

A Qualitative Study of Australian Indigenous Perceptions of Success

by

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A dissertation submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, School of Arts at Federation University

Approved by the university's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval Number
18-091 and subject to annual monitoring from the Committee.

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I declare this thesis is all my own work and no material has been included for an award or degree at any educational institution. And to the best of my knowledge, includes no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. The thesis was edited by Elite Editing, with editorial intervention restricted to Standards D and E of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice*.

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Date:

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement is crucial to all First Nations people, past, present and emerging, with special notice to the local community and the land this thesis was completed on. Thank you to advisors Dr Damian Morgan who was involved since the near beginning of the study with extra support from, Prof Erik Eklund, Dr Fred Cahir, Dr Harry Ballis and Dr Doris Paton. Further, thank you to my own family and friends as well as to every participant in this study for lifetime education enabling the completion of this research. Acknowledgements also to all academic, library, information technology, cleaning, administrative, general support and maintenance staff at Federation University, who contributed to this work by providing a comfortable/operable workplace, as well as all postgraduate associates at Federation and other universities. For personal development and other guidance, a special thank you to both Keith Hamilton and Kath Hamilton. For support during the thesis completion a thank you to both Steve Van Rooy and Lisa Van Rooy. Thank you also to librarian Carole Ingwersen as well as the local Indigenous community for encouragement to pursue local Indigenous knowledge. Thank you to federation University for support including the contribution to funding via what was known as the Australian Government Research Government (RTP) Fee-Offset Scholarship plus part funding for editorial assistance.

Abstract

This study explored Australian Indigenous perspectives of the concept of success. Qualitative audio interviews with semi-structured questions and a conversational approach adhered to the Indigenous research paradigm. Participants were provided with an opportunity to share their views. The welcoming nature of Indigenous communities as well as other rewarding experiences for myself were echoed during this study and examples were reported. A local Indigenous individual noticed that Indigenous perspectives of success often differed from many common ideas within a mainstream Western society. This was confirmed by the comments of eleven research participants.

The literature review highlighted an earlier literary emphasis on problems rather than the positive aspects of Indigenous communities. Investigating stories related to success was an attempt to avoid adding more unpleasant material that was present in the literature. The literature review empathised with Dennis Foley researching Indigenous success in entrepreneurship and Jeannie Herbert examining success in higher education, followed by an examination of the meaning of success. This study sought generalised community views of success, rather than success in one field.

Most data for this research were collected in the central Gippsland region, supplemented with three interviews at Circular Quay in Sydney. All participants indicated they lived a suburban lifestyle; 29 qualitative interviews were conducted, with 26 rated as useful and transcribed verbatim. All interviews satisfied the ethical clearance requirements and followed the advice of key authors arguing for decolonisation when completing modern research. Interviews were analysed by employing grounded theory thematic analysis, using an interpretive method with elements of deductive reasoning.

Five observed themes were classified as general comments about success: success is different, success is available to all, difficulty discussing success, determination, and creativity or spirituality. Five themes were classed as definition of success: family support, contribution to community, achieving goals, happiness and continuing culture.

A discussion of links between themes argued the broad range of views of participants evinced communal implications for success as well as a devaluation of materialism. Other links included the support for cultural traditions and the inadequacy of common Western definitions of the concept of success. The analysis acknowledged the overlaps between cultures that can exist when comparing Indigenous with mainstream cultures, especially when recognising individual differences. Literature identified concurred with findings from this study. Research limits included sampling restrictions and a limited time frame. Suggestions for further research included extra research be completed in more regions in Australia with more women, a broader age range and more cultural groups.

Differences were observed regarding the concept of success for Indigenous individuals when compared with more common mainstream Western views as well as appreciating the value of continuing the culture were two examples of the claims made by most participants. Therefore, the findings of the research resulted in recommendations for policymakers, educationists, academic researchers and the general community to converse with Indigenous groups and increase the understanding of the views for the meaning of the concept of success.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The study explores the concept of success and is an elucidation of Indigenous perspectives, used in plural here to acknowledge the diversity of views available. The term Indigenous is used for clarity, not to signify one single cohesive group and is used here to refer to both Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The term is defined for this thesis in Section 1.4.1. A literature review, clarifying the term success is provided in Chapter 2. Other key terms are defined below.

Chapter 1 first defines the importance of this study, before stating the general research goals defined by the primary aim, specific objectives and the research question, followed by a discussion of the context of this research. Next, comes the necessary discussion of worldviews, acknowledging the advice of L. T. Smith (1999) and others to complete research with an understanding of cultural ideals of the research community as well as supporting the view that everyone has something to learn from Indigenous ancestors and is referred to below as the Indigenous research paradigm (Blackman, 2011; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005; Habibis et al., 2016a, pp. 60–61). When the thesis is placed into context for the research world, the personal position from the researcher perspective is offered that includes one view of the definition of success. To simplify the reading process, when required, a first-person writing style has been used to indicate that the researcher's perspective is paramount and to allow for reader judgement of the relevance (Ballenger, 2012, p. 159). A description of the thesis structure completes Chapter 1.

This thesis acknowledges the argument by Shay and Lambert (2022) that the term community is complex and is indeed a product of colonisation with the term communities arguably more appropriate when referring to the diversity within any Australian Indigenous group. For simplicity, the term community is used in this thesis since most

data were collected from one small group within a small region and people often used the term community with positive reference to well-known individuals.

The data collection experiences in two different regions showed many similarities. See Chapters 4 and 6 for specific examples. This research began with my belief that an Australian Indigenous community nearly always involves a range of enjoyable and/or successful encounters among groups and is often associated with traditional cultural norms, while typically requiring Indigenous Australians to reaffirm an individual's comprehension of success from two different cultural positionings. Individuals were understood to be living a culturally affiliated lifestyle while many people have claimed the social current pushed in the opposite direction (Banerjee & Tedmanson, 2010). Influences from a Westernised colonising society typically had many implications for Indigenous Australians and examples are given below with a discussion of assimilation (Carlson & Frazer, 2018; Dockery, 2010). For more than 200 years, as a result of the assimilative actions resulting from the colonisation of Australia, Indigenous Australians have often been subjected to what is termed here as a type of bicultural lifestyle. That is, a lifestyle requiring some understanding of two different cultures. For example, affected people have often experienced both Indigenous and Western cultural lifestyle issues and have conceived two varying views about lifestyle issues, such as the concept of success explored in this research and comparable to the example of law used by Watson (1997), discussed below and illustrating the complexity of this lifestyle.

The terms mainstream and Western used for this thesis adhere to previous literature emphasising Western Eurocentric groups as the dominant culture in the modern Australian society and was an extension of the colonisers in Australia (Grass, 2014; see also Dockery, 2010; Foley, 2006a; Herbert, 2003b; Sharmil et al, 2021). The word modern is used below with reference to the most recent fifty years and Indigenous

research refers to research with participants known as Indigenous. The research goals were designed to provide an overview of researching the concept of success.

1.1 Research Goals and Understanding

This section presents the goals of this study and the context of the research by stating the central aim, specific objectives and the research question. The primary aim was to develop the understanding of the concept of success from the perspectives of Australian Indigenous individuals who have lived an urban lifestyle, whilst ensuring their own inclusion as part of an Australian Indigenous community. Urban compared with rural is a complex issue and especially so when cultural values are considered and in Australia both the urban and the agricultural areas are a result of colonisation (Gibson et al., 2008). The associated objectives were:

- Employ qualitative interviews with Australian Indigenous individuals offering their perspectives about the concept of success.
- Apply a grounded theory technique to identify themes observed from selected interviews with urbanised Indigenous Australians.
- Provide relevant information to be preserved for access to future researchers.

The objectives support the primary aim and appreciate various perceptions of the concept of success for people who have lived a type of two-tiered lifestyle. Accepting that diverse views present for the concept of success was comparable with the example of law used in Watson's (1997) quotation below.

The research question was developed to epitomise learning about the concept of success for information concerning the Australian Indigenous community. The value of listening was fundamental to the qualitative methodology (see Chapter 3).

To construct the research question, Getty's claim (2010) was accepted in that many relevant details of Indigenous culture and knowledge were often unavailable to a broader society (see Dweba & Mearns, 2011; Hunter & Jones, 2006). The research question was intended to improve the clarification of Indigenous cultural ideas regarding success:

- How do contemporary Australian Indigenous individuals living in an urban setting explain the concept of success?

The research question was intended to help learn more about Australian Indigenous perspectives of the concept of success, and possibly challenge established beliefs about success because the example of success is necessarily an individualistic notion and is always desirable (Groysberg & Abrahams, 2014; Shoja et al., 2019).

To understand the cultural differences, consider Watson (1997), who explained bicultural lifestyle by providing stories from Indigenous elders. Watson illustrated the complexity of an Indigenous relationship to lore and law and explained the necessity to live in harmony, not only with each other but also with everything in nature. This study explores perceptions of Indigenous people in relation to the concept of success; the complexity is comparable to the example of law used by Watson (1997):

Our indigenous [sic] law-ways are still with us, but they are now subverted by the Australian state. We are like the seven people of the Waargle awaiting the time for the Waargle to rise. We are the animals of Gurukmun's time struggling to bring water to the land. We are peoples rising from the ashes of the holocaust: our laws violated, our territories plundered, and our peoples still resisting colonisation, as we face the state. (p. 45)

Refer to Watson's (1997) paper for details of the Indigenous names used. Watson used the example of law to illustrate how an Indigenous view is likely to remain prevalent

within an Indigenous community, even when another postulation has been instigated by a colonising group.

This research adds to Watson's (1997) theory, and a claim stated here is that most Australians continue to have the opportunity to enable Indigenous voices to be heard, by at least participating in relevant social circles or contributing to relevant public forums. Personal experiences have highlighted almost everyone within an Indigenous community almost always pleased to offer details about cultural matters. For example, the claim is that anyone attending a concert featuring Indigenous artists or conversing with Indigenous parents about the needs of a child will soon observe the relevance of culture.

Other examples of frequent misunderstandings of the lifestyle of Indigenous individuals since colonisation include issues of ownership, land and time (see Section 1.4.5; Coburn et al., 2013; Lawford, 2016). The completion of this study about the concept of success is one step towards reversing the problem of these misunderstandings with an aim to recognise and value participants' perceptions (Sandelowski, 2002, p. 105). The research intended to increase understanding from the perspective of Indigenous Australians relating to the concept of success.

1.2 Contributions of the Study

This section describes how this study has contributed to the literature. The concept of success is discussed below. First discussed is what can be learned by listening to the perspectives of Indigenous individuals, termed the 'Indigenous voice' by Herbert (2003a, p. 88) as well as others arguing for the acknowledgement of Indigenous views (see also Hollinsworth et al., 2017; Raciti, 2021). Therefore, this study is an addition to, not a repetition of, the 2023 views in Australia arguing for the inclusion of an Indigenous voice into the Australian Constitution (Fredericks & Bradfield, 2021a; McIlory, 2022). Various

groups have argued both for and against the changes. The intention for this study is to acknowledge the Indigenous sector of Australia and argue for Indigenous views to be enshrined into Australian governing directions (see Chapter 7).

The lack of Indigenous voices in Australia, including many parts of the system, was fundamental to the need for this study, also intended to compensate for a bias of currently available literature regarding Indigenous Australians (see Chapter 2). The literature often focused on difficulties or problems associated with communities (Ali et al., 2010; McLennan & Khavarpour, 2004; Newman et al., 2008; Vos et al., 2007). Many authors have argued that there is a need to correct the literary bias, discussed further below (L. T. Smith, 1999; see also McLennan & Khavarpour, 2004; Vos et al., 2007).

Thompson and Hil (2007) argued that paternalistic attitudes of Australian policymakers have perpetuated an assimilation mentality in contemporary Australia, and Indigenous Australians have often been pushed to adopt mainstream intentions and values (see Section 1.4; Altman & Klein, 2018). The completion of this study is one step towards correcting the disparity of assimilation. Therefore, this study contributed to the process of decolonisation as advised by L. T. Smith (1999) and others to be necessary for ethical conduct of research involving Indigenous Australians (Mellor, 2022; Moyo, 2020; Omarjee, 2020; see also Ali et al., 2022). See Section 3.1 and Chapter 6 for discussion of ethical issues in the research process. Whether or not Australia will ever achieve realistic decolonisation is left to the readers' judgement because the issue is complex. The research goals have accepted the virtues of developing an understanding from Australian Indigenous perspectives.

Arguably, all research participants were affected by the colonisation of Australia and have experienced repercussions of the assimilation into the Westernised Australian society (Ellinghaus, 2006; A. Moran, 2005; Short, 2003). There have been many changes

in Australia since colonisation (Getty, 2010). This view will most likely vary among individuals and this research investigated the opinions of the participants who offered details according to their own personal position.

Only participants who were recognised as Indigenous were recruited; therefore, all participants were assumed to have at least some Indigenous cultural affiliations. An Indigenous person was accepted as someone who defined themselves as Indigenous and was accepted by the local community as Indigenous. More detail and the relevance of a broader research sample is discussed in Section 3.1.2. The qualitative research interview method discussed below notes the opportunity for many in mainstream Australian society to learn more about Australian Indigenous perspectives, which have often been overlooked or distorted, although improvements are now apparent and include the available literary information (Agozino, 2018; Bailey et al., 2020; Habibis et al., 2016b; Short, 2003, 2005; White et al., 2002). This research, exploring the concept of success, is another step in the process of recognising and understanding Indigenous perspectives.

