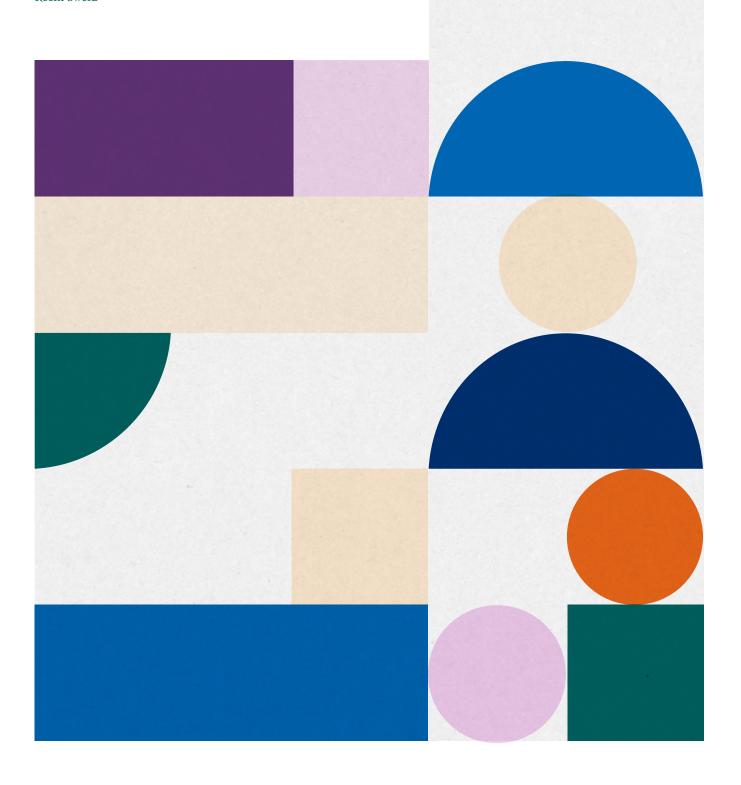Revitalising multiculturalism
through intercultural
dialogue and deliberative
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Fethi Mansouri
Amanuel Elias
Reem Sweid

The Doing Diversity Project

The Doing Diversity Project:

Revitalising multiculturalism through intercultural dialogue and deliberative interventions

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS
ABS ....Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIS ....Australian Intercultural Society
CoE...Council of Europe
ECCV ....Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
GC ....Global Citizenship
ICD ....Intercultural Dialogue
NESB ....Non-English-Speaking Background
SSI ....Survey Sampling International
UNESCO .... United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REVITALISING MULTICULTURALISM THROUGH INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND DELIBERATIVE INTERVENTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Below is a summary of the key findings in relation to community understandings and attitudes towards multiculturalism, intercultural dialogue, and the linkages between the two.

1. Multiculturalism

Overall support for the ethos of multiculturalism: the findings of this study confirm that most participants understand multiculturalism as a state of social harmony between various cultures, in which all citizens have equal opportunities regardless of their ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds. Multiculturalism is overwhelmingly understood as a rights-based framework providing citizens with equal access to social services, cultural rights, and political engagement.

Indeed, approximately 64% of the survey respondents reported that Australia is a successful multicultural society. This is consistent with other national surveys such as the Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion Survey (2013–2016) in which more than 80% indicated that "multiculturalism has been good for Australia". Furthermore, in this study 68% considered cultural/ethnic diversity as a fundamental positive characteristic of Australian society, with people from non-English speaking background (NESB) reporting the highest level of agreement (73%).

Current challenges to multiculturalism: in Australia, a heightened environment of fear of the 'other' – exemplified by debates on weakening section 18c of the Racial Discrimination Act (also known as the 'right to offend') along with the proposed changes to citizenship – has reopened debates on national identity, migration, cultural diversity, and intercultural relations more broadly. These disputes reflect wider societal tensions and an official hardening towards multicultural policy.

For some participants in this study, including those working in multicultural organisations, the term 'multiculturalism' still held some negative connotations; principally because it was perceived as reinforcing the 'othering' of minorities and the dominance of the Anglo-Australian culture. Participants expressed frustration that multiculturalism in Australia was often reduced to superficial folkloric manifestations and cultural forms of entertainment, with minimal, if any, engagement of Anglo-Australians.

Among participants there was a lack of agreement about what the term 'multiculturalism' means. This finding indicates that policymakers have been ineffective at communicating a coherent vision of multiculturalism that stakeholders and more importantly the broader community can embrace. Indeed, only 53% of respondents in a randomised survey [N=1004] understood multiculturalism to be synonymous with cultural diversity. And only 11% emphasised its key dimensions of respect and acceptance, with a small group (2.4%) associating it strictly with minority groups.

While participants strongly supported the idea that diversity is an inherent feature of Australian society, in focus group discussions and interviews they consistently pointed to a monocultural Australian identity as problematic for multiculturalism.

Some participants claimed that while Australian society is celebrated as multicultural, the national Australian identity remains largely embedded within an Anglo-Saxon monocultural framework. Therefore, a key challenge for the multicultural agenda, is whether it can transition from 'acceptance' and 'celebration' of minority cultures to equitable social inclusion and meaningful intercultural engagement for all.

Data from this study also suggest that existing unequal power relations between majority/minority communities have resulted in the further marginalisation of minority voices. Current cuts to funding arrangements for multicultural services and programs exacerbate this marginalisation, deepening the structural limitations of multicultural policy. Participants involved in delivering services to migrant communities, especially to recently-arrived groups, expressed frustration at the short-term, ad-hoc, and ephemeral nature of funding. The state of multiculturalism in Australia is inextricably bound to the allocation of resources to migrant communities, and how much autonomy communities have in determining how best to use these funds.

2. Interculturalism

Overall, findings from this study point to a lack of understanding of interculturalism among community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public; mirroring the lack of conceptual clarity in the scholarly literature on interculturalism. There was significantly greater uncertainty about the meaning of interculturalism than there was of multiculturalism.

Yet and despite this limited exposure to interculturalism, most participants understood interculturalism as a more 'active' and inter-relational approach than multiculturalism, and surprisingly expressed significantly more positive attitudes to interculturalism than to multiculturalism. This is because participants tended to attach high importance to universal human values shared across different cultures. Participants identified these as fundamental to establishing mutual respect and building meaningful engagement across cultures.

Multicultural sector participants in the qualitative phase of the project understood interculturalism as encompassing meaningful two-way engagement among majority and minority groups; manifested through working together, interacting socially, and learning from each other's respective cultural repertoires. This contrasted with their perception of existing multiculturalism, to which they attached high levels of disengagement from the majority Anglo-Australian group.

In terms of the broader Australian community perspective, gleaned from the randomised online survey [N=1004], only 13.9% of respondents provided responses somewhat close to the standard definition of interculturalism. Not surprisingly, 60% of the respondents indicated they were not previously aware of the concept, with 13.5% providing responses not in any way related to the actual definition of interculturalism. These findings, along with the 'non-response' rates, indicate that the general public is more familiar with multiculturalism than interculturalism; the question on multiculturalism received a 'non-response' rate of 17.6%, compared to 60% for interculturalism.

Therefore, if a shift in policy, or at least a refinement, is to be pursued then a significant amount of education and awareness-raising will be required to ensure that the broader community is fully cognisant and supportive of the new policy orientation.

3. The Relationship between Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

For the most part, multicultural sector participants indicated that interculturalism and multiculturalism were not mutually contradictory: they viewed the two concepts as complementary approaches to building a harmonious inclusive society. Interculturalism was described as the pedagogic tool that could help break-down racism, prejudice, and discrimination in society.

These results indicate that there is a strong desire by stakeholders within the community to examine and re-engage in the meaning of multiculturalism. Participants in the consultative phase clearly felt that multiculturalism in Australia required a paradigm shift: away from the majority/minority dichotomy to one based on shared values, mutual respect, and meaningful cross-cultural engagement.

Underlying much of the discussion on revitalising multiculturalism was the desire to engage the dominant (mainstream) culture and to create a space where multiculturalism can become relevant to all citizens. The idea of bringing a whole-of-society approach to multiculturalism was echoed by many participants, who expressed their frustration that multiculturalism has often been treated as a peripheral phenomenon. And this is where intercultural dialogue can play a significant pedagogic role.

Intercultural dialogue

Participants recognised that current policies do encourage some forms of intercultural dialogue (ICD), however they questioned the effectiveness of these existent approaches.

One participant explained that while current approaches to ICD were policy-driven, they did not manifest in actual intercultural engagement for all. This may be because there continues to be disinterest among the majority (dominant) culture to engage with minority cultures in ways that are not superficial and beyond mere cultural 'entertainment'. Additionally, the political leadership must be able to recognise and redress power imbalances within society, and ensure that this reflected in the structure of multicultural engagement and dialogue.

The discourse and trope of 'dialogue' must also move beyond the notion of a benevolent majority permitting the Other to speak. For dialogue to be meaningful there must be a firm belief that the Other's contribution has value, and can contribute to an innovative, inclusive, and dynamic society. Some participants identified cultural power dynamics as inhibiting meaningful engagement. In other words, ICD must be approached as a 'two-way street' where deliberative engagements are meaningful to, and inclusive of, all involved.

Overwhelmingly, participants believed that all types of dialogue were important parts of intercultural approaches to multiculturalism; identifying interreligious dialogue as significantly important, and inter-state dialogue as least important. This result suggests that ICD is understood as a micro-level intervention that should occur at the local level between individuals of various backgrounds, as opposed to the macro-level top-down approaches that can take place between different countries.

Local, bottom-up initiatives: further to the above, many participants recognised that ICD should happen in an 'organic' bottom-up way, through everyday interactions. These spaces of 'everyday encounters' can generate meaningful intercultural engagement, providing the building blocks for an inclusive multicultural society.

In addition to the everyday intercultural encounters that happen while living in a multicultural society, participants reflected on the importance of grassroots' initiatives spearheaded by local communities. While interculturalism can be fostered by government institutions and their policy initiatives, participants expressed how important community grassroots efforts are in encouraging and resolving problems beyond the scope of state institutions.

Cross-cultural literacy: critical cultural competency is a skill that is fostered and practiced through ICD. Cultural competency training and learning need to be built into workplaces and existing institutional structures. Too often, institutions, communities, and organisations are reluctant to make workplace changes until these become absolutely necessary through legislation or community pressure. This complacency towards social and cultural inclusion needs to be more proactively addressed.

The need for cultural competency is connected to an ethics of diversity that values cultural exchanges as key components of an innovative and dynamic society; emphasising differences as opportunities rather than problems or threats. The shift proposed here – an intercultural approach to multiculturalism – recognises diversity as an enabling resource that can foster innovation and create a dynamic and cohesive society.

Deliberative intercultural dialogue is premised on the idea that the foundations of a diverse community are built on shared values, which bind the community and create incentives for meaningful engagement. Multiculturalism in Australia is too often conceptualised as advocating for 'communities within a community'. Interculturalism can challenge this representation, by reinforcing the notion that there is unity and shared values across all members of the community.

Education: stakeholders engaged in the focus groups and interviews were keen to emphasise that a successful intercultural approach to multiculturalism in Australia will need to incorporate cultural competency into the education system from a young age.

One of the biggest challenges in incorporating interculturalism into the curriculum is that the curriculum itself is embedded in the monocultural framework, reinforcing the cultural power dynamics of majority/minority communities. The entire conceptualisation of education and school-based learning remains largely Eurocentric, leaving by the wayside multicultural approaches to education (such as experiential approaches). A truly intercultural education system would transcend this structural limitation to incorporate intercultural approaches to learning on all subjects, including history, the sciences, and art.

Leadership: stakeholders who participated in the interviews and focus groups believed that government had an important role to play in developing policy, fostering shared spaces, and leading by example. Participants, however, also emphasised the importance of individual citizens' responsibility to engage and contribute to interculturalism. Government efforts can provide resources and create spaces, cultivate skills through the education system, and lead by example, yet successful intercultural relations ultimately rely on the proactive and respectful engagement of individual citizens and civil society.

Considerations for Intercultural Success

Accountability and evaluation: paramount to any discussion on policy direction and approaches to multiculturalism is a need to provide methodological tools with which success can be measured and evaluated. A key criticism from stakeholders in almost all of the focus groups, was the lack of accountability, evaluation, and enforcement of the multicultural objectives that government sets out. Participants felt strongly that this issue must be addressed in any new intercultural approaches to multiculturalism.

Challenging intolerance: racial discrimination in Australia persists and is a challenge for the broader multicultural agenda. ICD has been posited as an approach that can reduce racism and foster social cohesion. Essentially, intercultural approaches must recognise the power imbalances, structural racism, and implicit biases that exist within the framework in which the dialogue occurs. Participants argued that discrimination and racism are structural impediments to an intercultural approach to multiculturalism in Australia.

Mainstreaming multiculturalism: One of the major challenges facing Australian multiculturalism is engaging the broader (mainstream) community in understanding the value and importance of multiculturalism and the potential positive role of ICD. Many of the stakeholders who participated in the focus groups and interviews identified multiculturalism as "a concept on the periphery", almost an afterthought for policymakers. This must change if racism and bigotry are to be overcome in the medium to long term.

Challenges to the Intercultural Agenda

Respondents identified resource and training as the main challenges to ICD (61%) followed by political leadership (57%). Less than half of the participants indicated that a lack of clarity around ICD policy articulation was also a challenge.

Intercultural tension: a major challenge for interculturalism in Australia is learning to navigate perceived cultural rifts and the enduring tensions they can create. Yet by providing individuals and communities with opportunities to develop cultural competency and intercultural dialogue, the impacts of these tensions may be lessened significantly. Further, too often migrant groups and minorities living in Australia are lumped into a single homogenous 'ethnic' basket with little consideration for the nuances of intra-ethnic diversity and history.

Racism and intolerance: one of the main challenges still facing Australian society is unpacking the existing racism and intolerance in the community, especially at the level of key socio-political structures. Participants in the interview and focus group discussions recognised this, highlighting the distinction between systemic and interpersonal racism, and indicating that sadly both remain prevalent.

FUTURE POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the key findings outlined above, the following future policy considerations are proposed as pathways to starting the community-policy dialogue aimed at reinvigorating the multicultural agenda:

1. As this study's findings (and consistent with other research) show, policymakers must act promptly to capitalise on the existing overall positive attitude towards multiculturalism in Australia;

- Building on the positive public attitudes, policymakers must effectively and consistently communicate the meaning and goals of multiculturalism.

- The multicultural sector must redirect its focus from acceptance and celebration of diversity, to social inclusion and participation.

- The simplistic and tokenistic portrayals of cultural diversity and superficial encounters must be countered by meaningful intercultural community engagement.

2. Resourcing, education, media, and cultural literacy are the key areas where effective intervention can be pursued;

- Multicultural perspectives must be integrated into school curricula to raise the level of intercultural competency among children and youth.

- State and local governments should create more opportunities than they do currently, to foster engagement among all their culturally diverse communities.

- State and local governments should raise positive public awareness and engagement with multiculturalism/ interculturalism through media and workplace cultural literacy training.

3. Interculturalism/ICD is still little understood, yet overall, the community sector as well as broader/mainstream society attach positive values to it;

- Policymakers should invest in creating public awareness of ICD as a tool for meaningful engagement and harmonious relations in a multicultural society.

- ICD should be facilitated through the provision of intercultural spaces, resources, and leadership.

- Community stakeholders should take initiatives to encourage their members to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to interact and deliberate with people from other cultural backgrounds.

4. The overall approach to cultural diversity and multicultural policy can be strengthened by utilising the key dimensions of ICD, especially: its deliberative democratic orientation, its two-way intercultural engagement, and its strong emphasis on local interventions.

- Federal- and state-driven multicultural policies must be supplemented by a robust ICD framework with deliberative, locally-based, and community-led strategies.

- ICD should be employed in such a way that it provides interlocutors the agency and pedagogic tools they need to negotiate living with difference in multicultural societies.

- The unintended monocultural bias of multiculturalism must be rectified by engaging members of the dominant culture (Anglo-Australians) in a multi-directional interactive and reflective dialogue.

INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly interconnected world, multi-faceted manifestations of diversity are engendering opportunities for intercultural encounters, new forms of local belonging and orientations towards cosmopolitanism and global citizenship. But these new manifestations of diversity are also, and more problematically, producing new forms of insecurities, social alienation, political marginalisation, and in some cases outright violence (Mansouri 2015). This complex situation highlights a need for new policy paradigms which can take advantage of these opportunities and address the associated risks as they develop in everyday contexts.

A new policy paradigm must prioritise moving from state-centric policy frameworks towards more deliberative, locally-based, community-led strategies. The emerging international impetus for this intercultural turn includes UNESCO's Global Citizenship (GC) and Intercultural Dialogue (ICD) initiatives, both indicative of a significant shift in thinking about diversity management policy (Zapata-Barrero 2015).

Yet substantial knowledge gaps continue to exist; especially regarding the conceptual clarity of both ICD and GC; in relation to understanding how young people negotiate and practice diversity in their everyday lives; and whether this engenders a sense of global responsibility, civic engagement, and belonging (Kymlicka & Norman 2000; Young 2000). This research examines the spectrum of diverse attitudes and dispositions towards ICD through in-depth contextualised discussions into multicultural engagement and local intercultural belonging.

Current research suggests that state-centric approaches to ICD, many of which are framed by civic education policies, have been limited in their capacity to increase positive levels of social cohesion (Noble & Watkins 2014). These approaches have been found lacking: overlooking agency, especially among young people; exclusively focusing on migrants and refugees; and routinely excluding majoritarian groups, in particular youth from Anglo-Australian backgrounds (Inglis 2010).

By examining everyday ICD practices and their potential to extend the social bonds of care and responsibility beyond ethnic and national identities (Mansouri 2015; Appiah 2006), this project deploys ICD as a conceptual and pedagogic tool for exploring individual negotiations of living with difference in multicultural societies. The definition of ICD that we use here, and seek to develop is grounded in a belief that knowledge alone is insufficient for developing critical intercultural capabilities (Abdallah Pretceille 2006). Instead, this project focuses on communities' views on the policies needed for developing skills, behaviours, and dispositions to enable everyone to make connections between their own worlds and the worlds of others, to build on shared interests and commonalities, and to negotiate or mediate difference (MCEETYA 2008).

This approach incorporates social and political theories of interculturalism that base the challenge of engaging positively with diversity in the need to "change our concepts of personal and collective identity, and [...] [to develop] common bonds, on the basis of a more universal conception of humankind" (Cantle 2012, p. 143). European policymakers have adopted ICD as part of a diversity management paradigm, driven by the desire to foster community cohesion and engender common public culture (Zapata-Barrero 2015).

In Australia, multicultural policies, with their focus on settlement and integration, face increasing challenges from the changing everyday reality of negotiating difference and the structural barriers of institutional racism (Mikola & Mansouri 2014). The critical lens of ICD with its focus on dialogue and reflexivity, is gathering momentum in international diversity policy discussions.

Our 'Doing Diversity Project', therefore, examines how the community sees the future of multiculturalism, their understanding of the emerging intercultural paradigm and the possibility for advancing the diversity agenda through an alternative deliberative approach.

The first section of this report engages with the growing literature on these interrelated topics, revealing the underlying theoretical thinking around key concepts pertaining to multiculturalism and interculturalism. To this end, the project reviews theoretical, conceptual, empirical, and policy research literature on the issues that contribute to the shaping of the discourse, on revitalising the core ideas of multiculturalism. This report will also present an empirical pathway towards the practice of doing diversity.

