. The majority in this study had been in
Australia between 5 to 10 years. This study is therefore not exploring the experiences of very recent refugees and migrants in Australia.

**Table 4.13: Participants Length of Stay in Australia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long have they been in Australia</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data

All the participants in this sample had worked or had careers in their country of origin. Their qualifications ranged from tradespersons such as hairdressers, mechanics, retail owners and nurses to highly skilled university lecturers, engineers, lawyers, journalists and teachers. Some had their work interrupted by war and conflict. Table 4.14 and Table 4.15 provide details of their work experience and training level.

**Table 4.14: Degree and Experiences from Former Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only 7 years schooling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Degree</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data.
Table 4.15: Careers in their Country of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Years of experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer and engineer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair dresser</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail owners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucrats/administrative roles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Student</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic Teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical doctor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data.

Four persons within the sample had an Australian university degree. Among the sample interviewed, it became readily apparent that there is an immense eagerness to learn new things and further their skills and qualifications in Australia. Many have also done extensive voluntary work in the community sector or offered much of their time assisting their own community.

Table 4.16: Training in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMES/AMEP</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Degree</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary work in the community sector</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data.
The majority in this sample had a very good command of the English language. While this might not be representative of the overall African refugee population in Australia, it does show that there are many African who also speak English fluently, and do have high levels of skills and qualifications.

**Table 4.17: English Fluency among those interviewed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Skills</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so good</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data.

The majority of those employed in this sample, were either employed in the community sector, had started up their own business, or did casual work. There were also several in this sample that had not been able to tap into the labour market at all. Many within this sample had done several types of employment varying from process work at BHP Billiton, fruit picking in Coffs Harbour, cleaning and other precarious types of casual employment.

**Table 4.18: Employment Status in Australia among those interviewed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Started up own business</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community worker (full-time)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community worker (part-time/casual)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed or doing casual work (less than 20 hours)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview data
4.7 Why did the case study group settle in Auburn and Blacktown?

As seen from the literature, place has an effect on people’s employment outcomes (Peck, 1996). Housing affordability is a major problem in Sydney, it is therefore not surprising that the more destitute clusters of Auburn and Blacktown LGA, become the home of many refugees.

One of main questions asked in the interviews was therefore ‘Why did you settle in the Auburn or Blacktown area?

One service providers highlighted housing affordability as one of the main reasons why refugees cluster in Western Sydney. He also highlighted that refugees arriving under the 202 visa, settle close to those who sponsor them to come to Australia. He said:

There are several housing affordability rings in Sydney. There is ring 1, 2 and 3. Ring 3 are somewhere between Auburn and the Blue Mountains. ACL therefore send refugees to places like Blacktown or Auburn because there was affordable housing there and high vacancies. Housing in the private market therefore went to anyone. If a refugee receives around $270 a week, then housing cannot exceed $135 a week. With that money they need to go further west. Secondly, NSW mostly take people who have a link with people already in Australia. These are from the existing refugee communities in Western Sydney.

(Service provider, Auburn)

Refugees are therefore either placed in these areas by the service providers or have to settle close to those who sponsored them to come to Australia.

Some were expressing their hope to move out of Auburn and Blacktown into other parts of Sydney.
One refugee said:

I settled in Auburn, not because of my community, but because it was the only place where I found a house I could afford. First I stayed two months in Blacktown. I came on a 200 visa, so as soon as they picked me up at the airport, they put me in short term accommodation in Blacktown. I now live in Auburn because I don’t have much of an alternative. I used to live in Summer Hill for a while but I had to move out, as it was too expensive to have a larger place there (my wife and child arrived 7 months ago). My target is to get back to an area such as Burwood. There are also quite a few Africans in Ashfield - that is why I want to live there. I like to live in area where there is not too many African’s and too much cultural tights. I like to live more mixed and multicultural. I am used to my own culture, but now in Australia I want some kind of other input as well. It is however important to have people around helping you with find employment. I help other people from my community too.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

Another interviewee from Sierra Leone said:

I settled in Granville. I did not have much of a choice. I am used to this area now, and if I move I will have to change school for my kids. If I could I would have moved. I don’t mix with other people from my own community. I do have a car, and are involved in my community organisation. I do however love my church in Merrylands. I am the only African there.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

A Somali refugee highlighted that she was placed her by government official. She said:

I was put her by government officials after being in Villawood Detention Centres. The reason that I am still staying here is that rent is cheaper her and that there is people her from my own community.

(Somali Refugee)
A Sudanese refugee also emphasised the importance of having people from your own background around. He said:

I live and work in Auburn. In Auburn there is a good network, shopping centres, and so it is very culturally appropriate for our community. They can find the food they are used to, clothes that is related to them, and also it can satisfy special needs, cultural needs, in terms there is a mosque here, churches in their own language. All these factors were important for myself when I settled in Auburn/North Parramatta. It is very important for a person that comes to a new country and a new culture to be able to hook yourself onto something. ‘From unknown to known’. You need to start with the people you are close to, who talk the same language, share the same food, share the same values, share going to church, mosques, synagogues etc. That is very important.

Africans are moving around from Auburn to Blacktown. Not linked, not settled properly. The case workers place there here, then they move around because they don’t like it. It is the policy settlement providers that place them in Auburn, Blacktown, Wollongong, Newcastle etc. It is the settlement providers that are the driving force behind settling them somewhere.

(Sudanese Refugee)

Another Sudanese refugee said he arrived in Blacktown, because the relatives who sponsored him lived there. He did however highlight the problem of housing affordability. He said:

I came to Australia under a 202 Visa and the person who sponsored me lived in Blacktown. They took me to Centrelink, schools etc. Rent has however become very high here in Blacktown. Many cannot find housing with the Centrelink money. Some therefore move to Orange, Coffs Harbour or further away from Blacktown town centre to areas like Mt. Druitt. But the further out, the harder it also gets for these to find employment.

(Sudanese refugee)
Because of the stress in the private housing market in Sydney, many refugees are now become forced to move even further away from the city centres to areas away with less social services, transport and employment opportunities. Another refugee also emphasised this problem. He said:

They placed me in Lidcombe, and I know a lot of people here now, so I do not want to move. There is a community here of people from my own origin, good public transport, service providers. Rent is not cheap here though. That is why many are now forced to move further out. So some are now settling in Mt Druitt, etc. People move out because of the rent. It is also hard for us to get an apartment. If there are several people competing about the same apartment, then it is very unlikely that the Sudanese people will get the flat. Churches are also very important for the Sudanese. My church is in Blacktown, and there is a mix there from many nationalities. I have many friends here from all over Africa. Even some Australians I know. Auburn council is also doing a lot to help migrant communities here. People from my own community is important because they help each other finding employment, housing, emotional support, cultural celebration and community organisation.

(Sudanese refugee)

Housing affordability was therefore found to be the main driver behind the fact that refugees move to more destitute areas. Some did however highlight the importance of their own network in finding employment and helping each other in general.

### 4.8 How important is their own network in finding employment

All the interviewees in this study struggled with employment. Those who had found employment though had found it either though their own community network, work in the community sector or started up their own business. As seen from table 4.18, 5 of the refugees in this sample started up their own business, 5 worked in the community sector full-time, 3 worked in the community sector part time, while 6
were employed doing small jobs here and there. I asked one Sudanese refugee how he managed to find employment. He said:

First I did process work in Blacktown, then I found some part time work through a community organisation, then I went back to process work in Newcastle. I moved to Newcastle alone, while my family stayed back in Blacktown. I did some work at a farm in Coffs Harbour between 20003-2005. In 2006 I went back to university and upgraded my degree. I am now working at a Migrant Resource Centre. It is disguised unemployment, as I work in an area where I am not using my skills. I found such survival employment through my own network (family, friends). It is only your own network of family and friends that can help.

(Sudanese Refugee)

A Sierra Leonean man emphasised the importance of their own local community, especially with regards to finding employment. He said:

It is however important to have people around helping you with finding employment. I help other people from my community too.

Another man also highlighted their own community importance in gaining basic jobs.

When I arrived there were hardly any Sudanese community in Sydney. Today many Sudanese network among themselves to find jobs. People help each other finding cleaning jobs, security jobs or help each other getting the taxi licence. Get help from the group around you. They get minimal support from others in finding jobs.

(Sudanese Refugee)
One Sudanese refugee highlighted that he had gained employment through networking and organisational work in the community sector.

I struggled on my own. I am the one that helps me into employment.
My work experience has been local. I have found my employment through networking and organisational work in the community sector.

(Sudanese Refugee)

There is however limitation in how much their own community is willing to help, as there is competition for available jobs in the community sector. These can be seen clearly from one of the comments made by a Sierra Leonean man. He said

There is competition about jobs in my community. If you are highly educated you are always in trouble, because they (that is people from my community) will not include you. I have no family ties here. I don’t have friends high up either. It does however depend on which sector you look at. For example jobs in migrant resource centres, there we are in the lead, that is people of diverse background. There is however an immense competition within our community for these type of jobs {community sector jobs}. When they see that I apply, they might not want to give me the job because of my qualifications. That is human nature. It is hard to integrate into the system.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

As seen from the results above many help each other to find entry level jobs in sector such as cleaning, security and process work. Some are lucky enough to get a foot in the door through the community sector but as seen from the data above shows there is fierce competition for this type of jobs.
4.9 Analysis in the context of the segmented labour market theory

Housing affordability is a big issue in places such as Sydney and refugees and migrants are therefore like most people dictated by housing affordability. What is happening though is that refugees get directed to areas with high concentrations of unemployment. These areas already struggle with higher than normal unemployment rates and social disadvantage.

The NSW State Government are well aware that large groups of refugees and migrants settle into these areas, while simultaneously supporting a policy position that leaves the labour market to its own devices.

As seen from the interview results above does therefore many end up networking within their own community for any jobs. The reality of refugee employment in Western Sydney is therefore that they are left to their own devices and have to rely on their own social network in their search for employment.

Neoliberal thinking, that the market forces would be able to sort these massive problems out has not worked. Many refugees are found struggling in the labour market with no way out, regardless of former skills and qualifications. There are therefore no labour market policies in place to help these groups with access to the labour market.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter has tried to answer the following research questions:

What are skilled refugees labour market experiences in Western Sydney?

Whit other words what are the relationship between refugee’s labour market experiences and the labour market policies carried out in Western Sydney?
Neo-classical human capital theory which argues people with skills and qualifications should do well in the labour market, was found insufficient when applied to the experiences of skilled refugees and many skilled migrants in the Australian labour market. This neo-classical rationale imply that migrants who possess skills and qualifications will be able to find jobs according to human capital requisites, while the reality is that skilled refugees (and also many skilled migrants) from developing countries often experience massive downward economic mobility.

While possessing human capital is an important variable for understanding labour market outcomes, it does not present the whole story. It is therefore insufficient to explain labour market outcomes among this case study group who were different from the standard norm and who therefore face a much more intricate labour market situation than their Australian born counterparts.

However discrimination is still very much part of contemporary Australian society, and often acts as a barrier to refugee and migrant opportunities to tap into and securing decent employment. Much of this type of discrimination is however camouflaged within the labour market processes. Segmented labour market theories, were therefore found valid as a framework to analyse these group’s problems within the Australian labour market. The labour market is still very much divided into different segments, where many people from developing countries still prevail among the lower segments of the labour market, even though there are many who have also become very successful.

The growth of precarious employment was found to be a real issue for these refugees. However place were also found to act as a real barrier to their overall employment outcomes.

However, as argued in the literature chapter, this study found that segmented labour theory, on its own, did not really adequately describe the barriers to employment. Neoliberal labour market policies were found to be a new avenue for creating structural discrimination in the Australian labour market. This issue is described in detail in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5: THE EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES OF SKILLED AFRICAN REFUGEES SETTLING IN WESTERN SYDNEY

The employers don’t think black people can do the work. Thank God for Obama.

(Sudanese refugee)

5.1 Introduction

As seen in Chapter 2 refugees and many migrants, from developing countries, experience downward occupational mobility and loss of economic status after arriving in Australia (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 68-69; Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Junankar and Mahuteau, 2005; Hawthorne, 2008). Colic-Peisker and Tilbury’s well quoted study for example shows that as much as 49.3% of skilled refugees surveyed in their study were employed well below their occupational skill level (2007b: 68). It is therefore clearly not enough to possess human capital requisites for this group as many skilled migrants have ended up within the ‘segmented labour market’ (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007). Despite the human capital advocates obsession with explaining refugees and migrants labour market outcome through their lack of human capital alone, other studies have shown that a range of factors outside these groups own control, also impacts on their overall labour market outcome.

This current chapter will analyse how this groups of skilled African refugees view their own labour market situation and the obstacles they faced within the Australian labour market. When asked about labour market barriers, all highlighted factors such as lack of work experience, lack of English language skills, lack of social networks, problems with getting their qualifications recognised, lack of access to social
services and discrimination. Much of the findings for this study therefore correspond with previous studies identification of refugee and migrant labour market barriers (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007:72; Berman et al 2008; Waxman, 2001; Iredale et al, 1996; Constable et al , 2004; Lamb, 1997; ECCV, 2009; Berman et al, 2008; Carrington et al, 2007; Flanagan 2007: 52).

The focus of this chapter is, however, on how African refugees relate to discrimination as an obstacle in the labour market. Several Australian studies highlight how many are discriminated according to their ethnic names, lack of local experience, their non-Australian accent, perceived cultural differences and physical looks (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 59-85; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Berman et al 2008; Flanagan, 2007; Constable et al, 2004; ECCV 2009). While many of the interviewees in this study also highlighted ‘racial discrimination’ as a labour market barrier, many were also found to be ambivalent or unsure regarding how important they felt this factor was in affecting their overall labour market situation. This chapter argues that much of this ambivalence is based on the rise of new forms of racial discrimination, which in contrast to the more overt old racism, is much more hidden and thereby harder to identify (Giroux, 2008; Davies, 2007: 347; Better et al, 2008: 68). This chapter argues that this has implications for how these groups see themselves and others within their society. As Robert and Mahtani argue neoliberalism has not only led to racism it has also altered the way society views racism per se (Robert and Mahtani, 2008: 2).