This study does not claim that the definitions of success are overarching for any group because the research investigated the diversity of opinions within one community. Hence, this study is not a statistical analysis. Rather, it explores the views of the Indigenous participants interviewed as well as examples presented in the literature (Bonta, 1997). Methodology is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. An important acknowledgement is that there are many more views offered within a single region of Australia and innumerable views, when the total population is considered over a broader time frame (see Section 6.5; Hollinsworth et al., 2017; Raciti, 2021). This study has accepted the argument of Hollinsworth et al. (2017) that Indigenous views have too often been overlooked in the literature. The significance of this study requires further clarification.

1.3 Research Context

This section explains the general research design and provides further detail of the need for this study. The study was intended to promote discussion regarding Australian Indigenous perspectives of success rather than attempting to provide anyone with a way of avoiding their own interaction with Indigenous communities.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 and the Chapter 5 analysis are now available for comparison in terms of the currently available Indigenous views. Further, the data have provided records for access by future historians. The study was not originally intended as an historical account, since the literature review has considered approximately 100 years of available literature and has been compared with data collected during one 12-month period, arguably connected with tens of thousands of years of Indigenous knowledge associated with contemporary Indigenous communities.

Reinforcing the above argument regarding Indigenous voice, this study acknowledged Raciti (2021), who claimed that the Indigenous voice needs to be heard:

the absence of discourse about First Nation Australians is deafening. An epistemology of ignorance is more than an accidental lack of knowledge, but also includes active neglect or avoidance of information, a failure to understand information, or refusal to know and acknowledge imbalances in social power (i.e.: privilege and oppression). (p. 2)

Supporting this view, this study concurred with Habibis et al. (2016a) and Herbert (2012), who argued that Indigenous people in Australia have had too few chances to speak their own views.

One example of a current literature shortage of Australian Indigenous views was illustrated by Dibley and Turner (2018), regarding issues faced by National Indigenous

Television (NITV), highlighting the point that this was the single Indigenous outlet compared with approximately 60 channels in 2022. The exact number of channels varies according to exact location. This is one instance of the scarcity of Indigenous views.

Habibis et al. (2016a) highlighted the commonly held view that even when reported, events of a positive nature have often been portrayed in a paternalistic manner. This is one reason for the use of the qualitative interviewing method utilised for this research (see Chapter 3) regarding the concept of success and giving participants at least some opportunity to speak their own minds. Qualitative interviews were further supported by another claim by Habibis et al. (2016a) that people in Australia ought to interact with Indigenous Australians. Chapter 3 discusses the grounded theory analysis, in which Mills et al. (2006) was supported by others advising for the positioning of the author within the research process to allow for reader judgement of personal and reflexivity issues (see Section 1.5; L. T. Smith, 1999; see also Rapley, 2018; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007).

Continuing the above reference to colonisation, historically, the invasions have claimed a cultural superiority of the colonisers. This, combined with attacks on Indigenous people, have rendered Indigenous Australians marginal in Australian society (Coburn et al., 2013; Russell & McNiven, 1998). The common view that Australia is a multicultural society was accepted for this study, although a detailed discussion of the exact structure is beyond the scope of this report focusing on success for one cultural group (Forrest & Dunn, 2006; Moreton-Robinson, 2020). The history of immigration and colonisation of Australia is cited as influencing everything, including literature, education, diet and language (Forrest & Dunn, 2006). Examples of affected areas of Australian society were framed on Western European proceedings of capitalism, consumerism, democracy, self-care, Christianity and the work ethic. As a result, the

Indigenous contributions in Australia, as for much of the world, are often overlooked (Cowlshaw, 2003; Simpson et al., 2008).

The need to confront the assimilative aspects, noted above, of Australian society was part of this research's justification. Many modern authors agree that forced assimilation by a colonising society should be challenged (Dockery, 2010; Ellinghaus, 2006; Short, 2003). When accepting the view that an Indigenous version of success is usually prevalent in an Australian Indigenous community and is likely to differ from Westernised ideas of success, assimilation is one example of problems associated with applying a Westernised universal definition of success on an entire societal group. The claim for this study is that applying one universal definition to a given concept often forces Indigenous groups to change their own practice. For example, adjustments have been implemented when thinking about land, time or ownership, discussed with worldviews (see Section 1.4). The alternative views being made available by completion of this research help manage assimilation issues.

A personal conversation I experienced during the early stages of this project was an example of Indigenous groups surmising success differently to what might be compared with a typical mainstream Western impression, agreeing with claims in the literature (see Fan & Karnilowicz, 1997; Kreuter & Moltner, 2014). The literature agreed with the views of local Indigenous individual, Christine Johnston who claimed during a personal conversation (26 February 2015) that success within an Indigenous community is different and personal success is most often associated with an individual's immediate community. This claim reinforced the necessity to acknowledge the views of Indigenous individuals.

Many other general conversations have led to the support of the claim by Raciti (2021) that Indigenous views are often totally dismissed or devalued in a Western

mainstream society. Therefore, this study acknowledges Raciti and others who agree that missing literature at present includes the perspectives of Indigenous individuals living in a colonised society (Coates et al., 2006; Habibis et al., 2016a; Nelson, 1992; Walter, 2016). The claim made here is this literature gap continues to exist in Australia and certainly includes the central Gippsland region where most of this research data was collected.

When referring to currently available Indigenous literature, the terms ‘problem’ and ‘negative’ used hereon are intended as a succinct reference sometimes referred to by authors as deficit discourse or deficit model often intending a gentler reading term (Fforde et al., 2013; Hogarth, 2017; Millier, 2021).

Indigenous literature has often emphasised problems rather than solutions or cultural resources. This study accepts the notion that changes are occurring (see Chapter 2). The problem-focused literature may be judged to have the effect of fostering negative images of Indigenous Australians or promoting stereotypical images. For example, McLennan and Khavarpour (2004) highlighted health problems observed within Indigenous communities in New South Wales. The work addressed a problem and is related to this study because the authors encouraged people to interact with Indigenous communities and support the culture with an aim to improve the wellbeing of Indigenous individuals. McLennan and Khavarpour (2004) claimed the results aligned with many Australian Indigenous communities and the methods used were related to this research, employing audio interviews, the snowball sampling method and the thematic analysis (see Section 3.4). Further examples of researched areas that relate to problems faced by Indigenous communities include land rights, intellectual property, health care, incarceration and educational barriers (W. Green & Myatt, 2011; Herbert, 2003a; R. S. Hogg, 1992; Seemann, 1997).

The literary bias effected the initiation of this study that intended to investigate positive aspects of participant communities, acknowledging the above claim that Indigenous Australians have previously had much knowledge either overlooked or even deliberately ignored. For example, during the early years of colonisation, European styles of agriculture were introduced, applying the assumption that these were superior methods and a deliberate move to avoid the Indigenous food sources as well as methods that had been used by people who had lived in Australia for tens of thousands of years (Campbell, 1965). Not only was this a loss of the food source, but it was also a contributor to the assimilation process. The claims by Dey and Maart (2020) are related and show examples of the difficulty of the European colonising actions that affected food supplies in Bengal and other places. The significance of Indigenous knowledge is elaborated upon in Section 3.2.4.

The persuasive argument of Ali et al. (2022) is evidence of past research issues, in which traditionally researchers have contributed to the process of colonisation by pursuing a positivistic approach to research, tending to disregard Indigenous knowledge and subscribe to the idea that Indigenous knowledge is unsound (see Chapter 3). Ali et al. (2022) presented examples of research designed to increase risks to Indigenous communities and contribute to colonisation policies.

This study is part of a process intending to correct some of the wrongs of colonisation, acknowledging the argument of Coburn et al. (2013) that modern Indigenous research, ‘not ‘doing’ social science for the sake of doing social science but as part of our struggles to decolonise our existence and move towards liberation’ (p. 346; see Roberts et al., 2013). In the twenty-first century, it is time to understand the damage of these marginalising and demeaning exercises and to acknowledge as well as learn from Indigenous Australians. The Indigenous worldview for this research is part of the

theoretical framework; clarification is essential preparation of the ethical research methodology (see Section 3.1).

1.4 An Indigenous Worldview

This section describes the Indigenous worldview applied for this study and is dependent upon my own understanding of the concept that involves experiences related to contact with Indigenous Australians. Further, the first-person writing style is highlighted here to show this is one position. A claim for expertise in worldviews is in direct contrast to what is called here an ‘Indigenous worldview’ because I am but one individual, part of a much larger societal group and continuing the journey of learning (Coombes & Ryder, 2019; Sinclair, 2003). Therefore, all citations refer to the development of this worldview, not necessarily the most recent nor historically valid sources for a worldview dating back tens of thousands of years. Arguably, the most relevant literature in terms of this research has been from the previous 150 years. For example, the changes the Indigenous population in Australia have necessarily been enforced owing to colonisation in Australia.

To help promote positive interaction with Indigenous groups, this study required some understanding of Indigenous societal cohesion from an Indigenous perspective, often known as the worldview. The intersections and disconnections of Indigenous and Western cultures within Australian society have generally been attributed to the colonisation of Australia (M. A. Hart, 2010; Kwaymullina & Kwaymullina, 2010, p. 298; Terare & Rawsthorne, 2020. Cheung (2008) argued that this requires an appreciation of similarities and differences to help explain lifestyles.

Understanding the Indigenous worldview is important for a researcher to conduct productive and ethical interviews in research with humans and essential for the application of an Indigenous research paradigm with recognition of cultural relevancies

(Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005; Ormiston, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Important for this research was my own ability to sustain a friendly conversation when collecting interviews. An important point is this was not a special skill and did involve accepting the worldview, especially the understanding that many Indigenous Australians would be happy to partake in the conversations. Specific examples are detailed in Chapter 4. As stated above, I believe that this information is available to anyone in the Australian community who is prepared to join the conversation because I have observed that many Indigenous individuals show a readiness to share stories with other cultures (see Chapter 4).

L. T. Smith (1999) advocated for the recognition of Indigenous ideas and practice claiming this is of paramount importance when completing Indigenous research (L. T. Smith, 1997, 1999, 2005, 2006; see also Macleod & Wilbraham, 2006). Therefore, acknowledging Indigenous worldviews provides a fundamental need to establish an appropriate Indigenous research methodology (Getty, 2009). M. A. Hart (2010) argued that there are often commonalities between various Indigenous worldviews and although often difficult to manage, the commonalities may be incorporated into Indigenous research methodologies (L. T. Smith, 1999).

Comparable to the experiences described by Ermine (2000), I have experienced the privileged position of exposure to two distinct bodies of knowledge distinguished by two rather different worldviews. The two areas vary for dissemination, understanding and lifestyle patterns. I was originally offered knowledge from a Western perspective in contrast to Ermine, who originally experienced an Indigenous perspective. I consider it fortunate that during my early years of learning, both parents (who were entrenched in a Western regime) retained an understanding of many issues faced by Indigenous Australians in modern society and accepted the reality of an Indigenous worldview. Both my parents showed respect and supported the continuance of Indigenous as well as other

cultures that were different to what they viewed as the norm. Therefore, during my early life, I was encouraged to accept and listen to others with an open mind (see Section 1.5). My first real communication with Indigenous people was as a teenager. As time progressed, I developed enough contact with a variety of people to effectively appreciate Indigenous worldview issues relevant to the local community. Sections 1.4.4–1.4.5 present specific definitions of the Indigenous worldview followed by examples of specific lifestyle elements and the details of Indigenous perceptions of research.

1.4.1 Definitions

As claimed above, an Indigenous worldview is an essential component of the research design; this requires consideration of some key definitions. The definition of the term ‘Indigenous’ used for this project is also relevant and is stated below. A summation of an Indigenous worldview is:

THE WORLDVIEW OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE underlies every aspect of their life—their language, social system, religious beliefs, even the way they go about their daily life. Worldview can be defined as a set of concepts that relate individuals within any culture to the natural universe and to other humans who comprise their social reality (Christie, 1985, as cited in Hewitt, 2000, p. 111)

Also, consider Hooley (2002):

The Indigenous paradigm or Native way of knowing relies on an awareness and respect for all things. There is a holistic and relational way of perceiving the world and a striving to live in harmony within that sphere. (p. 13)

Key words here are ‘awareness’ and ‘respect’, claiming someone is advised to be aware of the culture and show respect. For example, an individual ought to understand history, relationships and local knowledge, while showing respect for others. For Hooley (2002), ‘holistic’ and ‘relational’ indicate significant aspects of the culture often

concerned with people's understanding of all things related to other things. Notable also in this worldview is 'perceiving the world' and having the purpose of living in 'harmony', which are factors arguably often overlooked in a Western worldview (Hooley, 2000). Hooley (2000) and others claimed the invasion of Australia apparently decried the original inhabitants and attempted to resolve perceived problems using actions of severe violence (Coburn et al., 2013; Cowlshaw, 2004).