A guiding research question of this project was how multiculturalism, as a policy framework, could be re-invigorated through new insights from the scholarly and policy works around interculturalism. Further, the overarching aim was to undertake well-targeted community consultations with a view of assessing the current state of affairs vis-à-vis multiculturalism, and the possibility of its renewal via new policy paradigms such as interculturalism. This is taken up further in the Conceptual and Policy Background section of this report, which examines interculturalism not only as a theoretical framework but also as an empirical practice and action. It pays particular attention to identifying possibilities for enabling interculturalism in practice, uncovering new ways of doing cultural diversity.

The Conceptual and Policy Background first discusses the socio-political context for the current debate around diversity and multiculturalism. Second, it introduces the conceptual debate around the perceived retreat of multiculturalism and the rise of alternative policy paradigms most notably interculturalism. Third, it outlines the proposed empirical study and details the methodological tools for conducting surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

The discourse on optimal approaches to managing cultural and religious diversity has seen several major historical shifts that have tried to posit a model, both philosophical and governmental, for managing race relations and their social implications (Hasmath 2011). Following the Civil Rights movements of the 60s and early-70s, exclusionary social policies were gradually replaced with more egalitarian approaches articulated through a new emphasis on minority rights, cultural diversity, and multiculturalism (Mansouri 2015).

Multiculturalism came under significant criticism in recent years, despite its early promises and relative successes in several culturally plural societies, including Australia and Canada.

The public criticism of multiculturalism related particularly to new security threats associated with radical violent Islamists (Hassan 2015; Michalski 2006). This signalled a gradual discursive shift that argues for alternative models of including migrants and minorities, as well as for managing the complex dynamics of diversity within more aggressive securitised policy agendas.

Critics of multiculturalism have come from two camps: those who argue that multiculturalism failed to prevent racism and discrimination, causing the concept to lose is lustre (Barry 2001; Vertovec 2010); as well as those from the more conservative side of the debate who argue that it has led to a loss of social cohesion and produced segregated communities within communities.

Therefore, many experts (see for example, Abdallah Pretceille 2006; Cantle 2011; Zapata-Barrero 2015; Mansouri 2017a) have called for a move towards genuine 'intercultural relations' that minimise the centrality of a particular ethno-cultural group vis-à-via others. This project explores this concept in the Australian context through an empirical investigation of whether multiculturalism remains a viable and empowering social policy or whether it is necessary, indeed desirable, to look for alternative approaches such as interculturalism as a new conduit for managing super-diversity within an increasingly securitised socio-political environment (Byram et al. 2009).

The following section provides the background context for the rise of multiculturalism in Australia, which is then followed by a discussion of why the policy is perceived to be no longer able to manage diversity due to changing local and global socio-political circumstances. It will then outline the alternative intercultural approach which aims to reinvigorate a deeper multicultural ethos.

CONCEPTUAL AND POLICY BACKGROUND

We live in an increasingly mobile, socially, culturally, and politically dynamic, and highly interconnected global environment where modern transport and communications have narrowed the physical distance inside and between nation states. This new opportunity created by the unprecedented technological advances of the twenty first century has increased the movement of people, ideas, and social forces worldwide. Just in the last decade, the international stock of migrants increased from 2.7% of the world population in 1995, to 3.3% in 2015 (OECD 2016).

Currently, more than 244 million people reside outside their home countries (United Nations 2015). This continuous rise in the movement of people is impacting the demographic structure of migrant-receiving countries, adding to their social compositions and levels of diversity. The last two decades also witnessed increased levels of intercultural tensions, internal and regional conflicts, xenophobic episodes, and social strife (Wiesand 2008; Kymlicka 2015; Mansouri 2015). Consequently, the parallel rise in these tensions and international migration has generated discourses that assume causality among these variables although the underlying causative factors of such tensions are complicated, with religious and ethno-cultural disagreements usually combining with socioeconomic, political, and historical factors to exacerbate these tensions (Adamson 2006; Berry 2013; Kymlicka 2015). Such analyses align with the literature on conflict which affirms the intersectionality between ethno-cultural and religious diversity on the one hand, and socioeconomic factors on the other (Alesina et al. 2003; Fearon & Laitin 2003).

Confronted with the rising ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007), national and global policymakers and practitioners have been grappling with the search for an optimal approach to manage diversity. As such, there exists a range of policy frameworks that aim to effectively address the challenges of diversity (Mansouri 2015). Since the 1970s, multiculturalism emerged as the dominant policy paradigm replacing assimilationist policies of the pre-Civil Rights era (Kymlicka 2007). This was made possible with the

promulgation of legislations that protected minorities in Western societies (for example, Canadian Multicultural Act (1988), UK Race Relations Act (1965/76), Australian Racial Discrimination Act (1975), and so on).

2.1 Critique of Multiculturalism as a Policy Paradigm

There is a growing view in public discourse and in the academic literature that the appeal of multiculturalism has suffered considerable political destruction (Meer et al. 2015). Multiculturalism as a public policy has come under severe criticism in several immigrant societies (Meer et al. 2013, 2015). It has been denounced publicly by several influential government sources and national leaders, such as the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the ex-French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who both claimed multiculturalism had failed. Yet as some scholars (Meer et al. 2016; Triandafyllidou et al. 2012) have indicated, it is more accurate to say that multiculturalism was never implemented in countries such as Germany or France. Nonetheless, in 2008 the Council of Europe (CoE) deemed multiculturalism inadequate as a policy approach to the management of cultural diversity in societies where the degree of diversity was "unprecedented and ever-growing" (Council of Europe 2008, p. 9).

In the public discourse, multiculturalism is commonly associated with the ideas of tolerance, recognition, and accommodation of minority rights. Charles Taylor's 1992 essay is widely considered to be a founding statement of multiculturalism in political theory, as it characterises the emergence of a modern politics of identity as premised upon an idea of 'recognition' (Taylor 1994). Within multicultural policy, the recognition of cultural diversity became intertwined with the idea of accommodation of differences, and as Meer and Modood (2012, p. 181) observed multiculturalism came to be seen as "the political accommodation by the state and/or a dominant group of all minority cultures defined first and foremost by reference to race, ethnicity or religion".

In Australia, the official attitudes to multiculturalism have been inconsistent, at best, with lukewarm support from the very beginning, but with no federal legislation equivalent to the National Multiculturalism Act in Canada although there are state-level legislation on multiculturalism as is the case in Victoria. Some scholars (Jakubowicz 2015; Mansouri 2017b) are vocal in advocating for federal legislation as the "the pursuit of such an agenda would send the right message to all Australians on all sides of the political and ideological divide, that cultural, linguistic and religious diversity is a defining feature of Australia. Diversity creates a bond between all citizens, it does not create divisiveness" (Mansouri 2017b, p. 1).

Some of the challenges facing multiculturalism can be traced back to the late 1990s, when public concerns in relation to the rise in international migration and globalisation began to increase (Castles 2002; Vertovec 2010; Kymlicka 2015). Critics of multiculturalism argue that the diversity engendered by these new forms of human mobility has not been managed well by existing multicultural policies, which have often been limited to symbolic interventions at the national level (Loobuyck 2016).

Such a superficial focus has left the social milieu where migrants end up settling intact, with neighbourhoods remaining socially segregated and individuals unable to negotiate the everyday challenges of living with difference. Whether multiculturalism as such is to blame for the emergence of ethnic enclaves in cities around the West is contestable (Simpson 2004; Qadeer 2005; Terzano 2014).

Yet, the lack of harmonious interaction in culturally pluralistic societies is bound to reinforce socio-cultural differences rather than narrowing them. And despite limited empirical support (Johnston et al. 2002), the evidence on multicultural policies promoting ethnic self-segregation across countries is nuanced and contested (Johnston et al. 2002; Simpson 2004; Walks & Bourne 2006).

Hence, we see this nuanced reality reflected in the diversity of views on multiculturalism, with experts and policymakers hailing Canada and Australia as successful multicultural countries (Ho & Alcorso 2004; Adams 2008) while European politicians and researchers argue that multiculturalism as policy has failed (Cantle 2012; Stokke & Lybæk 2016).

2.2 The Emergence of the Intercultural Paradigm

In Europe, the criticisms of multiculturalism have been effective, and as a result the discourse surrounding cultural diversity started to explore novel alternative approaches designed to overcome the alleged weaknesses of multiculturalism (Cantle 2012; Taylor 2012; Zapata-Barrero 2015). Interculturalism is one such a concept that emphasizes two-way interactions between groups from different backgrounds (Cantle 2012). The concept of ICD is often used interchangeably with interculturalism. Cantle (2012) argues that the two are conceptually different, with the latter having a broader epistemological dimension. For the purpose of this research project, we take Cantle's rendition of interculturalism as a conceptual abstraction equivalent to multiculturalism, while framing ICD as an implementation strategy following UNESCO's definition:

[the] equitable exchange and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based on mutual understanding and respect and the equal dignity of all cultures is the essential prerequisite for constructing social cohesion, reconciliation among peoples and peace among nations.

UNESCO 2017

UNESCO adopted ICD as a framework for cultural diversity initiatives aimed at creating intercultural and interfaith understanding and bridging differences. In Europe however, ICD has been framed by liberal theories and traditions, foundational to liberal democracy, human rights, freedom, and tolerance (Besley & Peters 2012). In 2008 the Council of Europe (CoE) released a white paper adopting ICD as its policy framework for managing diversity in Europe. The White Paper conceptualizes ICD as:

a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect.

Council of Europe 2008, p. 17

ICD, in this context, seeks to achieve social cohesion, peace, and reconciliation through dialogic interaction that encourages participants to engage reflectively. Both UNESCO and the CoE emphasize respectful exchange as the key element of ICD. The UNESCO definition is aimed at a universal application, and to this end equality is vital to the transformative potential of dialogue.

This is also reflected in the phrase "equal dignity of all cultures", which forms the basis for mutual understanding and respect in achieving the desired goals of ICD. Mutuality entails that ICD can lead to changes in values, perceptions, and attitudes in both directions: participating individuals and groups mutually negotiate and change their views of each other (Dessel & Rogge 2008; Gawlewicz 2015). Given that dialogue can function to clear preconceived bias and prejudice, ICD has been picked up as a tool to tackle enduring social problems such as gender and ethnic prejudice, racism, and religious conflict (Dixon et al. 2012; Hunyadi & Molnar 2016; Elias 2017).

2.3 Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

As the literature on cultural diversity and intercultural relations continues to evolve, current debates on the topic centres on multiculturalism and interculturalism as the two dominant paradigms; in particular, whether multiculturalism should be reinvigorated or replaced by alternative policies. As mentioned above, some of the critical views against multicultural policies point to it engendering ethnic self-segregation perhaps contributing to rising levels of interethnic tension, racism, right-wing extremism, and xenophobia (Council of Europe 2008; Cantle 2012; Stokke & Lybæk 2016).

While the underlying causes of these social issues remains contentious, the search for diversity management policies that can remedy these problems has brought interculturalism to the fore.

Yet while policymakers and practitioners advocate the adoption of interculturalism (and ICD) as policy frameworks for reconciliation, intercultural understanding, and peaceful coexistence, some researchers have criticised this proposal for lacking conceptual clarity. This critique stems from the fact that the concept of 'interculturalism' remains fluid; meaning "different things to different actors" (Mansouri & Arber 2017, p. 30). Vague understandings of interculturalism are intertwined with confusion about its relationship to the idea of multiculturalism. Ostensibly, interculturalism is seen as lacking conceptual distinction, and yet is also said to be incongruous with multicultural policies.

On the one hand, researchers defending multicultural policies argue that there is little more than semantic differences between multiculturalism and interculturalism (Brahm Levey 2012; Modood & Meer 2012; Taylor 2012). For example, Modood and Meer (2012) argue that multiculturalism is a well-developed system involving coherent policies encouraging the recognition of ethnically, linguistically, and/or religiously diverse groups. Interculturalism, however, adds little more than interaction within the multicultural environment. Therefore, shifting from multiculturalism to interculturalism as a socio-political policy can lead to the loss of an important legal and policy framework that allows the background conditions of equality necessary for the intended dialogue to take place, for "the voices of minoritised groups and individuals [to be] heard" (Stokke & Lybæk 2016, p. 1). This line of argument, questioning interculturalism as a distinct and superior alternative to multiculturalism, contrasts directly with what the CoE identifies as the inadequacies of multiculturalism.

Interculturalism and multiculturalism are routinely treated as opposing and conflictual policy options (Meer & Modood 2012; Modood & Meer 2012; Wieviorka 2012). This view of conceptual incompatibility likely emerged as a result of operationalising interculturalism in the critique of multicultural policies, particularly in European policy discourses (see for example, Council of Europe 2008). Indeed, proponents of interculturalism in Europe argue that it could address the weaknesses inherent in multiculturalism, by introducing dialogue for minoritised people so that they can "find their own voices and negotiate their own identities and interests as well as the shared values of larger society" (Stokke & Lybæk 2016, p. 1). This critique has put proponents of multiculturalism on a collision course with advocates of interculturalism (Brahm Levey 2012). Importantly however, if interculturalism itself is criticised for having little to offer beyond what multiculturalism already does (Meer & Modood 2012), then the two should not be considered incompatible.

Looking at the inherent focus on local perspective, equitable transformative exchange, and individual agency, interculturalism could be seen as complementing the state-driven or top-down, multicultural policies. It should, in fact, come as a surprise that the two paradigms have been posed as conflicting prescriptions to the same problem. The inauguration of interculturalism, embedded as it was in a critique of multiculturalism, has contributed to such misunderstanding. Given that both operate at different levels, there should be opportunities for complementarity between them, rather than competition. Since interculturalism emphasises the "the micro and the cooperative" aspect of diversity management, it adds to, rather than challenges, multiculturalism's focus on the

"macro" and structural dimensions of cultural equality in society (Modood 2017, p. 89). ICD sets out to achieve the self-reflective and proactive engagement of individuals towards cultural difference, this extends, rather than replaces, existing multicultural ethos and approaches to diversity matters. As such, the multicultural milieu is the context within which ICD takes place. Accordingly, Modood (2017, p. 89) rejects the critique that multiculturalism's "exclusively macro and political focus" presents a problem to its compatibility with interculturalism, rejecting, at the same time, the "either-or choice" at the heart of this formulation. In the same way, the intercultural "focus on micro-relations" should not be read as an abandonment of "the idea of dialogue at the level of political controversies and public discourses" (Modood 2017, p.89).

2.4 Distinctive Features of Interculturalism

Therefore, while the tone of academic discourse on diversity management appears to view interculturalism and multiculturalism as inherently incompatible, this need not be the case. In this project, we argue that while multicultural policies operate at the state/national level addressing equality among cultural groups, interculturalism and its operational equivalent, ICD, are narrowcast at the local level of interpersonal relations. Multiculturalism's aims need not be set aside to implement ICD.

The later operates locally within a multicultural milieu; asking individuals to put effort into acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes, that will enable them to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds. Importantly then, ICD works much better at the local level without a top-down intervention, which can compromise the authenticity of interactions. Thus, for a more nuanced assessment of the value of ICD, it should be examined at the micro-level.

Multicultural dialogue takes place at the level of national policy, while ICD takes place at the level of local interpersonal relations. These dialogues are inherently different. In the first, the national community is called to embrace diversity through multicultural dialogue, assuring the interculturality of society through the assigning of resources and participatory spaces. It does not, however, assign individual responsibility for these intercultural relations to each citizen. In the second, ICD, a pedagogic dimension is mobilised to equip individuals with the capabilities to understand other groups. Interculturality becomes the responsibility of the individual and the way they approach difference, rather than that of the abstract national community.

2.5 Intercultural Dialogue in Australia

Among policymakers and the public, Australia is strongly regarded as one of the most successful multicultural societies (Soutphommasane 2012; Ozdowski 2012). Data from the Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion survey indicate Australians strongly support the country's multicultural demographic composition (Markus 2014, 2016). Indeed, attitudes toward multiculturalism and diversity vary depending on the cultural background of those assessed in surveys (Dandy & Pe-Pua 2010; Blair 2015). Nonetheless, overall public opinion tends towards agreement with the view that multicultural policies have had reasonable success.

This assessment parallels with enduring political contention on refugee and asylum seekers issues, racism/discrimination, and indigenous disadvantage (Ang et al. 2006; Every & Augoustinos 2007; McKay et al. 2012). The perspective that rising levels of interpersonal and institutional racism/discrimination (Blair et al. 2017; Habtegiorgis et al. 2014) depict an underlying weakness in Australian multiculturalism is subject to debate. However, the idea that Australian multiculturalism needs rectification, has been flagged since early 1990 (Jayasuriya 1990). A lingering question has not been addressed by policymakers or academics alike until recently is, which aspect of multicultural policy needs correction to make state multiculturalism effective?

Of late research has examined the effectiveness of intercultural understanding programs in primary schools (Mansouri et al. 2009; Walton et al. 2013; Halse et al. 2015). These studies identified the need for critical considerations of cultural diversity, as well as the opportunities for intercultural contact in schools. Clearly, research on intercultural relations and the state of Australian multiculturalism in education and other domains signal that public discourse on these issues is permeated by the absence of actual dialogic interaction between 'mainstream' and 'minoritised' cultures. This fact prevents

the evolution of authentic intercultural conversation and dialogic learning, whereby all participants develop mutual understanding and interpersonal knowledge. The lack of two-way dialogue is seen, for example, in the contemporary discourse regarding Islam's place in the West (Nyiri 2010) and the reductionist portrayal of the complex issues of migration, refugees, and asylum seekers (Soutphommasane 2012).

In view of this, ICD can offer a conceptual and practical avenue to reinvigorate Australian multiculturalism. Multicultural Australia currently exhibits features that are inherently similar to other plural societies.

Despite the relative success of certain multicultural policies, the society is still marred by racial disparities across socioeconomic domains, limited intercultural and interfaith contact, and racially/ethnically charged public discourse. Policies that can raise a citizen's level of intercultural awareness and competence, create opportunities for positive intercultural contact, and equitable and respectful intercultural communication can lead to the emergence of harmonious intercultural environment. Conceptually, these conditions are the key elements of ICD, and should therefore be integrated in any social, educational, cultural policies that target individuals and communities in Australian society.

METHODOLOGY

In the context of an increasingly contested public debate around how best to manage super-diversity, and against a growing scepticism towards policies that appear to recognise and support the cultural claims of minority groups – especially those of the Muslim faith – this project conducted stakeholder consultations exploring both the state of play for multicultural policy and the possibility for genuine innovative intervention. The evidence from the qualitative consultations was supplemented by a quantitative survey of public understanding and attitudes towards multiculturalism and interculturalism in Australia.

Phase One of the study included a short questionnaire completed by 58 participants, 8 focus group discussions with 57 stakeholders, and 27 one-on-one follow up interviews. The second phase of the study solicited responses from 1000 members of the public. To date, this is one of the most comprehensive studies to apply a mixed methods approach to investigate public understanding of interculturalism in Australia.

3.1 Approach

The key features of the intercultural approach, as per the discussion above, reflect deep cosmopolitan orientations (openness, universal ethics, and reciprocity) and move beyond just coexistence and tolerance; often associated with classical multiculturalism (Mansouri 2015). Interculturalism, depends on meaningful two-way, or multidirectional, dialogue to achieve mutual recognition and understanding. But it advocates for such interaction and dialogue in ways that, at least theoretically, would avoid falling back into the fixed minority/majority and 'us and them' dichotomies.

Meer and Modood (2012) identified and critically evaluated four ways in which conceptions of interculturalism can be contrasted positively with multiculturalism:

a. Unlike multiculturalism, [interculturalism] is more than just co-existence, and is more geared towards **interactions, exchange, and dialogue;**

b. It is less "groupist" and more yielding to **synthesis** than multiculturalism;

c. Committed to a stronger sense of the whole, in terms of **societal cohesion and national citizenship;**

d. Incorporates critiques of illiberal cultural practices, as part of the process of **intercultural dialogue.**

Meer and Modood (2012, p. 175) conclude that "each of these qualities too are important (on occasion foundational) features of multiculturalism". Therefore, upholding the 'old' concept of multiculturalism alongside this 'new' articulation of interculturalism is not contradictory nor indeed productive of a significant paradigm shift.