These new hidden forms of racial discrimination have its roots within the ideology of ‘neoliberalism’ which has been a major force behind this recent colour-blind line of thought (Davis, 2007). Becker’s neoclassical analysis for example, replaced the concept of racism with terms such as ‘taste’ driven preferences (Becker, 1957: 5). His argument is that racism would decline with the move towards free competition in overall economy (1957). By leaving the market to its own devices, the market forces automatically reward those who do not discriminate in the hiring processes, while simultaneously punishing those who choose to discriminate (Becker, 1957: 5). He argues that this would automatically lead to a reduction of such racism (Becker, 1957). Milton Friedman shares this same view and argues that discrimination in the labour market would decline with the rise of free competition within market forces.
(Friedman, 1962: 108-118). Friedman and Becker therefore see capitalism and racism as incompatible (Bohmer, 2005: 96). They thereby began the process to move the discourse away from focusing on racism as a labour market barrier, to linking wage differences in the labour market with individual attributes or shortcoming (Friedman, 1962: 108-118; Becker, 1957, 1964). Neoliberal doctrines have therefore downplayed the effects and importance of race and ethnicity in labour market settings (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007b: 76; Fugazza, 2003). This can now been seen in the way these refugees view and think about themselves.

The Chapter begins in section 5.2 with an overview of how the case study group of skilled African refugees view their own labour barriers and their experiences in the Australian labour market. A special focus will be placed on how refugees and migrants view factors such as racial discrimination within the labour market processes. Section 5.3 will examine how the interviewees respond to the hidden and undetectable forms of racism that exist within the labour market. This section will also include typical stereotypes made or alluded to by settlement workers and government officials working with African refugees and migrants on employment. Finally, section 5.4 will present this chapter’s conclusion.

**5.2 The labour market experiences of the sample and problems faced**

Mapping refugees and migrant’s labour market barriers is not, as conceded in the introduction of this study, a new area of research. Many studies have already done extensive mapping of the various labour market barriers which hamper or stop refugees and migrants from equitably tapping into the Australian labour market. Australian studies have also found factors such as lack of recognition of overseas educational qualifications, discrimination in the employment market, lack of local work experience, the lack of work-related networks and lack of English language skills as the major barriers to these groups employability (Waxman, 2001; Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007; Iredale et al, 1996; Constable et al, 2004).
This thesis will build on previous studies by contextualising predicaments and circumstances emanating from the case study groups. The majority of the interviewed above highlighted all the factors above. Surprisingly when interviewees were asked about their experiences regarding discrimination within employment processes, several came with contradictory answers or this factor was downplayed. The following analysis of why this is happening will map an interesting new angle in this research.

5.2.1 English language related problems

Sometime they don’t understand what you say, even though you pronounce the word correctly. You have to have the Australian accent but if you go to the dictionary and see how the word is supposed to be pronounced, you find out that you might be correct in the way you pronounced the word in the first place.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

English language is recognised in this study as a major obstacle among refugees and migrants interviewed for this study. Much has already been written about the importance of English language skills as a factor for gaining employment in Australia (Wooden, 1994). This is therefore recognised as one of the main barriers hindering refugees and migrants from tapping into the labour market.

However, this study came across many African refugees who are fluent in the English language. In this group of middle-class refugees, the majority, with the exception of two interviewees, had a very good grasp of the English language. Fifteen of the eighteen interviewees therefore spoke English very well or fluently. While this may not be reflective of the entire African community, it is reflective of the more skilled or professional section of the community.

Despite most interviewees high English language skills, all agreed that English is a major barrier leading to problems within the employment market.
One Sudanese refugee said:

When I came to Australia I did not find employment for two years. I was told I did not have Australian work experience and I did not have the right accent.

(Sudanese Refugee)

This woman also stated that she was fluent in the English language and had years of professional work experience behind her.

Other interviewees questioned the apparent obsession with possessing an ‘Australian accent’ finding they were being discriminated against primarily on the way they spoke. Many highlighted their awareness of a clear bias towards people who speak with a different accent, a point which has not been really addressed as yet. Even middle-class professionals who speak and write the English language proficiently felt they were judged on the basis of their accent. One of the interviewees reported that people look down on them because of the way he spoke. He said:

This unreasonable reliance on one’s ‘accent’ is in a way recognised by a community body AMES NSW. This organisation runs a program for skilled migrants called an ‘Accent Reduction Course’. So despite the stipulation that all migrants who arrive under the skilled migration program must be proficient in the English language, NSW AMES has found it necessary to run a program to train skilled migrants, seeking employment, to speak English ‘properly’. Collins supports this argument, and argues that there is an “accent ceiling” that limits NESB from reaching the top jobs (Collins, 2003: 64).

5.2.2 Lack of networks

All the 18 African interviewees also believed their inability to get proper employment was due to their lack of access to effective networks. This has also been
noted by previous research (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a). This is a common problem for many migrant communities but especially prevalent in new and emerging communities like that of the African community. Jobs often are distributed via existing employees or via the existing employee networks. Mission Australia’s Job Network brochure for example stated in their brochures how 50 percent of all jobs are given to people in their immediate network (Mission Australia, Job Network). This is in line with Granovetter’s (1995: 151) argument that one cannot make blood out of a stone? In other words, one cannot get good and valuable connections when everyone in your community is in the same bad situation as you. So even though the community might be able to network well within their own communities and provide job opportunities, the jobs available will be extremely limited in scope and opportunity. As one Ethiopian refugee and former teacher argues:

Getting a job in Australia is not about what you know but who you know. If you don’t have network, don’t have friends in different companies or organisation, that is influential people to assist them in finding a job, you will not be able to find a job. Even just to get entry level jobs is a major challenge. You need to have someone that can talk about you a little bit such as in factories or organisation.

(Ethiopian Refugee)

One service provider in Blacktown said:

African’s are very good at networking within their community. The problem is that they lack links into the mainstream Australian society. This needs to be formed. At the moment these link are not forming very well. We try to link into this process (informal employment group). The government has done a lot of good stuff regarding immigration, medical etc. but very little is done with regards to their social integration such as linking them into the employment market.

(Service Provider, Blacktown)
Many interviewees also felt that ‘Anglo Australian’s’ often acted as ‘gate keepers’ of employment, and there is very little willingness on their part to let them tap into this market.

One highly skilled Sudanese refugee said he often heard this statement:

Yes you are good, you are over qualified, you are this, you are that, but they always got someone who had local work experience. I began to inquire why they never got me. I began to realise that this is not going to get me into employment in Australia.

(Sudanese Skilled Migrant)

Several interviewees have also completed university courses in Australia but realised they still experienced barriers to employment. Despite fluency in the English language, high skill levels and tertiary qualifications from an Australian university, they still appear to be unable to connect themselves into employment in the private sector. They lack the right networks to be able to succeed. Those who do succeed are often those who have done degrees in social work, while other degrees become disused. One Ethiopian man even stated that this was the reason why he chose to work in the community work sector. He said:

I could do a bridging course in teaching and become a teacher in Australia, but this would not guarantee me a job. I therefore decided to do something else that would give me employment and began my degree in social work, where I know I can get a job. (Ethiopian Refugee)

What he meant was that he would rather do a degree in an area where there are chances of getting into employment, where there is a chance of him building some kind of network, compared to take a degree in a sector where there is very little willingness to give him an opportunity. To date, the community sector is the only
sector that has provided his community with the opportunities to network and gain local work experience through volunteering.

One skilled African man was even convinced by an employment consultant to gain employment in the community sector, thereby forgetting his prior occupation as a highly qualified university lecturer and engineer. He said:

I did realise that this was not the way I am going to get into employment. I had to change my career. That did not happen easily. I went to a course called professional development for professional people. I meet there luckily with a counsellor that asked me to change my career. ...... After a couple of sessions she asked me to change my career. She realised I could speak a couple of languages and she said what about some interpretation services. I joined the welfare sector. I changed my career. It is ridiculous that you have to change your career. I have spent all your life working in engineering, and now I have to change. I was almost fighting with the counsellor who was going to help me. I have spent half my life as an engineer, now I am almost 40 and you want me to change my career. She was very quiet, and said well go home and think about it, discuss it with your wife. Even my wife agreed and I argued with her too. Later on I calmed down and I changed my career ...

(Sudanese, Skilled Migrant)

Four of the interviewees had finished university degrees in Australia. This is on top of their own qualifications from their country of origin, but at the time of interviewing had still yet to find a job in their field. Only those who have done degrees in community work had succeeded in the job market.

One Sierra Leonean man did an accounting degree in Australia, but had yet to find employment related to his qualifications. A very similar situation was reported regarding a Sudanese man who also did a university degree in accounting.
Two Sierra Leonean refugees completed a degree in journalism, with a hope to continue their occupation in Australia, but soon realised that this was not going to get them a job. One Sierra Leonean refugee said:

We have no family here to help. *We don’t have friends and other people in high positions here that can help us.*

While the ethnic community network can help people find jobs in low skilled positions or in the community sector, without any network there are clear limitations. One person highlighted this dilemma. He said:

It depends on the sector we are looking at. For example for jobs in the migrants resource centres there are people from diverse backgrounds. There is however immense competition within our ethnic community. When I apply they might not want to give me the job because of my qualifications. That is human nature.

(Sierra Leonean refugee)

The interviewee is alluding to the unavailability of jobs in different sectors, so the competition is fierce. He argues that many from his own community too, would be selective of who they would advise people to hire from their own community.

One Sierra Leonean man said:

There is competition about jobs (in the community sector), and if you are highly educated you are always in trouble. They will not include you.

(Sierra Leonean refugee)
A Sudanese man said:

Friends and family help a bit. My friends send me stuff on the email, but mostly I do my own job research. We do share jobs within our community. Those who have come after me I tried to help when they arrived and some of them are now working. I was sending jobs and advising others and they are now working in the community sector. A bit of competition there.

(Sudanese refugee)

He stated that while he was helping others, they found jobs, while he still has not been able to gain any proper employment in this sector.

One Sudanese refugee who used to work in the community sector said she was afraid a cut in the intake of African refugees will lead to reduction in the need and therefore the number of African community workers. She says:

Many highly skilled African refugees are working in the multicultural sector. They will not get jobs in the mainstream. They are still not accepted as equal to an Australian with the same qualifications, they are used now because they can speak two languages. Her prediction was that with the decline of African workers in the immigration intake this might not be case for long.

(Refugee and community worker, Sudanese)

5.2.3 Lack of local work experience

The problem of gaining access to the employment market also impacts on their ability to gain local work experience. The majority in this sample of interviewees were very frustrated that employers placed so much emphasis on local work experience. For this group, it appears to be a vicious circle, with no way out. Upon arrival in Australia, many are advised to start networking with different organisations
if they want employment. Those who did succeed in this sample had done volunteering and networking within the community sector. Unfortunately many also do so much unpaid voluntary work and skill upgrading and finally paid casual work, that some claim to be on the brink of physically collapsing. One former high school teacher argues:

What I did after my TAFE lessons was to do my placement in three different organisations. I did things in three organisations to get local work experience...This gave me very little time to spend with my own family. I wanted to do these things ... otherwise it is impossible to get a job.

(Ethiopian refugee)

The way the community sector operates makes it possible to gain this type of job experience. This option is closed in most other occupations. Many of the interviewees would have loved to work in their own occupations in Australia.

One Congolese man said:

It is not English for me, the problem is that they want us to have Australian work experience and they want you to have volunteered some time. If you have just arrived in Australia, and in a short time you have the right to work, why do they then ask us for Australian job experience? How are we going to get work experience, if we are not hired by any Australians? How are we going to get it? It is impossible

(Congolese family migration program)

One Sudanese migrant concluded:

Australia are welcoming migrants and refugees, asking for people to come, but there is no real policy to link them with the engineer society if they are engineers, link them to get local work experience, language, doctors, accountants, agricultural the same. If they did Australia would be a luckier country.

(Sudanese Skilled Migrant)
5.2.4 Recognition of overseas skills and qualifications

Some within this sample have done a tertiary degree in a developing country. When they arrive in Australia their qualifications is only worth a diploma. As one Afghani man said:

Qualifications in one country lead to nothing more than a diploma in the Australian context.

(Afghani refugee)

Several respondents talked about the trauma of having their degree devalued:

One of key challenges when I came to Australia was that my qualifications were not accepted and that I had to do some more courses to become a qualified teacher in Australia. That has traumatised me also, because even if I did my bridging courses I was not guaranteed to get a job, then finally I decided to go to TAFE and do Community Welfare instead. I got my diploma in two years and I got a job in the community sector.

(Ethiopian Refugee)

One interviewee had a journalism degree from a university in Ghana, and naively though he would be able to continue his profession if he did a similar degree at an Australian university. He now feels he wasted his money and time doing his journalism degree at the University of Technology, Sydney, since he has not been able to secure any employment in the field. He has learnt from this mistake and is now trying to find a job within the community or multicultural sector. He is currently volunteering within this sector.
5.2.5 Racial discrimination

Many of the African interviewees played down the role of discrimination when the issue was put to them to explain their inability to get suitable employment. However some did acknowledge that racism may be a problem within the general Australian community, but claimed it only occurred at the fringes. They recognised recent events where the African community were being targeted including by pamphleting by extremists in Blacktown and Auburn, and the decision by the Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews to specifically cut back on African immigration numbers. They are also acutely aware of how some senior politicians persistently play the ‘race card’. Despite these recent negative events, many interviewees did not feel ill-treated or particularly targeted by overt forms of racism. In everyday life, they did not feel racism was a problem.