The two quotations above correlate with an Australian perception of an Indigenous worldview offered by Australian researchers Kwaymullina and Kwaymullina (2010). Australia is a large continent and there will almost necessarily be variances throughout. Kwaymullina and Kwaymullina claimed this singular view should not be read as the only perspective. This worldview will usually wish to acknowledge differences between individuals and certainly within regions (Hewitt, 2000; Sinclair, 2003). To accommodate these differences, a definition of Indigenous, as stated above and adopted for this study was a person who accepts themselves as Indigenous and is accepted by their local community as Indigenous (see Foley & Hunter, 2013). This is intentionally an open definition framed on my understanding of the views offered by various local individuals.

The Western culture often placed people who were considered elite into a specialised category while actively obliterating people who happened to exhibit what was described as a disability or even a low socio-economic position (Cowlshaw, 2003; Perlin, 2008). See next section, 1.5, for examples of the hierarchical attitudes within the workplace, sports clubs and various entrepreneurial scenarios. This is opposite to the virtually zero example of creating this hierarchy of people that was almost irrelevant within every Indigenous community that I had been part of and thereby different to many branches of a Western society with which I have been associated.

Within the local Indigenous community, I learned to give as well as receive gifts. Examples of the gifts included food, a didgeridoo, emu egg, visual art and clothing; the list goes on. I was learning to share rather than simply exchange material (see Hart, 2008). Interestingly, my next-door neighbour was comparatively a part of the Western community and had links with the Indigenous community. An ‘approximate Indigenous worldview’ was common when associated with the neighbour including the respect for each other’s needs. These needs included offering time commitments to assist each other, exchanging material items and adjusting the home space to satisfy each other’s needs. Thus, we were living in harmony.

The researcher persona explained below has proved useful when introduced to a new community as well as to establish a suitable approach to this study. For example, the acceptance of natural attitudes assisted with the satisfaction of finding new knowledge and the pleasure of learning from other cultures. These attitudes have been part of the learning about an Indigenous worldview and helping to learn to communicate with potential participants to initiate informative conversations to create productive interviews for this study. A privilege has been that many people within the local Indigenous community have accepted an awareness or understanding of Indigenous concepts. For example, the understanding of the local application of the concept of time proved useful when planning interviews with potential research participants.

1.4.2 Time

Within the local Indigenous community, two terms were used to distinguish between Indigenous and Western perceptions of time. The concept of time is usually perceived by Europeans or Western social regime as linear and is normally well entrenched into many segments of the society. For example, even advanced science required the eminent Albert Einstein to challenge an accepted notion of time before the

linear time concept was significantly adjusted to explain the science of particles moving near the speed of light, thereby enabling the advancement of the physical sciences while time remained essentially unchanged for much of the population (Berkson, 2014; Nakata, 2010). In contrast to the linear timeframe model, the Indigenous perception of time is more complex. In the Indigenous worldview, time is usually perceived as neither absolute nor linear.

For most Australian Indigenous communities, time, like all things, may be viewed as relative and continually changing. For example, even an era often known as the Dreamtime involving the creation of things was not fixed in time. Rather, Dreamtime happens continually and is contacted through actions such as ceremony, art and story. The issue might be explained as, 'Life does not move through time; rather, time moves through life' (Kwaymullina & Kwaymullina, 2010, p. 200).

This discussion demonstrates that in an Indigenous worldview, time is typically viewed in a style unlike a Westernised idea of time. In an Indigenous worldview, everything is dependent on growth or divergence, exemplified with the example of growth compared with decay, where both are occurring in an ever-changing universe. An understanding of an Indigenous version of time was useful when arranging interviews. Variants of time are often more complex in an Indigenous worldview compared with a Western version of time. Differences are also observed for the concept of ownership.

1.4.3 Ownership

The arrival of Europeans in Australia involved the newcomers' misunderstandings and denial of ownership in direct contrast to the already established Indigenous worldview (Kwaymullina & Kwaymullina, 2010). The beginning or discovery was implicated in early Western history with the arrival of British invaders in the late 1700s. Since there were no familiar signs of inhabitancy such as housing, fencing or agriculture,

the incorrect assumption was made that the land was uninhabited (see Nanni, 2006; Pettit, 2015; Watson, 2014). This had the result that Europeans claimed first arrival and discovery of the land. Ownership was claimed by the colonisers and signalled by European methods such as the construction of fence lines and European housing systems (Foley & Barnes, 2008; Pettit, 2015).

The Indigenous population had not considered themselves owners of the land. Rather, the land owned the people and required a responsibility to care for the relevant region. People believed they were drawn to the land with energy analogous to forces connecting all things in the universe. For example, the force holding the Earth to the sun was related to the belief that all things should remain in balance (Kwaymullina & Kwaymullina, 2010). The Indigenous worldview understanding relates to a holistic concept and assumes all things depend on everything else, which contrasts with European industrialisation that implies most concepts are independent. For example, the invention of the wheel was viewed as a milestone and a massive step forward, while anything the wheel had removed from the tree was overlooked (Kwaymullina & Kwaymullina, 2010). Material or immediate benefits were the goal, with costs often ignored. This is also clear when considering that many people have reaped the benefits of energy use while ignoring or even considering irrelevant the various types of industrial pollution. Early contact with colonisers, including researchers, instilled doubt in many different Indigenous communities (L. T. Smith, 1999).

1.4.4 Relationships and Indigenous Perceptions of Research

Relationships, being essential to every lifestyle, are often central to the Indigenous worldview (Crabtree, 2013). The idea is that the existence of everything is related to numerous other things. The notion is extended for knowledge being perceived as fundamental to creating the balance of all things in the universe. Thus, all aspects of

lifestyle should necessarily be in balance (Ens et al., 2015). This is comparable to the basis of many Asian concepts in which balance is central and readily observed in the concept of feng shui (Too, 1998).

Endeavours to colonise Indigenous groups were a common purpose of many early researchers (Sinclair, 2004). Early research projects soon developed a poor image among Indigenous communities and even the word ‘research’ was usually considered problematical (L. T. Smith, 1999). Researchers were sometimes considered intruders and predators (Sinclair, 2003). Any unsavoury factor resulting from research or research findings is possibly an outcome of the research itself. More accurately, the inadequacies rest with people who perform the research and produce the resulting outcomes (Ormiston, 2010; L. T. Smith, 1999). Therefore, during the last 20 years especially, a researcher must show respect and collaborative approaches as an integral part of methodology to complete useful research. This need has developed to incorporate Indigenous requirements and worldviews into Western research protocols to overcome many of the earlier negative contingencies (National Health Medical Research Council, 2007).

1.4.5 Worldview Summary

As emphasised by L. T. Smith (1999) and M. A. Hart (2010), for Indigenous research, the Indigenous worldview ought to be a key part of the research process. The intentions of any Indigenous research should consider the purpose, motivation and who has ultimate control over what has been learned. This requires consideration of the perspectives of Indigenous people, who accept positive results.

This section has outlined examples of an Indigenous worldview and intended to provide an overview. Important differences between Australian Indigenous and Western worldviews have been identified using examples of time, ownership, relationships and the holistic concept of life (Cheung, 2008). For this study, the collection of data and analysis

of results required at least some understanding of worldview issues because this improved communication. The researcher position in the study is affected by the understanding of the worldview. Accepting the Whorton (2016) argument that at least some bias is present in most qualitative research, the researcher position requires clarification (Williamson-Kefu, 2017).

1.5 Researcher Position

The section is intended to describe my personal position as the researcher and provide for reader judgement about how this affected the research process (Grbich, 2019; Leko et al., 2021). Relationships with participants, personal beliefs regarding Indigenous knowledge and preparation leading to this project are all relevant. With circumspection, I acknowledge my own position of Indigeneity, noting I was informed that a relative is currently involved in the search of family history expecting to find semblance of Indigenous Australians. For this study, the association with present-day Indigenous Australians was the relevant factor (see examples in Chapter 4).

When referring to myself, I often avoid the use of terms such as ‘Indigenous’ or ‘non-Indigenous’ with the belief that using these terms propagates the ‘them-and-us’ attitude often observed in Australia that I have observed in many conversations and seems intended to separate Indigenous groups from other parts of society (see Augoustinos & Riggs, 2007; Short, 2005). I am pleased to claim that many within the local community have acknowledged me as part of what is known as the local ‘Koorie community’; the spelling of Koorie used here to align with the accepted use by local people. The welcoming experience to the local Indigenous community in central Gippsland has been comparable for me with other places in Australia, including Sydney, during this study, as well as during visits to Alice Springs, Melbourne, Bundaberg and outback Queensland.

The research exercise was a challenge requiring problem-solving and I often enjoyed the challenges as described below, for the examples through personal interests of chess and yachting. The problem-solving process was related to each stage of this research journey. Unfortunately, for myself, the time commitment required reduced the input to other activities as well as my interaction with the local Indigenous community because most of the community has been left without access to the university environment.

I have always considered an inquiry to another person an opportunity to learn, believing the inquiry should be thought of as paying a compliment rather than an admission of weakness. The attitude proved useful for this research because of the comfort when asking others about new knowledge. For example, when lost in a new place, I have always been happy to ask locals for help or to enquire about cultural norms. This attitude was useful when preparing interviews and introductions to new people.

Several hobbies have assisted interaction with Indigenous Australians: for example, sharing loaves of bread and enjoying games of chess with various individuals. All these activities added to new relationships with the Indigenous community and included the reward of adding to an ever-changing knowledge bank that has continued during this research. Since maintaining personal health was necessary to complete this study, the value I place on physical health was relevant, including physical exercise and a favourable diet.

A belief in positive interaction with various community groups has been part of my initial contacts with various Indigenous communities. My prime moral beliefs include treating all people as equal, at least until sound reason is given to form a different opinion. I also believe in retaining an honest platform for liaison with other people.

Further examples of an interest and satisfaction when learning about other cultures include learning about Chinese food preparation and Mediterranean coffee production. This relates to an appreciation of artwork and an understanding of the protocols at local clubs because learning from others is the key factor group engagement. This attitude has helped with introductions and continued relationships within the local Indigenous community.

I also believe in care for the land and keeping any waste to a minimum. These beliefs assisted my understanding of the Indigenous worldview because land care is an issue usually given high priority by Indigenous groups (Hill et al., 2013). For example, to avoid waste, I am always willing to pursue repairs, if possible, rather than purchase replacement equipment. The attitude was relevant when interacting with various Indigenous groups and further examples include listening to music, enjoying cognitive puzzles and having an interest in general sport.

Avoiding any devaluation of Indigenous groups has been my goal with the belief all people ought to be on an equal footing and not rated on a hierarchical system of misogyny of colonial positioning. I always appreciate a conversation framed on equal status of both sides. I have observed instances in society in which societal beliefs and even individual constituents seemed to promote a belief that one group was more always important than others: for example, people being given a special status owing to birthright situations, monetary wealth, political influence or individual awards. The equalising attitude proved valuable when intending to retain equal status position to complete interviews when collecting data for this research (see Section 3.3).

For this study, acceptance of people is connected to recording the interviews and applying the analytical methods since all participants were allowed an equal status to

express their opinions. I have used the reflexivity approach, as explained in Sections 3.4 and 3.2.

I believe we ought to be wary of reaching conclusions on the basis of advice of one person or even one group. Equally, ignoring the advice of specific entities is sometimes wrong and possibly dangerous if opposed to the advice of a larger group of people. However, ultimately it is our own decision as to exactly what we accept or ignore. The methodology for this study provides for the reader to dispute conclusions, if necessary, since the report had to be written by a single researcher. Further, the analysis involved interpreting interviews, which was accepted as a useful method because this was viewed as further development of the conversation that occurred using the grounded theory approach, described in detail in Section 3.4.

As a conclusion, personal values are summarised with the belief that they are acquainted with the term ‘success’. Acquiring new knowledge and being prepared to learn from other cultures have been highlighted. An aim to accept all people in society and the appreciation of personal health were significant and resulted in the view that success usually relates to reaching goals, achieving personal wellbeing and being treated as worthwhile by an associated community. This brief outline of the concept of success is developed in Section 2.4 according to relevant literature. The introductory chapter requires completing with a summary of the thesis structure.

1.6 Thesis Structure

This section is an outline of the overall thesis. Each chapter begins with a portrayal of what is encompassed within the chapter and sub-sections are completed with a summary when relevant. The introductory chapter provides the research justification,

followed by specifics of the aims and the research question. The Indigenous worldview and research positioning are also part of Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 is a literature review beginning with a general summary of Indigenous literature and continues on to focus on more specific factors. The review is intended to illustrate the expanse of literature associated with negatively biased issues compared with literature that discusses positive aspects of the Australian Indigenous population. This general literature assessment is achieved by assessing published literature reviews. Chapter 2 reviews the work of two well-respected Australian Indigenous researchers, Dennis Foley and Jeannie Herbert, because both these authors have completed work that has focused on success within specific fields. Foley has researched in the field of entrepreneurship and Herbert has examined higher education. Chapter 2 includes a summary of currently available definitions of success. This study aims to discover the views of a general community and is not restricted to specific fields. Contemporary definitions are explored that are possibly affected by early traditions.

