An exploration of the experience and sense-making of refugee parents and children of the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology

at Massey University
Albany, New Zealand.

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2018

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Abstract

According to the UNHCR (2015), the number of people forcibly displaced globally was 65.3 million by the end of 2015; the highest since World War II. The drastic increase of numbers in recent years makes research on refugees, displaced persons, and asylum seekers particularly important. As a contribution to help those affected by the global crisis, the current study qualitatively explores one of the challenges that refugees face after resettlement, parenting. The study is based in New Zealand, which has also increased its refugee quota in recent years. Seven mothers from refugee backgrounds were interviewed following their attendance at an evidence-based parenting program; the Triple P Discussion Group Series. During the interview, participants discussed their parenting experiences before and after they had attended the program. Their children were also involved in the study by being asked to respond to a series of vignettes related to the Discussion Groups in order to explore their sense-making of parenting situations. Data were analysed using thematic analysis, where four main themes emerged related to the parenting struggles which were not resolved after completion of the program, the influences on parenting, the parenting strengths of participants, and the usefulness of the programme. While the study suggests that the Triple P Discussion Group Series was useful for the participants, it also proposes that additions to the program would make it more useful and relevant. Suggested additions include addressing parental mental status and mental health, changes to family dynamics, and the development of acculturation gaps between refugee background parents and their children.

Key words: Refugees; parenting; Triple P; New Zealand.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge my academic supervisor, Dr. Clifford van Ommen, for his guidance on this project. Thank you for your support and encouragement.

I would also like to give special thanks to my colleague Margaret Weston, who has empowered me in ways that no one ever has.

To the seven mothers and eight children that participated in this research, thank you for your time, contribution, and trusting me with your stories. Your resilience has been an inspiration to me, and I hope that I have provided a decent reflection of your experiences.

Thank you also to my husband Moataz and son Haroon. I could not have done this without your unwavering support and patience with me on this journey.

To my parents, thank you for instilling in me the love of helping others, thank you for being the high achievers that you are, and thank you for pushing me to reach my goals. I hope I can always make you proud.

Nga mihi ki a koutou!
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