When the interviewees were asked if they felt that discrimination based on racism has affected their labour market opportunities, many appeared to downplay the role of racism. There appeared to be a relatively high level of confusion on this issue with some acknowledging that this may be a problem but at the same time making contradictory statements downplaying its role later on in the interview.

However all acknowledged that if racism did come into play, it was usually subtle or hidden in its form. However one Congolese man claimed that this type of racism can be easily pinpointed:

Discrimination in Australia is very subtle, you would not know it. I don’t know Australia that much. Australians are great when you socialise with them and when you meet them in the street, but when you apply for employment, you find that they are a totally different breed of people.

(Congolese migrant)
One Sudanese continued this point. He said:

Even when you talk about anti-discrimination, it is just in theory. It is just in the books. But in practice we are not practicing it. It is very easy to say you are over qualified. It is a subtle form of discrimination.

(Sudanese Refugee)

Others are more negative. One Sudanese refugee recounted the experience:

*I am not sure, I see people talk nicely to you, but you don’t know what people have in their in their hearts.*

(Sudanese Refugee)

Some of the interviewee comments were quite contradictory. One of the interviewees argued how he did not see racial discrimination as a problem. However in the same conversation he highlights a range of examples of how he had been discriminated against in the labour market. He said:

I went to a nursing home and I asked the receptionist if I could fill out a form so I can get a job. She did not even ask for my qualifications. She gave me another form, a form for non-educated staff. So I asked her why she gave me this form, when I asked for the other form - there was no answer.

I went to another nursing home at the time, and the same thing happened. They see me, they think, oh he is a black man, he is not educated so they don’t even think that I could have that kind of qualifications. That is the problem.

Not long ago I blasted someone in a nursing home. She thought I was half baked. I told her you have to ask me if I have qualifications. Not just assume that I have none because I am a black man. She apologised.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)
This Sierra Leonean refugee continues:

\[
\text{I still don't believe in the term racism. If I am the manager director of a major bank, five men apply for the job and I the black man apply. If I don't give the jobs to the black man people would say I am racist. But I was looking at qualifications. Same with us, I don't see it as racism.}
\]

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

While he has clearly experienced discrimination within the labour market, on the other hand he still appears to have a strong degree of trust in Australian community not to discriminate. Here lies the current dilemma for many in this situation.

This same Sierra Leonian man also gave examples of his experiences with a Job Network provider.

I was not happy with them before. The way they talked to me. When the job network officer realised that I had skills and could speak English, she knew she had done a mistake. She was just an ordinary office worker. She thought a black man could not have any qualifications. The other lady there knew me because I had blasted here before. She knew me and said sorry. She said the other lady doesn’t understand. That is what pisses me off with these job network centres, their ignorance. First you have to find out about the person, and if he has any qualifications. If he does not have any qualifications then talk to the person so he can upgrade himself and get some kind of qualifications. But just looking at someone and they say they are not good for anything. All this leads to a lot of frustration. I am always pissed off. It also leads to frustration back home. When anyone sees a black man the assumption is that he is not educated.

So my conclusion is that it is not the job network per se, it is the person who deals with you. It is very individual you can be lucky like me. I so far got no job through them though. I am however, no more hopeful.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)
Within the Australian community, there is a strong perception that African people are not skilled. One community worker said:

\[
\text{The employers don’t think black people can do the work. Thank god for Obama.}
\]

(Sudanese community worker)

Some even reflected on the way the government deals with such form of discrimination. One Sudanese skilled migrant said:

\[
\text{Australia is very good in theoretical terms and in procedures it has but when it comes down to practices it is unbelievable. I am a victim of being overqualified, I am victim of people being labelled as “yes you are good but you don’t have Australian work experience”, and “yes your papers are excellent, everything recognised by the Genève Institute of Australia and NOOSA”, but when you apply for jobs, you apply to private sector, and you are not known to them.}
\]

Theoretically Australia is excellent, but in practice there is lots of barriers, lots of obstacles. Some sort of subtle discrimination is there that is not addressed properly. In term of policy, very good, antidiscrimination - there, a lot of laws, rules and regulation, brilliant. But there are no mechanism that exist that can enforce these policies. There is nobody that controls that anti discrimination is not happening. That is the contradiction.

(Sudanese Skilled Migrant)

### 5.3 The issue of discrimination

There is a clear sense of ambivalence and confusion amongst the interviewees as to whether they are experiencing racism and discrimination in the employment process. This ambivalence is based on a strong degree of uneasiness with regards to the circumstances they find themselves in. This reflects the overt way discrimination and racism is practised in the workforce where most of its actions are carried out in a hidden manner. The perpetrators try to remain innocent, and their victims, not able to definitely identify their motives, are left confused.
Because racism has become so hidden, the overall perception within society is also that racism is no longer supposed to take place (Dunn and Nelson, 2011). The ironic thing is that even those who are discriminated against start to think along those lines. They also see that Australians are recruiting skilled migrants at a grand scale to fill skilled migration gaps within the economy. While racism is supposed to take place at the fringes of society, it is not supposed to occur within the recruitment processes. The perception is that as long as you are skilled and qualified you should be able to succeed.

The mental hurdles many within this sample have to deal with in their frustration is therefore that the problem lies with themselves. The effects therefore often become insidious because this type of racism is not supposed to occur. One Sierra Leonean refugee comments:

_The employment I have at the moment is nothing. I don’t know if it is my own problem. When you come to Australia, they will tell you that you don’t have the Australian English, the Australian experience and the Australian training. This means that you have to start from zero. I am always determined to expose myself to new developments and make improvements in my life - we are always ready to do that. So when I came I meet all these others that said you can easily solve it by doing this and doing that. Well with my own personal experience I think I got most of what they asked me to do to get a job if not all. In terms of training (university degree both from an African and Australian university), in terms of experience (long term journalist experience + voluntary work in the community sector). I don’t want to boast about this, but you have your experience and I have mine. But I have yet to experience getting a job in Australia. Because they can not tell me that I don’t have the qualifications, they can not tell me that I don’t have experience and they can not tell me that I don’t have Australian training. You can not tell me that I cannot speak English that you can not understand. You can not tell me that I cannot write English. What is the problem?

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)_
5.3.1 Starting to blame oneself

One of the results in this hidden form of discrimination is that many of its victims begin to blame themselves. Today many deny the existence or relevance of ‘racism’. Racism is therefore assumed to not hold a significant role within the employment processes in contemporary society.

The neoliberal argument therefore encourages a discriminatory society to arbitrarily determine whether a person is deemed capable of fitting in or not. Hence, if you don’t succeed it is more likely that one lacks the perquisites of human capital. If one does not fit in then one doesn’t have the right skills, qualifications, lacks the correct accent, possesses the wrong body language, doesn’t like footy or cricket, doesn’t laugh at the same jokes,— then you don’t fit in. The colour argument is therefore replaced by the ‘skill’ argument.

One skilled African migrant showed how he perceives this subtle form of discrimination. He gave an example of an employment project that was put into place to help young African juveniles into employment and out of crime. A project officer went to many local shops asking if they were willing to give these young people an opportunity to gain local job experience. However he claims everyone gave an excuse not to take them on. Only one was blatantly racist. This person said I don’t want to hire a black person. He jokingly explained how he liked this blatant racist person better than the others. At least he understood where this person came from and where he stood. The rest he argued hid behind camouflaged forms of discrimination. He emphasised that:

It is exactly this subtle and hidden form of racism that gets you.

It is at this point many interviewees begin to blame themselves. Many expressed self doubt and often feel something is wrong with them. Many do realise that one of the many reasons why they don’t get decent employment are a result of forces outside of
their own control. However this predicament creates deep issues of doubt, mistrust, anger, betrayal and frustration and contributes to conflicts within the family and home circles. This is further exacerbated by the financial problems brought on by the precarious position of unemployment or underemployment. Many males also lose their role as ‘breadwinner’ and so lose respect, confidence and motivation to create new opportunities for themselves and their families. This is especially apparent among males who simply feel they are unable to provide for themselves and their families.

A former Sudanese engineer argued that after a while the employment situation started to effect him and his family. He said:

> At that time I had started to lose my friends, fight with my wife, and ask questions like what is wrong with me. I started to lose myself, blame myself, there is a deficiency with me, there is something wrong with me.

(Sudanese migrant)

One Congolese migrant, married to an Australian woman, said she did not understand why he could not find any job. He recounts:

> My wife (who is Australian) tried to apply for jobs for me. For some time she thought I was not applying for jobs, and that I was just happy staying back home and doing nothing. So she got to it. She applied for many vacancies that were advertised, but I don’t think she even got one answer on all her applications.

(Congolese migrant)

These type of experiences have a psychologically devastating effect on people who are used to holding respectable jobs and living standards back in their country of origin. It even has detrimental effects on their family life and leads to break down of marriages, and can even deteriorate into domestic violence and mental illnesses (Veroff, Douvan and Hatchett, 1995: 80; Wilkinson and Marmot, 2003: 20).
A Sierra Leonean man said:

All this led to a lot of frustration. I am always pissed off. It also led to frustration back home.
(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

A Sudanese skilled migrant said:

When you talk about anti-discrimination, it is just in theory, it is just in the books. But in practice Australia are not practising it. It is very easy to say you are overqualified. It is a subtle form of discrimination, you cannot tell, even if discrimination is happening.

That is why it is affecting you. When you find out that the person they give the job too is less qualified than you are, it makes you upset and frustrated. You start asking why?
(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

He continues:

To survive I do voluntary work to build up by skills and experience. I don’t know if the fault is with me or not. I cannot just blame everyone. It is God’s power and he knows the best.
(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

Many highly skilled and qualified persons are often forced, largely due to economic necessity, to take on what they find ‘humiliating’ employment. However, this is far better than being unemployed. One of the interviewees who held a good job in his home country and who obvious possessed a very high degree of ‘social capital’,
applied for a cleaning job in Sydney. But not even the cleaning company wanted him.

He said:

I have another experience that I am not really happy to tell you about. I went even for a cleaner job, the Job Network said that this job was a sure one. The Job Network called me and said that if I was interested should meet up at so and so place. They asked for my papers, citizenship etc (only me). After 2 to 3 days they called back and said we are sorry blah, blah, blah. I did not even get the cleaner job. (laughter)

I did not even tell them about any of my professional experiences. I was just keen to get the job.

These type of experiences have a severe effect on a persons’ mental and emotional health.

Another outcome of this situation is that subjects began critiquing their own community and even other ethnic communities. Much of this frustration and self-doubt also comes out in other negative ways. Some interviewees appeared to not only question themselves and their immediate communities, but also begin to compare themselves with other migrant communities, who in their eyes, appear to be more successful than them.

Below are some of typical scenarios which came through during the interview process. They are:

a) Maybe it’s better in the USA:

One of the interviewees reflected on the fact that it might be better in the United States. She argued that her cousin had found a job at an American university. She also reflected on the fact that the American president was a black man.
b) Comparing themselves with the Indian community:

One man began to compare the African communities with the Indian community and also queried as to whether the Indian community coped better than the Africans did.

One Sudanese man said:

They are more organised, get a job straight away. They don’t move around like the African community. (Sudanese migrant)

These examples illustrate how many appear to question the relevance and effectiveness of their own communities, thereby putting the blame back on themselves.

c) Comparing themselves with other African communities that are not doing well:

One Nigerian woman clearly felt uncomfortable about being linked to the Sudanese community. She claimed all Sudanese are unskilled and don’t want to work. It is clear she is trying to distinguish herself from these groups which she feels may drag down the social status of all other skilled and qualified Africans. She compares herself with these groups by comparing their economic outputs and contributions. This type of rationale fits into the neoliberal argument that migrants have to be economically efficient. This Nigerian woman continued:
For Africans in particular, there is an overall perception within the Australian society that they are all unskilled, humanitarian entrants. They are not supposed to be able to do anything. One African refugee said:

They should bring in people who can speak English and are willing to work. They (referring to the Sudanese) don’t want to learn and don’t want to do nothing. I am from Africa and so they put all the Africans together.
(Nigerian refugee)

Another said:

They (Australians) don’t think we are capable of doing anything”
(Sudanese refugee)

Another said:

When anyone sees a black man, the assumption is that he is not educated.
(Sierra Leonean refugee)

Another stereotype is that Africans are primitive.

When the white guy see black guy people think we know nothing. There are a number of time people have asked me stupid questions and it was just because that I at that time managed to restrain myself that I did not burst out. Foolish, foolish questions that I cannot even imagine they would dare to ask anyone. There was for example a guy in Queensland who said to me, you are using shoes now-what where you using back in your home country. I wanted to give him a big slap, but I managed to restrain myself. I looked at him and I shook my head.
(Sierra Leonean Refugee)
This person had had a very good job in his home country. He belonged to the upper strata of his society and was totally devastated that someone would make such an outrageous and insulting comment.

Another stereotype that disempowered many Africans in Australia is the idea that they are helpless victims and are therefore very dependent on handouts from Australian society.

Many African’s are tired of being seen as helpless refugees and victims. They want to get on and start building up their lives in Australia. As one Sudanese migrant argues:

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The perception in Australia of a refugees is someone that come to Australia as a refugee and is going to stay here as a refugee. However most refugees are very keen to start their new life as soon as they can and become independent and be able to build up their life again.
(Sudanese skilled migrant)
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This type of stereotype is even prevalent among service providers to refugees. One Western Sydney-based service provider admitted that a very paternalistic attitude prevailed among service workers working with African refugees. He said:

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The Africans. Oh my God! This paternalism, it did not happened with the other groups. It is like everyone must have their own pet African. Sorry I am going off the track a little bit here but it perceives how some people see Africans. Such as they are good at working in the dirt, so send them out to a farm to get work experience program. What I am getting at though is that there is a mismatch between the perceptions of the service providers and the Africans themselves.
(Service provider)
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5.4 Conclusion

This chapter aims to provide some insight into some of the many problems African refugees and migrants experience in the labour market. This experience is exposed through their insights, personal views and experiences. A range of labour market barriers were highlighted such as lack of networks and local work experience, lack of English language skills, lack of recognition of qualifications and finally, discrimination. Many of these results match, as discussed in the introduction, recent studies which mapped refugees and migrants labour market barriers (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2007:72; Berman et al 2008; Waxman, 2001; Iredale et al, 1996; Wagner, R., Childs, M. Constable, J., 2004; Lamb 1997; ECCV 2009; Berman et al 2008; Carrington et al 2007; Flanagan 2007: 52).