More recently, Zapata-Barrero (2015) has articulated three potential contributions of interculturalism to three spheres of life: social, political, and cultural. The social contribution relates to interculturalism's capacity to act as a strategic policy intervention aimed at restoring social cohesion, trust, and feelings of belonging. This can be done via social equity policies, as well as educational policies directed at the circulation of knowledge among diverse ethno-cultural groups as a tool for prejudice reduction. The political contribution lies in interculturalism's ability to maintain intercultural interactions and exchanges of views in the face of changing traditional values and changes to citizenship rights and duties. The technique of ongoing interaction aims to preserve social harmony between different groups of citizens and new migrants.

Based on all the above and given the fractious nature of existing debates, the current project looks to make an empirical intervention into this discussion by engaging key actors in Australia who have a major stake in the outcome. The study utilises the foundational principles of ICD to engage in meaningful discussion with stakeholders on the future direction of multiculturalism in Australia and the role of ICD as a means by which to reinvigorate it. These stakeholders include those who: run ethnic community organisations; are engaged in policymaking; and, are

affected by policy and practice. Furthermore, the project incorporates a survey of the broader Australian community, aimed at gauging public understanding of, and attitudes towards, multiculturalism and interculturalism.

3.2 Key Research Questions

Informed by current literature and multicultural and intercultural policy and practice, this project seeks to address key issues in diversity management.

The following **questions** guide this empirical research:

- To what extent does the public perception of multiculturalism reflect its multi- dimensional manifestations (philosophical/theoretical articulation; social policy; and demographic visibility)?

- Can a deliberative approach to ICD (deliberative focus groups involving all stakeholders NOT just minority/migrant groups) engender more positive outcomes? And,

- Does multiculturalism need to be revitalised with a renewed emphasis on the individual citizen's obligation and capacity to understand and embrace cultural diversity as a two-way relational process?

3.3 Project Design

To address the key research questions, this project employed a mixed methods research design to survey a breadth of opinions while also engaging with the nuances of the subject through in-depth discussions. It involved in-depth qualitative tools examining key conceptual understandings of ICD among stakeholders and the general public complementing quantitative methods that incorporated a randomised survey, exploring views and understandings of ICD among Australian society.

3.3.1 Phase One

The first phase of the project was qualitative and engaged key organisations and peak bodies closely linked to the multicultural sector, in terms of both service provision and advocacy. The aim of this consultative phase was to solicit the input of participants who not only understand the current challenges facing the broader diversity agenda but also, and more critically, are at the forefront of exploring additional and alternative policy intervention paradigms for dealing with new and emergent challenges.

The project worked closely with two key partner organisations, the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Australian Intercultural Society (AIS), to recruit and involve a broad range of community stakeholders in focus groups and interviews.

In this phase, participants were directly involved, formally and informally, in the Australian multicultural sector. The roles within this sector ranged from a Chief Executive Officer to a project officer. Further details on the characteristics of participants are provided below. The aim of these consultations was to ascertain:

i. How the new realities of heightened insecurity and renewed racism, affect daily engagement with diversity; and

ii. How grassroots organisations conceive of ICD strategies that highlight individual agency as a means of fostering multicultural conviviality.

a. Data Collection

Three data collection methods were used in this phase of the project: (1) pre-focus group surveys, (2) deliberative focus groups; and (3) follow-up individual interviews.

Coordinating with the ECCV and AIS, the research team utilised snowballing techniques drawing on existing networks to recruit participants. A flyer (see Attachment E) was designed and distributed among these networks and incorporated into each organisation's newsletter. The invitation flyer was accompanied by an electronic participant information sheet (see Attachment F), pre-focus group survey, and consent form (see Attachment B and G).

Pre-Focus Group Survey

The purpose of the pre-focus group survey was to provide baseline reference data about the general views of the participants and their understanding of the role of ICD in reinvigorating multiculturalism (see pre-focus group survey in Attachment B). The pre-focus group survey was provided to all participants for completion prior to the focus group discussion. The survey was available online and in Word format (see Attachment D). Printouts of the survey were also available to participants to complete in writing prior to the focus group. The survey consisted of four open-ended questions, and nine questions with 7-point Likert scale responses. The questions explored the participants understanding of the terms multiculturalism and interculturalism. It also explored the notion of ICD and the success of multiculturalism in Australia.

In total, 58 participants completed the pre-focus group survey.

Focus Group Discussions

The focus groups were designed to respond to the three research questions outlined above. The idea of 'deliberative democracy' informed the design of the focus. In political theory, deliberative democracy emphasises reasoned argumentation in a discussion, wherein individual interests are recognised but do not dominate the conversation (Fishkin 2011). It allows for all manner of communication apart from threats, lies, abuse and political spin, which are aimed at manipulating the outcome.

The deliberative process ensures that participants communicate, and more importantly, listen and engage with other participants' viewpoints while keeping an open mind. Inclusiveness is a key element in deliberative interventions as it provides ordinary citizens a platform with which to engage in public debates (Dryzek 2002; He 2010). Thus, the focus groups outlined below included not only stakeholders from key community organisations, but also members from their constituencies and from the wider community.

It is important to note that while deliberative democratic activities are geared towards opening-up and altering the views of its participants, this was not the primary objective of the project described here. Rather, the focus groups were

part of an exploratory exercise, allowing participants to express their views on the key concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism, and offer insights into how:

- The new realities of heightened insecurity and renewed racism, affect daily engagement with diversity;

- Grassroots organisations conceive of ICD strategies that highlight individual agency as a means of fostering multicultural conviviality; and whether

- There is indeed a disjuncture between multicultural policy and their everyday lived reality; and

- Whether interculturalism can be developed as a useful policy/practice concept that can be operationalised.

Altogether, 8 focus groups were conducted involving 57 participants. Members of the project team from Deakin University facilitated the focus groups.

Three focus groups were organised by the ECCV, one by AIS, and the remaining four by the Deakin project team. The sessions ran for approximately 90 minutes each, and explored 8 questions (see Attachment C.1).

Table 1 below details the 8 focus groups conducted, including the dates, locations, and number of participants.

TABLE 1 Summary of focus groups conducted

Date	Location	Participant group	Organised by	No. of participants
22 January	ECCV Office Coburg	ECCV Board	ECCV	11
6 February	Sirius school	AIS members	AIS	9
8 February	Deakin Downtown	Community Leaders	Deakin	5
9 February	Deakin Downtown	Women	Deakin	8
10 February	Deakin Downtown	Mixed	Deakin	6
5 April	Cultural Infusion Offices	Mixed	Cultural Infusion	8
6 April	ECCV Offices	Women	ECCV	2
7 April	Deakin Downtown	Community Leaders	ECCV	8
Total				57

Follow-Up Interviews

All participants who took part in the focus groups were invited to participate in a one-on-one follow-up interview.

The follow-up interviews were conducted to better understand the contextual parameters for attitudinal shifts regarding the two main policy approaches examined. Almost half of the focus group participants attended one-on-one follow-up interviews.

By encouraging interviewees to reflect on the focus group discussions, the interviews allowed for in-depth exploration of issues. The interview questions were loosely structured and further explored the issues raised in the focus groups.

The questionnaire included the following:

1. Reflecting on the focus group conversation that you participated in, what is your view/thinking/feeling about the state of multiculturalism in Australia?

2. Is there a problem that needs to be fixed? If so what is causing such problems?

3. Do you now think that interculturalism can be a means by which to reinvigorate current multicultural policy?

4. What might be the limitations within your constituency/ organisation/community for an intercultural approach to diversity/migration matters?

5. Or are there other practical considerations that you think need to be explored?

6. Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on the subject before we conclude?

A total of 27 participants were interviewed either face-to-face or via telephone.

The one-on-one interviews lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and took place at a time and location set by the participants.

Summary of Data Collection for Phase One:

Overall, in the consultative phase of this study, data was collected from a total of 142 participants. As indicated in Table 2, nearly half of the focus group participants attended one-on-one follow-up interviews.

TABLE 2 Phase One participant summary

Description	Conclusion
Pre-focus group survey	58
Focus groups	57
Follow up interviews	27
Total	142

b. Participant Characteristics

The characteristics and demographic information of participants was collected in the pre-focus group survey. A total of 58 respondents completed the surveys, of these 29 were male, 28 female, and 1 left this question blank. As indicated in Table 3, the survey included a wide range of age groups.

TABLE 3 Summary of focus groups conducted

Age group in years	N	Decade	N
18-24	6	1940-1949	2
25-34	13	1950-1959	0
35-44	11	1960-1969	2
45-54	6	1970-1979	5
55-64	12	1980-1989	9
65+	7	1990-1999	2
N/A	3	2000-2009	10
		2010-2017	4
Total	58		34

NB: One participant dropped out of the focus group.

Most participants were from a non-English speaking background (N=40), only 8 were from an Anglo Celtic background, and 6 from other English-speaking backgrounds. Of the 34 participants who had migrated to Australia, the earliest arrival was in 1941 while the latest was 2015. Fourteen of the participants were born in Australia.

The participants were employed in large and small organisations that offered a wide range of services:

• Education services• Cultural services

• Women's services

• Ethnic specific organisations

• Local and city councils

• Religious organisations

• Interfaith organisations

• Social services

c. Approach to Data Analysis:

Data collected in the pre-focus group survey were collated and systematically analysed, responses were coded and imported into an excel spreadsheet. This data provided information on each focus group participant and their initial thoughts and understandings of multiculturalism and interculturalism. In addition to the demographic questions, the survey included Likert scale and open-ended questions.

The Likert scale questions asked participants to rate (from 1–7) how strongly they dis/agreed with various aspects of ICD. The findings are presented in graphs and used to supplement the qualitative discussion.

The open-ended questions asked participants to provide definitions on multiculturalism and interculturalism, and to identify any challenges to these. The responses were

1. This age category differs from the "20-24 years" cohort in the 2016 Census.

incorporated into a qualitative software analysis programme (NVivo) and applied to the broader analysis of qualitative data.

Similarly, all focus group discussions and interviews were recorded, transcribed, and imported into NVivo for analysis. A content analysis was conducted by systematically reviewing each transcript and coding according to themes that emerged from the discussion. The codes were then thematically arranged and presented in the findings.

3.3.2 Phase Two

In addition to the in-depth qualitative interviews and focus group discussions undertaken in phase one, quantitative data was collected using an online representative survey. A randomised survey of 1004 members of the Australian public was also conducted to better understand broader views on multiculturalism and interculturalism.

a. Survey Implementation

The Survey of Views on Multiculturalism and Interculturalism is an Australia-wide representative survey that was implemented through Survey Sampling International (SSI), an online data service provider. Survey Sampling International recruits participants through "partnerships, invited via banners, invitations and messaging". Once participants have agreed to respond to the survey, they are subject to "rigorous quality controls before being included in SSI panels". Survey respondents are tracked via a unique ID.

A total of 1004 randomly-selected respondents aged 18 and over completed the online survey. Data was collected between 26 April 2017 and 3 May 2017, and each survey took an average of 6.24 minutes to complete. Before commencing large-scale data collection, the survey was piloted by SSI who coded and administered it to a sample of 60 randomly-selected participants. Following a review of the test data by the investigators, the survey was modified and launched online.

The survey included a range of demographic questions as well as 13 questions on interculturalism, multiculturalism, and ICD. For each of these questions, a 7-point Likert scale option was provided where the value '1' indicated strong disagreement and '7' strong agreement.

b. Approach to Data Analysis:

The quantitative analysis in the second phase examined the pattern of public perception in relation to multicultural and intercultural issues. Responses for each question in the survey were reviewed for relevance and coded thematically in a spreadsheet before conducting a descriptive analysis. The data were then analysed in the Stata software and the key findings compared to those from the qualitative study.

c. Participant Characteristics

Demographically, survey respondents were balanced in terms of gender distribution, comparable to the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing. The age distribution in this sample is also consistent with the Census, with the exception of young people aged 18–24[1]. Due to the online nature of the survey, people with relatively high levels of education are overrepresented (65.5%).

While migrants make up 20.3% of the sample, respondents
with non-English speaking background (NESB) make up
15.3% of the total sample. A summary of the sample
characteristics is provided in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4 Online Survey: descriptive statistics

Description	Percent	Description	Percent
Observations (n)	1004	**Highest education**	
Gender (Male)	50.5	Did not finish Year 12 at school	15.0
Age (Years)		Finished Year 12 at school	17.3
18-24	12.0	Certificate - Diploma	33.8
25-34	18.2	Bachelor Degree and above	31.7
35-44	19.8	Other and nonresponse	2.2
45-54	18.0	**Employment status**	
55-64	14.8	Employed	50.9
65 & Over	17.1	Unemployed	8.5
Cultural background		Other	40.6
Non-English Speaking	15.3	**Income (Annual)**	
Anglo-Celtic	33.1	Below $50,000	38.2
White (Other)	51.6	$50,000 - 99,000	38.3
Migration status		$100,000 - 199,000	20.3
Migrant	20.3	More than $200,000	3.3
Non-migrant	79.7		
Schooling years		**Has multicultural leadership role within government/community**	8.9
Mean	7.91		
Standard deviation	5.93		

KEY FINDINGS

This section presents the key findings from the qualitative and quantitative data.

The qualitative analysis explored how multiculturalism and interculturalism are conceptualised by stakeholders from the multicultural sector in Victoria. Participants were asked to discuss their opinions on the current state of multiculturalism in Australia.

They contributed in-depth views on intercultural policies, including issues around the involvement of the dominant culture, navigating mixed culture identities, and the role of leadership and government. The study also examined how participants understood the relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism within the larger frame of social cohesion. Data from the online survey was analysed to supplement the findings from the qualitative study. Most of the findings from the qualitative study were corroborated by the quantitative survey data.

As the Conceptual and Policy Background section showed, the concepts 'multiculturalism' and 'interculturalism' are complex and embedded in particular debates, eluding simple definitions and applications (Cantle 2012; Modood &Meer 2012; Mansouri & Arber 2017).

The ambiguity of these two concepts is often cited as a hindrance to the success of social cohesion policy programs in super-diverse multicultural societies (Mansouri & Arber 2017). Participants in this study were first asked to define the terms in the pre-focus group discussions, and then engaged in focus group deliberative-style discussion on the understandings of the terms and their applications. It became evident that there were varying conceptual understandings of the word multiculturalism and limited engagement, if any, with the proposed transformative pedagogy of interculturalism.

This section presents in a succinct manner some of the key themes that emerged from these discussions. This is followed by a discussion on how ICD, grassroots interventions, and intercultural competency can invigorate multiculturalism. The final section of this analysis, explores the various challenges to interculturalism examined in the pre-focus group surveys, focus groups, and follow-up individual interviews.

4.1 Understanding and Appraising Multiculturalism

Participants conceptualised multiculturalism in different ways, varying from those referring to it as a 'matter of fact', to those who see it as diverse communities living in harmony. The focus groups and follow-up interviews provided the opportunity for more in-depth discussion to shed light on the key findings emerging from the pre-focus group surveys. The key themes from these discussions are outlined and discussed below.

4.1.1 Defining Multiculturalism

Over the last few decades, the term 'multiculturalism' has become well-known component of the Australian social and political landscape (Ho & Alcorso 2004; Markus 2016; Soutphommasane 2012; Ozdowski 2012). At the state level, the Victorian State Government has a dedicated Minister for Multicultural Affairs, instituted a ground-breaking Multicultural Act, and embraces multiculturalism

as a key socio-demographic attribute of the state (Victorian Multicultural Commission 2008). But, what does 'multiculturalism' mean to Victorians? Despite its extensive use and apparent acceptance among the community, the term, according to the participants in this study, can be vague and open to different interpretations. The analysis in this section, unpacks some of the ways in which multiculturalism is understood by those who work closely in the sector.

Some participants continue to view multiculturalism in purely demographic terms as a 'matter of fact'; the existence of multiple cultures and faiths in a single immigrant society. Yet most participants also envisaged multiculturalism as a state of social harmony between various cultures where all had equal access to and opportunity for active engagement regardless of ethnicity. As such, the need for 'harmony' and 'understanding' in society was a strong theme that emerged in a few definitions proposed by the participants.

[Multiculturalism is] a process towards a harmonious society.
Survey participant 52, female, aged 55–64

Multiple cultures living harmoniously, celebrating commonality and difference.
Survey participant 25, female, aged 25–34

For other participants, multiculturalism was envisaged as a policy that embraced a rights-based framework directed at providing all citizens with equal access to social services, cultural rights, and political engagement. The rights-based approach to multiculturalism came from the civil-liberties movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, which shifted public attitudes away from 'assimilation' towards more egalitarian understandings of diversity (Mansouri 2015).

Multiculturalism is a policy that celebrates differences and provides fair and equal access to services for people from culturally diverse backgrounds. More recently the focus on social cohesion comes under multiculturalism.
Survey Participant 6, female, aged 55–64

A community made up of people of different cultural backgrounds. As a policy: ensuring that arrangements are inclusive of and reflects real diversity.
Survey Participant 16, male, aged 55–64

Some participants stressed the demographic and empirical dimension; reporting that a multicultural society was simply one in which people of diverse cultures live in the same geographic region.

A society that is made up of people from various ethnic, cultural and national groups that has been created through an active migration process.
Survey Participant 44, male, aged 55–64

Several people of diverse cultural backgrounds living in the same locale.
Survey Participant 19, female, aged 25–34

Insights into the personal and public attitudes on multiculturalism were also offered during the focus group discussions.

For many the term also held negative connotations, principally because it reinforced the Othering of minorities and the dominance of the Anglo-Australian culture. Participants expressed frustration that multiculturalism in Australia was often reduced to folkloric manifestations and associated entertainment with the engagement of Anglo-Australians remaining superficial at best:

I understand people have a problem with the word, I also have a problem with the word. In my mind, multicultural is this multiplicity of culture. What is missing for me is multiculturalism continues to be treated and understood and actualised and operationalized as a peripheral phenomenon.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

When they say things like, "Some people are multicultural, of multicultural backgrounds, some people are not." It's ridiculous… we are all multicultural.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Multiculturalism is at the moment a bunch of people from different cultural groups, different cultural backgrounds existing in the same space, and certain things, like, their different foods and the different way they dress or the – they're surface culture things. I think those things are kind of celebrated and brought to the fore and made visible. But when it comes to the, you know, things like core values there still is underlying kind of assimilation argument. So, yeah, multiculturalism but only so far; be different but only so different.

Interview participant 27, female, aged 25–34

The focus group discussions attested to the fact that there are multiple ways that multiculturalism is understood in the community. 'Multiculturalism' has taken on various meaning since it was first introduced in the early 1970s by the Whitlam Government before being institutionalised in 1975 by the Fraser Government (Lopez 2000; National Multicultural Advisory Council 1999).

Australians' understandings of multiculturalism have been impacted by the changing approaches and attitudes to the policy paradigm by successive governments since (Bertelli 1979; Bastian 2012).

Yet the lack of consensus among participants in this study, all engaged directly in the multiculturalism sector, indicates that the government has not been effectively communicating a vision of multiculturalism that stakeholders can agree on and embrace. This also applies to broader community views on multiculturalism, corroborated by the findings from the online survey.
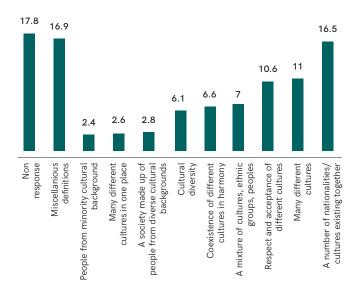
In it respondents were asked to reflect on their understanding of multiculturalism with an open-ended question: "what does multiculturalism mean to you?" The responses, thematically coded and collapsed into 26 categories, highlight the diversity of public understandings of the term. Table 5 (right) provides a summary of the results.