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of ethical issues for this study. Specific ethical points are considered that are associated with human research, work with marginal groups and cross-cultural research. The aim to investigate the concept of success and compare an Indigenous community with the Australian mainstream community was supported by the research method ethics and is detailed in Section 3.1. This includes consideration of past misappropriations in research with Indigenous groups (L. T. Smith, 1999; see also Sharmil et al., 2021). Supporting this point, Coburn et al. (2013) claimed an Indigenous research paradigm acknowledging that various Indigenous philosophies are necessary to increase the trust of the researcher because of the past wrongs of research, such as trying to use craniometry attempting to ‘prove’ inferiority of the Indigenous population and propagate the colonisation process (Gorman & Toombs, 2009; Omarjee, 2020). The

research ethics for this study conform to a decolonisation philosophy by appropriating advantages for the researched community. This study acknowledges that in the past, academic researchers have approached Indigenous participants and issues with a focus on the researcher perspective and needs, without respecting Indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

The explanation of the Indigenous research paradigm as applied for ethical as well as practicable reasons is discussed in Chapter 3, followed by details and theoretical framework for the qualitative interviews used for the collection of data for this project. The methodology chapter also includes specific details of the application of grounded theory and how this was applied to this study to complete the thematic analysis used to establish detailed meaning of the collected data.

Chapter 4 provides details of individual situations during the data collection stages of this study. Descriptions of individual circumstances are presented and needed to be reported since they all provide details of the virtue of the methodological process and a foundation for the analytical process of the research. These incidents contribute to the discussion of results.

Chapter 5 provides the thematic analysis of the study. The chapter is divided into two major parts. The first part details five general-comment themes and the second part presents five themes relating to a definition of success. The themes are the findings of the analysis of audio interviews that were classified according to comments made by participants when discussing the topic of success.

The significance of the observed themes as well as other specific details are discussed in Chapter 6. Relevant advice that has emerged from the research is to encourage individual groups within the community, such as policymakers and educators, who have been judged to be in a suitable position to assist people and enhance the current

social situation by accepting Indigenous individual needs as well as general desires and continue the work that has been demonstrated by this study. That is, addressing the problem stated via the research question to develop the understanding of an Australian Indigenous concept of success and to recognise Indigenous perspectives. For example, this might be one way to assist what has been stated in Australian government circles as the necessity to ‘close the gap’ (Morley, 2014, p. 1).

Chapter 7 is a detailed statement of the significance of this study, providing a general outline of major points including a general conclusion and the overarching meaning attributed to the research.

1.7 Conclusion

The introductory chapter has identified the importance of this research, required to understand the concept of success from the perspectives of members of the Australian Indigenous research community. The study has the benefit of illustrating positive experiences of this community, such as the appreciation of community support and traditional culture, discussed in greater detail below. The aims and the research question have been defined and have addressed a need to demonstrate Australian Indigenous understandings of the concept of success. See Section 1.2 for the use of the phrase Indigenous voice that shows why listening to individual views was a key reason for the completion of this study because this emphasises learning from Indigenous perspectives. Another inspiration for this study was identified as attempting to rectify missing literature by listening to Indigenous Australians and reporting positive depictions of an Australian Indigenous community. Also explained was the Indigenous worldview, my personal position as the researcher and the thesis format. The literature review is the basis of Chapter 2 and is a detailed discussion of directly relevant work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature contextualises this work with previously published studies. See definition of Indigenous, Section 1.4 for this research study. Indigenous literature used here refers to literature claiming to discuss issues associated with Indigenous people, and Australian Indigenous literature refers specifically to the Australian subset of these items. The review begins with an overview of earlier literature. A summary of passed literature reviews is presented, supporting an argument that there has been a large imbalance of negative to positive-style literature for Indigenous people compared with the general population, as noted in Chapter 1. The purpose of this published material is often not always related to the misplaced poor stereotype for the Indigenous population because the literature does serve a purpose, as shown below.

To illustrate a need to provide an Indigenous community with an opportunity to discuss issues related to personal needs, the review of general Indigenous literature indicates the imbalance of literature. Section 2.1 provides examples of Australian Indigenous literature reviews, on a global scale, as well as examples of specific papers showing that this style of paper is not restricted to literature reviews and aims to illustrate the literary bias that is beginning to change. Examples of positively associated literature are presented below.

Section 2.2 discusses literary examples of successful Indigenous Australians. Section 2.3 provides examples of studies investigating the topic of success related to Indigenous Australians. The authors were considered successful Indigenous Australians. The examples include Dennis Foley (2003a), who has completed studies regarding successful Indigenous entrepreneurs, and Jeannie Herbert (2003a), who has completed research regarding Indigenous success in education. When this research study is justified

as well as examples of related literature offered, Section 2.4 is an overview of the term ‘success’, assessing available definitions of a Western idea of success and Indigenous definitions of success as well as a definition accepted for the purpose of this study.

2.1 Indigenous Literature

This section is an exploration of the extant literature in the field of Indigenous research. Australian works are considered first, and the second section considers international examples. Section 2.1.1 describes specific studies to illustrate the negative bias in general and is not restricted to literature reviews. The claim is there has been an extensive bias towards negative issues: for example, not acknowledging the achievements of Indigenous people sufficiently. One reason for the negative type of literature is to confront and search for solutions to problems. For example, Kalb et al. (2014) reviewed literature with the aim of identifying problems requiring governmental attention. The purpose was to promote governmental plans to reduce problems for Indigenous Australians.

2.1.1 Australian Indigenous Literature

Much of the research discussing Indigenous Australian research has focused on problematic or negative factors within the researched community (L. T. Smith, 1999; see also Barker et al., 2007; Harder et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2008). Rather than the passive, helpless subjects often implied in early Australian Indigenous research, this research views Indigenous Australians as active agents. Aboriginal people now generally live in a location close to mainstream Australians and often in an unfavourable social context in which mainstream society has forced itself onto Aboriginal people. The report from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017) stated that in 2016, approximately 80% of the Indigenous population lived in urban areas. This is understood to be a result of the

practice of programs now known as the White Australia policies of Australian governments (Jayasuriya et al., 2003; see also Curthoys, 2003; Kane, 1997; D. Walker, 2003). B. Jones (2017) stated, ‘The White Australia policy was not a single government directive but a series of acts with a common goal: to achieve and maintain a white, British national character. The [Immigration Restriction Act](#), [Pacific Island Labourers Act](#) and the [Post and Telegraph Act](#)’ (para. 4). B. Jones (2017, Section 2, para 2) said the hypocrisy of these governmental exercises was evident claiming, ‘It never mentioned the words “white” or “race”, but the parliamentary debates—and its application—make clear it was a tool of racial exclusion’. Therefore, more studies are necessary, such as this one aiming to understand the Indigenous perspectives.

Curthoys (2003) emphasised that the exclusionist mentality of White Australia policies was part of colonisation:

These exclusionary aspects of liberalism emerged and are sustained most clearly in the context of colonisation. Colonisation takes many forms, from colonies of exploitation on the extraction of economic value ... Where the colonisers seize the land, introduce their own labour force, and destroy the economic and cultural basis of the pre-existing Indigenous societies. (p. 10)

This agrees with Jayasuriya et al. (2003), who told the story of the governmental acts being applied and interpreted by the public as a way of excluding Indigenous Australians from official public activities. McGregor (2009) showed examples of the attitudes stating, ‘if Aboriginal and white Australians were to become one people’ (p. 03.2) to illustrate the assimilationist attitudes of trying to build a white Australia and furthered the claim that these attitudes were in practice an outright denial of the non-white history of Australia. The completion of this research is an answer to this denial by investigating the views of Indigenous individuals regarding the concept of success,

thereby illustrating the preferences of specific individuals regarding their experiences when asked to discuss the topic. The focus on difficulties was also evident in the global Indigenous reviews.

2.1.2 Global Indigenous Literature Reviews

This section considers literature reviews from various places on a worldwide scale. Rowan et al. (2014) applied an assumption of a major addiction problem for Indigenous people. The examples were primarily for the United States (US) and Canada. Australia was included as another example of related issues. In the literature review about care in hospitals, Williamson and Harrison (2010) recognised problems for Indigenous groups worldwide. Examples of reviews related to China, US and Canada. There were also reports of situations related to the Australian scenario (Burns, 2004; Rowan et al., 2014; Stevenson et al., 2017; Tollefson et al., 2013; Williamson & Harrison, 2010). The foci of these literature reviews portray the examples of problematic issues and relates the papers to examples from Australian Indigenous research. A comparable example is the review by Jiménez et al. (2014), which explored water and hygiene issues connected to Indigenous groups in various parts of the world.

Reviewing 185 articles, Jiménez et al. aimed to summarise many of the problems that have been identified in the literature regarding Indigenous sanitary fields. The discussion claimed that most reviewed articles were within the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and indicated that many problems exist in the Asian and former Soviet regions. This provided a basis from which to draw conclusions supporting the argument for the acknowledgement of Indigenous people's worldviews and the need to address problems when working with relevant groups. The problem-focused articles were evident in all material, not simply the literature reviews.

2.1.3 Problem-Focused Literature

To indicate that the type of literature is not restricted to reviews, this section demonstrates examples of the literature that has focused on unsavoury aspects of various Australian Indigenous groups. Rosser (1987) was an example, in which the title of the book, 'Dreamtime Nightmares', illustrated that the content was about the difficult issues faced by the Indigenous interviewees, with individual narratives presented as a way of discussing various awkward scenarios. Warren and de Vries (2009) explored problems faced by Australian Indigenous students in the Western schooling system and attempted to address problems by offering ideas for students to increase their achievement in mathematics. A related example is Anderson and Atkinson (2013), who aimed to address problems in the higher education sector. The paper offered training advice for educators to gain knowledge, providing teachers with the tools required to create a more positive relationship between teacher and student compared with observations from earlier years.

Rowan et al. (2014) was an example of a study referring to drug issues and was another paper that aimed to offer a method of first confronting and then attempting to improve the situation. Lea and Pholeros (2010) provided a thorough description of the many barriers faced by the Indigenous community when attempting to find reliable housing. A related paper by Fien and Charlesworth (2012) treated the housing crisis as a societal crisis facing the Indigenous community.

The key in this research is recognising a different approach taken by individuals compared with much of the published material focusing on difficult issues such as educational barriers, violence, health problems and marginalisation. Most examples of literature in this section refer to difficult scenarios for Indigenous people. To offset this style of literature, this research investigated the meaning of the concept of success and associated experiences for participants. Not confined to one domain as for the examples

mentioned above and discussed further below, in the field of entrepreneurship researched by Foley (2006a) or higher education, studied by Herbert (2003a). Apart from the negatively focused literature illustrated above, there is extant literature that shows examples of successful Indigenous Australian situations.

2.2 Australian Indigenous Success Examples

Positive literature does exist; this section intends to provide examples. Ens et al. (2015) was an example of a more positively flavoured literature review developing the argument that using Indigenous knowledge would help control many modern biocultural issues in Australian agriculture: for example, employing Indigenous advice to make better use of planned burns, learn more about managing waterways and increase the understanding of the value of native vegetation. Ens et al. (2012) used diverse literature to construct an argument regarding the related topics of biodiversity, aquatic systems, threatened species and fire management. All these topics were addressed to illustrate support for other authors, who argued for the acceptance of Indigenous knowledge techniques. Ens et al. (2012) argued for the recognition of the Indigenous knowledge in coherence with the Western knowledge system and using these two methods to gain maximum benefit.

The literature review by Battiste (2002) was framed on Indigenous groups in Canada. An example of issues studied include the application of Indigenous knowledge as an aid to the pedagogical design for a range of schools. This is an example of a positively flavoured review and has shown that there is much to be admired within an Indigenous community. For example, Battiste illustrated the value of the diversity of respected opinions, the continual ability to access knowledge via pleasurable ceremonies and the retrieval of spiritual gifts for people to become aware of personal nuances.

Using the general definition of success for this study stated in Section 2.4, one key area where success may be observed is the life stories of high-profile and well-known Indigenous Australians. Examples have illustrated variance between an Indigenous view of success compared with Western mainstream success concepts. People who have been considered successful in mainstream Australia have sometimes described a differing depiction of their own success. An example is presented in Freeman and Gullan (2003). Rather than highlighting Cathy Freeman's athletic success, the book reads as a type of diary with examples of various hurdles faced during Freeman's lifetime. The success may be interpreted as managing the hurdles, such as overcoming the educational difficulties incurred by assimilation into the Australian school system. Freeman being included in the Indigenous community is pronounced as integral for her eventual achievement of the athletic goals. Therefore, the success from Freeman's perspective might also be interpreted as providing support for her community or achieving goals, as discussed further in Chapter 6.

Media reporter Stan Grant's (2004) book is technically a biography but reads as a moving story. The book contains examples of harsh lifestyle and ways to confront problems. A similar example is Rubi Langford Ginibi (1988), whose sense of humour persisted through a broad range of hardships.

Ginibi's (1994) later publication, *My Bundjalung People*, was evidence of a successful life and the content questioned many parts of Australian colonisation events. The text includes examples of massacres, missionary life, the invasion process and racism. Ginibi reported being taken from her parents and posed her own views. These thoughts gather force when the reader has listened to related individual accounts. There is frequently a desire for the Indigenous community to tell their own side of the story and often display a positive tone. As indicated above, this is one reason for the completion of

this research. Examples of changes suggested by Ginibi include the need to include Aboriginal historical items in concepts such as the school curricula. A major question posed by Ginibi is whether white Australians would allow Indigenous Australians to write about white history, thereby challenging various historical records.