What is new in this chapter though is the way racial discrimination is understood and perceived among these groups of African refugees and migrants. This chapter shows that neoliberal ideology has had a much deeper impact on this group than just altering refugee and migrants’ overall labour market outcomes. As these case studies show, the implications often go deeper than that often effecting how these skilled refugees and migrants view themselves and others in their communities. This sample also left a strong impression that many blamed themselves for their predicament.

This groups did not highlight racism in everyday life as a problem, but emphasised what really affected them was the type of discrimination that stopped and hindered this group tapping into the labour market. Despite being aware that racism is a large obstacle, many “internalise” the problem of not finding work. They seem to accept the colour-blind human capital argument that racism does not really exist in the labour market as long as one has proper skills and qualifications. This colour blind human capital argument, which pushes the idea that racism no longer exists in the labour market and the neoliberal idea that anyone can compete in the labour market.
as long as they are skilled, has had a major impact on some of the refugees interviewed in this thesis.

Many respondents seemed to follow this logic:

- They know they are skilled, they know they have the qualifications that are sought after and wanted in Australia.
- They cannot get jobs in these areas;
- They conclude that the problem must lie with themselves.

This factor leads to a lot of psychological stress. This is why the colour-blind racism is dangerous (Davis, 2007; Giroux, 2004)

It is clear that the neoliberal colour blind human capital argument has a strong impact on how refugees and migrants perceive themselves in this labour market. Such treatment is seriously stifling hope, positive mindsets, willingness to mix and aspiration to contribute socially, economically and politically back to Australian society. Instead this study has found a growing level of confusion, anger, betrayal, duplicity and deception among many who feel they have a lot to give towards Australian society.

Only one person within this sample had managed to get a job at a similar level to the previous held in their country of origin. In this instance, this person had started up her own hair dressing salon.

What this chapter has tried to highlight is that neoliberalism has changed the concept and meaning of racism per se (Robert and Mahtani, 2008: 2; Giroux, 2005; Davis, 2007: 349). Robert and Mahtani highlight more work needs to be done explaining how neoliberalism modifies the way race is experienced and understood within the general society (Robert and Mahtani, 2008: 2). This chapter has therefore tried to highlight how racism is experienced and understood among this case study group of African refugees.
Neoliberalism has also altered the way racism is viewed among employers. For example, Tilbury and Colic-Peisker show in their study that many employers and employer representatives do not like to use the term racial discrimination in the employment market anymore. Instead they found that many of the employers interviewed in their study transferred any issues of discrimination to the clients or the applicant. While these employees were aware that injustice took place, they were not willing to do anything to correct these problems (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006: 270). Tilbury and Colic-Peisker’s study is therefore a clear example of how racial discrimination has become camouflaged amongst employers based on market based thinking.

They write:

> Within a neo-liberal framework, employers argued they should be allowed to choose employees freely, and should not be compelled, through affirmative action policies, to accept diversity.

This chapter therefore taps into the discourse of how neoliberalism constructs neoliberal subjects. Neoliberalism has long been active in constructing the idea amongst the general public that it is a necessity to reign in public spending, privatise services and encourage people to take greater share of responsibility for their own employment experiences. Neoliberalism is today, as Beaten argues, a whole philosophy expressed in certain attitudes towards society, the individual, employment and the city (Beaten, 2011: 24) which again is producing spaces, states and subjects in complex and multiple forms (2011: 26). Enck Wanzer argues that in this environment has racism been driven underground, become privatized and born again as something different (2011: 24). He borrows this term from Goldberg who refers to this new form of racism as ‘born again racism’ (Goldberg 2009: 23). Goldberg writes:

> ‘it is racism without race, racism gone private, racism without the categories to name it as such. It is racism shorn of the charge, a racism that cannot be named because nothing abounds with which to name it’.

(Goldberg, 2009: 23)
CHAPTER 6: NEOLIBERAL SOCIAL POLICIES AND ITS IMPACT ON SKILLED REFUGEES LABOUR MARKET SITUATION

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters described the experience of skilled and semi-skilled African refugees in the Australian labour market and the impact of neoliberal labour market policies. In line with much previous research, the interviewees from this case study group were confronted with issues such as unemployment, underemployment or being directed to particular industries. The domineering human capital perspective which views migrant and refugee’s labour market outcomes as a direct result of their human capital resources, were found to leave many of the interviewees confused. They struggled with grasping the conflicting messages which tells them that on the one hand migrants with skills and qualifications should be able to succeed in the Australian labour market, and on the other hand the overall neoliberal assumption that racial discrimination should no longer be a problem within the labour market processes. Barriers to success in the labour market thereby become automatically correlated with these group’s personal flaws (Roberts and Mahtani, 2008). Many within this sample were therefore found blaming or questioning themselves for their employment problems, leading to psychological stress affecting both themselves and their families. The argument put forward in the previous chapter is therefore that neo-classical human capital based research and neoliberal ideology have been part in ‘silencing’ (Goldberg, 2009) or ‘mute’ to use Davis term (2007: 350) these refugees claims of racial discrimination within the employment processes. This has therefore had strong implications on how these groups view themselves and others in their own community. This chapter therefore claims that neoliberalism had done more than just generating racialised results. As Robert and Mahtani argues (2008: 2) it has ‘worked to modify the ways in which race functions’ in the overall society.
This present chapter will analyse why skilled and semi skilled refugees continue to struggle in the Australian labour market. It will also thereby explore some of the many ways neoliberalism and neoliberal policies in Australia have generated racialised results. As Goldberg argues race has become

‘embedded within the structures, without being explicitly named, where it is more difficult to identify, more ambivalently related to’ (Goldberg, 2010: 90).

While being skilled, qualified and with a good grasp of the English language are important credentials for any migrant’s employment situation (Cobb-Clark & Chapman 1999; VandenHeuvel & Wooden 1999, 2000; Cobb-Clark 2000, 2001; Richardson et al. 2001, 2002), it only presents a part of the full story. Human capital based research are therefore not equipped in its pure form to explain why so many skilled refugees but also skilled migrants from developing countries lag behind in the labour market. Both skilled refugees and skilled migrants from developing countries have still, despite their excessive skill level, found to be unemployed and underemployed within the Australian economy (Ho and Alcors o, 2004; Hawthorne, 2008: 15; Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Chiswick and Miller 2008).

This chapter will therefore try to throw some light on the impact discrimination is having on this group’s labour market situation. As seen in chapter 2, most of the current forms of labour market discrimination are found embedded and hidden within the structures of the many labour market institutions. This type of discrimination is often labelled as ‘institutional’ and ‘structural discrimination’. While some researchers refer to these two terms synonymously, other sees it useful to distinguish the terms. Pincus (2003: 2) for example defines institutional discrimination as:

the behaviours of individual members of one groups that is intended to have a differential or harmful effect on members of another groups.

Pincus, on the other hand, refers to structural discrimination as:

the policies of majority institutions and the behaviours of individual who implement these policies and control these institutions that are intended to be
race/gender neutral but which have harmful effects on people of colour and women (Pincus, 2003: 2)

This chapter has however chosen to use a definition that combines both institutional and structural discrimination, as it is very hard to differentiate between the two in a practical setting. This chapter will therefore build on the definition set out by the Swedish Inquiry into Structural Discrimination. They write that structural discrimination:

refers to rules, norms, routines, patterns of attitudes and behaviour in institutions and other societal structures that represent obstacles to ethnic or religious minorities in achieving the same rights and opportunities that are available to the majority of the population. Such discrimination may be either open or hidden, and it could occur intentionally or unintentionally (Lapplainen, 2005: 4).

Examples of such structural discrimination in the Australian labour market can therefore be found when employers avoid hiring some people in society because of their physical appearance or ethnicity (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a; Ho and Alcorso, 2004: 254; Constable et al 2004, Berman, 2008) or when employers choose to ignore job applications with ethnically different sounding names (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009: 21\textsuperscript{17}) or cultural fit (Tilbury and Colic-Peisker, 2006). Such forms of discrimination can therefore very easily be hidden and camouflaged within the institutional practices of an organisation.

This chapter goes a bit further and argues that much of the structural discrimination is currently linked to neoliberal policy changes. What this chapter is analysing is therefore the impact of race-neutral neoliberal policies and the behaviour of the organisations and the individuals who implement and control these institutions, that impact on refugees employment prospects in a negative way.

\textsuperscript{17} Their study found for example that a person with a Chinese sounding name, living in Sydney, had to put in 92\% more job applications than a person with an Anglo sounding name (Booth, Leigh and Varganova, 2009: 13).
To understand how neoliberal structural discrimination has found its roots within the labour market it is necessary to review the neoliberal changes in the public sector and how these changes have interacted to impact on the labour markets of Western Sydney. These tasks are undertaken in this chapter. Section 6.2 will analyse the impact of neoliberal policies within the public service sector with a special focus on the outsourced Australian employment service. Finally section 6.3 will conclude.

6.2 Neoliberal restructuring and the public sector

Refugee’s problems in the labour market have become exacerbated by the neoliberal restructuring of the Australian public service sector. On top of the hurdles imposed on this group as a result of the restructuring of the labour market, a range of policy changes were implemented to change the Australian public service sector. This was based on the neoliberal assumption that free market ideology would produce better services and thereby lead to better outcomes than governments (Pursey, 2003). One of the driving forces behind this critique, as described in Chapter 2, was the work on Public Choice Theory. The overall aim was to introduce competition within public service delivery and thereby make public services more economically efficient and cheap to run (Health et al, 2009). The service delivery role, previously delivered by Government, should now be undertaken by private and community based corporations (Berrios, 2000: 27). The role of the state should now be reduced to a steering or controlling task, reflecting the Osborne and Gaebler report which recommended governments to ‘steer’ but not ‘row’ in the service delivery process (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). A range of quasi market and competition incentives was therefore put into action within the Australian public services sector during the 1990s that aimed to live up to this new neoliberal ideal.


6.3 The Australian public employment service

The Australian government’s commitment to neoliberal ideals within public service delivery became particularly apparent with the full outsourcing of the ‘Australian Public Employment Agency’ the ‘CES’ in May 1998. Private, community and public organisations who were interested were given the opportunity to compete in a market based environment to gain a public employment service contact. This new quasi-market based employment service was named the ‘Job Network’. In July 2009 this model changed and was rebranded to the current employment service ‘Job Services Australia’. The research for this thesis was carried out before the recent policy change in July 2009. The focus of this research will therefore be on these refugees’ experiences with the former ‘Job Network’ model. It is however worth noting that the current employment model, ‘Job Services Australia’, is still based on the quasi-market model (McDonald and Marston, 2008). Even though some differences have been made to the program, DEEWR is still the purchaser, while the many service providers are still contracted to provide the services.

6.3.1 Description of the Job Network, how it works and its evolving problems

These contracted Job Network agencies were given the difficult task of providing unemployed job seekers on Government Income Support with employment assistance. While still being a federally funded program, its structure was purely based on market based ideology (McDonald and Marston, 2008: 114). Economic labels were therefore put in place for the different actors in this artificial market; the government in this case the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) became the ‘purchaser’, while the ‘Centrelink’ and the many ‘Job Network’ agencies became ‘contracted service providers’ and the unemployed job seekers, the ‘clients’.

Because of the experimental nature of this policy structure and its focus on cost efficiency, many problems began to emerge. The following section will look at the Job Network’s Funding Structure and its impact on the Job Network agencies overall.
behaviour. These agencies’ behaviour will in the following section be linked to the case study groups’ experiences with these agencies.

The first employment service contract (ESC1) commenced in May 1998 and lasted until February 2000. In this tender round there were 306 successful applicants coming from the private (33.3%), community (33.3%) and public (33.3%) sector (Thomas, 2007: 2). The second employment service contract (ESC2) commenced in Feb 2000 and lasted until May 2003, this time with only 206 successful applicants which were now predominantly from private and community based organisations (ibid). In both these service contracts were successful providers awarded tender based on an overall assessment of ‘quality’ and ‘price’ (Thomas, 2007: 2).

The main problem that emerged straight away was lack of support to the more disadvantaged job seekers (Thomas, 2007:17; Quirk, 2009:3; Eardley, 2003). The more disadvantaged clients were found to be left to their own devices in the ‘Intensive Assistance’ phase (Thomas, 2007). In the literature this phenomena has been referred to as ‘parking’ of clients (Thomas, 2007: 17 and 30; OCED, 2004: 45). In contrast extra support were instead found to given to those who were easier to find employment to, as this action where found to provide better revenue for these agencies (Thomas, 2007: 18) The phenomena has in the literature and policy papers been referred to as ‘creaming’ (Thomas, 2007: 18 and 30). Thomas (2007:17) summarises this issue in his review of the Job Network model in 2007:

designed to increase the cost effectiveness of the system and promote assistance for difficult to place job seekers through higher outcome payments for this group in reality it introduced pervasive incentives to “park” difficult job seekers in Intensive Assistance. These difficult job seekers were offered minimal or no service by some Job Network providers with the resources saved then invested in those job seekers most likely to generate an outcome payment. Because Job Network providers received an upfront commencement payment irrespective of employment outcome, so long as they did not spend too much on service provision for job seekers in Intensive Assistance, their profitability would be assured. Moreover, where employment placement for
job seekers were delayed for sufficient length of time, the outcome payments for these job seekers increased substantially”

Problems such as ‘creaming’ and ‘parking’ therefore came about as a result of the funding mechanisms of the Job Network contracts (Thomas, 2007; Productivity Commission, 2002: Chapter 9; Cowling and Mitchell, ). In Employment Service Contract 1 (ESC1) 20 percent of overall income came from outcome based fees, which further increased to 33 percent in Employment Service Contract 2 (OECD, 2004: 35). However the problem with this fee structure was further intensified firstly by the limited monitoring of the providers carried out by the Government and secondly because of the limited fees paid to the Job Network agencies for providing Intensive Assistance (Thomas, 2007).