TABLE 5 Online Survey: what does multiculturalism mean to you?

Definition	Observations	Percent
A number of nationalities/cultures existing together	165	16.5
Many different cultures	110	11.0
Respect and acceptance of different cultures	106	10.6
A mixture of cultures, ethnic groups, peoples	70	7.0
Coexistence of different cultures in harmony	66	6.6
Cultural diversity	61	6.1
A society made up of people from diverse cultural backgrounds	28	2.8
Many different cultures in one place	26	2.6
People from minority cultural background	24	2.4
Many different peoples/countries	17	1.7
Learning and getting along with others	16	1.6
People from different cultures sharing with one another	16	1.6
Inclusion of other people/cultures	13	1.3
Existence of cultural diversity in society	12	1.2
A multicultural community	11	1.1
Assimilation of minorities	11	1.1
Mixed races/cultures	11	1.1
Unity of people from different cultures	11	1.1
Interaction and integration of people from different cultures	8	0.8
All cultures having the right to maintain their cultural identity	8	0.8
A fair community	7	0.7
Equality of different cultures	7	0.7
A harmonious community	6	0.6
A culturally diverse place/workplace	6	0.6
Celebration of cultural diversity	6	0.6
Commitment to the nation of Australia	3	0.3
None Response		
No response	60	6.0
Vague response	45	4.5
Sceptic response	27	2.7
Don't Know	20	2.0
Not sure	16	1.6
Racist response	5	0.5
Other definitions	5	0.5
Total	1,003	100

As shown in Table 5 and Figure 1 (below), nearly 53% of the respondents understand multiculturalism as a something synonymous with cultural diversity. While roughly 11% emphasised the features of respect and acceptance as key aspects of multiculturalism, only a small group (2.4%) identified multiculturalism with minority groups.

FIGURE 1 Online Survey: Public understanding of multiculturalism in Australia

What does multiculturalism mean to you?
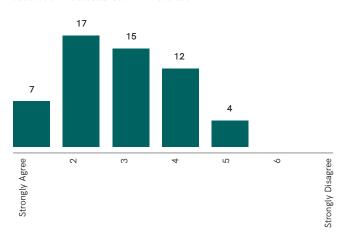
4.1.2 Multiculturalism in Australia

In addition to this conceptual confusion, the debate on multiculturalism in Australia and around the world, is increasingly fraught by events such as 9/11 and other terrorist attacks on the West.

A heightened environment of fear of the Other has reopened debates in Australia on the Racial Discrimination Act's §18C (also known as the 'right to offend') and the rigour of citizenship tests. Indeed, this is indicative of a palpable tension in the national community and a hardening approach towards multicultural citizenship.

This study found that the hyper-securitised trend contrasts with the public perception of multiculturalism.

To gauge participant's attitudes towards multiculturalism prior to the focus group conversation, the pre-focus group survey asked participants to rate how they viewed the success of multiculturalism in Australia on a 7-point scale.

FIGURE 2 Pre-Focus Group Survey: success of multiculturalism in Australia

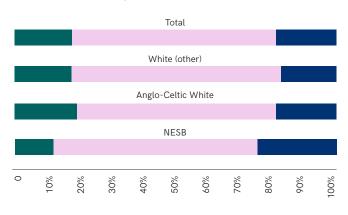Australia is a successful multicultural society.

The responses showed a generally positive perception of multiculturalism, while also suggesting that there is room for improvement (Figure 2).

This positive perception appears to be more pronounced among the general population, according to results from the online survey. Overall, approximately 64% of respondents to the online survey think that Australia is a successful multicultural society (Figure 3).

This is consistent with other national surveys such as the Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion Survey (2013–2016) where more than 83%–86% indicated that "multiculturalism has been good for Australia".

The Challenging Racism Survey (2001–2008) reported a higher rate of acceptance of multiculturalism (88%). In the online survey, non-Anglo white Australians indicated the highest proportion of such a view of multiculturalism; those from NESB indicated the lowest negative view; and Anglo-Australians expressed the largest negative view of multiculturalism.

FIGURE 3 Online Survey: success of multiculturalism in Australia

Australia is a successful multicultural society
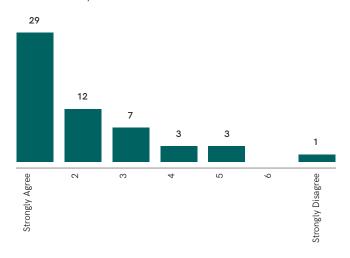
The data seem to indicate that an awareness about multiculturalism and cultural diversity translates into its recognition as a successful policy. The focus group and follow-up interviews provided for more in-depth discussion to shed light on the outcomes of the pre-focus group survey. The key themes from these discussions are outlined below.

4.1.3 Multiculturalism and Identity

A recurring theme in the discussions across the focus groups was the overarching monocultural Australian national identity. In the pre-focus group surveys, a sizable majority of the participants believed ethnic diversity to be a fundamental characteristic of Australian society (Figure 4).

This is corroborated by the findings of the online survey (Figure 5). Yet in the focus groups discussions, participants expressed concerns about Australia's overarching monocultural identity.
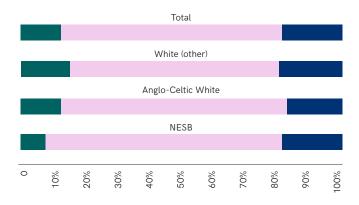
FIGURE 4 Pre-Focus Group Survey:
cultural diversity in Australia

Cultural and racial diversity is a fundamental characteristic
of Australian society

Nearly 68% of the online survey respondents considered multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Australian society (Figure 5); with respondents from NESB expressing the largest agreement rate by far (73%). The positive perception of cultural diversity as a feature of Australian society was slightly lower among non-Anglo white Australians, when compared to other respondents. Overall however, our finding is consistent with other studies, particularly the Mapping Social Cohesion survey in which 85% identified diversity as a feature of their local community.

FIGURE 5 Online Survey: cultural diversity in Australia

■ Disagree ■ Agree ■ Neutral

Cultural and racial diversity is a fundamental
characteristic of Australian society

Despite these high-levels of agreement that diversity is inherent feature of Australian society, the issue of a monocultural national identity challenging a multicultural identity was a recurring and contentious theme among the focus group discussions and interviews. Some participants expressed that while Australian society is celebrated as a multicultural society, the Australian identity remains largely embedded within an Anglo-Saxon monocultural framework.

When it comes to migration. It's like white Australians, white Australians I feel are like, "This is our country and you're a guest here". And, no matter how long you stay, or no matter how – even if you were born here – or how many generations, you always – I feel – like an outsider.

Interview Participant 67, male, aged 25–34

As long as the monocultural mindset prevails amongst the dominant group, the transition from multiculturalism (respecting or celebrating difference) to interculturalism (engaging meaningfully with other cultures) will be fraught. Some of Australia's most prominent national symbols such as the national flag (displaying the Union Jack), and Australia Day (celebrated on the date of the First Fleet's arrival to Australia) reflect the country's Anglo-Saxon heritage. One of the study participants pointed this out bluntly:

We need to change our flag. We need to change all the symbols of this country to even start a dialogue. We need to, you know, change our symbols and our flags to represent diversity and moving into a space of equality.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

The historical treatment and subsequent marginalisation of the indigenous population remains one of the thorniest issues in Australia's national identity. Avoiding dialogue on difficult issues like this one however, is counterproductive to the goals of creating a harmonious society via ICD (Hardy and Hussein 2017).

Our political leaders keep saying it's why Australia is still attached to the Commonwealth – that Australia is an Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Celtic country, and that's what people want – that's what our government wants, that's what our lawmakers want. But if there were recognition that the first people are the true custodians of this land and everyone since then is an immigrant, it creates a shift. It creates a shift of ownership.

Focus Group, mixed gender 2

Youth have a significant role to play in ICD, as evidenced in the CoE's White Paper on interculturalism and UNESCO's guidelines on ICD (Mansouri and Arber 2017; Hardy and Hussein 2017; Odora-Hopper 2007).

This is particularly relevant in the Australian context where multicultural education has been a core feature of the school curriculum since the 1970s: in 2003 Australia introduced its first nationwide curriculum, which included the goal of cultivating students' capacity for 'intercultural understanding' (Mansouri and Arber 2017). In general, participants believed that the Anglicised version of Australian identity was not prevalent amongst the youth.

Their [Australian youth's] concept of Australia is entirely different to what my parents had. Thankfully not uniquely different to mine but that whole idea [of monocultural Australia] is an echo of a time past.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

I do a lot of work with year 9 and 10 students at high schools on resilience and so forth. And we talk about their identity.

You talk about the Australian flag. They literally don't give two hoots that there's a Union Jack on it, because it's our flag. It's not — we're not a commonwealth flag, it's our flag. Their friendship group; they don't walk around in groups of white Australians, you know, my daughter's 13 and I think she's got one friend who was born here out of her group of friends.

Focus Group, community leaders 2

The country's political structure provides several avenues for engagement with minority communities, yet participants reported that consultations often would not lead to meaningful results. This exemplifies how unequal power relations among majority/minority community relations can result in the marginalisation of minority voices.

When it came down to consultations, where councils and government representatives sit down and talk and look what the needs are for communities, it's very tokenistic. It's just, there's no follow up, there's no practicality about it. It's just, "I've listened to you and I've ticked the boxes".

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 39–44

*I get the sense that multiculturalism …
is becoming more about ticking the boxes.*

Focus Group, women 1

To facilitate meaningful intercultural engagement, these prevailing power relations need to be confronted. Members of minority communities should be empowered beyond their role as 'community representatives' and the stereotypes that accompany it. One participant explained how tokenism can limit meaningful engagement by placing people from minority background in boxes and expecting them to engage only through their ethnic/cultural traditions.

Because I'm Japanese, they expected me to do Haiku, which is Japanese poetry. They expected me to talk about Japanese things. It's like an Aboriginal person, for example. They're expected to do painting like Aboriginal person and, if they want to do just creative things out of nowhere, they won't achieve anything in this society.

Participant 42, female, aged 55–64

The challenge is to address the stereotyping that limits individuals' meaningful engagement with other cultures, their history and traditions. Interculturalism offers a pathway for addressing this issue; especially if it helps to create shared spaces in which unequal power relations are addressed, and minority cultures are allowed to permeate dominant culture in consequential ways (Sarmento 2014).

These spaces need to be negotiated to go beyond the tropes of 'diversity' that continue to silo minority cultures. Discussing this challenge, participants highlighted the differences between 'diversity' and inclusion.

There's a difference between diversity in the workplace and inclusiveness in the workplace and I've seen that too. You can boast to everyone and say, "Oh, we have a diverse staff, you know, we've got so-and-so from that country, so-and-so" but in practice, the boss does not include that person in any discussion and actually that person is excluded in lots of

communication and so that person actually can't get ahead. It's a very subtle thing that happens…excluding people in just very subtle ways, the way they look at people, the way they stop talking to them and things like that. So it's to do with that inclusiveness as well.

Interview Participant 6, female, aged 55–64

Yet even inclusion can become tokenistic if it is not motivated by values that are conducive to intercultural engagement. Improving intercultural competence can assist in developing meaningful relations by exploring shared values and appreciating the benefits of difference rather than fearing it. For one participant, diversity without meaningful engagement constituted an 'inclusion delusion'.

I think there's definitely an effort for more inclusion and to being included and token inclusion but then if nothing comes from that, if it doesn't translate into anything meaningful, it's just inclusion delusion.

Focus Group, women 1

4.1.4 Structural Limitations of Multiculturalism

Overall, the data suggests that even the parameters of multiculturalism and interculturalism are defined and developed within a power dynamic that favours the dominant white European culture. Participants offered insights into the ways that this can produce structural limitations to intercultural engagement, and hinder multiculturalism. First, multicultural policy is often debated in the public arena where members of the dominant culture enjoy disproportionate advantage to express their contention with the policy. Participants expressed frustration with the way that multicultural policies are usually subjected to politicking to serve populist agendas, which do not serve the goals of multiculturalism. The perceived lack of bipartisan support around certain matters, further politicises the policy framework.

But what complicates it even further in the last 15 to 20 years is while there was a bi-partisan policy on this you couldn't move incrementally…. The most recent policy statement from the federal government simply exhibits the fact that there's no interparty collaboration on this. That there is a constant hedging to get leverage, to maintain the cultural walls around the notion of multiculturalism.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Moreover, current funding arrangements for multicultural services and programs can further entrench the structural limitations of multicultural policies. Participants involved in delivering services to migrant communities, especially recently arrived groups, expressed frustration at the short-term, ad-hoc, and ephemeral nature of funding. Participants criticised the kinds of activities that are readily privileged by funding structures as being too limited and focused on entertainment (food and festival) rather than meaningful community participation and engagement.

It's almost like they just created separate categories of funding, where they were just going to be funding for ongoing festivals — what I call food and festival multiculturalism versus actual community engagement programs, which are different.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

In focus group discussions participants told of community organisations that were unable to engage effectively in ICD activities because they were unable to secure funding, or there was not enough funding. Competition from larger and more established organisations in the sector is an impediment to local community engagement.

They just keep it in-house essentially and go with the stock standard providers rather than engaging more with community so there's a lack of expertise, lack of funding, too much red tape – those are just three thoughts off the top of my head of what's stopping them [community organisations]

Focus Group, community leaders 1

What can you do with 15, 20, $25,000 in a year, to be able to do – it's like tokenism.

Interview Participant 34, male, aged 55–64

In addition to the quantity and distribution of funds available, the grant approach to funding compels community organisations to operate under perpetually uncertain conditions, affecting the sustainability of their programs.

There's a lot of grants that often come around that have a tag to, you know, building inclusion and so forth. But they're small and they only last for a period of time. So, you know, you do see lord mayor grants and other things come around that might put $12,000 to a project or whatever. But there's no sustainable elements to those when you talk about that side of funding.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Underlying the frustrations with the structural limitations of funding was the recognition of a power imbalance where minority communities competed with each other for limited resources to engage meaningfully in civil society. The state of multiculturalism in Australia is inextricably bound by how resources are allocated to minority communities, what limitations they are bound by and how much autonomy they have in determining how best to use these funds. However, a higher level of cultural competence is required from both government and community leaders to develop the level of engagement and trust needed to challenge these existing structural limitations.

You can't change things systematically unless you change them at the point where the money comes. Where the resourcing comes.

Interview Participant 43, male, aged 65+

Participants also expressed concerns that multiculturalism funding may be co-opted to pursue an alternative government agenda.

There are increasingly blurred lines between multiculturalism and countering violent extremism policy. For example, in Victoria, the Multicultural and Social Cohesion Division brings together the Community Resilience Unit, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, and the Office of Victorian Multicultural Commission and is responsible for addressing the threat of extremism within communities as well as celebrating Victoria's minority communities.

The VMC [Victorian Multicultural Commission] grants used to focus on festivals and events grants and then a lot of them would focus on how to become more culturally responsive, access to services. I think a lot of those grants should change … Last year we had a bit of a short period where the government grants were focusing on social cohesion which was code word for de-radicalisation.

Interview Participant 6, female, aged 55–64

Community Perspectives on Multicultural Policy

Multiculturalism is frequently portrayed as a story of migration often wrapped up in notions of individuals and families coming to Australia seeking a better future, equal rights, and security. What is often missing from this representation is the vulnerability and immeasurable loss (economic, social, and personal) that is associated with the story of migration. While settlement in Australia is itself a challenge, the discourse on multiculturalism or interculturalism must not lose sight of the complexity of the migrant story that some will never completely recover from:

When people talk about immigration history and multiculturalism it tends to just be this heroic or even a beautiful sort of thing. But of course, it's not only beautiful and heroic. It's also very difficult … the history of every person and every culture that have moved here, they are very complex and not always beautiful.

Interview Participant 36, male, aged 35–44

When asked about the state of Australian multiculturalism, many participants compared it to the state of multiculturalism in Canada. Canada's multiculturalism was viewed more favourably, particularly, in relation to Prime Minister Trudeau's leadership.

Trudeau – Canadian Prime Minister – I think is a great example of being an icon of interculturalism … paving the way for other communities to get involved in decision-making in Canada, and all the other things that are happening.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

Look at Canada. It's got a similar profile, similar continent, maybe a little bigger, but same concept. They've got 35 million people, 40-ish, 35-ish I think, and so they're not much larger than us, but see the quality leadership that they have from the current Prime Minister and see what we have.

Interview Participant 34, male, aged 55–64

Canada and Australia are similar in many ways, yet while Australia's first settlers were largely exclusively Anglo-Saxon, Canada's settlers were both Anglo-Saxon and Francophone. Canada therefore has never been monocultural, and a respect for difference was paramount to its success as a nation.

One participant insightfully compared Australia's multiculturalism to that of Malaysia. While Malaysia may have its own socio-political challenges, it (along with many other postcolonial nations such as India and Indonesia) have built a more inclusive national identity that encompasses many different cultures and languages. These nations may

provide some insight on how to approach intercultural engagement and transition Australia from a monocultural to a multicultural nation.

I'm just tapping into myself being from Malaysia and - and we say we come from a multicultural society and what we have is we have for example language and language from Malay or Mandarin, different Chinese dialects, Mandarin, Hokkien, whatever. It all leads into like a national identity and we don't quite have it here. But, I don't really see it happening here

Focus Group, mixed gender 1

Many participants recognised that Australia's success as a multicultural nation needs to be looked at in relative terms.

In comparison to some countries we're probably doing not so good. I mean, if we compare ourselves with Canada. If we compare ourselves to Saudi Arabia maybe we're doing extremely well.

Interview Participant 27, female, aged 25–34

The idea that multicultural policy needs to revisit the 'Food, Flag and Festival' (Arber 2008) approach, responsible for limiting cultural engagement to entertainment, was also raised by participants:

Multiculturalism is kind of a form of entertainment, isn't it? Whereas it isn't really a fertile space for what happens when you put human differences to work together.

Interview Participant 51, male, aged 35–44

Multiculturalism as a term and policy was also said to carry negative connotations that inhibit engagement and success. Some of these connotations are created by the blurred lines between multiculturalism and service delivery to ethnic minorities. In other ways, these negative connotations are derived from the conflation of multiculturalism with immigration and the socially constructed threat of social disengagement and youth radicalisation.

There's all these other problems that are happening and we talk about the government and multiculturalism and like you said I feel like it's just lip service or any kind of funding that goes in towards cohesion is really just about the antiterrorism stuff.
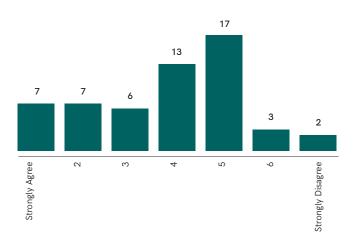
Focus Group, community leaders 1

Ethnic Ghettos

A key criticism of multiculturalism is that by encouraging and supporting communities to maintain their cultural heritage we see "increased communitarian segregation and societal divisions" (Mansouri 2017a, p. 14). The pre-focus group surveys examined participants' views of this claim by asking them to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement "Multiculturalism, as a policy, only promoted recognition of different ethnic/cultural groups and has effectively created ghettos".

According to Figure 6, 20 participants indicated they disagreed with this statement (somewhat – strongly) and

22 indicated they agreed (somewhat – strongly), with 13 choosing to remain neutral. This indicates there is a wide range of opinions on the role that multicultural policy has played in encouraging intercultural separation or engagement.