Remembering Aboriginal Heroes: Struggle, Identity and the Media is a quality textbook by Ramsland and Mooney (2012) and is extensively referenced, with every chapter discussed in detail. The book includes a series of biographies of Indigenous Australians, who the authors describe as Aboriginal heroes. Therefore, these are effectively examples of success and there is no pretence that the ‘heroes’ did not manage a burden. The book emphasises the claim these were all Indigenous Australians from the early to mid-1900s who have succeeded via encapsulation of the colonising society while still maintaining their Indigenous identity.

The ‘heroes’ selected by Ramsland and Mooney (2012) include Albert Namatjira, who was apparently one of the first Australian Indigenous visual artists to become widely recognised. Namatjira produced works of art with an essence of his original culture and painted onto canvas, thereby combining well-established Indigenous visual art combined with presentation methods from a globalist art environment. The canvas medium was not part of the Indigenous technique until after the invasion of Australia. Therefore, Namatjira made use of a Westernised medium to pursue his knowledge of Indigenous visual representation practice.

Further examples from Ramsland and Mooney (2012) of heroes capturing the Western culture while retaining the Indigenous identity include boxer Dave Sands, who accepted European boxing, even when the media continued to attribute his success to dishing out punishment for earlier wrongs. Reg Saunders is another example of success, aiming to help Christian missionaries while attempting to support the Indigenous

population. Musician Jimmy Little grasped the country and Western style and the English language to publicise some Indigenous protest details (Ramsland & Mooney, 2012). This music was an example of Indigenous artists aiming to publicly disclose their own views. Mentioned above and discussed further later, participants in this study given this opportunity to share their own views is an example of the benefits of recording qualitative audio interviews.

The section has illustrated examples of Indigenous Australians perceived as successful in mainstream Australian society. The examples of success presented were in sport, music art and religion. This study accepts this group as successful but aims to find a more instructive view of success, especially when defined from an Indigenous perspective, discussed further in the following sections.

2.3 Dennis Foley's and Jeannie Herbert's Research

The relevant research discussed in this section illustrates examples of two prominent Indigenous scholars who have researched success for Indigenous Australians in the fields of entrepreneurship and education. Dennis Foley (2006a) is an who has undertaken research about successful Australian Indigenous entrepreneurs. Another example is Jeannie Herbert (2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2013, 2015), who has researched success in higher education. Herbert's research is even more aligned with this study because the issue of success has been studied with greater emphasis on the meaning of Indigenous perspectives.

A major interest for Foley was the possibility of the impact of entrepreneurial success regarding Indigenous identity and personal networking (Foley, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2006a, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2013d; Klyver & Foley, 2012). Further interests included cultural needs for individuals in business (Foley, 2003a,

2005, 2006a, 2008a; Klyver & Foley, 2012). The success issue ought to be judged as secondary for Foley. This section includes the range of topics explored, the sustained research and the modern views. According to the above argument that the segment of literature discussing more positive aspects for Indigenous Australians that is available has often been overlooked, Foley is a key Indigenous researcher whose work merits more detailed examination.

2.3.1 Indigenous Entrepreneurship

This section outlines a prominent research theme for Foley, investigating the significance of networking in business circles, which is an idea combining many Indigenous issues with entrepreneurship, including success in the field (Foley, 2000d, 2006b, 2012b). Therefore, it relates to this research, since the research considers cultural factors in relation to established Western ideals as for Watson (1997, 2014) above. Foley discussed aspects of the successful Indigenous entrepreneur in the mainstream business environment (Foley, 2006a, 2011a, 2012a, 2013a, 2013c).

Foley has worked to understand the nature of Indigenous business. The claim is that a community-based Australian Indigenous business enterprise arguably falls within a grey area of business classification. Studying from Hobart to Darwin and not fully satisfied with general literature, Foley (2006a) provided a lengthy discussion and offered the following definition of an Indigenous entrepreneur, stated here to demonstrate that Indigenous groups sometimes use alternative definitions:

[The Indigenous] ... entrepreneur alters traditional patterns of behaviour, by utilising their resources in the pursuit of self-determination and economic sustainability via their entry into self-employment, forcing social change in the pursuit of opportunity beyond the cultural norms of their initial economic resources. (Foley, 2006a, p. 256).

The qualitative, empirical nature of research undertaken by Foley illustrates that the methodology is a useful technique. The research regarding Indigenous entrepreneurs was relevant to the life experience perspective of participants. Qualitative research investigating matters concerning Indigenous people in Australia by an Indigenous researcher was not common before these projects (Foley, 2006a). Previously published related papers by Australian researchers relied on statistical reviews of ABS data (Foley, 2006a).

The research question in the paper investigating business success was, ‘with business success do Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs lose their Indigeneity and their Indigenous values?’ (Foley, 2006a, p. 241). Foley maintained the answer was inconclusive because no precise form of measurement can be applied to the outcomes. He surmised that each Indigenous entrepreneur responds differently to the business environment within which they operate according to their individual situation. These varied responses are probably not surprising when one considers the audio interview process with a variety of individuals. Comparable examples are available in Chapters 4 and 5. For example, a personal interview if answered at all may only be answered with one person’s individual statement and a single interview is part of a lengthy research process.

Foley stated that generally, there is little difference in character, such as a positive mindset, for Indigenous compared with non-Indigenous entrepreneurs (Foley, 2000a, 2006a). The claim was that Indigenous entrepreneurs manage to maintain and practice modern urban Indigenous Australian values that include working hard and valuing relationships (Foley, 2003a, 2006a, 2008a). Foley argued that money is often the prime motivator as well as a status symbol for mainstream entrepreneurs but not for their Indigenous counterparts (Foley, 2008a, p. 212). A significant point was Foley’s claim that

money has not been the main motivation for an Indigenous person entering business and success has not been measured with tangible factors. Success might be indicated by materialistic factors, but other connotations are possible, and another lengthy debate is initiated, see in Section 2.4.

Importantly, Foley (2003a) indicated that the Indigenous entrepreneur research subjects did exhibit specific differences to mainstream entrepreneurs. Therefore, this is relevant to this study. The issue is discussed further in Chapter 6. Foley claimed the ultimatum of success was found to vary compared with a common Westernised idea of success. For example, Foley (2006a) argued that other studies would lead us to surmise that Australian Indigenous culture should be antithetical to entrepreneurship.

Foley claimed Indigenous background should not be a disadvantage nor an undermining factor (Foley, 2006a). Foley compared the experiences of Australian Indigenous entrepreneurs with those of Indigenous groups from New Zealand and Hawaii (Foley, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a; Foley & O'Connor, 2013). The work explored what had been called the lack of wealth creation for each Indigenous group. Notably for the entrepreneurs, other commodities such as social networking and supporting others were considered more important. Foley (2008a) argued for more qualitative research to explore the topic in greater depth from the participant perspective, which is pursued by this study.

Foley's (2006a) research revealed that by working as entrepreneurs, the Indigenous participants maintained cultural links and retained connections to their traditional lands that lasted for successive generations. Foley (2006a) claimed that early Indigenous entrepreneurs did possess strong Indigenous cultural values and the state of change since colonisation of Australia has probably hindered traditional cultural links for the Indigenous entrepreneur. Foley referred to modern forms of traditional cultural links as contemporary Indigenous Australian values that were further defined as contemporary

kinship values. This aspect of contemporary culture was referred to as an extension of Indigenous beliefs. Furneaux and Brown (2008) provided another example of research that challenged the argument that Indigenous entrepreneurs lack required traits for successful business operation. The paper argued that barriers are not well understood, and more work is required to correct this disadvantage. This study is one example of pursuing this end.

One participant in Foley's (2006a) research believed that if traditional and/or cultural values do not already exist for the individual, then the outcome will be a transition into the dominant culture of the non-Indigenous business world. Referring to tourism and cultural heritage, a participant stated that they cannot 'invent culture ... [otherwise they will be known as] ... white'. This comment related to the Ogbu (2004) paper, which considered Indigenous Americans' references to 'acting white'. Foley (2006a) argued that the concept of values, both traditional and modern, appear to be interpreted by Indigenous entrepreneurs as the evolutionary outcome of traditional values. The conclusion was that traditional values still exist, including ethics, protocol, respect, ceremony and responsibility. These values are the basis on which the Indigenous entrepreneur earns right of place within a given Indigenous community (Foley, 2006a). Foley's work has focused on the Western version of success for the Indigenous entrepreneur and more research is required to identify a broader definition with greater focus on the Indigenous version of success.

Another point noted by Foley (2006a) for Indigenous entrepreneurs was, 'Many do not hold a grudge against Anglo-European Australia; they work with them and mutually prosper even though they suffer from overt and covert racism in the workplace and marketplace' (pp. 251–252). Apparently implying the grudge among Indigenous Australians is not uncommon when referring to Anglo-European Australian issues. Foley

claimed that this was less frequent for the entrepreneur given the entrepreneur's work with Anglo-European groups, who mutually prosper even though people suffer from overt and covert racism issues in the both the workplace and marketplace. Significantly, Foley made the point in several papers that survival or continuation of the business is the vital part of the individual's operation within their circle of contacts (Foley, 2006a, 2008c, 2013a).

A key conclusion of Foley was that it was difficult for most participants to remember constructive relationships with financiers or government departments, including those established to support them. Later work by Foley considered business arrangements of the entrepreneur. Foley (2013a, 2013c) explored the topic of what exactly a successful Indigenous Australian business was, and suggested that even though the courts define Indigeneity in terms of heritage, the business world considers percentage ownership terms to define Indigeneity of a business. Other topics discussed in this section include the issues of racism, Indigenous identity and monetary values. This may be extended with the consideration of other prominent Foley themes.

2.3.2 Other Themes

The nature of themes emanating from the Foley entrepreneurial research and other themes are assessed in this section. A significant Indigenous issue is the identity of individuals (Foley, 2006a, 2006b, 2008a, 2010, 2012b; Foley & O'Connor, 2013; Klyver & Foley, 2012). Foley (2006a) claimed, 'the overall findings of the research indicate that the Indigenous entrepreneur can remain true to their Indigenous beliefs in a modern urban environment and still be successful in business' (p. 252).

Foley (2008b, 2008c) asserted that the research indicates that when embedded in a minority culture, entrepreneurs need to consider two cultures simultaneously. This is a similar situation to that discussed above for participants in this research. Foley claimed

that networking requires consideration of expectations from both the mainstream and the individual's own culture. Foley argued that maintaining involvement in active social networking is a necessity for Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs and becoming involved in business networking circles is also necessary. For Australian Indigenous entrepreneurs, social and business networking circles were perceived to be separated (Foley, 2008b).

Foley (2008a) completed three independent case studies that investigated 60 Australian Indigenous entrepreneurs from 2001 to 2006, as well as 25 Indigenous Hawaiians and 15 Māoris. The results might be used to theorise about cultural activities in other fields: for example, comparisons with Indigenous views in education or agriculture.

Participants in Foley's research highlighted that they have been obliged to live and work in the dominant society with the non-Indigenous socio-economic system, while non-Indigenous people have never been expected to live according to Indigenous cultural values (Foley, 2006a, 2008a). The natural question to ask here would be, is this further confirmation of the assimilation process? Foley briefly answered this question and addressed it more deeply later, claiming that entrepreneurship is long established in various Australian Indigenous communities, beginning well before the invasion of the country (Foley, 2010, 2012a, 2012b, 2015). Foley (2010, p. 85) claimed:

Aboriginal involvement in a structured, orderly and entrepreneurial society dates back over 8,000 years. Australian Aboriginal enterprise is quite possibly the oldest surviving recorded 'business' undertaking known to modern man. (p. 85)

Clearly arguing the Indigenous entrepreneur was not necessarily a product of assimilation, Foley did suggest more research needs to be completed on the topic. For both the Hawaiian and New Zealand groups, entrepreneurial networks were culturally acceptable, and the family role was usually strong. Networking in business and social circles was found to be a high priority in New Zealand and Hawaii (Foley, 2008a).

Schaper (1999) claimed that research involving Indigenous business is advantageous for both the Indigenous communities concerned as well as for the researchers by providing an increase in knowledge. This point was complemented by Foley's work in the above examples, indicating that studying from an Indigenous perspective, such as devaluing materialism, with the aid of the Indigenous participants often provides a different approach for the mainstream populace. The example of devaluing materialism might be interpreted as way of increasing the appreciation of sharing. The completion of this study intending to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of success reaped related benefits, as discussed further in Chapter 7.

2.3.3 Minor Themes

Education has been a less prominent theme for Foley (Foley, 1996, 2000b, 2000c, 2014a, 2014b) publications. He discussed issues confronting Indigenous students at various stages of their education, arguing for student support in areas Foley called, 'housekeeping skills, life skills and financial skills'. Foley (1996) proposed what he called the 'serious question' (p. 54) of why most staff are employed in Indigenous student support fields or maybe academia and not valued as full support practitioners with fully qualified people skills, apparently taking the view that the required skills might not be available within the academic stratum.

Notably, these papers discussed problems in the current education system and strongly advocated the need for more Indigenous people in fields of student support and law (Foley, 1996, 2014a). Other papers argued an increase in current levels of education for Indigenous students before beginning an entrepreneurial career (Foley, 2000c, 2003a). Herbert (2003a) argued for learning to understand the meaning of success in education. This study is intended to assist learning about Indigenous perspectives in the general community.