The government was therefore forced to do something to change this problem pattern in Employment Service Contract 3 (ESC3). This contract began in May 2003 and the first stage of this contract (ESC3) lasted until June 2006. This tender round was a bit different from the first two stages as well as it firstly reduced the number of agencies to 109, while secondly letting 60 percent of the previous agencies continue without further tendering (Thomas, 2007: 2). Stage 2 began in June 2006 and lasted until June 2009 with a rollover of 95 percent of these agencies (Thomas, 2007: 3).

What was new in ESC3 was that ‘quality’ became the main evaluation measure based on the current star rating system (Thomas, 2007: 2). The government’s aim with this mechanism was to move clients towards those Job Network agencies with highest star rating (OECD, 2004: 28). The fee for outcome based payments was also reduced to combat the major problems associated with ‘parking’ and ‘creaming’ of clients (Thomas, 2007). The emphasis was now instead on assuring that these services were carried out (OECD, 2004: 35). A Job Seekers Account was therefore also established to make sure that such services were spent on the clients (OECD, 2004: 35). The main model for service delivery under ESC3 was however based on the Active Participation Model. As Thomas Points out (2007:19):

> The introduction of the ‘Active Participation Model’ was not just about ensuring that job seekers were provided with adequate employment
assistance by the Job Network providers. It was also an exercise in ‘tree-shaking’, or a means of ensuring that job seekers were in regular contact with a Job Network provider and actively engaged in job search, mutual obligations and other authorised activities.

A whole new set of problems emerged. Compulsory interviews with Job Network providers led to severe administrative problems for the Job Network providers and Centrelink (Thomas, 2007: 19-20). It also led to additional problems for the clients who now risked losing their Centrelink payment if they breached any of these new incentives. Thomas therefore argues in his evaluation that this lead to move away from free market conditions (flexibility, choice and competition) towards regulations and monitoring from the governments side (Thomas, 2007: 23). The problem with employment assistance is associated with the structure of this employment model.

Another problem which has emerged is that under this new model, there is less training of Job Network staff. Quirk confirms this and argues that less training has been provided (2009: 4):

in employment brokerage skills, counselling, industrial and occupational knowledge and in understanding labour market disadvantage and strategies for redressing them.

### 6.3.2 Refugee experiences with the public employment service based on interview data

Based on the interview data from this thesis, none of those interviewed found employment through any of the job network agencies. Twelve of the participants in this study had used the Job Network. Of the twenty interviewed only two had some positive comments regarding this public employment service. These two said they were happy with the way the Job Network had helped them make their resume, but nothing more. It however worth noting that neither of these two respondents gained employment through any of these agencies.
Prior to the 1996 had the government been the main deliverer of employment services. However with the influence of the ‘Public Choice Theory’, a range of quasi market initiatives were put into place. In this creation of quasi market everything became based on choice. One service provider in Auburn concedes:

Before we had one provider but everyone knew who it was, now there are so many providers and everyone is just confused. It is like going to the supermarket and buy a tin of tuna, there are so many varieties, tuna in tomato, oil, water, in brine, there is a whole wall full of canned fish, to the point where I have been so overwhelmed by the amount, and ended up buying nothing. Choice at times is meaningless. The whole thing is based on market ideology, where consumers should be given a choice, when actually there wasn’t one.

This is also happening with refugees when they arrive here. There are so many different providers and many of them don’t know who to go to or what to expect from them. Often they end up with not using these services at all, and those who use them have therefore very negative employment results from them. They also often listen to friends who tell them negative stories about their experiences with the Job Network providers.

When I asked a service provider working with refugees in Blacktown if any of the African refugees manage to get jobs through these networks the answer was:

No one get jobs through the job network.
(Settlement worker, Blacktown)

At the same time there were 472 Humanitarian entrants active on the jobs networks case load in Blacktown (DEEWR Presentation in Blacktown).
One former Sudanese businessman said:

I used AMES employment. It is not very good because it has a long waiting period. I got no jobs through them. This is the same for everyone in my community. It is hard for immigrants to find jobs through any of these organizations”.

(Sudanese, Refugee)

A simular observation was also done by an Iraqi service providers:

They (the refugees) go to the job network for example and they register their name fine, and they send them to do interview courses fine, but if you really deeply consider the nature of job network, most of them are corrupted. They do the education profile for the client, report it and get the dollars and forget about them.

An Afghani doctor summarises his experiences with the Job Network this way.

I tried for a long time to get a job, and I went to job network, Mission Australia. It was not very good because they just got us to read newspapers. I think that Mission Australia and others should try to find jobs for the people. They should be contacting employers and find work for the people not only get you to read the newspaper and make a record of you. It is not good. It makes the people lazy.

(Afghani refugee).

Another Iraqi service provider argued:

They are however not interested in helping refugees as their have no money attached to them. If they lack language skills they are not interested. If they got English language skills and qualifications, they might spend some money and time to retrain them. They are however in most cases not interested in spending money on refugees, just let them do some job searches by themselves etc.

(Iraqi Service Provider)
One Ethiopian refugee concluded:

No, the job network what they tell you is to go on the internet and do job search yourself.

This is a particular problem for many lesser skilled African’s where they might not have the same infrastructure as in Australia. How are they going to do job searches when they don’t even know how to use computers, one of the interviewees noted.

Another service provider said he had seen how hard it is for many within these communities:

Job network is doing nothing for them. One guy had to be physically removed from one of the agencies.

(Settlement worker, Blacktown)

One man from the Congo argued:

Not helpful, they tell you about job availability but it ends there.

_In Australia I have only had one interview. I don’t know why._

(Migrant, Congo)

One Sudanese refugee said:

I have used the job network. It is not good, the support they give is bad, even the computers are not working. There is 3-5 computers, and 1-2 are always not working. I used IPC. They provided me with interview and resume training. But they don’t connect people with employment. Sometimes they do, but is always in lower key jobs. I have yet to get any jobs through them though.

(Sudanese, refugee Auburn)
The majority of those who had found jobs had managed to get them through their family, friends or community networks (interview data).

Most of the jobs that I have got, I have found with the help of God and myself. I have done some interpreting, worked as a tutor, teaching community groups, causal work and volunteer as a case worker. I am also currently training with DOCS to try to get some work as a social worker.

(Sudanese Refugee)

One Congolese said:

The job network is a money making business. The government are happy to dish out money to these agencies, when they are doing nothing.

Others said that this situation makes it impossible for refugees who may not have computer skills or the language skills needed. The infrastructure in many African countries at war is limited, so many don’t have computer experience. However this does not mean that they don’t have skills. Many have trade skills such as carpeting or painting. They are however not offered traineeship positions because they are often regarded as to be too old to gain any apprenticeships (Service provider, Blacktown). One skilled Sierra Leonean refugee summarised his experiences:

I was not happy with them before. They way they talked to me. When the job network officer realised that I had skills and could speak English. She knew she had done a mistake. She thought a black man could not have any qualifications. The other lady there knew me because I had blasted at here before. She knew me and said sorry. She said the other lady doesn’t understand. That is what pisses me off with these Job Network centers, their ignorance. First you have to find out about the person, and if he has any qualifications. If he does not have any qualifications then talk to the person so he can upgrade himself and get some kind of qualifications. But just looking at someone and then say they are not good for anything. All this leads to a lot of frustration.
He continues:

Before I had not much believe in the Job Network, but now I find it more helpful. About a month ago, I meet an older lady at ‘Job Find’. She is very good. She is so patient and helpful. She helps me, and tells me things, and that was why I was so pissed off before. She explain that even if you have lots of qualifications it does not mean you will find a job. Before they left me to my own devices with regards to finding a job that is not the way to go. You have the qualification but how to translate them into employment.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

This shows that there also exists a general perception among many service providers that African refugees are unskilled. These groups are therefore very much on the mercy of the service providers that provide these services. He continues:

So my conclusion is that it is not the job network per see, it is the person who deal with you. It is very individual you can be lucky like me. I so far got no job through them though. I am however now more hopeful.

(Sierra Leonean Refugee)

This person was lucky to find someone with skills and qualifications that has been in the game for some time to help him. However with the casualisation of the work force there is also a rapid turnover among Job Network providers. Those who have been in the business for a long time has also become burned out and many young and less experienced staff find their way into these organisation. These do often not get the same type of training that the older generation of employment service provider had (Quirk, 2009). DEEWR staff also dealt with this problem. They admit:

High turnover is a problem. How does a provider keep its staff?

(Interview data DEEWR staff)

One DEEWR staff member also reflected on the fact that many service providers in the past had many years of professional experience behind them and could therefore provide better services than currently.
The current focus on labour market flexibility and casual employment has led to the fact that:

...much previous experience in these organisations has been lost. (Interview data DEEWR staff)

She was not only referring to Job Network agencies but also training organisations such as TAFE. By bringing in new recruits she argues there has been a loss in skills in many service provider organisations. (Interview data, DEEWR staff)

This argument is supported by a study by Marston and McDonald who obtained the following comments from Job Network managers:

I feel this system at the moment is an absolute disaster and is burning out many staff. You will lose a lot of the long term staff. The system is causing irreversible damage to the minds of people working in it. It creates too much paper work and not enough personal help to clients. It has become a process line job. Job satisfaction in helping people is out the window and as soon as I can get out I will. I personally know of the same attitude in others...

Something must be wrong if you have one employment sector like ours with such a high turnover of staff. Within the four years I have been working in the Job Network I have seen more than three quarters of the total staff change over. (Marston and McDonald, 2003:8-9)

These Job Network providers are expected to show economic outputs. These people work under a very high stress levels, with around 100 clients each (Interview data, Auburn). That is a lot of clients to provide for, and with the competitive incentive in mind it is therefore obvious that they will focus on those who are most easily helped.

One DEEWR interviewee commented that there is hardly any difference between the way the NGOs organisations and the private recruitment agencies run the Job Network agencies (Interview data, DEEWR). It is therefore important to highlight
that also the NGOs are working as private corporations. While one arm of the organisations is carrying out charity work, the other arm runs a pure business arm.

With the focus on competition is also becomes clear that there has been very little communication among the different service providers working in this sector\textsuperscript{19}. They are competing against each other. This chapter’s main argument is therefore that the economic incentive creates marginalisation of those who do not fit into the mainstream. At the same time has government tried to reduce these type of pervasive outcomes (‘creaming’ and ‘parking’) with accountability measures (Thomas, 2007) which again has taken up much of these private and community based organisations time.

One MRC staff highlighted this issue:

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Even the Job Networks have to have high numbers of clients to make a profit for themselves. Lots of people are therefore left nowhere. They are left to their own devices.
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All the clients therefore become a number. This study is not claiming that the Job Network providers do not want to help clients. Rather, these organisations are faced with massive constraints imposed on them through the governments funding arrangement. As one of the service providers summarised:

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We have to comply with the people who fund us.
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While there has been changes to the main foundation of the Job Network program (July, 2009), it is still a competitive model. It is still tendered out to private, church and NGO groups. It is still about creating economic output.

\textsuperscript{19} As observed at the Auburn Employment Forum, February 27\textsuperscript{th} 2009.
One service provider in Blacktown said that he welcomed the new changes but that he thought it maybe that it was very little difference to the present system.

Some said that changes had to be done, but that in reality it is pretty much the same.

Another service provider said:

I think we have to look at what was there before the job network. It was the commonwealth employment service. It was run by government, they had an office in every suburb, every town, everywhere. If you were employed, it didn’t matter if you were on the dole or not, you went down there and they found you a job. And employers called up and got someone from the CES.

Government had to be made small and all this stuff, and they got rid of the CES and replaced it with the JOB network.

The CES had its own deficiencies and but at least everyone knew where to go. I believe it was much better than the job network.

(Settlement Worker)

To summarise there is a range of reasons why skilled refugees in this case study sample were not able to find employment through any of these organisations.

- Firstly because the current employment agencies are run like private enterprises they have focused on those who are most likely to provide an economic return to these organisations. Job Network agencies have therefore been found to focus on the: “job ready” clients.
- Everyone has to comply with the economic incentives set out by the government, which again has led to accountability problems.
- Job Network staff often does not understand the situation that refugees are in.
• This is compounded by the high turnover of staff in Job Network agencies.
• Some agencies were found to be under-resourced e.g. some agencies had only limited working computers.
• Many respondents said they were left to their own devices (doing computer searches).
• Job Network agencies have a ratio of 100 clients per staff member leading to little individual attention.

The results from this small sample is small are obviously not statistically significant, but the findings of this study can be supported by evidence from similar research.

For example, at a community consultation in Fairfield in 2006 it was found that out of the 15 African migrants who attended this seminar, only one had got a job. He had found the job, not through the Job Network, but through a private employment agency (Bartles, et al, 2006: 7)

Moreover, the findings are supported by the work of Colic Peisker and Tilbury (2007a) whose research also examined the impact of the usefulness of the Job Network services. They used a survey to ask 150 refugees about the usefulness of the network. This study shows clearly that the majority of refugees surveyed found the service to be poor or at best acceptable.