FIGURE 6 Pre-Focus Group: on the outcomes of multicultural policy.

Multiculturalism, as a policy, only promotes recognition of different ethnic/cultural groups and has effectively created ghettos

The focus groups and interviews provided more in-depth exploration of the relationship between multiculturalism and perceived community segregation. Many participants responding to this question suggested that ethnic segregation was a natural phenomenon for migrant communities that should not always be viewed with disdain.

Migrants settling in a new country were under various pressures (economic pressures and social/language pressures) and would therefore naturally seek environments that can facilitate their settlement and diminish risks and burdens.

You go where you're safe. You go where they speak your language, where they have your shops, where they have your butchers. It's a reality.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

I think it is human nature and especially a very Australian thing to do. And it's hard because if you are introduced to a new country, you want to be introduced with people who are in a similar situation to you. Yeah, it's a really, it's a really difficult one, because sustaining a bit of your own culture is kind of important.

Interview Participant 12, female, aged 18–24

While the participants in the study did not express negative connotations or concerns about migrants' choice to live in 'ethnic ghettos', there was significant concern that some in the general public would interpret this segregation negatively.

I think it's feeding this new phase, if we want to call it racism – and I'll put it to the table because I think it's there.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Regional Areas

There was a strong conviction among participants who worked or lived in regional Victoria that regional multicultural policies and service delivery needed more attention from government.

The other thing is I really believe that we have an issue when the state government, decide a policy, or when they think about Victoria, they think about Victoria like Victoria is Melbourne… they forget about the region. The region has to be seen as what it is, you come to Melbourne, "Wow, this is really amazing" then you go to the region and there is this little minority group that is struggling to understand, what a migrant is. What the person from, maybe from Korea with a different language is. So, I think that we are not really doing very well in that department.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

What was happening federally was they introduced a point system and people were being encouraged to go into the country – into regional areas. The problem was that there were often no services – or very limited services – in the regional areas.

Interview Participant 43, male, aged 65+

Mediated Tensions

The focus groups were run a few weeks after Anzac Day 2017. During these few weeks, there was a prominent media story on a celebratory Anzac Day billboard that featured images of people from various cultural backgrounds including one picture of two Muslim girls wearing hijab and waving the Australian flag. The flag was removed after threats were made to the company that sponsored the billboard.

Many of the comments made on social media suggested that the images were not a reflection of Australia Day and were instead driven by political correctness to placate minorities. This incident was cited often during the focus groups and interviews as an example of how a powerful element of Australia's population continued to resist changes to Australia's monocultural identity.

I think that issue we had with the Australia Day billboard is also example of not accepting that Muslims are also part of the Australian culture.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

A key lesson from this incident was the message that challenges to preconceived notions of identity should be accompanied by sincere dialogue and not used as a public relations exercise.

And then we've got that billboard on Australia Day with the Muslim girls but there was no commentary along with that. It was just an image plastered out there for people to attack.

Interview Participant 28, female, aged 25-34

It didn't come with a dialogue.

Focus Group, women 1)

It should be noted, that many Australians rallied in support of the billboard and funds were raised to reinstate it across Australia.

An important challenge for Australian multiculturalism is whether it can transition from 'acceptance' and 'celebration' of minority cultures to meaningful intercultural engagement. Many of the participants described the current state of multiculturalism as 'tokenistic'. In other words, Australia continues to struggle with an unequal power balance between the majority and minority communities. Indifference towards minorities will limit their effective engagement with civil society and making it difficult to participate politically beyond the multicultural trope.

Tokenistic - that's what I would use as well if I had to just use one word. But I think behind this tokenism is either rejection or fear of complexity.

Interview Participant 36, male, aged 35-44

Having been a practitioner in the sector for a long time that in some, I can say we have the right policy in place, we have the rhetoric in place. But when you're trickling down to what it really means to be average person out there in the neighbourhood it is a bit tokenistic at times… In some places, you might find it's a little bit more meaningful than others, but often organisations, governments just want to tick the box, you've got the policy in but when you start to implement things then the battle begins.

Focus Group, community leaders 3, women

In summary, participants in this study were supportive of multicultural policies and acknowledged that Australian multiculturalism is unique having significantly evolved overtime under intense political pressures. The study also highlighted the various social, cultural, logistic, and political pressures that it currently faces as it seeks to address the multi-dimensional challenges associated with growing levels of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity. Interculturalism comes into this context as a complementing paradigm that can offer a solution to some of the challenges multicultural policies find it difficult to tackle. In the next sub-section participants' views on interculturalism are examined.

4.2 Understanding and Appraising Interculturalism

Both the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of this study examine how interculturalism is understood in Australia. Overall, the data indicate that the lack of conceptual clarity evident in the literature is also prevalent among community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public. The main findings of the research are summarised below.

4.2.1 Defining Interculturalism

Participants in the pre-focus group survey were asked to define interculturalism and were then engaged in deliberative-style discussion about interculturalism during the focus groups. Evidently, there was more uncertainty about the meaning of interculturalism than multiculturalism, with many participants admitting to having never heard

the term before. Despite limited exposure to the literature and discourse on interculturalism, participants engaged in dialogue and apply critical reasoning to determine its meaning and relevance.

Surprisingly, despite the limited familiarity with the concept, there was more consistency in participants' definitions of interculturalism than that of multiculturalism.

Most participants understood interculturalism as a more 'active' and inter-relational approach than multiculturalism. Yet, they expressed uncertainty in relation to clear definitions while expressing significantly more positive attitudes to interculturalism than to multiculturalism.

I think intercultural relationships will be more about we're all working together for a better society. I'm not sure if that's the way or if that's my thinking.

Interview Participant 2, male, aged 55-64)

I quite like the word intercultural because to me it's a doing word. It's getting out there. It's doing.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

A strong theme that emerged in the discussions around understandings of interculturalism was the role of ICD and cultural exchange between individuals and groups. Some participants mentioned interfaith dialogue in their conceptualisations of interculturalism; concluding that dialogue and reciprocated exchange were fundamental elements of the latter.

Valuing your own culture and that of others - through interactions between the different cultures. Looking at your own beliefs critically and gaining insight into other beliefs

Survey Participant 1, female, aged 65+

The interaction and engagement of meaningful exchange between cultures.

Survey Participant, male, aged 45-54

Participants also stressed the importance of recognising universal human values across cultures. Recognition of these universal values are fundamental to establishing mutual respect and building meaningful engagement across cultures.

Interculturalism is looking for commonalities and building bridges upon common goals.

Survey Participant 7, male, aged 25-34

I like to sort of view multiculturalism as a descriptor describing the state that we live in, describing the society and interculturalism almost as a process, which encourages interaction.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

In contrast to participants' attitudes towards multiculturalism, interculturalism was seen to encompass meaningful two-way engagement, manifested through working together, interacting socially, and learning from each other's respective cultural repertoires.

When people or communities from different cultures come together in harmony or social activities that's recognizing each other, learning from each other, inter-marriages, celebrating together the different beliefs and cultures harmoniously - social cohesion.

Participant 55, Female, aged 55-64

Multiculturalism, perhaps implies separate groups that are in their own walled gardens, living in the same land. Whereas, interculturalism perhaps implies a more homogenous kind of existence where everybody is actually participating in everybody else's culture.

Interview Participant 67, male, aged 25-34

The term interculturalism has only recently emerged in the Australian conversations on multiculturalism and has still not entered the wider public discourse (Ballantyne & Malhi 2017). Therefore, it is no surprise that some participants claimed not knowing what interculturalism meant, and couldn't differentiate between multiculturalism and interculturalism. During the focus group discussions, more participants expressed uncertainty about their understanding of the term.

It is that dialogue across so many different channels. I'll be honest that I hadn't actually heard the term interculturalism before the invite to this.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

The online survey generated similar results. Respondents gave a plethora of responses to the question "What does interculturalism mean to you?" This is indicative of the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding the concept. Table 6 and Figure 7 provide summaries of the responses.
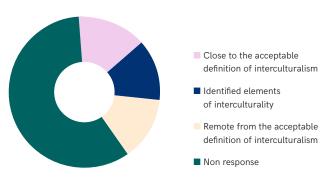
According to Figure 7, 13.9% of the respondents gave responses that are somewhat close to the acceptable definition of interculturalism. While 60% of respondents indicated that they were not previously aware of the concept, 13.5% gave responses unrelated to an acceptable definition of interculturalism.

As seen in the nonresponse rates, these findings suggest that the general public is more familiar with multiculturalism than interculturalism: the nonresponse rate of 60% on interculturalism contrasts sharply with the nonresponse rate of 17.6% for the same question on multiculturalism. Incidentally, just 5.8% of the respondents identified dialogue, respect, understanding, acceptance and exchange as key aspects of interculturalism. This is in contrast with 17.2% who identified respect, acceptance, coexistence, and harmony with multiculturalism.

TABLE 6 Online Survey: what does interculturalism mean to you?

Description	Freq.	Percent
Close to the acceptable definition of interculturalism		
Exchange between people from different cultures with knowledge and understanding	11	1.1
Interaction between different cultures	51	5.1
People/cultures getting together	30	3.0
Accepting other cultures	17	1.7
Understanding and respect for other cultures	15	1.5
Dialogue with other cultures/races	4	0.4
Learning and diffusion of cultures	11	1.1
Identified elements of interculturality		
A mix of different cultures	56	5.6
Different cultures in society	29	2.9
The same as multiculturalism	11	1.1
Activities/policy related to different cultures	12	1.2
A blend of people from different cultures	8	0.8
Between cultures	6	0.6
Equality of people/cultures	4	0.4
Incorporating elements from different cultures	4	0.4
Remote from the acceptable definition of interculturalism		
Sharing the same culture	31	3.1
In-group focus	14	1.4
Cross-cultural marriage	10	1.0
Mixed cultures/nationalities	8	0.8
Adopting other culture	8	0.8
A community	7	0.7
Blending with other cultures	7	0.7
Integration of different cultures	14	1.4
Integrating people from other cultures	6	0.6
Being Australian	5	0.5
Non-Australian cultures	4	0.4
Nonacceptance/Racism/Disrespecting cultures	8	0.8
Not interacting with other cultures	13	1.3
Nonresponse		
Don't know	257	25.6
Not sure	179	17.8
No response	111	11.1
Vague response	53	5.3
Observations	1,004	100

FIGURE 7 Online Survey: public understanding of interculturalism in Australia

- Close to the acceptable definition of interculturalism
- Identified elements of interculturality
- Remote from the acceptable definition of interculturalism
- Non response

What does Interculturalism mean to you?

4.2.2 Beyond Culture: Complexity in Diversity

Underlying any discussion about interculturalism and multiculturalism are ontological understandings of 'culture' (Powell & Sze 2004; Ozturgut 2011). Many participants used the terms 'culture' and 'ethnicity' interchangeably, however they expressed an acute awareness of the complexity of both. In an increasingly diverse and globalised world, culture is fluid and constantly changing (Naylor 1996). Many people living in Australia can trace their cultural heritage to more than one culture. Approaches to ICD and exchange must consider the fact that the cultural identities of many Australians are complex, as recent Census data attest (ABS 2017). According to Census 2016, 39% of the population claimed Anglo-Celtic ancestry and 23% indicated Australian ancestry which could mean Anglo-Celtic or otherwise, while the remaining 38% reported diverse ancestry. In terms of heritage, almost 53% had at least one parent born overseas. Participants spoke of this complexity and how it plays out in everyday living vis-à-vis cultural identity.

Every culture, every family unit, every community is complex. I'm from the Greek community but my mum remarried an English guy and she's now married to an American and my cousin married an Italian so I'm connected to the Italian community. My brother is white because he's blond haired, blue eyed but he's still half Greek. And my stepmother is Cypriot so it's not black and white.

Interview Participant 28, female, aged 25–34

I think it's just really important to realise that, even if I'm wearing my Afghani dress to school as a grade prep, there's complexity behind that and that, we see other with that deep culture as having these stories that aren't the same just because you've got a label.

Focus Group, women

Generally, participants spoke positively about an intercultural approach to diversity, though they were not familiar with the concept 'interculturalism'. Assuming it to be linked to interaction between cultures, they expressed their perception that it could be the missing factor necessary for fixing the challenges of managing diversity. This is explored further in the next sub-section, which discusses participants' observations of linkages between multiculturalism and interculturalism.

4.3 Relationship between Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

Earlier, participants' views on the state of multiculturalism in Australia were presented. We outlined some key challenges that emerged from these discussions such as, tokenism, funding structures, and power imbalances tied to monocultural nationhood, among others. This sub-section examines whether participants believed that multiculturalism needed to be revitalised or replaced to face these challenges. It also examines whether the findings from the online survey corroborate these. Participants in the focus group discussions first explored the conceptual and practical relationship between multiculturalism and interculturalism. For the most part, interculturalism was understood as a

practical approach to implementing multiculturalism rather than a replacement for the latter. Participants indicated that interculturalism and multiculturalism were not mutually contradictory, rather the two were viewed as complementary approaches to building a harmonious society.

For a lot of people, the two concepts are the same. I would say they are aspects of the same. And I think that's how people sort of see them.

Interview Participant 43, male, aged 65+

I really see the two complementing each other rather than being different or opposing each other.
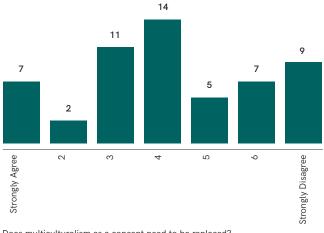
Focus Group, women 2

In some instances, interculturalism was described as a tool that could be employed to help break down racism, prejudice, and discrimination within society. Participants identified racism in society as a major impediment to the success of multiculturalism, and intercultural exchange. While racism and discrimination in Australia are discussed in greater depth later in this report, the following quote exemplifies how intercultural approaches were identified as facilitators for interpersonal relationships which help eliminate stereotypes and fear of the Other:

The way that you break down racism is by interculturalism. And by way you get to a multicultural society is through the process of interculturalism. Unless the different cultures can talk to each other and understand each other you're not really going to have a truly multicultural society where people have some respect for each other. And I've seen that happen often once people meet the new emerging community and they get to know them – people are people.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

The pre-focus group survey asked participants to respond to the question "Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be replaced" by indicating their agreement on a 7-point scale. As Figure 8 shows (see also, Attachment A), participants had mixed responses: 36% agreed that multiculturalism needed to be replaced entirely, while 38% disagreed with this statement. Given that an additional 25% were not sure, it is safe to conclude that the multicultural project faces strong challenges to ensuring its relevance in public policy.

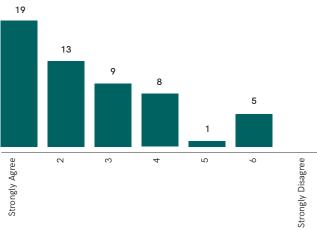**FIGURE 8** Pre-Focus Group: view on the replacement of multiculturalism.

Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be replaced?

Participants were also asked to rate the question "Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be revised/ updated?" As shown in Figure 9 (see also, Attachment A), a significant majority of the respondents (75%) agreed that multiculturalism needed some kind of revision, with only 5 participants disagreeing.

These results point to a strong desire among stakeholders within the community to examine and re-engage the meaning of multiculturalism. This may be driven by a need for more conceptual clarity since, as we indicated earlier, there were different conceptualisations of multiculturalism among participants.

In the online survey, disagreement and/or indecision on the need to replace multiculturalism with interculturalism significantly surpasses agreement with the same idea.

Yet as we reported earlier, there is uncertainty as to what interculturalism as a policy means: 59% of respondents claimed to have no idea what interculturalism as a policy entailed. Nonetheless, a large majority reported that something needs to be done with multiculturalism; though they were not sure what that is.

Consistent with the results in Figure 7, nearly 30% think multiculturalism should be replaced by another policy while 38% disagreed with this and an additional 32% were indifferent to its replacement.

On the other hand, more than half (52%) claimed that multiculturalism needs to be revised.

Some of the responses on the distinction between interculturalism and multiculturalism are ambiguous.

Nearly half of the respondents claimed to be unsure about this, (36%) suspect interculturalism may be the missing element in multicultural policy. This contrasts with a roughly 36% who disagree that interculturalism can replace multiculturalism.

Respondents were also prompted to assess whether an intercultural approach offered a better two-way dynamic relative to multiculturalism, and nearly 45% agreed with the idea that interculturalism contrasts with multiculturalism in that it encourages a dialogic (a two-way) cultural exchange.

FIGURE 9 Pre-Focus Group: view on revising/updating multiculturalism

Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be revised/updated?

FIGURE 10 Online Survey: public perception of interculturalism as a policy option in Australia

Interculturalism, unlike multiculturalism, promotes a two-way cultural exchange between individuals

Agree 44.6 Disagree 13.8
Neutral 41.6

Multiculturalism as a concept needs to be revised/updated

Agree 51.7 Disagree 18.7
Neutral 29.6

Interculturalism cannot replace multiculturalism, but is the missing element in an otherwise sound policy

Agree 49.4 Disagree 14.7
Neutral 35.9

Multiculturalism as a concept needs to be replaced

Agree 29.8 Disagree 37.9
Neutral 32.4

I am not sure what interculturalism, as a policy concept, actually means

Agree 59 Disagree 15
Neutral 26

Interculturalism as an alternative to multiculturalism.

4.3.1 Revisiting Multiculturalism

From the first consultative phase of this study we learned of a clear sentiment among participants that multiculturalism in Australia needs a shift away from the majority/minority paradigm to one that is based on shared values, mutual respect, and engagement. One participant expressed this as the need for long-term culture shift moving away from short-term solutions to a sustained whole-of-society approach to multiculturalism.

I think I really hope that we can see something change in the way we talk about interculturalism in Australia because I think it's important.

Interview Participant 36, male, aged 35–44

There's no long term concerted efforts to have a real culture shift. The other thing is that we often do Band-Aids and I like this recent dialogue around whole of society approaches, whole of school approaches.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

Informing much of the discussion on revitalising multiculturalism was a desire to engage the dominant culture, creating spaces where multiculturalism would be relevant to all members of society. The idea of extending multiculturalism to the whole of Australian society was echoed by another participant who expressed frustration that multiculturalism was being treated as a peripheral phenomenon.

What is missing for me is multiculturalism continues to be treated and understand and actualised and operationalized as a peripheral phenomenon. Whether it is policy, whether it is actions whether it is programs, whether it is resources – in budget allocation time it is always an added on.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Revitalising multiculturalism also meant moving away from tokenistic and superficial rhetoric and engagement, towards a more practical and applied multiculturalism.

This inevitably requires a greater willingness and ability of the dominant culture to relinquish power in social structures. A few participants identified significant differences between the rhetoric around multiculturalism and the practice of multiculturalism on the ground.

I tend to agree because there's a big gap between the speech and the reality and you only have to look at the private sector employment or the public sector employment.

Focus Group, mixed gender 1

There is the ideal, then there is the practice; there is the theory, and there is the practice. And there's a lot of contradiction between those.

Interview Participants 27, female, aged 25–34

Participants were hopeful that Interculturalism offered a new approach to multiculturalism that might reinvigorate cultural relations and dialogue.

The intercultural thing hasn't got into people's heads yet …. I think the intercultural thinking, intercultural skills, I think it's the real answer to this, and I can see the government hasn't explored that enough yet.

Participant 6, female, aged 55–64

Just as multiculturalism has become a compromised term, interculturalism can also lose its effectiveness if it is not backed by action and engagement.

It [interculturalism] could just become another word that means the same as multicultural for people. Unless there's an actually process of engagement.

Focus Group, mixed gender

Overall participants in this study recognised that multiculturalism needed to be revised to address the complex challenges associated with diversity.