Investigating the theory of Indigenous research methodology, Foley (Foley, 2000b, 2002, 2003b) referred to an Indigenous standpoint theory in which the research project was approached from the research participant group's perspective. He stated that this relates to issues and concepts of feminist research methods. Foley credited this connection to Moreton-Robinson (2000), L T Smith (2012, as cited in Guenther, J, n.d.) and Hennesy (1992), who all researched relevant areas when applying the philosophy of feminist standpoint theory. For studies that involved Indigenous groups from various nations, Foley (2008a, 2011a) indicated the application of this methodology (Foley & O'Connor, 2013).

When discussing Indigenous leadership concepts, Foley (2006a, 2006d, 2007) illustrated several ideas, including an Anglo misunderstanding of the issue. The thorough analysis by Foley (2007) presented several significant points noting that before the British invasion of Australia:

the pluralistic style of society of Aboriginal Australia was an unknown concept to the invader. (p. 178)

a pluralist society that did not experience dominance and leadership in the Western sense. (p. 179)

contrast to the invading settler society, the Eora [term used by Europeans referring to coastal Indigenous groups from the area now known as Sydney (Moore, 2004)] had an intimate relationship with nature and a non-materialistic philosophy. (p. 180)

With each quotation, Foley highlighted the importance of specific elements of how he perceives an Indigenous society that are at variance from the Western norm. For example, the pluralistic nature of the society and the absence of Western idea of leading

people(s) as well as the close relationship to natural phenomena. The views agree with other authors (Campbell, 1965; Raciti, 2021).

Book reviews published by Foley provided examples of exploring Indigenous perspectives as pursued for this research study (Foley, 2009b, 2011b, 2013a, 2013d; Foley & Barnes, 2008). Foley and Barnes (2008) challenged the concept of terra nullius by identifying misleading connotations in the Sven Lindquist book. The Foley reviews were presented to the reader and clearly indicating the Indigenous perspectives. Researching Indigenous views relates to Herbert's research for the studies in the field of education.

2.3.4 Jeannie Herbert, Success in Education

Herbert (2003b) is another scholarly Indigenous author currently well known for research in the area of success in education. The work is comparable to Foley in that there has been plenty of work about the achievement of success (Herbert, 2010; Herbert et al., 2014). Also comparable to Foley was Herbert's use of qualitative and other methods to enhance the research (Herbert, 2003a, 2012). Herbert posed a question as part of her dissertation title, 'Is success a matter of choice? Exploring Indigenous Australian notions of success within the context of the Australian university'. The title indicated the study was concerned with Indigenous connotations of success. Thus, in the field of education, this work may be considered a precursor to the more general societal connotations of success that are investigated in this research. Herbert's discussion of Indigenous perceptions of success in a university environment relates directly to this research regarding the diversity of Indigenous opinions. Additional investigation is needed regarding Herbert's point about an individual's freedom to select their own perception of exactly how a successful academic pathway ought to be defined.

Further research by Herbert (2010, 2013, 2015) was in accordance with a Westernised view of success as defined below. The research by Herbert related various methods for individuals to establish success. Conclusions reached by Herbert (2003a) include an evaluation of the reasons students feel like they belong and appreciate attending the education precinct, as well as establishing ways to join the workforce. Herbert claimed the increase of retention rates is undoubtedly valuable in relation to the success of the student at all levels of education.

There have been observations in which participants suggested that success in university was a way to obtain skills that enable them to help their people (Herbert, 2003a, p. 234). This relates to themes observed in this research, discussed further in Chapters 5 and 6. Herbert noticed students who aimed to achieve a pass grade, and this was effectively a goal of the students. Another theme noted by Herbert was the holistic view of happiness and success.

The investigations by Herbert (2010) have benefited Indigenous communities and this is evident in Herbert's papers. An example was the paper about success in academia, which argued that achievement at the tertiary level was a way of obtaining an Indigenous voice and an increase in Indigenous power, thereby offering motivating thoughts for others to consider when assessing levels of achievement in academia. Herbert made it clear that the argument was for acceptance of Indigenous knowledge to be shared, not to devalue Western knowledge.

Herbert et al. (2014) claimed collaborating with others is way to establish success and the situation may be made more attractive than currently experienced by secondary level Indigenous students. Qualitative and quantitative methods were applied to determine student answers to why school might be important. The authors claimed that the most significant finding was that almost all participants indicated they valued education. Further

observations included the increased attachment to others, making the comment, ‘intensely social place where they met and made friends’ (p. 89). Another point was the remote students stating a variety of reasons for maintaining study, including the obtaining of significant help in the future and finding a place to increase their knowledge of the English language.

The research by Herbert (2003) may be compared to the work by Pidgeon (2008a) who has researched various views of success for Indigenous people in British Columbia. The research by Pidgeon (2008b, 2016) has investigated challenges faced by Indigenous students in higher education and often with views of success differing to numerous Western counterparts. Another author with interests for higher education students was the work by Mayeda in collaboration others who investigated problematic issues of success faced by Indigenous youth in New Zealand and other regions resulting from colonisation (Mayeda et al, 2014; Mayeda et al, 2022).

Discussed below and compared with both Herbert and Foley, this study aimed to learn about issues such as success. Both Foley (2003a, 2006a) and Herbert (2003a, p. 241) claimed that perhaps participants possibly become more focused on individual success when saying, ‘success is almost impossible to define’. Therefore, producing a universal definition is virtually impossible. Herbert’s work demonstrated that success in obtaining tertiary qualifications resides in finding new opportunities for the achievers and the ability to move on and assist relevant Indigenous communities. The summary of this section provides for review of this point.

2.3.5 Summary

This section has examined the work of Foley, who has researched success for Indigenous entrepreneurs, as well as Jeannie Herbert’s research on success in education. This work demonstrated that for these relevant fields, the wider public often interpret

success in a different way from Indigenous people. Foley (2005) argued for the importance of entrepreneurs contributing to their own community and Herbert (2003b) demonstrated that success when obtaining tertiary qualifications avails new opportunities to those who become qualified and able to assist their own communities. The research by these two authors is a key part of this literature review. The discussion in this section has necessitated further consideration of the term ‘success’, highlighting a range of approaches and definitions, all of which require more detailed discussion.

2.4 Defining Success

Acknowledging the complexity of the term success, this section provides a summary of available definitions. The definitions in this section are usable definitions for different groups and this study does not fix on a given definition but rather explores the perspectives for a given group. A common claim by authors is that success is difficult to define (Herbert, 2003a; Jackson & Coltheart, 2013; Moon, 2014; Shoja et al., 2019). Therefore, this section is intended to provide an overview of the term success as interpreted by various authors. The completion of the thesis by Moon (2014), focusing on success within a single field and investigating success for Indigenous educators, related to both Hebert and Foley above, providing examples of the extent of this topic. Hence, there is a need for a project such as this study, attempting to consider success that encompasses people within the general community.

General literature about success is discussed first, followed by interpretations of success from an Australian Indigenous perspective, as well as a section that states specific definitions of success interpreted from a Western perspective. The final section provides a definition to illustrate how success was interpreted during the planning stages of this study.

2.4.1 General Literature About Success

The specific details of the item of success are sparse and the summary of literature in this section helps clarify the details. Many people have applied a specific definition of success and there are many different variations (Kreuter & Moltner, 2014). The subjectivity of the term results in the realisation that it is a perception of the observer (Stull et al., 2010; Vanderbilt University, 2014; Williams, 2013). Stull et al. (2010) presented an extensive argument that different people have unique specific interpretations of success. For example, some people might decide that high monetary income could be defined as being successful, while others might say that happiness is far more important. Another example is some people placing importance on sporting achievement and others placing prime value on artistic endeavours. Personal interests might well be expected to determine the final decisions.

Groysberg and Abrahams (2014) offered a view that success changes for various people. The main point for Groysberg and Abrahams was that success may be defined in both objective and subjective terms. Examples used for objective points were income, job status, awards and accolades. Examples of subjective success were enjoyment of activities, pride in accomplishments, connection with others and the completion of meaningful tasks. The claim for this research is that the final judgement of success should be the choice of the individual. Groysberg and Abrahams emphasised the value of the subjective viewpoint, which was the result in research with 40 interviewees. Results were supported by other authors (Maxwell, 2002, pp. 1–2; Sutin et al., 2009).

Gorgievski et al. (2011) completed research judging success criteria in research on Dutch small business and concluded that the most common criterion was profitability. However, when Gorgievski et al. judged Indigenous research, they supported Foley (2003a) and agreed that the main criterion was continuity in business.

2.4.2 Australian Indigenous Success Definitions

The literature reviewed in this section indicates that an Indigenous perspective of success is often viewed in a different way to the idea manifested in the Western mainstream culture (Herbert, 2003a; see also Foley, 2000b, 2003a, 2004; Schaper, 1999; Westby, 2007). Success may even be interpreted differently by different genders within a given culture (Fan & Karnilowicz, 1997; Grass, 2014, pp. 78–82; Mertens et al., 2007; Westby, 2007). Mertens et al. (2007) concluded that Muslim females valued what the authors described as traditional success, with males considering status as most important. There are examples of research of Australian Indigenous females valuing cultural items, while their male counterparts place higher value on the outcomes of a task (Grass, 2014, pp. 79–82; Ulm et al., 2001). Grass referred to comments of research interviewees and claimed the results supported this point. The research was connected to First Nations people in British Columbia. More work in this field would be of interest because sample size and place might affect results. Cultural desires and a relationship to success are reported below for this study.

As indicated above, Foley (2000b, p. 15, 2003a, pp. 137–138) and Herbert (2003a) considered success from an Australian Indigenous perspective. In research regarding the Indigenous entrepreneur, Foley claimed that for the mainstream entrepreneur, success is usually measured as monetary reward, as discussed further in Section 2.3. Foley stated that success from an Indigenous perspective is rarely measured by tangible assets. The claim was supported with comments from interviewees. Foley (2003a) suggested that success was not even a readily accessible topic during interviews, claiming that individuals felt ‘cultural values that make it difficult for the respondents to talk openly about their success as to do so would be to elevate them to a level above their peers’ (p. 139). This is discussed further in Chapter 6 and compared with observations in

this study. To complete interviews, Foley mentioned being prepared to use another term for what he called ‘success’. A similar approach was useful during interviews for this research, discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4 and Section 5.1.4. An alternative term was sometimes substituted for success when interviewing participants who showed a reluctance to discuss the topic of success.

Foley judged that the collective interpretation of success within an Indigenous community is the establishment in a position, while not failing and not being forced to leave the position (Foley, 2003a, pp. 137, 2004). Foley suggested that success has both philosophical and communal aspects for Indigenous groups. Several participants in Foley’s research described success by the level of importance and how something has been achieved rather than by the accumulation of assets (Foley, 2000d, p. 54). These observations by Foley are comparable to this study and are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Herbert (2003a) delved even more deeply into the concept of success with the statement in the thesis about success and related corollaries:

I realised that defining success within the context of contemporary higher education, of necessity, narrowed the definition to one that required course completion. My dilemma was how making ‘completion’ a requirement of accountability could be justified within the context of an individual student's right to freedom of choice. Pressuring students ‘to complete’ the course’. (p. 4)

Herbert extended this comment and noted that finding a definition of success is a complex process. Even within the specificity of the field of completing a higher education course, Herbert claimed the narrowing of a satisfactory definition had impacts on an individual’s freedom to choose their own notion of success, thereby being somewhat impinged by the requirements of related governmental demands.

Schaper's (1999) interpretation of success focused on contributions to the community and family needs. Thus, Schaper supported Foley (2004), who noted the communal significance of success for Indigenous Australians. Schaper (1999) emphasised the point that success has a range of interpretations but not one put in dollar terms for the Indigenous entrepreneur, making the claim, 'the success of Aboriginal people cannot be measured solely by conventional Western ideas of entrepreneurship, wealth creation, and management' (p. 90).

In research regarding successful educational strategies for Indigenous students, Grass (2014, p. 78) reported similar observations to both Foley and Schaper regarding the communal significance. Related observations for this study are reported in Section 6.3. Grass concluded that the common theme in education is to develop a means to improve conditions for families, communities and nations and finding a way to ensure the continuation of culture. The observations relate to themes reported in this research in Section 5.2.5. Grass (2014, pp. 79–81) also observed individual differences in the meaning of success. For example, different interviewees gave examples of success, describing the individual achieving a particular level in a task and a community arriving at a given point. Another interviewee was less focused on academic points and more concerned with social, cultural or general wellbeing issues. This may be interpreted as acquiring an improved ability to live in a cultural way. Others researching higher education concurred with the view of Indigenous success offering contributions to the family as well as the community (Barney, 2016; Devlin, 2015). The completion of a planned course of action was also important according to both Barney and Devlin. This factor was also supported by the definition by Lydster and Murray (2018), who referred similarly to success being linked to the capacity to support family and community, using educational study to achieve lifetime goals, obtaining a desired employment position and

finding a study–life balance. The Lydster and Murray argument, as well as the work of both Barney and Devlin, relates directly to the themes and discussion for this study (see Chapter 6).

Authors considered here have conveyed related concepts of an Indigenous perspective of success. Importantly, this literature suggests the Indigenous perspective of success is usually not the same as the Western concept (Barney, 2016; Devlin, 2015; Foley, 2003a; Grass, 2014). For Indigenous communities, often the communal idea of Indigenous success has been identified compared with the generally individualised idea of Western success. This is a complex issue and has been addressed by the research question stated in Chapter 1. The communal idea is often evident in Indigenous success and has been identified as dependent upon the contribution to the needs of a community or family. Authors mentioned in this section noticed that the completion of a task and the relevance of maintaining culture are other factors interpreted as success for Indigenous groups.