**Table 6.1: Usefulness of Job Network Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Former Yugoslavian</th>
<th>African</th>
<th>Middle Eastern</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Extracted from Colic-Peisker and Tilbury’ Report, 2007a, p. 28.*

Note however, that this study did not ask if the Job Network had assisted them in gaining employment.
The Job Network was in June 2009 changed to ‘Job Services Australia’. However as reported by the Refugee Council, many service providers were also in 2009-2010 still frustrated by the ineffectiveness of the ‘Job Service Australia’ model. Their argument is that such generalist employment services do not fit groups in the society such as refugees. They write:

Although a new employment services model was introduced in 2009 and any evaluation of the efficacy of this model is some way off, many of the previous concerns raised regarding the old Job Network model are likely to be equally pertinent to the new JSA model. Indeed, most community members did not or could not distinguish between the former Job Network and the current JSA. (RQOA, 2010: 70)

They continue:

The new JSA model has incorporated greater administrative requirements without a commensurate increase in funding, and the system is still very much designed for providers working with individual clients who have a good understanding of Australian employment systems and workplace culture and are fluent in English. That is, JSA providers are not resourced to provide the kind of targeted individual and community support that would provide newly settled jobseekers with the necessary job-seeking skills and understanding of workplace culture. (RQOA, 2010: 70)

While this system might work for some Australians, it is not working for people who suffer different forms of discrimination in the labour market. More specific services are needed to assist these groups into employment.

6.4 Other public settlement services

The Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) is the first settlement service refugees are entitled to after arriving in Australia (first six months). It also
based on a purchaser provider model which allows both private enterprises and NGOs to tender to undertake these services. These tender based services include case coordination, information and referrals, on-arrival receptions and assistance; accommodation services and short term torture and trauma counselling (RCOA, 2009-2010: 43). In NSW ACL the main providers of such services, with smaller providers FM Resolve and Mission Australia.

After this initial stage, Migrant Resource Centres (since 2003 funded under the Settlement Grants Program) provide assistance and information relating to employment, housing, education, Centrelink, health, domestic violence, immigration and aged care. The funding to successful applicants is given on a project basis, with priority given to regions and communities in need, and thereafter assessed and determined annually (Spinks, 2009: 7).

Government’s role, on the other hand, is to monitor and create bureaucratic rules to ensure that these organisations are not wasting taxpayer’s money. A range of accountability rules has been developed to assist in this process among these services as well. This again has had implication for the NGO sector but also private companies, who now need to spend a lot of their time, and economic resources on management and administrative functions (Keevers, 2006:12). The outcome of this massive creation of accountability rules is that these organisations too have fewer resources available for their service delivery functions. (Keevers, 2006: 12).

Keevers et al argues it is not only the state itself that has become outcome focused in this system. The NGOs also adopted this approach. He writes:

In this way it is not only the State that has demanded outcomes but the organisations themselves have become performative in understanding their work in this way (Keevers et al, 2008: 6)

Migrants that come under the skilled migration program are not entitled to any employment services for the two first years in Australia. Many find it hard to tap into the employment market despite the popular portrayal of the Australian skilled migration program (Ho and Alcorso, 2004).
By way of contrast, refugees coming on permanent protection visas, like most of the African refugees, are entitled to a range of services that are provided to assist refugees into employment. However despite the fact that they are entitled to many of these services, the harsh reality is that there is hardly anything in these services that support these groups into employment. One service provider argued that in the currently climate people only do what they need to do to satisfy the accountability standards set up by the government. Anything else has become seen as irrelevant. It is therefore not so much about helping and assisting these groups anymore. She continued:

Everything and everyone becomes numbers. It results in that everyone thinks short term. They want numbers so they can continue to get more funding. The level of help therefore becomes short term....

*Not that they don’t want to help, more that everything* has become so political. We have to comply. People have becomes numbers.

She thereby concludes with the following comments:

It is therefore a matter of accountability. Who keeps these organisations accountable and how. All this changed that has taken place with government services, comes down to that we have to comply with the people who fund us. Lots of people are therefore left nowhere, to their own devices.

### 6.5 Local reactions to neoliberal service delivery

The changes described in this chapter shows that Government in many ways is controlling the third sector, by making their funding dependant on their economic performance and efficiency measurements (Van Granberg and Bassett, 2005: 9). Everyone in the NGO has to work with one main thing in mind - how to guarantee
their organisations funding for the coming year. This has, as some have already argued, been part of the strategy for silencing some of the worst opposition to the neoliberal policy changes taking place within the public sector (ibid, 2005:9). However, such neoliberal thinking has however, as Keevers argues, impacted on how these organisations view themselves (Keevers, 2006). Keevers describes how many within these organisations have themselves been found to adopt these ways of thinking (ibid, 2006).

Neoliberal thinking has constrained some settlement services workers so much that some of the service providers interviewed in this thesis has began to feel very uncomfortable with the way the system works. One small group of service providers in one LGA in Western Sydney for example has started their own employment service, outside their representative agencies.

One person in this network said:

| We formed a loose employment group. This is however done outside our representative work organisation and all on a voluntary basis. |
| We have had as many as 90 refugees and migrants on our database. |

A couple within this group criticised the Job Network model and even the way many of the settlement organisations were run. They therefore moved out of the neoliberal realm to be able to support and assist refugees into employment, stating their own employment support service. As one of them said:

| The Job Networks do nothing for these groups..... |
| Even migrant resource centres have to apply for funding through the government. You have to justify your funding. All services has to follow black and white paperwork, so many becomes left behind. (Service provider) |
One individual therefore struggled with working in such an environment. She found that whatever she tried to do to assist these groups with employment was rejected by her employer because it did not fit into the requirement needed to get funding (service provider).

However many governments has in Europe tried to neutralise the negative impact of such neoliberal policies by implementing third way policies such as the social inclusion agenda and highlighting partnerships approaches. With other world some ‘roll out’ of the many neoliberal policies pushed strongly during the 1990s. Some work has also in Australia been done in this area such as:

- Implementing the Social inclusion Agenda\textsuperscript{20}

- Some Local Employment Initiatives for lagging regions such as Blacktown, Auburn, Fairfield and Campbelltown (DEEWR).

- Partnership approaches.

There is however nothing in the social inclusion agenda that specifically targets refugee or migrants communities. The main focus is on supporting social enterprises, children at risk of long term disadvantage, jobless families with children, areas with greater disadvantage, people with mental illness, homelessness and indigenous Australians\textsuperscript{21}.

While getting community organisations involved in partnership arrangements are vital, it does not help if the funding structure for the main programs is not working.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{20} The Rudd Government established the Social Inclusion Unit in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; and established the Australian Social Inclusion Board.
\end{flushright}
6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to show the many ways neoliberal ideology, theory and policies have contributed to marginalise specific groups within the Australian labour market. This chapter even goes so far as to argue that such neoliberal policies and practices in itself can be labelled as a cause of structural discrimination leading to racialised segmentation.

The previous chapter primarily argues that Australia’s labour market flexibility policies have led way to increased racialised results. Most of the interviewees within this sample were found to be unemployed or under-employed regardless of their skill level and struggling to deal with non-standard work arrangements. The problem with such casual or temporary jobs is raised by several academics and they point out that such jobs hinder further career building options (Campbell, 1996; Watson, 2004). While many would have liked to work more, this option is often no longer there. While such policies has impact on the lower skilled in the society, it has an even worse detrimental effect on groups who struggle with different forms of discrimination in the labour market. While statistical material has been scarce, I have highlighted this issue by sourcing material from other studies.

Secondly, his present chapter shows how neoliberal ideology fed by public choice theory has led to marginalisation of those who do not fit the norm in Australian society. The public choice theory has opened the way for out-sourcing of government services to private organisations and NGOs. This has also impacted on the way these organisations are run. These new governmental administrative regulations have in more recent years hamstrung these organisations by excessive administrative responsibilities mainly to prove their economic efficiency. This has also indirectly exacerbated the marginalisation of refugees and migrants. This essential creates a vicious cycle where little to nothing is achieved. With the major outsourcing of public services, every organisation has to comply with government accountabilities rules. This has left many, as the case study interview and statistics from these chapter shows, to fend for themselves.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This thesis has discussed neoliberal ideology, theory and policy and its effects on a small group of skilled and semi refugee in the Australian labour market. While structural forms of racial discrimination has been found in a variety of levels in the Australian labour market, little research has explored the link between refugees, neoliberalism, employment and structural barriers and discrimination. A cross disciplinary framework was developed for this study to achieve its research objectives. This framework included concepts from labour market theory, race theory and governance theory. Despite the fact that many of these theories belong to different disciplines, they were found to be an important vehicle to gain an overview of what is going on within the Australian labour market. As seen from the literature chapter, neoliberal ideology, theory, policies and practices infiltrated most aspects of everyday life. It has infiltrated our understanding of labour market analysis through Becker’s human capital theory, our understanding of racism within labour market settings through Friedman’s and Becker’s work, and even public service delivery through Buchannan’s Public Choice theory.

The thesis was divided into four different stages. Stage one focused on statistical analysis, exploring data related to refugees and migrants labour market situation in Australia. Stage two and three were based on interview data of refugees and also government officials and community workers working with refugees in the labour market in Western Sydney. This data explores refugees’ experiences in the labour market and also examines the barriers and their experiences dealing with public services. Lastly, section four includes a policy review.

The thesis addressed the following research questions:
1. What are the labour market experiences of skilled African refugees in Western Sydney?

2. What are the relationship between their experiences and labour market and social policies?

3. How do refugees perceive and understand their own labour market situation?

4. Is enough done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market?

Section 7.2 will address the four research questions above and summarise this thesis’ research findings. Section 7.3 will also highlight the importance of this thesis. Finally Section 7.4 will present some of the policy implications of the study’s findings.

7.2 Research findings

The research findings from each of the research questions will be summarised below:

7.2.1 What are the labour market experiences of skilled African refugees in Western Sydney?

Research question one was addressed in chapter four of this thesis. It reveals the explicit links between neoliberal economic policies and the labour market experiences of refugees.

While migrants and refugee that arrived in the post-war period had problems utilizing their skills and qualifications, they were at least able to find employment (Jupp, 2002). However refugees who arrived in the 1990s and later were faced with new sets of obstacles which did not affect earlier generations. Today skilled refugees
are faced with a vastly different labour market, where jobs are ‘casualised’ and insecure. They are also confronted by negative changes to service delivery that took place as a result of government cost cutting measures in the 1990s. Local labour market measures have also taken a neoliberal turn (Fagan and Dowling, 2005), negatively affecting these groups labour market outcomes.

The neo-classical human capital theory which argues people with skills and qualifications should do well in the labour market, was found flawed when applied to the experiences of skilled African refugees and migrants in the Western Sydney labour market. This theory cannot alone explain the entrenched labour market disadvantage experienced by this group. A critical analysis was therefore undertaken in an attempt to explain why certain groups of people become trapped in segments of the labour market or locked out of employment altogether.

The main problem found with the human capital theory and human capital based literature is therefore as also reported extensively its ignorance of accepting ethnicity and racial discrimination as a major labour market barrier (Ho and Alcorso, 2004; Becker, 1957: 5 and Friedman. 1962: 108-118).

Segmented labour market theories, were therefore found better suited as a framework to analyse these group’s labour market outcomes and experiences. The labour market is still divided and people from developing countries still prevail among the lower segments of the labour market. Recent literature has already documented a range of reasons for why these groups end up in the segmented labour market (Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a).

What is new in this thesis however is the way neoliberal labour market policies play a part in creating labour market segmentation. Australia’s labour market flexibility policies have led way to a more segmented labour market. For example most of the interviewees within this sample were found to be unemployed or under-employed regardless of their skill level, struggling to deal with non-standard work arrangements. The problem with such casual or temporary jobs is raised by several academics and they point out that such jobs hinder further career building options (Campbell, 1996; Watson, 2004), and have poor job security. Such neoliberal labour
market policies have therefore had an uneven effect: the worst affected are the most vulnerably in the society.

Work has also been undertaken showing the spatial unevenness occurring as a result of neoliberal labour market policies (Peck, 1996; Fagan and Dowling, 2005). Fagan and Dowling for example highlight the disadvantaged clusters of Auburn and Blacktown LGA (Fagan and Dowling, 2005), areas with massive unemployment rates and high disadvantage among its residents. Most of the refugees in NSW were also found clustered in these more disadvantaged areas. While the NSW government is aware that such clustered settlement of refugees take place (often placed there by settlement workers), nothing has been done to mend the massive unemployment rates taken place within these clusters. Instead neoliberal labour market policies have been allowed to rule freely (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). While such policies have led to job growth for the western Sydney region as a whole, a problem of labour market access has emerged (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). This study therefore argues that skilled refugees in these areas have therefore been left to fend for themselves.

7.2.2 What are the relationship between their experiences and social policies?

Research question two was addressed in chapter six, and aimed to provide further insight into reasons why skilled refugees continue to struggle in the labour market regardless of their human capital requisites.

This is a small study so no conclusion can be made to as whether the findings could be replicated amongst all skilled refugees. The findings from this small sample do however raise issues around different new forms of structural discrimination that is worth further investigation.

The results from the survey and interviews suggest that neoliberal ideology, theory, policies and practices have contributed to marginalise this group in the Australian
labour market. This chapter even goes so far as to argue that for the group investigated, such neoliberal policies and practices in itself can be labelled as a cause of structural discrimination leading to racialised segmentation.

This study concludes that the neoliberal service system is not working for the refugees group investigated. The outsourcing of government services has strongly impacted on the way these organisations are run. These new governmental administrative regulations have hamstrung these organisations by excessive administrative responsibilities. This essential creates a vicious cycle where little to nothing is achieved. This has left many, as the case study interview and statistics from this chapter demonstrate, to fend for themselves.