While they struggled to clearly articulate the idea of interculturalism as policy, they understand that an intercultural approach could play a vital role in revitalising multiculturalism to address the task of building a harmonious society.

4.4 Reinvigorating Multiculturalism through Intercultural Dialogue

This section reports the participants' views on an intercultural approach to multiculturalism, comparing the findings with those from the online survey. The themes examined here include: the role of dialogue in interculturalism; the way interculturalism develops through 'organic' and grassroots initiatives; the need for cultural competency and skills; interculturalism as a value proposition; and interculturalism as it is expressed in education and employment.

This section also explores participants' views on the role of government agencies and individual citizens in encouraging and developing an intercultural community. The section then concludes with several examples of intercultural activities that participants provided.
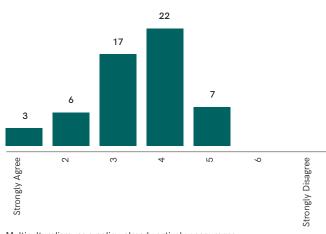
4.4.1 The Role of Dialogue in Interculturalism

Participants were asked to comment on how effective multicultural policies are in encouraging intercultural interaction, dialogue, and exchange.

Most respondents were largely neutral or only slightly positive, suggesting that current approaches are not effectively engaging different cultural groups in meaningful ways.

An intercultural approach may provide a framework with which to reinvigorate cross-cultural exchanges by fostering cultural competencies; creating shared spaces; and encouraging communities to engage meaningfully.

FIGURE 11 Pre-Focus Group: multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue.

Multiculturalism, as a policy, already actively encourages intercultural interaction, dialogue and exchange.

In addition, stakeholders in the multicultural sector in Victoria were asked to elaborate on how intercultural interaction, dialogue, and exchange is being fostered through multicultural policies.

In so doing, they acknowledged that some current policies do encourage forms of dialogue, however they questioned the effectiveness of existing levels of dialogue. One participant explained that while current policies encouraged some types of intercultural activities, these did not manifest in actual intercultural engagement.

We can actually look at the Australian example, currently our Australian government encourages interculturalism, with so many actions. Once you look at most of the politicians, they actually favour it, but still interculturalism does not really happen much.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

This could be attributed to a persistent disinterest among the dominant culture to engage with minority cultures in ways that go beyond 'entertainment'. Rectifying this will require members of the dominant culture to recognise and redress power imbalances within the structure of multicultural engagement and dialogue.

I feel that it's important for us to talk together. But as long as the power is equal. So, when there is a power indifference, it adds another element to that relationship.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

Under the framework of intercultural dialogue. Political leaders [should] actually have an open, authentic, honest dialogue to understand the subconscious biases within institutions and make changes according to the voices of the community.

Focus Group, mixed gender 1

'Dialogue' must also move beyond the notion of a benevolent majority permitting the Other to speak. For dialogue to be meaningful, there must be a firm belief that the Other's contribution is valued and contributes to an innovative and dynamic society.

Some participants identified the power dynamics in ICD as inhibiting meaningful engagement. In other words, they maintain that ICD must be an equally shared multi-directional exchange, or 'two-way street'.

It should be a two-way street. It should be consultative, collaborative rather than sort of dictating.

Interview Participant 13, female, aged 25–34

And to work together you need an open dialogue and open discussion. But bearing in mind, we are not about showing you are wrong or I'm better or I'm right and you're wrong. It's about exchanging idea and exchanging thinking, a way of thinking.

Interview Participant 2, male, aged 55–64

It is fundamental for ICD to foster environments that encourage dialogue about issues beyond the Othering of minoritised cultures; these spaces should not be taken as another opportunity for cultures to 'entertain' through difference. Subjects broached may be sensitive, loaded with preconceptions and emotional significance for all involved. For example, dialogues on Australian identity, values and history are fundamental to meaningful ICD, yet because they often provoke tension they are usually avoided.

Where's the intercultural dialogue about Australia Day? Where's the intercultural dialogue about the rights of indigenous people in the Constitution et cetera et cetera?

Focus Group, mixed gender 1

I think it's really awkward. There's been a lot of clunkiness in relation to this kind of discussion … in terms of one-on-one interactions with people, I find it's really a sensitive sort of space. Especially for white people to talk about culture. I find that it's a very fragile space to be in for them and I actually feel sorry for some of them, because they say, "I'm boring. I've got no culture" and stuff like that.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

Similarly, there are sensitive topics in and among minority communities that would benefit from dialogue with the wider society in safe communal spaces; such as the issue of radicalisation to violent extremism within Muslim Australian communities.

The pre-focus group surveys asked participants to reflect on how important five levels of dialogue would be for an intercultural approach to multiculturalism.

These five levels include: dialogue between groups in nation states; dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds; interreligious dialogue; dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds; and dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment. The responses from the participants are presented in the table on the following page.

TABLE 7 Pre-Focus Group: role of dialogue in interculturalism

| Description	Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly agree
Dialogue between groups within nation states	0	1	2	9	9	23	13
Dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds	0	0	1	4	2	36	14
Interreligious dialogue	1	0	0	1	0	42	11
Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds	1	0	0	3	7	36	8
Dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment	1	0	0	1	3	40	9
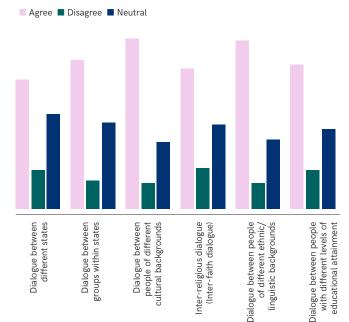
Participants overwhelmingly believed that all the types of dialogue were important for intercultural approaches to multiculturalism. They viewed interreligious dialogue as the most important, and intercountry dialogue as the least important dimensions of ICD. This aligns with the relative prevalence of interfaith dialogue in the Australian public arena. Religious groups have experience engaging in dialogue among each other, and can provide the impetus and direction needed for ICD (Hardy & Hussein 2017). Indeed, in an environment where issues of Islamist extremism are prominent in social consciousness, the need for meaningful interfaith dialogue cannot be underestimated. On the other hand, participants viewed dialogue between nation states as the least important of the types of dialogue. This illustrates that ICD is understood as something that occurs within national societies and on a local level between individuals of various backgrounds.

These findings from the pre-focus group survey are partially corroborated by the online survey. As indicated in Figure 12 (see also, Attachment A), the respondents in the sample reported mixed understanding of ICD. While most the respondents (73%, Figure 7) failed to articulate a description close to the acceptable definition of interculturalism, a large proportion (64%) correctly identified the key aspects of ICD when given options. They strongly identified ethno-linguistic and cultural backgrounds as essential constituents of ICD. Yet, more than half of the respondents understood the latter as a dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment. Nearly half of all respondents thought of it as involving some kind of dialogue between different states.

4.4.2 Limitations of Dialogue

In the focus group discussions, some limitations of ICD were also identified. Some participants expressed the importance of the need for action-oriented dialogue. The trope of dialogue can be perceived as 'just talk' with no meaningful outcome, unless it incorporates actionable strategies. For this reason, it is important that dialogue also be accompanied by action.

FIGURE 12 Online Survey: public understanding of intercultural dialogue in Australia.

What is central to intercultural dialogue?

Make it about social action – not dialogue. "Change" the Australian identity narrative so it's not just white. Allow space for younger generations to spiel, be heard and act on what they say.

Survey Response, Participant 14

In addition, ICD must broaden its appeal to the wider public and should not simply engage those who already have an interest in other cultures. In the comment below, a participant makes a comparison between ICD and interfaith dialogue, and highlights the need to ensure broad engagement from a range of participants.

I facilitate interfaith programs which are interesting because bringing the religions together to talk about their religion. It is really great and each group listens to everybody else and we learn so much. I facilitate a lot of them. As part of that, we also bring cultures together to do intercultural stuff and I think that's very important. But it's the converted that come, it's not the people who don't want to know.

Participant 17, female, aged 65+

As with other forms of dialogue, ICD may be inadvertently exclusive. To extend its appeal, there should be as few barriers to entering the dialogue as possible. For example, in interfaith dialogue, people often do not feel confident enough in their religious knowledge to represent their religion. This may also occur with ICD, resulting in communities electing representatives to engage on their behalf. This can create a bubble that limits the benefits of ICD to those within its sphere of influence. Addressing this requires equipping the wider community with the tools and competencies it needs to engage in meaningful dialogues. Further, discussion should be directed at moving beyond sharing and comparing, to consider active citizenship.

This is why I don't even like the word dialogue …. It becomes esoteric and the only people who can engage in it are those who can articulate their own faith or culture …which is a very small population. So, the way that I work is by doing things like doing things around social justice issues. You're working side by side and in that space that's when you learn about each other. And it's about building bridges, not gathering information.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

4.4.3 Bottom-up Interculturalism

Many participants recognised that ICD and exchange happens in an 'organic' way through everyday interactions. These spaces of 'everyday encounter' generate meaningful intercultural engagement that provide the pieces with which to build an intercultural society.

Interaction can happen when there are necessities… and happens by osmosis and also by the fact that they're there, and - and it is happening. And I witness that across the board, you know.

Interview Participant 27, female, aged 25–34

It [intercultural interaction] is happening all the time anyway.

Interview Participant 9, male, aged 55–64

Participants expressed various ways that these intercultural encounters occur daily in a cosmopolitan city. One participant engaged in a Melbourne music scene expressed how intercultural engagement occurs naturally, without any political impetus, organisation, or investment.

I'm very involved with the music scene and in the music scene everyone's thirsty to work with everyone and there is curiosity of what would happen if I recorded with that person who has nothing to do with my musical heritage…. It's not something

that is happening because there's a policy stimulus for it to happen or because government creates spaces for that to happen.

Interview Participant 51, male, aged 35–44

Universities and schools are hives of intercultural engagement where youth are exposed to other cultures in an environment that encourages openness and critical thought. Students must, however, have a level of cultural competence and respect for the Other to take advantage of these opportunities.

I remember when I was a student I had friends from all over the place. Because you don't think at that…. At that stage you're just…. You're in university, it's very exciting and you just naturally begin to form friendships with people from different backgrounds because you're all at university together.

Interview Participant 45, female, age n/a

In schools and universities, intercultural engagement moves beyond 'show-and-tell' exchanges given the dialogue occurs within environments of shared values and objectives – the attainment of higher learning. There are many other examples of how shared objectives bring people of different cultures together for meaningful engagement. This could be through common sports, hobbies, or professional relationships. Interculturalism in these spaces can moving beyond stereotypes and preconceived expectations. One participant's experience in a writers group reflects this sentiment:

I've workshopped with lots of migrant writers, even without trying to be intercultural or that wasn't my purpose. I just wanted to write and I just wanted to interact with people… They didn't look at me as a Japanese person. They didn't expect to learn about Japan from me. That wasn't their purpose. They just wanted to see me as a writer, and that was great, fantastic.

Interview Participant 42, female, aged 55–64

In addition to the everyday intercultural encounters occurring in a multicultural society, participants signalled the significance of grassroots initiatives spearheaded by local communities. While interculturalism can be fostered in government institutions, the participant below stresses the importance of grassroots efforts to encourage and resolve problems that are beyond the scope of state institutions.

I think we need to have a proper communication to the grass-roots level… Also, I think our community leaders also take some responsibility…I think there is probably an issue in community that leaders need to come together and resolve that problem.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Too often, bringing communities together to discuss issues is a process dominated by self-appointed community leaders who engage enthusiastically, but have limited ability to influence their communities and produce change. For interculturalism to achieve change, engagement must go beyond the individual representative model, towards an

beyond the individual representative model, towards an all-inclusive approach. The participant below questioned whether current intercultural efforts draw in the grassroots.

Sometimes I feel as if they [intercultural activities] are very superficial because if I go to any event, I see the same people … we are not reaching the grassroots.

Focus Group, women 1

Fundamental to successful intercultural engagement is the development of interpersonal relationships between people of different communities. Meaningful cultural exchanges take place through personal one-on-one relationships that challenge stereotypes and prejudices. An intercultural approach to multiculturalism aims at providing the spaces, opportunities, and tools to facilitate interpersonal relationships among individuals from different backgrounds.

Unless we basically talk to those persons at a lunch — you know, go onto being a friend or just invite to my house… just have some basically personal relationship, it doesn't really get through much.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

For me interculturalism is basically more a one-on-one. It's an interchange of ideas.
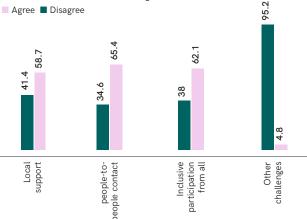
Focus Group, mixed gender 1

I don't have a real, human connection until I've met somebody from that background, and that changes everything. It changes stereotyping and it changes, attitudes that might be incorrect, and meeting people, of course, is absolutely essential and critical.

Interview Participant 16, male, aged 35–44

The interpersonal nature of ICD was also highlighted in responses to the online survey. Respondents were asked to reflect on what they thought ICD needed to produce a positive impact. As indicated in Figure 13, 65% of respondents identified people-to-people contact as an essential factor. In addition, more than 62% also pointed to the need for inclusive participation from all, and not just minoritised groups. More than half but slightly fewer respondents (58%) emphasised the importance of local support rather than just a top-down (government directives) as essential for effective ICD.

FIGURE 13 Online Survey: determinants of successful intercultural dialogue.

■ Agree ■ Disagree

Essential factors for effective intercultural dialogue.

4.4.4 Cultural Competency and Intercultural Skills

As with any form of dialogue, those participating in ICD benefit from having skills such as critical analysis, empathy, and cultural knowledge. It is imperative that individuals are provided with the skills required to meaningfully participate in spaces created for intercultural exchange.

Many participants expressed this claim, that ICD and intercultural exchange requires certain skills and levels of competency:

I think that it's important to recognise that if you're going to do this [intercultural dialogue] ideally there should be some cultural training that's happening particularly at the leadership level.

Interview Participant 30, female, age n/a

The Australian national curriculum recognises that cultural competency skills are important assets for citizens of a globalised world.

Many participants reinforced this, stressing the importance of embedding instruction on intercultural competency in the education system as necessary for overcoming the challenges facing Australian multiculturalism.

Well I always believe the cross-cultural education is the most important thing. Cross-cultural education is the key for everything.

Interview Participant 2, male, aged 55–64

Well, of course, what we've all talked about is education to end of the day. It's that a lot of people have, because we're living in this increasingly globalised world they have, they don't have the competencies to be able to navigate their way through worldviews. And this is why I applaud the initiative of the federal government took under Julia Gillard to put cultural understanding as a key a competency, capability of the Australian curriculum which will underpin all the key learning areas.

Interview Participant 3, male, aged n/a

Cultural competency however is a skill that needs to be fostered and practiced. Cultural competency training and learning need to be built into workplaces and other social structures. Too often, institutions, communities and organisations are reluctant to make changes until they become necessary through legislation or community pressure.

Complacency towards cultural inclusion needs to be addressed and replaced with more proactive approaches. Forward-thinking institutions are recognising that in an increasingly globalised world there are many opportunities to be garnered by improving cultural competence (Centre for Community Health and Development 2017).

The participant below provides an example of the practical implications of cultural competency, and how having these skills can help institutions and organisations identify problems before they emerge.

Building those cultural competencies into existing structures, not in a tokenistic way, but just in a sense of putting those things into place before it actually becomes relevant to you. For example, when you make a company dress code or a school dress code or…how you deal with personal leave in regards to cultural celebrations, all that kind of thing. I think we're not very good at that, we expect people to all be the same.

Focus Group, women 2

There's that one person within the organisation that deals with all the multicultural stuff and then everybody else just does their job normally, without any cultural training.

Focus G, mixed gender 2

Participants did not conceptualise cultural competency as a pedagogical knowledge about diverse cultures, but rather as skills of human interaction, such as: the ability to empathise, critically identify implicit biases, and build constructively on shared values. Becoming self-aware of implicit (or unconscious) biases is a crucial step towards addressing the power imbalances in majority/minority communities and identifying cultural biases that are embedded in the structural systems of society.

I think we need to teach empathy, recognising when there's someone struggling in the room or recognising when there's someone who's feeling like a bit of an outsider.

Focus Group, women 1

I'd like to take it a step back and before you dive into cultural competency I'd like to see some serious education around unconscious bias.

Focus Group, community leaders 1)

While it is possible to upskill individuals and institutions in cultural competency, its success relies on participants' desire and willingness to learn. This is evident in the CoE's definition of ICD as a process comprising "an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect" (2008, p. 9). It requires the freedom and ability to express oneself, as well as the willingness and capacity to listen to the views of others.

The willingness to engage in ICD is a major challenge many Australians who view Australia as a monocultural society and perceive multiculturalism as a challenge to that. To address this, intercultural exchanges must be given intrinsic value beyond the 'feel-good inclusiveness' of superficial engagement. In other words, intercultural approaches to multiculturalism must focus on highlighting the value-added by engaging meaningfully with other cultures. A participant who provides cultural competency training explained the difficulty of teaching cultural competency to a group of people who are not interested in engaging:

When people are forced to come – and I sit there and I see 30 policemen in [Suburb] Police Station and I'm doing a culture competency focus on the South Sudanese and you just know that they're – they're putting daggers at you. They don't want to be there.

Focus Groups, community leaders 1)

4.4.5 Interculturalism as a Value Proposition

Cultural competency is part of a larger goal; genuine intercultural engagement wherein participants value cultural exchange is essential to an innovative and dynamic society. This shift in how we understand multiculturalism emphasises that differences should be perceived as opportunities rather than threats.

An intercultural approach to multiculturalism recognises diversity as an advantage and a resource that can foster innovation and create a dynamic and cohesive society. Culturally normative approaches to problem-solving can be invigorated by ideas and solutions that are framed in atypical contexts (for example by minority communities). Yet for a society to capitalise on this resource, it must create the relationships and spaces that facilitate ICD and problem-solving. Most importantly, the dominant culture must accept that atypical approaches, while seeming peculiar, are valuable and can offer insights and opportunities to the society at large.

If every state government really took it seriously and said that this is a resource… which is more powerful than your mining resources, more powerful than all your wealth.

Interview Participant 34, male, aged 55–64

So, I think we're talking about a cultural shift, and when I say culture, I mean the broader interpretation of that. And we're talking about values and how we affect the value shift in the ordinary person's mind and application.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Intercultural problem-solving occurs best when the foundations of a diverse community are built on a set of shared values that bind the community and create incentives for meaningful engagement. Multiculturalism in Australia is too often conceptualised as advocating for 'communities within a community'. Interculturalism can challenge this representation, by reinforcing the notion that there is unity and shared values among all members of the community.

The key message is, within diversity, there's unity – that needs to be really rammed home when teaching this subject. And that's where…everyone benefited from each other's contribution to humanity's development. All traditions…irrespective of their background, belief system or non-belief system, and their ethnicity… the important thing is that everyone helped humanity progress.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

4.4.6 Interculturalism in Education

The role of education for fostering interculturalism in plural societies cannot be understated. The UNESCO report on Education for Intercultural Understanding highlights that "education systems, schools and teachers are […] responsible for strengthening [a] child's cultural identity and values, while also promoting respect and understanding for the culture of others" (2010, p. 9). The school curriculum plays a vital role in teaching youth about their culture while providing them with the 'competencies, attitudes and values' that allow for critical engagement and reflection of cultural paradigms in society (Mansouri and Arber 2017).

The stakeholders who participated in the focus groups and interviews were keen to emphasise that a successful intercultural approach to multiculturalism should incorporate cultural competency into the education system from a young age. Some participants recognised that a shift to an intercultural approach is already underway in the education system.