2.4.3 Accepted Western Definitions

The first paper considered in this section, Shoja et al. (2019), was one example of the claim that success is a complex phenomenon. This section should be thought of as a simplified example of defining success. More concise definitions were obtained from English language dictionaries and the aim here is to understand the main features of the fundamental criteria for a Western perception of success. The definitions are still relevant even if viewed differently for an Indigenous individual because the English language is a language now used by many Indigenous Australians but not without pressure from the early colonisers (Arthur, 1996).

Shoja et al. (2019) listed specific details for a definition of success and the result might be criticised as describing success rather than adhering to the title ‘Defining and Re-defining Success’. The authors aimed to clarify what should be interpreted as

examples of Western success. A list of 16 pieces of advice were claimed to be portions of the success definition. Examples included success is a mindset, success is continually changing, and happiness is inclusive to success. Another example, failure is paramount to success, is a way of promoting the need to accept failure as part of the journey. More detail is offered by Shoja et al. and these extra details exemplify the complexity of the issue. A list of 26 items was provided as fundamental for establishing success. The first example is establishing a sense of purpose. The essentiality of motivation is important and the power of having an open mind is emphasised. Another list of 21 items provided advice to obtain success. Eleven more items were also mentioned as methods of evading barriers to success. Examples include avoid giving up, not devaluing confidence and trying not to be harmed by criticism.

Moore (2004) used the definitions:

- the accomplishment of an aim or favourable outcome
- the attainment of wealth, fame or position
- a thing or person that turns out well
- a specified outcome of an undertaking.

Moore's first definition suffices as a summary of success. The definition allowed for various individuals who offer different descriptions of aims or favourable outcomes. The definition provides for the view, as claimed above by Shoja et al. (2019), that success is a journey not a destination. This has been considered important by various authors (Brannigan, 2000; Radun, 2016).

The second definition by Moore (2004) allowed for individual differences because three areas were included. The third definition is similar to the first in that the outcome is regarded as significant. However, this definition differs in that it refers to the individual

person or specific task. The fourth definition also provided for individual differences because various tasks might be specified.

To compare dictionaries, consider the online *Collins Dictionary* (2016) definitions:

- the favourable outcome of something attempted
- the attainment of wealth, fame, etc
- an action, performance, etc, that is characterised by success
- a person or thing that is successful
- (*obsolete*) any outcome.

These dictionary definitions all appear to allow for different individuals or societal group interpretations of success in various ways.

The second definition offered in each dictionary refers to the collection of assets. This concept is often interpreted as the accumulation of wealth (Moav & Neeman, 2010; Rubtcova & Pavenkov, 2018). The extent, importance and relationship to success of materialism in present-day Western society is left here for the reader to judge since there is extensive debate regarding personal positioning and the relationship of wealth to success. ‘Economics’ is a related term often used nowadays, apparently relating to materialism, sometimes referred to as ‘economic rationalism’ (see Chaplin & John, 2007; Inglehart, 1981; Pusey, 1998; Sumsion, 2006). The claim here is a materialist approach is still common in a Western society, although there is debate regarding definitions and an individual regarding themselves as materialist. An example of modern materialism is the justification of governmental or bureaucratic actions using the terms ‘economics’ rather than materialism. A related point is that the term ‘success’ might refer to non-personal factors, such as obtaining the continual availability of land or adequate functioning of the

environment. The detail of the dictionary definitions in this section assumes there are variations of success or favourable outcomes often cited in terms of either personal or non-personal factors. All these variations of a success definition become relevant in Section 2.4.4.

2.4.4 General Success Definition

This section is an extension of the personal view of the definition of success stated above as part of the researcher position posited in Section 1.5, developed in accordance with the other definitions available in current literature. The detail in this section follows the argument of Hewitt (2000) that a combination of worldviews is of benefit to all members of a societal community. For example, Indigenous Australians living in a mainstream Australian society often apply two distinct worldviews depending on their needs. Therefore, an interpretation of success is presented for this research plan framed on claims by Lipka et al. (2013) for the need of a combination of individual views, not simply a single definition.

The first definition given in each of the two dictionaries consulted referred to a favourable outcome of a task as fundamental. This is considered important for this study, since this provides for the interpretation of a situation from the perspectives of a range of individuals. Favourable outcomes presumably refer to preferences for the individual concerned.

Another important factor is the point that an individual ought to consider themselves successful. This allows for a range of subjective views while also providing for Indigenous community participants to recognise themselves as successful whenever relevant, possibly only in their own community or maybe only in a contemporary Australian society and possibly successful in both communities.

As mentioned previously, the subjectivity of the term ‘success’ is allowed for by the definition proffered in this section and for varied opinions, as well as being open to adjustment when necessary. Ideas of success stated above are summarised in Section 2.4.5 and developed further in Chapter 6 according to results from this study.

2.4.5 Summary

This section has explored philosophical aspects of the term ‘success’. Interpretations have been outlined from both the Indigenous and Western perspectives. The references used have indicated that success may be interpreted differently by different cultural groups. Western success is often measured in terms of individual benefits or material outcomes. The literature assessed suggested that the Indigenous perspective appears to be often associated with a more communal aspect or for the completion of a task(s).

As stated in Chapter 1, as a research question and a list of aims, this research aims to learn more about Australian Indigenous perceptions of the concept of success by completing qualitative audio interviews to collect data provided by participants living an urban lifestyle. The possibility of finding mainstream participants able to provide an Indigenous definition of success was considered minimal, given many people often have little understanding of Indigenous positions and in most cases have had minimal interaction with Indigenous communities (Arabena, 2007; H. Moran, 2008). The research goals in Chapter 1 address the literature gap regarding Indigenous success.

2.5 Conclusion

Relevant literature to this study has been presented in this chapter. The first two sections focused on summaries of Indigenous literature by considering a range of literature reviews. First considered were Australian reviews; the second section

considered reviews from other places in the world. The trend in these reviews indicated that much literature has focused on problems within Indigenous communities. The next section illustrated specific papers, analysing related issues to indicate that the negative focus was present in the general literature, not simply the literature reviews. The third section presented examples of literature about successful Indigenous Australians. This was followed by examples of authors studying aspects of Indigenous success in Australia. Foley (2003a), who completed work with successful Indigenous entrepreneurs, and Herbert (2000), who researched success in the field of education for Indigenous students. Foley and Herbert completed research in specific fields regarding the topic of success. This study is aimed more specifically at investigating the topic of success relevancy to a general Indigenous community. Therefore, the fourth section of this literature review sourced the topic of success and provided appropriate definitions as used in this study. Participants for this study were generally recruited from localised communities and the intention was to investigate Indigenous perceptions of success in a general sense, including definitions and topical comments. Methodological details discussed in Section 3.4.1 outline that the qualitative interview methodology limited the sample to a selected group of individuals. The full details of methodology are provided in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the details of the methodology used to complete this study, including general ethics, human research, theoretical outline, qualitative interviews and grounded theory outline used for the analysis of this research. The methodology details are aligned with the research question stated in Chapter 1 and intend to satisfy the aim to investigate the concept of success. Considering the methodology essential to the adequate completion of this study, this chapter includes a broad range of sections and is an extensive explanation.

Since ethical practice was considered fundamental to the completion of this research, the ethics are explained first. Next discussed is the theoretical background, followed by the explanation of the qualitative interviewing method (see Section 3.3), including the semi-structured questions used to prepare interviews. The extra data acquired by observation were recorded in field notes and provided the information used for the personal introductions of participants, reported when necessary in Chapters 4 and 5 to facilitate data. The field notes also provided information necessary to report interpretations of non-verbal actions of participants: for example, keeping records of the emphases shown by participants. The observations have been included in square brackets as part of the transcripts, explained further in Section 3.3.7.

Although not always easily identifiable, the required data are available via direct contact with Indigenous Australians and are located via the qualitative interview process. A conversational approach was used to complete the audio interviews, supporting the views of Kovach (2010), who claimed interviews ought to help the interviewer know interviewees better and followed the views of DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) who claimed:

The purpose of the qualitative research interview is to contribute to a body of knowledge that is conceptual and theoretical and is based on the meanings that life experiences hold for the interviewees. (p. 40)

In this research, the conversations were different for each interview because circumstances varied. All interviews respected the ethics plan, approved by the university's Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval Number 18-091) and were subject to annual monitoring from the Committee.

3.1 Ethics

This section describes the method model for this study that acknowledged an Indigenous research paradigm and was fundamental to the ethical procedure (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], 2020; L. T. Smith, 1999; see also Omarjee, 2020; Carjuzza & Fenimore-Smith, 2010). The areas discussed include general ethical issues, research design, participant selection, power issues and management of risks.

To ensure a sound ethical research philosophy, the advice of Wiersma (1995) was followed, applying common sense at all stages of the research. For example, even the decision to judge an issue as requiring further ethical consideration requires a common-sense-based decision. Indigenous research is used below to refer to research with participants considered part of an Indigenous community. The Indigenous research paradigm, described in detail in Section 3.2.3, is a method of including the research community as part of the research process and acknowledging local cultural practice as an important part of the research. This was satisfied by allowing time for participants to contribute whenever desired and assist in managing research methodological issues.

3.1.1 Ethical Practice

The project methodology subscribed to the view that sound ethics is an essential characteristic of all research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Punch, 1994). This is necessarily so for human research with Indigenous groups because people have suffered as a result of dubious research practices in the past (L. T. Smith, 1999). Sherwood (2010) argued that research practice was racist, and researchers have attempted to disprove humanity of Indigenous groups (Coburn et al., 2013). L. T. Smith (1999) advocated for the social interaction of researchers with members of the Indigenous community involved in the study, which has been supported by other authors (Coburn et al., 2013; Foley, 2003b; Gorman & Toombs, 2009; Kovach, 2010; Omarjee, 2020). For example, regular conversation and showing of respect was encouraged. During this research, regular communication with the research community occurred. Examples are explained when appropriate as Indigenous research (see Section 3.2.2). An accepted viewpoint was the Indigenous community should have input for approval of the research, how the process will be completed and who will take part. See Chapter 4 for examples in this study.

Acknowledging the interaction of the community is important for research discussing successful individuals (Tornquist, 2003). The reason for this study was to remain open, while neither alienating nor rating people. See Section 2.4 for further details used in this research to define someone as successful and accept the view that a description of another individual is a subjective judgement. Participant selection was a necessary stage of data collection and depended on an individual's willingness to join the discussion as well as being accepted as Australian Indigenous.

3.1.2 Selecting Participants

The first problem discussed regarding participant selection and was an attempt to retain anonymity. A participant's right to remain anonymous was respected and

anonymity is important when required (Cheshire, 2009, pp. 32–33; see DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In recognition of participant rights, the original recordings were agreed to be securely stored for five years. Data storage is discussed further in Section 3.3. The participant was asked to clearly indicate their preference for future storage and use. All participants were satisfied with arrangements stated on the consent form and Plain Language Information Statement (see Appendices A and B).

This study adhered to the view of Brinkmann and Kvale (2005) that total anonymity is virtually impossible since the interview is necessarily completed on a conversational basis in a public environment with at least some relationship between the interviewer and participant. The effort to retain anonymity is an important issue because people have the right to privacy; this was part of the consent form signed before the interview (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005; Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). Names of participants were retained during the research write-up stage. This was necessary to simplify an interview to the original source and enable the possibility of a second interview as confirmation of data, discussed further in Section 3.3.5. These names were not advertised and only observed as data. Via personal connections, most participants were aware of other people involved in the research and the extent of familiarity varied. In accordance with the ethical requirements, participant names have been replaced by pseudonyms before publication. Participants did not indicate any concerns with anonymity. At least four participants said that rather than being anonymous, they preferred their correct name to be used.

Participant selection was primarily via current community networks with whom I was involved. Recruiting participants involved encouraging participants to pass on their knowledge of the project to others. Therefore, a type of snowballing method was employed (Naderifar et al., 2017). Personal introductions using a friendly approach and

minimising officialdom proved valuable. See Chapter 4 for detail of specific cases and see the grounded theory in Section 3.4, outlining significance of assessing individual situations.

Small townships in Gippsland with populations of approximately 15,000 people proved useful as participant recruitment regions. Participants interviewed were living a suburban type of lifestyle. For example, participants were people living in a small home on a single block and obtaining living resources from a local central business district. Interviews conducted in the Sydney region involved participants living in similar situations and are explained in greater detail in Chapter 4.

The potentially wider sample was considered an advantage for this study since there is no definitive answer before sampling begins as to exactly who is willing to provide an interview. Indigenous Australians from further afield than the Gippsland region were valued as potential participants. The Gippsland boundaries are necessarily a region introduced as a result of colonisation and not an original area defined by Indigenous groups. A participant understood to be Australian Indigenous was considered a potential participant. The definition used for Indigenous, discussed in Section 1.4, was used to specify the research question. The relevant view was the research topic had relevance in a range of situations. A useful method of organising interviews was using a positive approach with Indigenous Australian communities. An adequate introduction, listening to concerns of participants and maintaining a readiness to complete the exercise were all important parts of collecting data. Potential issues for any participants were addressed before the interview began and are discussed further in Chapter 4.