For example, the refugees in this study found it hard to get any help from any of the public employment agencies. These organisations are run like private enterprises, and are heavily influenced by the economic incentives set up by the government. They therefore spend a lot of time filling out paper work and justifying their work. The skilled refugees in this study therefore found that they were left to their own devices, often directed to do computer searches by themselves.

The results from this small sample is small are obviously not statistically significant, but the findings of this study on the problems with the Job Network model can be supported by evidence from similar research (Bartles, et al, 2006: 7 and Colic Peisker and Tilbury, 2007a).

This chapter therefore presents a critique of the neoliberal assumption that free market ideology would produce better services and thereby lead to better outcomes than government delivered services. This chapter therefore also finds the ideas of Public Choice Theory to be deeply flawed and questions the overall idea that competition within public service delivery will make public services more economically efficient. Instead it found that such policies often makes things worse for the group studied.
7.2.3 How do refugees perceive and understand their own labour market situation?

The third research question, which focused on refugee experiences in the Australian labour market, was addressed in chapter 5. This chapter provided this thesis with insight into the many problems skilled African refugees and migrants experience in the Australian labour market. A range of labour market barriers were thereby highlighted by the interviewees including the lack of networks and work experience, lack of English language skills, lack of recognition of qualifications and finally, discrimination. Many of these results correspond with previous studies which identified refugee and migrant labour market barriers.

What is new in this chapter though is the way racial discrimination is understood and perceived among the case study group of African refugees. This chapter argues that neoliberal ideology and theory (human capital theory) have impacted on how this case study group views their own employment situation. Confronted with issues such as unemployment, underemployment or segmentation in certain industries, many interviewees were found bewildered and confused. They often struggled with grasping the conflicting messages which tells them that, on one hand, migrants with skills and qualifications should be able to succeed in the Australian labour market but then failing to find meaningful work. For some respondents these barriers to success in the labour market become automatically correlated with personal flaws. Many within this sample were therefore found blaming or questioning themselves for their employment problems, leading to significant psychological stress affecting both themselves and their families. The argument put forward in the chapter 5 is that neoclassical human capital based research and neoliberal ideology have been in part ‘silencing’ (Goldberg, 2009) or ‘muting’ (Davis, 2007: 350) these group of refugees claims of discrimination within employment processes. This chapter therefore claims that neoliberalism had done more than just led to racialised results, it is as Robert and Mahtani’s study also argues, ‘worked to modify the ways in which race functions’ in the overall society. (Robert and Mahtani, 2008: 2). Neoliberal ideology and theory therefore pushed the idea that race is unimportant in present day society, while at the same time being a creator of racism. The respondents’ view of themselves and their
own employment situation is therefore found to lead to a growing level of confusion, anger, duplicity and deception among many who feel they have a lot to give towards Australian society.

7.2.4 Is enough done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market?

The fourth research question, asks if enough is done to combat the many problems refugees go through in the employment market. The current policy settings in Australia do not seem to be having a positive impact on the employment prospects of refugees. Instead we are witnessing a situation where people who were previously not destitute, are becoming so, on a large scale. These groups are hindered by a range of visible and invisible barriers, which slowly breaks down their hopes and aspirations for the future. This thesis has shown how the rise of neoliberal policies in the last three decades has seen a ‘restructuring’ of the labour market and the cutting back and outsourcing of government services, has placed both refugees and migrants from developing countries in an extremely helpless situation in the Australian employment market.

This study argues that the complexity of structural barriers and structural discrimination needs to be place on the agenda again among government, policy makers and scholars on labour market analysis. The current silencing of such issues, can only makes things worse for the people concerned and also for the regions where these people settle.

In the presiding neoliberal economic environment, government is no longer expected to create employment or even procure adequate services for its new citizens. This has left marginalised groups such as refugees and migrants from developing countries to fend for themselves. While some initiatives has been put into place to improve this situation, such as the social inclusion agenda and a few partnership approaches, the reality remains that these policies are still embedded within a neoliberal perspective. Even though some polishing has been done at the edges it is still very much the same
system. Public service delivery is still outsourced to private and community based organisations in a market based environment. What becomes clear is that the current general employment model is not working for these groups. The newest members of Australian society deserve better.

7.3 Significance of this research

Recent literature both in Australia and overseas have shown how many refugees, despite having skills and qualifications, are still unable to tap into the labour market. Many end up unemployed or with fruitless casual jobs in the secondary labour market. Similar employment outcomes are also found among many skilled migrants from culturally and visible different communities in Australia. There exists an invisible barrier, where many migrants and particularly refugees are trapped in unattractive jobs regardless of their skills and qualifications. This lack of opportunities leads to despondency and cynicism as shown in Goh’s study of the Assyrian (Iraqi) community in Fairfield (Goh, 2005). This under-utilisation of refugee and migrant skills and qualifications has relevance not only for the refugees themselves but is also a waste of opportunities for the many local areas where they settle. Still there exist several gaps and even obstacles within policy which prevents people from gaining employment and from accessing services that should assist them with regards to accessing employment and settlement services. Instead much of these policies act as a structural barrier in itself. This study therefore contributes to the literature that critically reviews the impact of neoliberal or economic rationalist thinking within public policy and governance in Australia.

Secondly if large groups of skilled refugees and migrants end up unemployed and underemployed this could also threaten social cohesion at the local level. As Phillimore and Goodson writes;

Lack of coherent integration initiatives to assist those granted refugee status, will lead to high levels of unemployment and deskilling amongst new

Lack of employment lead to social exclusion, and problems for areas that are already experiencing deprivation such as the LGAs of Western Sydney. There is no doubt that satisfactory employment is the basis of successful settlement and integration of migrants and refugees, and that there is a strong link between employment and social exclusion. The employment and integration policies that have been undertaken will therefore have major impacts on migrant and refugee communities as a whole. If large numbers of refugees and migrants are not incorporated into local communities this can lead to dissatisfaction and even social unrest (OECD, 206; 34). As Phillimore and Goodson further note (regarding refugee settlement in deprived urban areas in London) unemployment will exclude refugees because:

on low incomes and without the opportunity to interact with local people – they will be excluded from other aspects of society such as consumption and social interaction” (2006: 1730).

Instead large numbers of new refugees and migrants are pulled into an economy, where full-time employment is sparse and where underemployment is profound, and where social services have been significantly reduced.

Thirdly there has been a lack of critical research on employment of refugees in Australia in comparison to other countries. The discourse on labour market analysis of migrants has been dominated by the human capital approach and the importance of filling the nation’s skills gap. In Canada and the US, there has in recent times been a range of studies that critically analyse the link between neoliberal policies and racial discrimination. Most research on refugee and migrant employment in Australia in comparison, from the 1990s and until very recently, commissioned by DIMIA (now DIAC) emphasises the claimed economic successes of the skilled migration program. Instead of encouraging independent and critical research, any such efforts have been killed off with the closure of independent research agencies and the reduction of funding to research with a broader remit. This thesis is one attempt at filling this gap.
7.4 Policy implications

The overall question this thesis has tried to answer is: why has the current employment system generated such negative labour market outcomes for skilled and qualified refugee migrants settling in Australia? Their labour market situation can clearly not be blamed on Australia’s overall economic situation, an economy that sustained strong economic growth between 1996-2007. Even the 2008 global economic crisis, which left the Australian economy relatively unharmed, cannot be blamed for this overly negative outcome. Similarly, it is problematic to blame all refugees for lacking human capital requisites, as many refugees from developing countries have been found to possess both skills and qualifications. While racism is a problem in the labour market both past and present, it does not appear to be worse now than previously. Several new forms of institutional barriers have however developed especially since the 1990s, which actively stops and hinders these groups from gaining a foothold into the labour market. This study found one of the main problems to be hidden within the neoliberal economic and social policies that have been pushed onto labour market and the social service sector in Australia since the 1990s. Within these policies, discrimination of different forms has been allowed to flourish.

The neoliberal policies pushed on the public sector for example has resulted in a range of interesting policy creations such as the public employment service known as the ‘Job Network’, now the ‘Job Services Australia’. This government funded contracted out employment services, based on a neoliberal market rationale, ended up supporting clients with less employment barriers, rather than supporting the most disadvantaged. The reason for this is that these groups provide greater economic output for these organisations. Refugees and other vulnerable groups are therefore left to their own devices unable to gain much support from these services. Unfortunately the neoliberal culture has also found inroads into the NGO sector, which also have had to adopt the overall vision and language of greater transparency and efficiency to survive. Many service agencies therefore struggle with delivering the services in a way that benefits their client, and end up using a range of resources
to satisfy their funders. Those who do not comply with this efficiency rational have had their funding cut altogether.

In addition to this, the neoliberal housing market, plays are significant part in negatively shaping refugee’s employment situation. Secure and decent housing is the anchor point for starting to get their life back on track both with regards to employment and social integration. With public housing on the decline, refugees are forced into the private housing market. Many experience problems with their landlords or real estate agents, and with rising housing prices and rents are forced to move into suburbs which often are high unemployment clusters. Many new refugees are therefore either placed in these cheaper rental areas by government officials or move there because of cheaper rent. Many refugees and new migrants therefore tend to cluster in these areas. While this helps them with networking among their own community and may provide unstable and short term employment, it does not assist in tapping into more sustainable employment.

Thirdly, neoliberal thinking has played a role in the restructuring of the employment system in general, leading to massive casualistion of the labour market and insecurity for many groups. Vulnerably groups in the labour market such as refugees are therefore among the many found in this segmented labour market. Even the local labour market in Western Sydney has been left to the market forces as highlighted by Fagan and Dowling (Fagan and Dowling, 2005). While such policies have led to job growth in the region as a whole, it has failed to assist local disadvantaged job seekers with accessing these new jobs. Instead these jobs often go to skilled people from other areas of Sydney.

Fourthly, neoliberal thinking has impacted on how many refugees perceive their labour market situation. In other words it shows how neoliberal thinking has constructed new realities. Many deduce that their employment problems are their own personal fault, holding themselves responsible for their negative employment experiences. Professor Kevin Dunn highlights this problem stating that the dominant response to racism in Australia until a few years ago has been public denial. He referred to both Howard’s handling of the ‘Cronulla Riot; and the politicians handling of more recent attack of Indian students (Dunn, 2011)
So what could be done to encourage better the labour market outcomes for these skilled refugee migrants?

The government needs to take a more pro-active role in creating job access schemes especially for areas that suffers massive unemployment and disadvantage such as the high unemployment clusters existing within Auburn and Blacktown LGA in Western Sydney. The neoliberal turn to market based thinking in these areas has clearly disadvantaged many groups including new refugees and migrant communities. Instead of leaving outcomes to market forces these areas would benefit from implementing more proactive and supportive labour market policies targeting disadvantaged job seekers.

This again would benefit by being combined with a better public employment service especially targeting vulnerable groups within the society such as refugees and new migrants. Services that focus on improving employment outcomes for the groups in need and not just on revenue for the service provider should be developed. Some sort of stable public housing would further improve these people’s well being.

A more open policy stance that acknowledges that racism is a problem within our society would also be beneficial for this group. It will help them with understanding their own employment problems, instead of putting the blame back on themselves. The current development of a new National Anti-Racism Strategy for Australia is therefore the first step in the right direction to highlight the problem of racism and discrimination represent for many groups within Australia.
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information sheet for refugees

Displaced Human Capital: Untapped Talent of Greater Western Sydney

I would like to invite you to participate in a new research, which is exploring the employment situation, and livelihood strategies of skilled urban refugees settling in Greater Western Sydney, and the impact this group have or can have on the local area where they settle. This will be done firstly by examining the way the Australian governments (federal/state/local) support or obstruct refugees’ efforts to enter the labour market. Secondly, an analysis of how skilled refugees organise their own survival strategies with a special focus on ethnic networks and social ties as factors in achieving employment and successful integration. Finally, the study aims to look at the absorption and use of refugees’ knowledge base and the impact skilled refugees have in the communities in which they settle. The case areas for this project will be the Local Government Areas of Auburn, Fairfield, Liverpool and Blacktown in Sydney’s Metropolitan Region.

I was hoping that you, a skilled refugee living in Greater Western Sydney, would be interested in participating in a focus group or an interview to discuss your progression into the Australian labour market and the strategies you have utilised in this process.

The qualitative nature of the analysis will provide a better understanding of the human and social capital refugees bring to a particular place and how local institutions take that into account in their planning systems. The study will therefore provide policy analysis and suggestions for a better design of policies and instruments that minimize the economic mismatch that could be occurring with settlement of refugees in Australia.
The study is part of a Doctorate investigation under the supervision of Dr. Cristina Martinez and Professor Ed Blakely (Sydney University). The Urban Research Centre is an independent research centre, with no commercial ties, that specialises in research on cities and urban and regional development. For further information please contact Merete Bjorkli on (02) 8833 5906 or 0413 61 93 73, m.bjorkli@uws.edu.au or principal supervisor Dr. Cristina Martinez on (02) 8833 5932, c.martinez@uws.edu.au. Further information on the Urban Research Centre is available at www.uws.edu.au/urban.

The attached discussion themes are for orientation only of how the content of the discussions in the focus groups might look like but your input in this process is very important and new themes can be added. The research will be conducted confidentially and will not include names of individuals or organisations taking part in this project. In accordance with the University of Western Sydney research ethics practices written consent for participation in the focus groups and the interviews will be requested prior to taking part in the study. This written consent would assure you exercise your choice of participating or not participating in this study after reading the information provided. You also have the right to withdraw or change any of the information that you have given at any time without providing any explanation. You also have the right to request that specific information will be included in the analysis. The interview will only be tape recorded if you agree to do so.

If you are willing to take part in this research, please send me an email or contact me by phone, and I will email you back with the time and venue for the focus group and/or interview.

You will be given a summary of findings from this study. If you would like a further explanation on this project please feel free to contact me or my academic supervisor for further information.