There's a huge movement happening in Australia, especially in the education sector, where intercultural understanding [is in the] Australian curriculum and the Victorian curriculum [as] a key competency, sitting alongside our numeracy and literacy, which is going to underpin the key learning areas. This is all about how you develop the competency of intercultural understandings as a value, a key competency of global citizenship almost.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

One of the biggest challenges to incorporating interculturalism into the curriculum is that the curriculum itself is embedded in a monocultural framework that reinforces the cultural power dynamics of majority/minority. The entire conceptualisation of education and school-based learning is Eurocentric and does not incorporate multicultural approaches to education. A multicultural approach, for example, would be experiential rather than pedagogical. A truly intercultural education system transcends the structural limitations of a school-based system by incorporating an intercultural approach to learning, as well as providing different content alongside European-focussed perspectives (on all subjects, including history, the sciences and art). One participant explained her vision for an education system that reflected the diversity in the country.

You know, every single milestone that we have has to include diversity. We need to update the entire education system to include diversity and young people that have different frameworks that they live by.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

While an intercultural curriculum may still be a long-term goal for Australia, in the short-term, schools are still struggling to engage sensitively with students from diverse cultures. The participant below cited an incident last year in a public school in Flemington, Melbourne as an example of how interculturalism in schools is undervalued:

Did you see those articles in the papers, I think it was early last year, about the schools in the inner north and I think around Flemington where – these are yuppie families who fervently believe in multiculturalism but they're pulling their kids out of school because there are too many refugee kids being sent to those schools which brings down, in their eyes perhaps, the quality of the teaching.

Focus Group, women 1

Negative attitudes towards difference in schools can inadvertently be reinforced by school rules and regulations requiring Eurocentric dress codes. Some schools in Australia are struggling to manage their increasingly diverse student body. One participant cited an example of a young Sikh primary school student who was admitted to a private school only to learn he had to shave his top knot before being allowed to attend. Another participant referred to restrictions on Muslim Australian girls wearing long sleeves under their school uniforms. School administrators must be more proactive in upskilling their cultural competence, to learn how to cater to a range of students without inadvertently reinforcing cultural bias.

And the parents said "but when we came for the interview he had his topknot and, you know, two months later – the interview was in November and now in January you say he can't" – they said "no, shave it off" and they said "but this is part of his upbringing and when he came for the interview nobody told us shave off the topknot".

Focus Group, mixed gender 1

You can't wear long sleeves under your dress rather than just being flexible about those kinds of things I think you do see it a bit with the education system. They think everyone's going to be the same, everyone's just going to do whatever the school policy is and then until a situation like that comes up where they have to think about it, they don't.

Focus Group, community leaders 3, women

The education system can also offer a platform for challenging rising xenophobia, racism, and intolerance. Schools provide fertile grounds for intercultural engagement and offer opportunities to engage young citizens in practicing key competencies such as empathy and critical reflection. Schools can also foster cultural competencies by including human rights principles in the school curriculum.

I always said respecting other culture should be part of the education system. Because if you bring up the kids at school with this respect to each other, you won't discrimination or racism when they grow up.

Interview Participant 2, male, aged 55–64

Upskilling youth with intercultural competencies is an investment into the future of a multicultural Australia. It is also a strategy for challenging negative attitudes in the general public. Through intercultural competency training, young people are equipped with tools enabling them to challenge xenophobic attitudes within their own families and communities.

Because if we can teach the intercultural connections and communication, then maybe then they can teach their parents …. A trickle up kind of thing. Not a trickle down. Educate the young and they will help the old break down their sort of xenophobic attitudes.

Interview Participant 67, male, aged 25–34

4.4.7 Fostering Interculturalism: Individual Responsibility or the Role of Government?

Participants were asked to reflect on the roles of the government and the individual in facilitating the shift towards interculturalism. Conclusively, participants identified that governments play a vital role in designing multicultural

policy, allocating resources, and setting the framework of dialogue and discussion. Government's also play an important role in facilitating the development of spaces where intercultural exchanges can take place.

Government plays an important role to allow the organic process to happen.
Participant 36, male, aged 35-44

If local government embraces the idea that we should have spaces where cultures contribute, then I think cultures would contribute and I think more people would realise the contribution that multiple cultures can do.
Interview Participant 51, male, aged 35-44

Some participants expressed frustration that current state and federal government policies on diversity were esoteric and offered no concrete objectives that are measurable or enforceable. For example, if a government policy has 'creating an inclusive society free of discrimination' as its objective, how would this objective be measured, and who is accountable for its attainment? The need for enforceable and measurable government policies was reiterated by some participants.

I think to really get to that intercultural state you would need more government intervention and the said intervention would have to be specific, measureable, enforceable and, more importantly, enforced. Again, we need to move away from lip service.
Interview Participant 13, female, aged 25-34

Government leaders, as public figures, are well-placed to set standards of inclusivity and openness to difference, as well as being examples of intercultural practices. A focus-group participant expressed delight in seeing the former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd give a speech in Mandarin. Similarly, government officials attending community engagement may be cynically dismissed as superficial or tokenistic, but are often viewed by as meaningful symbolic gestures of interculturalism.

When you see the Prime Minister or some of the ministers visit a mosque to break bread during Iftar time, or to visit a home or an institution's Iftar dinner – it gives a great buzz to the community, because it shows that there's a willingness, and there's a welcoming – or that there's an acceptance.
Focus Group, mixed gender 3

Principally, stakeholders who participated in the interviews and focus groups believed that the government had an important role to play in developing policy, fostering shared spaces, and leading by example.

Yet, participants also emphasised the role and responsibility of individual citizens in engaging and contributing to interculturalism. Government efforts can provide resources, create spaces, cultivate skills through the education system, and lead by example, but ultimately the success of interculturalism depends on the meaningful engagement of individual citizens and civil society.

The government can set a vision of what they [expect from a] harmonious society. And they can govern, and put laws in place to help work towards that vision, but it comes down to the people living inside that society to go above and beyond.
Focus Group, mixed gender 3

For a few of the participants, the responsibility for community intercultural engagement stood squarely on the shoulders of individuals.

I believe that basically, interculturalism, to me, happens through face-to-face, personal relationship, and government really cannot do much unless the people really are looking for it.
Focus Group, mixed gender 3

This reflects the Victorian State Government re-definition of intercultural understanding, as a 'personal and social capability'. As such, interculturalism emphasises the role of individual and community agency and responsibility in engaging cross-culturally.

4.4.8 Example of Intercultural Activities

Participants were asked to provide examples of any intercultural activities that they were aware of in their community. The activities below were identified in focus group discussions and interviews.

Community Initiatives

The participant below detailed local initiatives led by ethnic communities that created spaces and invited other communities to share in culturally significant events.

I've been involved with both the Sri Lankan Muslim community and the Afghan communities as I was growing up. And they both had really distinct community groups, particularly the Sri Lankan Muslim community.
And would often, like, run very distinct events but, [also] often invited other communities to be part of the events and work that was happening.
Interview Participant 30, female, age n/a

Local Mothers' Groups

Mothers' groups were repeatedly mentioned as an example of intercultural activities at the local level.

These groups, however, bring together mothers from a geographical area, their usefulness as a tool for intercultural engagement depends on the diversity of the suburb or designated area. Nonetheless, mothers' groups are an example of how ICD and cultural exchange can occur in meaningful ways beyond the tropes of 'multiculturalism'.

We had a mums and bubs group where we had especially Afghan women Korean women and the Indians, the Pilipino, they come together, they learn English and also to let the children play together.
Focus Group, community leaders 3

It is worth nothing that many of the examples of the local intercultural activities were directed at women; other examples included cooking and sewing groups.

Food and Festivals

Food is often a conduit for intercultural engagement, as a 'carrier of culture'. Interpersonal relationships can be formed and nurtured around food.

Consuming food from other cultures is an easily accessible and affordable act of intercultural engagement. While it may be self-motivated and superficial, it can also motivate individuals to position themselves outside of their cultural hegemony, and can be a catalyst for ICD.

Food is an important carrier of culture so I would never undervalue that, and people, when they want to show their culture, often the easiest way to do it, even here, is through food.

Interview Participant 6, female, aged 55–64

The Australian food industry has managed to successfully translate the nation's appetite for flavourful diverse cuisines into a uniquely Australian 'Fusion cuisine', celebrating Australia's multicultural identity.

The challenge for the nation is to translate this success into one that goes beyond food producing more meaningful intercultural encounters.

I think the food industry is very successful at it because they don't use the word multicultural. They came up with fantastic words like fusion and other really good solutions of, making people not think that when they cook a meal…that it's a cultural experience.

Interview Participant 32, female, aged 35–44

Yet what is colloquially known as the 'Food, Flags, and Festivals' approach (Arber 2008) to multiculturalism has significant limitations.

The challenge for intercultural exchange is how to translate these one-time (often self-motivated) food and festival events into deeper, sustained, and more meaningful engagements, in which other cultures are valued and respected beyond the commodities and entertainment that they offer.

It happens in festivals, today there is a Lunar festival in Victoria Street in Richmond, and of course, there will be…30, or 40 thousand people and the majority of those will not be Vietnamese and Chinese.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

So, for me, it's that – at least, on the surface, it may exist really well in the sense that people are enjoying all the different things they can attend, event festivities that a group puts on for the other group…. But to really be part of it can be difficult.

Interview Participant 29, female, age n/a

4.4.9 Considerations for Intercultural Success

The focus group discussions allowed participants to reflect on a range of topics in relation to developing and conducting successful ICD. From these discussions participants mentioned: the need to ensure accessibility to other cultures; developing accountability and evaluation measures; challenging intolerance and racism; navigating mixed and complex cultural identities; cultivating effective leadership; addressing the role of the dominant culture; and effective framing of policy.

Accountability and Evaluation

Paramount to any discussion on policy aims and approaches to multiculturalism is the need to provide tools with which progress can be measured and evaluated. In almost all of the focus group discussions, stakeholders criticised the lack of accountability, evaluation, and enforcement of multicultural objectives set out by the government. Participants felt strongly that an intercultural approach to multiculturalism can help to address this problem of accountability:

They've even changed the language to targets so that they aren't held accountable for the kinds of policy that they put in place. They'll just use loose words like targets instead of a quota which is enforceable and measureable…otherwise it's just lip service.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

Where is the evaluation? Where is the measurement? …. If you are not measuring something there's no accountability whatsoever.

Interview Participant 34, male, aged 55–64

I would say that Australia is a multicultural society that needs better intercultural practices. Or even thinking, intercultural thinking.

Interview Participant 36, male, aged 35–44

Challenging Intolerance

Racial discrimination in Australia persists and is a challenge for any multicultural policy. ICD can reduce racism and foster social cohesion (Elias 2017). Intercultural approaches must recognise the power imbalances, structural racism, and implicit biases that provide the context in which dialogue occurs. Participants argued that discrimination and racism are structural impediments to an intercultural approach to multiculturalism in Australia.

It [discrimination] is not overt. It's sort of subtle. It's done in manipulation and only done in systems and processes within organisations, not in interpersonal relations. Its structures that exist or that have existed since colonialisation in this country and they're very solid structures. We are under an illusion that we have equal opportunity, because we don't.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

The evidence suggests that racial discrimination in Australia exists and is a barrier for civic engagement and professional development (Dunn et al. 2004; Blair et al. 2017; Markus 2016; Elias 2015). Discrimination in the workforce is

often cited as an issue for many Australians from minority communities, such as Muslims. Organisations like Islamophobia Watch document rising levels of Islamophobic sentiments in Australia, with multiculturalism sometimes criticised for failing to facilitate social cohesion.

I would say that though but I think there is a rising discrimination either due to colour or due to race or due to religion increasing at the current moment. Probably that happened about maybe 12 months/15 months ago.

Interview Participant 9, male, 55-64

I tolerate you, you tolerate me. We're tolerating, but we're not doing very well accepting and understanding and interacting with each other, that's my take on that.

Interview Participant 12, female, aged 18-24

Navigating Mixed Cultural Identities

Many Australians, including 'Anglo-Australians', come from mixed cultural heritages. This makes intercultural conversations and engagements complex if not impossible. On the other hand, the complexity offers an avenue for the participation of Anglo-Australians in cultural dialogue. As Australians from diverse cultures intermarry, we can expect greater levels of intermixing, and mixed families. Thus, spaces for ICD need to be inclusive of Australians who have complex and diverse cultures within their own traditions. Considering an intercultural approach to multiculturalism, it is important to consider strategies for dialogue with individuals who may not fit neatly into unitary and specific cultural categories.

Patients often ask me, "Where are you from?" and I used to get a little bit affronted and I'd say, "Well, you know, this is not relevant to this discussion. Why are you – like I grew up in, you know, the eastern suburbs of Melbourne". But now I actually say, "I'm from – this is my background" and even if they look as white as white can be, I'll say, "And what's your family story?" because every single person, including Aboriginal Australians, including white Australians, has an interesting background story and I think it's important to actually recognise that. My husband is Anglo but actually he's got German and he's got Irish and Scottish and Aboriginal heritage and it's an interesting story and if they can recognise that they have multiculturalism within them, then it kind of allows them to relate to migrants.

Focus Group, women 1

Everyone is calling me Anglo-Saxon and I'm thinking, "I don't think I am" – because my background is 50 per cent French. I'm 25 per cent Irish and 25 per cent Scottish. We don't call ourselves Anglo-Saxon but everyone says, "You're Anglo" and I'm thinking, "Oh, do I have to be?"

Focus Group, women 1

For the purposes of ICD, it is also important to recognise that an ethnic heritage does not necessarily imply a connection to that ethnic culture. In addition, as long as Australian national identity is framed as monocultural, identifying as from a minority culture may be viewed as a handicap. Some Australians may also be wary of dialogue and engagement that continues to emphasise their difference leading them to disengage from cultural dialogue that labels them as Other.

I was born and brought up in Japan but I lived in Australia longer now because I was only in my twenty - early twenties when I came so I lived in Australia longer. Why do I have to stick with Japanese this and Japanese that and present Japan in festivals. I did for a little while but now I got sick of it.

Interview Participant 42, female, aged 55-64

Accessibility to Other Cultures

When considering strategies to foster ICD, participants recognised the importance of accessibility to diverse cultures. In a diverse and globalised world, individuals are increasingly siloed and opportunities for meaningful engagement can therefore become rare.

An intercultural focus on creating spaces for cross-cultural encounter and engagement seeks to address this; broadening accessibility currently limited to food, festivals, and film.

ICD is also furthered by creating community spaces in which people of diverse cultures have a sense of co-ownership.

If you make it free and easy and broadly accessible then I think people will eventually sort of start to get involved.

Interview Participant 12, female, aged 18-24

Leadership

A strong theme emerging from the discussions was the need for leadership to facilitate meaningful intercultural exchanges. An intercultural approach should be able to identify community leaders who have the respect of their community and are able to translate engagement into meaningful exchanges.

Groups working in intercultural engagement should learn to identify leaders within their communities, not just those who have official roles, but community members who are respected and followed. Community leadership roles offer opportunities for the exercise of democratic principles; a shared value underpinning the Australian society.

An intercultural approach should encourage more democratic pathways to community representation that will encourage the flow of information and ideas from the members of the community to the leaders and vice versa.

I also think leadership is very much an individual thing. You know to some extent you can see, if you see someone as a leader they are a leader to you and so you follow, like it doesn't necessarily have to be a really formal thing.

Focus Group, women 2

Some participants raised concerns that ethnic community leadership in Australia is male-dominated. The role of community leaders can tend to be driven by ego and self-interest rather than a desire to be an effective conduit of ideas between the ethnic community and the broader public.

We have these men who have got no connection to anybody and claim to be community leaders who do nothing.

Focus Group, community leaders 1

Mainstreaming Multiculturalism

As long as Anglo-Australians fail to recognise the personal relevance of multiculturalism, it will remain a marginalised affair. A major challenge to Australian multiculturalism is, therefore, making the mainstream community recognise the value and importance of ICD.

Many of the stakeholders who participated in the focus groups and interviews identified multiculturalism as 'a concept on the periphery'; almost an afterthought for policymakers,

What is missing for me is multiculturalism continues to be treated, understood, actualised and operationalised as a peripheral phenomenon, you know? Whether it is policy, whether it is actions whether it is programs, whether it is resources - in budget allocation time it's always an added on.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

It [multiculturalism] is not a mainstream topic. In schools, in media, in governments, it's just. Even the multicultural portfolios are on the side everywhere you go.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

One participant spoke of an international film festival and other mainstream events that are multicultural, but avoid branding themselves as such in order to appeal to the mainstream,

[There is a] difference between, let's say multicultural and international. As soon as you say international that's inclusive and that's – that's something that people want to – to engage with. When you say multicultural that's something that people don't necessarily want to engage with because they think – the feel that they're not – they're foreign to us and they can't contribute to it.

Interview Participant 32, female, aged 35–44

The Role of Dominant Culture

A key dimension interculturalism is that it aims to bring the dominant culture into the fold of multiculturalism. Participants in the interviews and focus groups agreed that drawing in the dominant culture was an important step in making multiculturalism relevant and effective.

On the other hand, some participants noted that inviting the dominant culture to the table changes the power dynamics of dialogue. The challenge for ICD is identifying ways to engage the majority community while maintaining a neutral environment that does not favour one culture over the other.

I've kind of only starting to get an appreciation for that now and I think maybe multi-culturalism, the people who work in this area do realise that and, Anglo-Australians do need to be part of a conversation as well.

Focus Group, women 2

I agree that the Anglo-Saxon and those who come from that particular ethnic group need to be part of the conversation, they

need to come into the fold and it's about how best to do that. But unless all those others do not feel that they can equally share the power and the resources and the representation, they're never going to be [fully engaged].

Focus Group, women 2

When you say multicultural, I think to some people that is everybody but the, Anglo Australians. And they are just as important as everybody else. And the more we involve them, the more likely that we will have successful policy. And it won't constantly be challenged as, you know, infringing upon their culture, or their way of life.

Interview Participant 67, male, aged 25–34

An Anglo-Australian participant expressed some concerns in relation to brining the dominant culture into the conversation. For decades Anglo-Australians have conceptualised multiculturalism as a concern for the Other. This frame has underscored the 'us versus them' mentality that is difficult to shift. The participant quoted below stated that it would be 'uncomfortable' for Anglo-Australians to take part in multiculturalism

I think the idea of people with an Anglo background taking pride in multiculturalism is seems like it's a bit of a shallow.

Focus Group, mixed gender 2

Policy Framing

It is vital that an intercultural approach to multiculturalism engages communities in meaningful consultation and uses language that is appropriate. There was frustration among some stakeholders that multicultural policies tend to be developed without meaningful consultation with minority communities.

About a year ago, the government released the policy, multicultural policy and they had no consultation, which really it was meant to.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Further, the language of policy should avoid implying a one-way action, such as 'promoting' or 'accepting'. Current multicultural policies do not accurately reflect the two-way exchange and dialogue at the heart of interculturalism.

A lot of it's still caught up in the language of the 80s, which is all about, you know, promoting, promoting, promoting, promoting, each of the specific ethic groups as opposed to, an exchange of ideas where I think we're moving this discussion in, this sort of two way, two-way exchange.
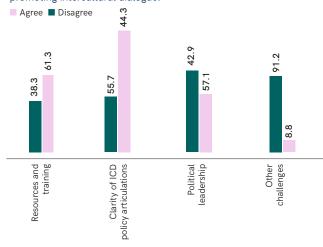
Focus Group, community leaders 3

4.4.10 Challenges to Interculturalism

Finally, participants were asked to reflect on the main challenges to interculturalism in Australia. Some of the themes that emerged from this included: intercultural tension, the media, and language barriers. Before detailing these findings from focus group discussions, Figure 14 highlights the main challenges identified by the general public in the online survey. Asked of the challenges

involved with ICD, respondents highlighted resourcing and training as the main challenges (61%) followed by political leadership (57%). Less than half cited the ambiguity of ICD

FIGURE 14 Online Survey: challenges in promoting intercultural dialogue.

Challenges in promoting intercultural dialogue.

policy articulation as a challenge, though they consistently proclaimed their ignorance about interculturalism as a policy.

Intercultural Tension

One of the major challenges for interculturalism in Australia is learning to navigate the tension between cultures that may have rifts between them.

This can be addressed by providing individuals and communities with opportunities to develop cultural competency and inter-personal relationships. Too often, minorities living in Australia are lumped into a single 'ethnic' basket with little consideration for the nuances of intra-ethnic tension and history.

An important facet of interculturalism is learning to develop knowledge and awareness of these issues as well as tools to navigate the tensions, rather than avoiding them. One participant provided a contemporary example of this:

In [suburb name] we're just starting a child care course. And we're targeting specifically the recent arrivals from Syria, particularly from Syria. And they're Christians of one grouping or another. Now, within that collective there are a cluster of people who are obsessive about the possibility that they may have a teacher who is Muslim. … Collectively the society has to move beyond that.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

Racism and Intolerance

Another main challenge facing Australian interculturalism is the elimination of existing racism and intolerance in the community and in the structures of society.

Participants in the interview and focus group discussions recognised this, highlighting the distinction between systemic and interpersonal racism that is prevalent in the country,

You can't eliminate it altogether – even within races themselves, there's some sort of discrimination.

Focus Group, mixed gender 3

There's a difference between Australians, as the people, and the structures and the politics. The structures and politics are very racist.

Focus Group, community leaders 3

You can't have social cohesion if you have discrimination and racism.

Interview Participant 43, male, aged 65+

Media

Any shift in the way multiculturalism is perceived and operationalised will need to secure the support of the Australian media. The media's often sensationalised reporting can fuel intercultural tension and hinder the development of meaningful ICD.

The media usually follows cues from government leaders and as such it is reasonable to assume that a change in the government's attitude and approach towards multiculturalism (from securitisation to intrinsic value and engagement) may give rise to a change in its media representation. Thus, managing media and encouraging positive narratives should be factored in when considering an intercultural approach.

The media only give certain, certain weight to certain people's views and I think that's really, really problematic… [for example] the media perpetuates this idea that … if you're a Muslim you must be a terrorist and that it is completely not true.

Focus Group, community leaders 3, women

In addition, many participants were highly critical of the lack of diversity in Australia's media content. Most newscasters on free-to-air Australian television are Anglo-Australian. Encouraging more diversity in media content and production will assist in limiting monocultural expressions of Australian identity.

Sometimes there's a need for positive discrimination or, ways to kind of ensure that, you know, that society is reflective of the people that make up that society… There's something like 33 percent of Australian who were born here, and only 13 percent of characters, on screen are not Anglo. So, there are discrepancies.

Participant 16, male, aged 35–44

You do actually notice when it's non-white people in the ads. That's how I remember these ads.

Interview Participant 27, female, aged 25–34

Language Barriers

Another major impediment for intercultural exchange is language. ICD requires a common language that is easily understood and contains vocabulary that is accessible to ordinary community members.

Significant investment and novel approaches should be considered to address this challenge. Some participants suggested translations services could overcome this, .

If you're looking at really practical levels there could be language barriers; that's frequently an issue that comes up in some of the diversity work that I'm doing in the [suburb] that we come up against those barriers of language. And there isn't, perhaps appropriate funding for translation services and so on.

Interview Participant 39, female, aged 35–44

Participants strongly believed that English was the common language of Australia and that providing avenues to facilitate learning English is an appropriate priority for successful multicultural policy. However, Australia might also examine how bilingual or multilingual countries (for example Canada and Malaysia) have managed to incorporate a variety of languages into their cultural identity.

Moreover, Australians could be encouraged to learn a language other than English. Learning a foreign language has been shown to boost empathy in children and will be an asset for any Australian living in an intercultural world (Fan et al. 2015).

Nonetheless, learning English can be a significant challenge, especially for migrants with little formal schooling.

There are significant sections of our migrant communities that will continue to be people who [have] limited schooling. You can't run an effective and a fair humanitarian program without picking these kind of people up. And then you're going to expect them to sit in classrooms and formally learn English. It won't happen. It won't happen. They will learn bit by bit, aurally, and they will learn to be able to converse.

Interview Participant 43, male, aged 65+

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study examined the current state of Australian multiculturalism and interculturalism. It reviewed stakeholders' and the public's understanding of multicultural issues through in-depth consultative reflections, as well as surveys addressing a variety of topics: from the challenges facing multiculturalism, to the questions of whether it can be reinvigorated and reframed by an intercultural approach to diversity management.

This study found a distinct lack of clarity on the meaning and ethos of multiculturalism among the general public. While the data indicate that most participants from the multicultural sector envisaged multiculturalism engendering social harmony in a culturally diverse society based on equal opportunity for active citizenship, few still perceived it merely as the demographic fact of cultural diversity, in agreement with most members of the general public. Nonetheless, the familiarity with multicultural policies is reflected in the study population's acquiescence with the general 'acceptance' and 'celebration' of minority cultures.

Yet, they are also aware that this acceptance did not translate to equitable social inclusion and meaningful intercultural engagement. Therefore, a sizeable majority of participants in the multicultural sector (75%) and the wider public (51.7%) reported that multiculturalism, while positive for the society, needed a refocusing and reinvigoration. This public recognition of support for the multicultural ethos contrasts with the vocal backlash against multiculturalism across the West (Murphy 2012).

Indeed, in their current state, multicultural policies while providing room for self-expression and belonging among minority groups, are limited by their exclusive focus on cultural minorities, leaving members of the dominant culture outside its radar. In addition, the policy's effectiveness is limited by the funding and resources allocated to minority communities, the constraints they operate under, and the degree of autonomy that they are afforded with the funds. To this end, multiculturalism is critically in need of reinvigoration and revision.

As this study demonstrates, this conclusion is shared equally by academics, policymakers, and the general public.

The need to address the limitations of multicultural policies remains high on the agenda in diversity research and policy, and the concept of interculturalism is at the centre of this debate. However, confusion on the meaning of interculturalism and its distinction with multiculturalism has permeated discussions on the concept and its efficacy in tackling the challenges of 'super diversity'. As this study demonstrates, policymakers need to clearly understand and articulate interculturalism and what it entails before deploying it as a framework for managing diversity.

As it stands, its relative novelty means there is a substantial lack of knowledge regarding interculturalism among Australian society, as the findings of this study confirm. Interestingly, this is paralleled by substantial support for an intercultural approach to reinvigorating multicultural policies in the country. There is a growing understanding in the community that an intercultural approach to multiculturalism recognises diversity as an advantage and resource that can foster innovation and create a dynamic and cohesive society.

As argued throughout this study, multiculturalism shouldn't be conflated with interculturalism, nor should proponents and critics of multiculturalism position interculturalism as a mere substitute to it. As such, they operate at different levels: multicultural policies work at the macro or national level, while interculturalism is designed to work at the micro interpersonal or local level via ICD.

The ICD framework that UNESCO and other international bodies including the Council of Europe promote, offers a possible conduit to achieving an intercultural agenda. In this sense, to the state-driven multicultural policies that have an overarching goal of a harmonious and culturally diverse society, ICD offers opportunities and tools for cross-cultural

engagement at the local, grassroots level. The utility of ICD lies in its capacity to address some of the criticisms levelled against multicultural policies including: the creation of ethnic enclaves, social exclusion, intercultural tension, and so on. It does so with an epistemological focus on transformative cross-cultural engagement and intercultural exchange based on shared values, mutual respect and understanding, and a focus on individual, bottom-up initiatives, locally-driven and deliberative processes.

Although ICD as a deliberative tool offers an opportunity for a meaningful exchange and engagement, stakeholders and scholars have cautioned against a preoccupation with the dialogue process to the detriment of its outcomes. Importantly, as participants in this study expressed, the challenge is to engage members of the dominant culture (Anglo-Australians in this case).

The key factor here is the participation not just local communities, but also other key social institutions and actors, particularly the media, political and religious leaders, and the education sector. While an education policy that creates space for nurturing intercultural competency is essential for ICD, political and religious leaders offer direction in promoting engaged and constructive dialogue. The media can play a critical role in promoting cross-cultural engagement and dialogue, providing a forum for a balanced expression of cultural values, views, and perspectives.

Indeed, an ICD framework aimed at fostering engagement and appreciation for cultural exchanges as constitutive elements of an innovative and dynamic society, can offer a better solution for addressing the challenges of 'super diversity'. Yet, such a framework requires a meticulously organised action plan with clearly outlined strategies, committed resources, predefined targets, as well as measurement and accountability.

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APPENDIX

Attachment A: Additional data

TABLE 8 Online Survey: Multiculturalism, Interculturalism, and Intercultural dialogue

Description	Agree Percent	Disagree Percent	Neutral Percent
What is central to ICD			
Dialogue between different states	49.0	15.1	35.9
Dialogue between groups within states	56.1	11.1	32.9
Dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds	64.2	10.3	25.5
Inter-religious dialogue (Inter-faith dialogue)	52.6	15.7	31.7
Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds	63.7	9.8	26.6
Dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment	54.6	14.9	30.5
Perception of multiculturalism			
Australia is a successful multicultural society:	63.5	17.9	18.6
Cultural and racial diversity is a fundamental characteristic of Australian society	67.8	13.6	18.6
Multiculturalism, as a policy, only promotes recognition of different ethnic/cultural groups and has effectively created ghettos	44.9	26.6	28.5
Multiculturalism, as a policy, already actively encourages intercultural interaction, dialogue and exchange	54.3	15.1	30.6
Interculturalism as an alternative to multiculturalism			
Multiculturalism as a concept needs to be replaced	29.8	37.9	32.4
Multiculturalism as a concept needs to be revised/updated	51.7	18.7	29.6
Perception of interculturalism			
Interculturalism, unlike multiculturalism, promotes a two-way cultural exchange between individuals	44.6	13.8	41.6
I am not sure what interculturalism, as a policy concept, actually means	59.0	15.0	26.0
Interculturalism cannot replace multiculturalism, but is the missing element in an otherwise sound policy	35.9	14.7	49.4

THE DOING DIVERSITY PROJECT

Attachment B: Pre-focus group survey

Survey of Views on Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

Gender: Male: ☐ Female: ☐

Gender: 18-24: ☐ 25-34: ☐ 35-44: ☐ 45-54: ☐ 55-64: ☐ 65+: ☐

Heritage: Non-English Speaking Background (NESB): ☐ Anglo-Celtic: ☐ White (Other): ☐

If you are a migrant, in what year did you migrate to Australia: _____

Do you play a multicultural leadership role within government/community? NO: ☐ **YES:** ☐

If YES, please specify the exact role: _____

_____

1. What does multiculturalism mean to you?

2. What does interculturalism mean to you?

3. The following elements are central to intercultural dialogue
   (please circle a number; 4 = neutral):

   a) Dialogue between different nation states (countries)
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   b) Dialogue between groups within nation states (countries)
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   c) Dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   d) Inter-religious dialogue
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   e) Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

f) Dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

4. Australia is a successful multicultural society:
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

5. Cultural and racial diversity is a fundamental characteristic of Australian society
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

6. Multiculturalism, as a policy, only promotes recognition of different ethnic/
   cultural groups and has effectively created ghettos
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

7. Multiculturalism, as a policy, already actively encourages intercultural interaction,
   dialogue and exchange
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

8. Interculturalism has been proposed as an alternative policy replacing multiculturalism.
   a) Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be replaced?
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   b) Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be revised/updated?
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

9. Interculturalism, unlike multiculturalism, promotes a two-way cultural
   exchange between individuals
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

10. I am not sure what interculturalism, as a policy concept, actually means
    Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

11. Interculturalism cannot replace multiculturalism, but is the missing
    element in an otherwise sound policy
    Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

12. Please specify any challenges you feel that your organization/agency faces in promoting
    intercultural dialogue. You can list up to 3 challenges:

13. For intercultural dialogue to have a positive effect what needs to take place?
    You can list 3 factors:

We would like to follow up with you (after the focus group) for a short face-to-face or telephone interview. This interview will give us an opportunity to discuss your views on multiculturalism in more detail. If you would be interested in participating in the follow up interview, please fill out the details below.

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Preferred interview type: Face-to-Face interview: ☐   Telephone Interview: ☐

THE DOING DIVERSITY PROJECT

Attachment C: Interview & Focus Group Questions

C.1. Focus Group Lead-in Questions

1. Do you feel that multicultural policy and practice in Australia has been successful? If yes/no, why?

2. Does multiculturalism lead to ethnic ghettoes and not promote interaction as some critics suggest?

3. Do you feel that current climate around refugees and Islam/Muslims and the apparent resurgence of right-wing politics is seeing a retreat from multiculturalism?

4. Is there a missing element to multiculturalism in that it simply promotes recognition but not interaction? If so, what do you think is the missing piece of the puzzle?

5. How do you understand interculturalism? How would you define it?

6. Are you aware of any initiatives that might capture intercultural approaches?

7. Can interculturalism through an emphasis on two-way cross-cultural exchange be means of re-invigorating multicultural policy?

8. In what practical ways can intercultural interaction be facilitated?

C.2. Follow Up Lead-in Interview Questions

1. Reflecting on the focus group conversation that you participated in, what is your view/thinking/feeling about the state of multiculturalism in Australia?

2. Is there a problem that needs to be fixed? If so what is causing such problems?

3. Do you now think that interculturalism can be a means with which to reinvigorate current multicultural policy?

4. What might be the limitations within your constituency/organisation/community for an intercultural approach to diversity/migration matters?

5. Or are there other practical considerations that you think need to be explored?

6. Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on the subject before we conclude?

Attachment D: Online Survey

2016-254 - Doing Diversity: Revitalising Multiculturalism via Deliberative Interventions

Survey of Views on Multiculturalism and Interculturalism

Gender: Male: ☐ Female: ☐

Gender: 18-24: ☐ 25-34: ☐ 35-44: ☐ 45-54: ☐ 55-64: ☐ 65+: ☐

Heritage: Non-English Speaking Background (NESB): ☐ Anglo-Celtic: ☐ White (Other): ☐

If you are a migrant, in what year did you migrate to Australia: ☐

Do you play a multicultural leadership role within government/community? NO: ☐ YES: ☐

If YES, please specify the exact role:

1.What does multiculturalism mean to you?

2. What does interculturalism mean to you?

3. The following elements are central to intercultural dialogue
   (please circle a number; 4 = neutral):

   a) Dialogue between different nation states (countries)
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   b) Dialogue between groups within nation states (countries)
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   c) Dialogue between people of different cultural backgrounds
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   d) Inter-religious dialogue
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   e) Dialogue between people of different ethnic/linguistic backgrounds
   Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

f) Dialogue between people with different levels of educational attainment
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

4. Australia is a successful multicultural society:
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

5. Cultural and racial diversity is a fundamental characteristic of Australian society
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

6. Multiculturalism, as a policy, only promotes recognition of different ethnic/
cultural groups and has effectively created ghettos
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

7. Multiculturalism, as a policy, already actively encourages intercultural interaction,
dialogue and exchange
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

8. Interculturalism has been proposed as an alternative policy replacing multiculturalism.
a) Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be replaced?
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

   b) Does multiculturalism as a concept need to be revised/updated?
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

9. Interculturalism, unlike multiculturalism, promotes a two-way cultural
exchange between individuals
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

10. I am not sure what interculturalism, as a policy concept, actually means
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

11. Interculturalism cannot replace multiculturalism, but is the missing
element in an otherwise sound policy
Strongly disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 > **Strongly Agree**

12. Please specify any challenges you feel that your organization/agency faces in promoting
intercultural dialogue. You can list up to 3 challenges:

13. For intercultural dialogue to have a positive effect what needs to take place?
You can list 3 factors:

Attachment E: Recruitment flyer

Attachment F: Participant Information Sheet

TO: Interviewee

Date:

Full Project Title: Doing Diversity:
Revitalising Multiculturalism via
Deliberative Interventions Principal
Researchers: Prof. Fethi Mansouri &
Dr David Tittensor

You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Participant Information Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researcher via the email address listed below.

You have chosen to participate in this research because you either:
• work for an organisation that supports an ethnic community and/or promotes cultural diversity; or
• are a served by such an organisation as part of an ethnic community; or
• are part of the Anglo-Celtic community that is interested in the promotion of multiculturalism.

As a token of our appreciation for your time and input, you will receive a $20 Coles-Myer gift card. The aim of the study is to ascertain whether multiculturalism is still a viable policy platform to support ever increasing cultural diversity in Australia, and if it can be improved through the introduction of intercultural practice.

The study involves a brief survey that will be administered both before and after a focus group and then a follow up interview will be held sometime later. Both the focus group and follow up interview will be audio recorded. The survey should take around 10-15 minutes. The focus group will take up to 90 minutes, while the interview may range from 30 minutes to one hour. All of these will take place in a mutually agreed upon location.

The benefits from this research include the opportunity to share your reflections on the current policy climate regarding multiculturalism and diversity in Australia. It is envisaged that the project will help policy makers to critically reflect and improve upon Australia's rich multicultural heritage by fostering creative new policy interventions.

It is not expected that your involvement will cause inconvenience and/or discomfort to you. A pseudonym will be used to de-identify your contribution to this project.

Data collected will be stored in accordance with Deakin regulations. The interview recordings and transcripts will adhere to University regulations and be kept on University premises in a secure electronic file and locked cupboard/filing cabinet for 5 years. The project has been funded by Deakin University's Central Research Grant Scheme.

Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participate. If you do consent to participate, you have the right to withdraw during the interview or at any stage after the interview. If you withdraw from the interview, you will not be penalised or disadvantaged in any way. To withdraw your consent after the interview has finished, please contact either Prof. Fethi Mansouri or Dr David Tittensor directly (contact details below).

Alternatively, if you would like to be informed of the research findings, please contact either of the Chief Investigators of this research project:

Prof. Fethi Mansouri

Director, Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation UNESCO Chair, Cultural Diversity & Social Justice

Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

Email: fethi.mansouri@deakin.edu.au

Attachment F: Participant Information Sheet

Dr David Tittensor

Research Fellow to the UNESCO Chair
Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and
Globalisation Deakin University,
Melbourne, Australia

Email: david.tittensor@deakin.edu.au

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Manager, Research Integrity, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, research-ethics@deakin.edu.au

Please quote project number [2016-254]

Thank you,

Prof. Fethi Mansouri

Director, Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship
and Globalisation UNESCO Chair, Cultural
Diversity & Social Justice

Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

Email: fethi.mansouri@deakin.edu.au

Attachment G: Consent form

Consent Form

TO: Interviewee

Date:

Full Project Title: Doing Diversity: Revitalising Multiculturalism via Deliberative Interventions

Reference Number: xxxx-xxx

I consent to the following:

	No	Yes
I agree to be interviewed by the researchers	☐	☐
I agree to allow the interview to be audio recorded	☐	☐
I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.	☐	☐
I understand that any information I provide is confidential and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to another party.	☐	☐
I understand that I can request a transcript of this interview for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research.	☐	☐
I understand that the interview audio file will be kept in secure storage and accessible to the research team. I also understand that the data will be destroyed after 5 years unless I consent to it being used in future research.	☐	☐
I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics, unless I request it.	☐	☐

Participant's Name (printed)

_____

Signature

_____

Date

The Doing Diversity Project

Revitalising multiculturalism
through intercultural dialogue and
deliberative interventions

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and Cabinet

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