The research team thanks you for your attention.

Kind regards.

Ms Merete Bjorkli

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NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee or Panel (indicate Committee or Panel). The Approval Number is HREC Number 07/198. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee/Panel through the Research Ethics Officers (tel: 02 4736 0883 or 4736 0884). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 2: Consent form for refugees

Displaced Human Capital: Untapped Talent of Greater Western Sydney

I have read the Information Sheet and understand that the study is regarding my employment experiences in the Australian labour force, and the livelihood and skilling strategies I have utilised to get into this market. I therefore understand what my involvement in this project might be and have agreed to participate.

The research will be conducted confidentially and will not include names of individuals or organisations taking part in this project.

I understand that I may withdraw from the research at any time without providing any explanations. I also understand that I will only be tape recorded if I agree to do so.

Please indicate below if you are willing to be tape recorded during the focus group (voice only):

I agree to be tape recorded:

☐

I don’t agree to be tape recorded:

☐

Name of participant:

---------------------------------------
I would like to invite you to discuss my PhD thesis which is looking at the employment situation and survival strategies of Sudanese, Afghani and Iraqi refugees living in Greater Western Sydney. Refugees has been chosen as the focus of my study since they present a unique case to examine the impact of programs and policies in a mismatch between talent and skills much needed in the Australian economy. While it is true that refugees generally experience more unemployment, poverty and health problems much less is known about how they contribute to shape the knowledge base of those suburbs they choose for settlement. Many refugees bring specific skills that can contribute to the Australian labour market. Their exclusion is a lost source of potential talent to the economy because their skills are either underused or discouraged. The study analyses the existing government policies that aim to assist this group getting into the Australian labour force and the importance of the refugees own network in this process.

The qualitative nature of the analysis will provide a better understanding of the human and social capital refugees bring to a particular place and how local institutions take that into account in their planning systems. The study will therefore provide policy analysis and suggestions for a better design of policies and instruments that minimize the economic mismatch that could be occurring with settlement of refugees in Australia. The study will collect narratives of refugees settling in Sydney’s suburbs and its progression into the labour market and quality of life.

The research will be conducted confidentially and the result of the research will not include names of individuals or organisations participating in this project. The study is part of a Doctorate investigation under the supervision of Dr. Cristina Martinez (University of Western Sydney) and Professor Ed Blakely (Sydney University). The Urban Research Centre is an independent research centre, with no commercial ties, that specialises in research on cities and urban and regional dynamics. Further information on the Urban Research Centre is available at [www.uws.edu.au/urban](http://www.uws.edu.au/urban).

I would like to discuss this project with you, as a community leader working with refugees, in order to include any views you might have on this topic. I will contact you by phone soon to
arrange a suitable time for a meeting. For further information please contact Merete Bjorkli on (02) 9798 9205 or m.bjorkli@uws.edu.au.

Kind regards,

Merete Bjørkli

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**NOTE:** This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee or Panel (indicate Committee or Panel). The Approval Number is **HREC Number 07/198**. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee/Panel through the Research Ethics Officers (tel: 02 4736 0883 or 4736 0884). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix 4: Survey

DISPLACED HUMAN CAPITAL: UNTAPPED TALENT OF GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SKILLED REFUGEES LIVING IN AUBURN, FAIRFIELD, LIVERPOOL AND BLACKTOWN

August 2008

Contact persons for this document:
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The Urban Research Centre is a Research Centre of the University of Western Sydney.

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         Parramatta, NSW, 2150
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Fax: (02) 9891 5899
Web: www.uws.edu.au/urban
Questionnaire protocol

This survey is part of a study examining the employment situation and skilling strategies of skilled refugees living in Auburn, Liverpool, Fairfield and Blacktown. The study also analyses the existing government policies that aim to assist this group getting into the Australian labour force and the importance of the refugees own network in this process.

The survey consists of 28 questions and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey is divided into 4 sections:

- section 1 asks for some details about your background;
- section 2 asks about initiatives and services that might be helping you with finding a job;
- section 3 asks questions about what employment and skilling strategies you have utilised to get a job and
- section 4 asks question regarding the importance of networks in finding employment and with settlement in general.

The study is part of a Doctorate investigation under the supervision of Dr. Cristina Martinez and Professor Ed Blakely (Sydney University). The Urban Research Centre is an independent research centre, with no commercial ties, that specialises in research on cities and urban and regional development. For further information please contact Merete Bjorkli on (02) 8833 5930, m.bjorkli@uws.edu.au or principal supervisor Dr. Cristina Martinez on (02) 8833 5932, c.martinez@uws.edu.au. Further information on the Urban Research Centre is available at www.uws.edu.au/urban.

The responses are analysed as aggregated data and no names or identification is recorded. If you are interested in participating in a focus group or an in-dept interview please send me an email and I will forward you an information sheet (m.bjorkli@uws.edu.au).
SECTION 1 – ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND

What is your former country of origin?
   Afghanistan

   Sudan

   Iraq

   Former Yugoslavia
   Other: Please specify

Question 1.
How long have you been living in Australia?
   One year

   Two years

   Three years
   Three to five years

   Five to 10 years

Question 2.
Where do you currently live (suburb)?

_______________________

Question 3.
What type of visa do you have?
   Permanent Protection Visa

   Temporary Protection Visa

Question 4.
What type of education do you have?
   No formal education

   Secondary education (High school)
Certificate or Diploma level (technical college) 
(please indicate in what field) 

Bachelor's degree (please indicate in what field) 

Masters Degree (please indicate in what field) 

PhD or Doctorate (please indicate in what field) 

**Question 5.**  
Which gender are you?  
- Women  
- Man  

**Question 6.**  
Did you have family living in Australia before your arrival?  
- Yes  
- No  

**Question 7.**  
Did you arrive with family members?  
- Yes  
- No  

**Question 8.**  
How well would you rate your knowledge of the English language?  
- Fluent  
- Very good  
- Good  
- Basic  

**Question 9.**  
Which age group are you in?  
- 20-30  
- 30-40  
- 40-50  
- Over 50  

**Question 10.**  
Which occupation did you have in your former country of origin?  

______________________________  

How many years experience do you have in this job? 
______________________________
**Question 11.**
What type of job are you doing now?

_________________________________

*If you are not working please go to Question 17.

**Question 12.**
Is this job casual, part-time or full-time?
- Casual ☐
- Part-time ☐
- Full-time ☐

**Question 13.**
Do you have more than one job?
- Yes ☐
- No ☐

**Question 14.**
How many hours a week do you work?    Employed in a full time position ☐
- Under 10 hours ☐
- Between 11-20 ☐
- Between 21-30 ☐
- Between 31-37 ☐
- Over 38-40 ☐

**Question 15.**
How is this work related to your qualifications?
- Appropriate ☐
- Below skill level ☐

**Question 16.** Please indicate the importance of these units in gaining employment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not relevant</th>
<th>Little importance</th>
<th>Somewhat importance</th>
<th>High importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from your country / culture</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugees/migrants from other countries</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian friends</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 17.** What type of jobs have you managed to get through your ethnic network (family, friends, and ethnic community organisations)?
**Question 18.** Have most of your job experiences been in your Local Government Area?

- Yes  
- No

**Question 19.** Which Job Network provider did you use?

----------

**Question 20.** How useful was the Job Network services in finding you a job?

- Very helpful
- Good
- Not helpful at all

**Question 21.** What type of job did the Job network provider find for you?

----------

**Question 22.** What methods do you use when applying for jobs? And the importance of these methods in gaining employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Seeking Strategies</th>
<th>Not Relevant</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply for jobs found on the internet or Newspaper ads</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for jobs through Job Network</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for jobs through Centrelink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding jobs by contacting employers yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding jobs through your closest networks (family and friends)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding jobs through contacts in ethnic community organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding jobs through your contacts with Australians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting up your own business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SECTION 2 – SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

**Question 23.** Have you used any of the employment services below? If yes, please indicate how helpful they have been in assisting you in gaining employment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Providers</th>
<th>Not relevant</th>
<th>Not helpful</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Very helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Network Members (Mission Australia, IPC, AMES, Salvation Army, Employment Plus, Employment Plus, Max, Job Find)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Employment Networks Services</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work for the Dole</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Support Program (PSP) e.g. STARTTS</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRELINK (MSO)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ProLinks (Professional Links mentoring program)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leaders and Volunteers</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMES Community – Refugee mentoring project</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private recruitment agencies (e.g. Julia Ross)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 24.** What training and skills programs have you attended since your arrival in Australia?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Skills Programs</th>
<th>Not attended</th>
<th>Attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language course AMEP</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses through community organisations (such as English courses)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE Courses</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seeking courses</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University courses</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Company training</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging courses to get your qualifications recognised (TAFE or university)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 25.** Please show the importance of the training of skills programs that you have attended with regards to your employability? (Only those you have attended)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Skills Programs</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

230
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and Skills Programs</th>
<th>No but I would like to</th>
<th>Yes, it was free</th>
<th>Yes I pay for it myself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seeking courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging courses to get my qualifications recognised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 26.** Have you managed to get your qualifications recognised in Australia?
- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

**Question 27.** Have you participated in any of these training and skills programs during the last 12 months, and how did you finance it?

**Question 28.** Where are these training programs located?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration partners</th>
<th>Local (radius 20km)</th>
<th>Sydney metro</th>
<th>Elsewhere in NSW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job seeking courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging courses to get my qualifications recognised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 29.** What is the biggest barrier in attending training programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to attending training programs</th>
<th>Not Relevant</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problems commuting (no car, no public transport where you live, to expensive)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The courses are to expensive</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No childcare</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to earn money instead</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SECTION 3: YOUR OWN EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLING STRATEGIES**

**Question 30.** What has been your *greatest barrier* in gaining employment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to employment</th>
<th>Not Relevant</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problems with getting qualifications recognized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Australian work experience and/or Australian references</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost all papers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination on the basis of race, religion and/or ethnic origin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination on the basis of ‘soft skills’ such as Australian cultural knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of networks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems commuting to work (no car, no public transport where you live, to expensive)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health problems and/or stress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 31.** Has anyone helped you with preparing resumes and job application and preparing for interviews?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

If yes which organisation? ________________________________

**Question 32.** Have you been part in any organised work experience placement program (mentoring program)?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

If yes who organised it and where was it? ________________________________

**Question 33.** Would you be interested in taking place in any work experience placement program (mentoring program)?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

If no, why not? ________________________________

**Question 34.** Have you started up your own business?

- Yes [ ]
No

*If no please go to Question 30.

**Question 35.** If yes in the above question, what type of business are you running?

_______________________

**Question 36.** What has been the main obstacle in starting up your business?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacles</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No experience with Australian business regulations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems finding your market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others. Please specify</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 37.** If you have started up your own business did you receive any type of assistance in this process?

Yes

No

**Question 38.** Do you regret starting up your own business?

Yes

No

**SECTION 4: THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT IN SETTLING SUCCESSFULLY IN AUSTRALIA**

**Question 39.** Why did you settled in your Local Government Area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auburn/Fairfield/Liverpool/Blacktown</th>
<th>Not relevant</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a community there of people from my former country of origin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good public transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many refugee service providers there</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent at cheaper there</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many ethnic community organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious churches/mosques are located there</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The place is safe and friendly to live in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Question 40.** Do you have many friends living in this area, and where do they come from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auburn/Fairfield/Liverpool/Blacktown</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Many</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same country as yourself</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africans from other countries</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern/Asians/European migrants</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian born</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 41.** Is your ethnic community (Sudanese/Iraqi/Afghani community) in Greater Wester Sydney socially active?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Question 42.** Are you **socially active** within your community?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Question 43.** Are you part of an ethnic community organisation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Question 44.** Is there any mistrust between people within your ethnic community?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Question 45.** Why is it important to have people from your own ethnic background living in this area?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People from your own ethnic background</th>
<th>Not relevant</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist with finding employment</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist with finding housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide emotional support</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come together for cultural celebrations</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious leaders will also be located there</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community organisations will be located there</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please specify</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 46.** How often do you have contact with the different actors below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge intensive services</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Extended) Family members living outside your household</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from your country of origin/ culture</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends from other refugee or migrants communities</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian born friends</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 47. Do you feel isolated?
Yes ☐
No ☐

Question 48. Do you have a good relationship with your neighbour, and how important is this network for you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbours</th>
<th>No Importance</th>
<th>Little Importance</th>
<th>Some Importance</th>
<th>High Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbours from your ethnic background</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant neighbours</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian neighbours</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 49. What is the best thing of living in Fairfield/Blacktown/Auburn/ Liverpool??

Question 50. How is public transport in your suburb or Local Government Area?
Very good ☐
Good ☐
Bad ☐

Question 51. Do you live alone or do you share housing?
Live alone ☐
Live together with my family ☐
Share with other people ☐

Question 52. Have you had problems finding suitable housing?
Yes ☐
No ☐

Question 53. What are the main problems with your housing arrangement?
To expensive ☐
To small ☐
Other: Please specify: ..............................................................

Question 54. Please indicate which of the actors below has been most important in supporting you in your settlement in Australia, and where are these located?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Network</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Local (radius 20km)</th>
<th>Sydney metro</th>
<th>Elsewhere in NSW</th>
<th>Elsewhere in Aust</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Family</td>
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<td>Friends from my country of origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Migrant/refugee friends from other countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/religious groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non Governmental</td>
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## Appendix 5: Service providers interviewed

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<th>Service Provider Organisations</th>
<th>People Interviewed</th>
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<td>Australian Centre for Languages (ACL)</td>
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<td>Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)</td>
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<td>Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)</td>
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<td>CENTRELINK</td>
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<td>CHURCH ORGANISATIONS</td>
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<td>HEALTH SERVICES</td>
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