3.1.3 Managing Power Issues

Power issues are a potential problem in any research with human participants (Evelyn, 2005). A totally equal relationship between researcher and participant is not

possible since all decisions, except the decision to participate, are ultimately left to the researcher. For example, all planning before data collection and after analysis is ultimately the responsibility of the researcher (see Section 3.2.2). For this study, the possibility of investigating a problem from the perspective of others was appreciated and was a method of addressing methodological issues, especially for ethical issues. Any potential problems recognised by participants involved in the research were discussed with anyone concerned, whenever necessary. This was an attempt to overcome the problem of too much power residing with the researcher, who was in practice in control of the interview process (Evelyn, 2005; Geia et al., 2013; L. T. Smith, 1999). For example, when potential participants in Sydney requested an interview be conducted the following day, their needs were respected and followed.

To enhance the understanding of interviewee experiences from the participant's perspective, I had accepted the role of participant in four different research projects. These were the Hazelwood Health Study (Monash University, 2016), Environmental Protection Authority Citizen Science Dust Study (Environmental Protection Authority Victoria, 2019), a public transport telephone survey (Department of Transport and Planning, 2019) and a local council telephone survey (see Latrobe City Council, 2019). All these projects were somewhat different to the qualitative interviews asked of participants for this study, but all helped improve the understanding of the participant's experiences. For example, the citizen science dust study provided a method for participants that was not recorded interviews but did provide for qualitative views and personal opinions. Even the act of agreeing to an initial research request to join a project improved understanding research from the participant's perspective.

The qualitative interview process helps manage power issues (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009; Kvale, 1996). The method allows participants to provide information as desired

at a preferred rate. For each interview during this research, there was an opportunity for participants to alter the course of an interview whenever required: for example, to explain an answer or take a rest. This was a method of managing the problem of an interviewee not producing all the relevant information with perfect accuracy during a single interview. Participants always had the option of withdrawing at any stage of the interview process without the need for explanation. Effort was made to address participant issues following the interview by conversation and adjusting the interview process as required. The opportunity for counselling if needed proved unnecessary. Power issues are an example of the presence of potential risks in the research.

3.1.4 Risk Management

A verbal introduction that included an explanation of the research was used to support the written Plain Language Information Statement (PLIS) statement intended to enable participants to understand the research. A signed consent form was obtained before the engagement of any interviews. These forms were a product of the university ethics process (Federation University. Australia, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, Tornquist, 2003). Obtaining a participant's signature on the consent form was an attempt to ensure they were satisfied with the interview process. These formal documents avoided the overuse of detail and were prepared with the intention of enabling participants to understand the research. Allowances were made for any difficulties interpreting the written documents. For example, visual hindrance, comprehension and time constraint problems may create difficulties with written forms for various individuals. This was managed by first discussing the form with each participant and providing useful answers to all questions.

The verbal explanation was considered necessary to fully supplement the three-page explanation document or even the one-page consent form. There was no way to prove that people completed a thorough reading of the documents, and this was checked

by discussing the issues with participants. For anyone reading the full document, there is a difference between simply reading and fully comprehending the document (Nation & Angell, 2006). There are numerous examples available of people reading something but reaching an incorrect conclusion. An example is a driver making an incorrect turn after reading a road direction sign. Verbal discussion during the process of research introduction ensured that potential participants had an adequate understanding before agreeing to the interview.

Evaluation of risks on behalf of everyone involved were undertaken. This was an important part of the ethical procedure. Risks during preparation of the research and during the interviews involve any situations that cause personal stress or another difficulty. For example, an interviewee might experience stress as a result of interview demands, recurring unpleasant personal memories or an unexpected event. The problems were checked continually and managed through methods such as suspending the interview, careful liaison with participants or providing contact with others when necessary.

3.1.5 Ethics Summary

The approach to research ethics was followed with a belief that a common-sense approach can lead to other ethical decisions (Wiersma & Jurs, 1995). The adoption of the Indigenous research paradigm, detailed below, allowed for greater sensitivity to unequal relationships and demonstrated an acceptance of Indigenous values and was followed for this study adhering to L. T. Smith's (1999) advice (see Sinclair, 2003, pp. 119–20). For example, as stated in Chapter 1, acknowledging the worldview was useful to prepare a decolonising methodological praxis. One example was showing respect for the participant community. Another example was understanding an Indigenous perception of time. Examples of specific interview situations are listed in Chapter 4. Importantly, the

decolonising research approach necessitated that study provide benefits for the research community (Coburn et al., 2013; Roberts et al., 2013). This research addressed some of the colonisation issues experienced by the Indigenous population: for example, acknowledging as wrong some earlier actions of past invading groups and overcoming privilege problems by maintaining positive interactions with participants. These actions were fundamental to the methodology (Carjuzaa & Fenimore-Smith, 2010). Examples for this research included situations in which individuals were required to address personal or community issues during the interview and required the interview to pause.

3.2 Method Theory

Theory is refined with an acknowledgement of Indigenous research issues and the application of an Indigenous research paradigm. This addresses specific points for research with the Indigenous population and research with humans. These points are fundamental to the ethical practice of this research project, as detailed above. The theoretical framework relates to the methodological process and is thereby connected to the updating of all research problems when required. This is explained further with grounded theory details, Section 3.4.

3.2.1 Postpositivism

This section discusses the postpositivist aspect of this study, accepted with the understanding that a researcher has at least some effect on the results. Discussion of the reflexivity and inductive analysis methods used for this research are included as part of the research paradigm. For the postpositivist, the focus is more on a constructed set of data rather than found or discovered data, which is the essence of a positivist philosophy (Lather, 2004; Ryan, 2006). For example, even the decision to measure something ultimately effects results; therefore, results are to some extent constructed by the

observer. Applying the postpositivist philosophy combined with the Indigenous research paradigm, discussed below, rejected the notion that the researcher may observe from an outsider position without affecting results (L. T. Smith, 1999). Therefore, in contrast to common assumptions in positivism, results were not considered unobtrusively objective (Walter, 2009, 2010). Thus, for this research, even previous personal activities were considered an issue. See Section 1.5 for the researcher position.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the word ‘research’ is often a nasty word in the Indigenous world’s vocabulary (L. T. Smith, 1999, p. 1). For example, the word ‘research’ is often directly linked to European imperialism and colonialism and common early research practice involved activities that aimed to orchestrate negative elements of the Indigenous populace. To address this issue, during this research, L. T. Smith’s (1999) thoughts were applied, acknowledging history, imperialism, colonisation and accepting an Indigenous research paradigm. Confirmed by Geia et al. (2013), the qualitative interviewing method acknowledges the philosophy of accepting the validity of storytelling and other oral communicative process; ‘[s]torytelling, oral histories, the perspectives of elders and of women have become an integral part of all Indigenous research’ (L. T. Smith, 1999, p. 145). These issues are explained further below.

3.2.2 Indigenous Research

This section recognises issues relating to Indigenous research and the necessity to adhere to a decolonising philosophy, thereby justifying the use of narrative enquiry as well as the participatory method as relevant in pursuit of the research aims, see below for reference to the term ‘narrative’ (see Hyde, 2000; Squire et al, 2014). Applying these techniques adheres to the Indigenous research paradigm explained in detail in Section 3.2.3 (AIATSIS, 2020). For Australian Indigenous research, the method of narrative inquiry is significant because it respects a method utilised by Australian Aboriginal

groups throughout history to record information (Vickery et al., 2004). For example, to emphasise the link between qualitative interview methods and Indigenous techniques, Herbert (2003a) stated, 'I also perceived a strong degree of fit between the way in which many Indigenous Australians share knowledge and develop understandings, and the methods qualitative researchers use in gathering their data' (p. 86). The method was rated as a useful tool for this study, accepting the claim by Barrow (2008) that this is a valid way of completing cross-cultural research, described further in Section 3.2.3. Also relevant is narrative inquiry and the transcription process, described in Section 3.3.8.

A participatory approach has validity for Indigenous research (Erick et al., 2008). Advantages include an improved understanding and specified recognition of the research community. Difficulties noted by Erick et al. (2008) include required perseverance, peer contact, problems discussing sensitive items and overcoming the problem of researcher as leader. The argument could be posed that participants are not in participatory mode because they are not on equal terms with the researcher. G. W. White et al. (2004) agreed that managing the role of the leader could be regarded as a weakness of a participatory method. Thus, McNicoll (1999) explained that it is more correct to think of the researcher as coach rather than on equal terms with the participant because the researcher is realistically in a position to make nearly all major decisions. Final decisions and many other factors, such as exact recording situations and exactly what details are saved, are ultimately controlled by the researcher. Interaction with the research community was a method of coping with these potential problems.

Working with Indigenous people in the field of health research, Giles (2006) claimed that a participatory methodology was useful. Other authors have also claimed that participatory research is useful when working with Australian Indigenous groups (dé Ishtar, 2005; Mason & Noble, 2000; Varcoe, 2006). Varcoe (2006) addressed the issue of

racism and offered examples to help address racism issues. One example was the involvement of any affected people into the research project. This is a method of overcoming the problem of a participant not being allowed to feel significant (Varcoe, 2006). Marginal groups are commonly vulnerable, being forced into insignificance, as shown in the field of disability by Dickinson (2018), who supported the use of a participatory methodology.

A problem noted globally by many authors for colonised groups is the removal of all authority from the colonised people (Allimadi, 2002; Memmi et al., 1965). This issue is typified with the controlling paternalistic attitude of the colonisers (Allimadi, 2002; Sangster, 1999). In this research, any paternalistic influences were eliminated by the application of a shared approach to data collection. Participants were included in the data collection exercise by being given the opportunity to offer new ideas and make suggestions (see Section 3.4.4 for specific interview details). The method was an attempt to shift power from the researcher to the researched, reducing oppressive perceptions of power, addressed in Section 3.1.3. (Varcoe, 2006; Walter, 2009). These views have been supported by others (Classen et al., 2008; Dickson & Green, 2001; Gatenby & Humphries, 2000).

Methodological approaches used to collect data followed the views of Kildea et al. (2009), who agreed with G. W. White et al. (2004) and argued that passing power from the researcher to the researched is important in participatory methodology, especially in the case of Indigenous research (see Shay, 2021). The strategy was used for this study to minimise the overwhelming power of the researcher (Olesen, 1994). For example, at the beginning of the interview, the research was often introduced with the comment, ‘this is your story’. Therefore, an interpretive method was attributed to the analysis because later

analysis was an interpretation of the participant's comments (Pietkiewicz & J. A. Smith, 2014).

This research was initiated without the research community's input and completed as per the needs of the higher degree requirements. Therefore, it is not specifically participatory, but has involved parallel philosophies by asking for advice whenever available, adhering to participant requests, completing interviews as per participant needs and allowing input from the research community (L. T. Smith, 1999). Examples of participant input for this study included ceasing to interview according to participant directions and preparing an interviewing room as per the participant's advice by making use of nearby space (see Chapter 4 regarding data collection for details of specific cases). This co-directional attitude to the research was part of the Indigenous research paradigm.

3.2.3 Indigenous Research Paradigm

This section outlines the Indigenous research paradigm in practice. Adhering to the L. T. Smith (1999) philosophy, this research supports the need for decolonisation, introduced above as part of the research context (see Section 1.3) and supported in Section 3.1. The application of the decolonising methods was recognised by Smith and others as significant and requiring an Indigenous research paradigm, to create a connection between cultures enabling the correction of some the wrongs of the early contact between colonisers and Australian Indigenous groups (Coburn et al., 2013, Omarjee, 2020; L. T. Smith, 1999). This was acknowledged in this study as a way of showing respect for cultural groups associated with the project. The analysis used to develop the themes stated in Chapter 5 was part of the Indigenous research paradigm, given that the analysis was based on the narratives offered by the participants.

Adhering to the usual style for qualitative research, this study used a primarily inductive reasoning paradigm as the method to clarify results since the analysis was

generally framed on interpretation and the resulting organisation of the collected data (Hyde, 2000). As described by Hyde, deductive reasoning aspects were also present since at least one theme resulted from early research ideas stated in Chapter 1. The major example was the idea that success usually exhibited differences when compared with a Western precinct.

Sandelowski (2000) argued for careful distinction of the research project rather than simply claiming that any qualitative recording was narrative analysis. For example, in this study, the analysis included careful listening to the interview, later followed by the analytical process linked with the interpretation of the interview. This was followed up with the interviewee when necessary and the exclusion of recordings that were considered dysfunctional were all parts of narrative analysis. All details are reported where necessary as part of Chapter 4 and the thematic analysis as part of Chapter 5. The complexity of analytical requirements resulted in the inductive reasoning and elements of interpretive analysis as the method of data analysis selected and the analytical process was dependant on a grounded theory technique, discussed in Section 3.4, to construct data.

The research data made use of interviews that were called narratives because they were interpreted as primarily an individual's verbal explanation of the topic under investigation (Hyde, 2000; Squire et al., 2014). By analysing these interviews, the themes were developed as they became evident, explained further in Chapter 5. Rather than either inductive or deductive, this type of analytical approach to research is more correctly called a continuum; this study was inclined towards the inductive element (Hyde, 2000). Aligning with above comments, the conversations recorded during this research were audio interviews with participants. This was primarily the method used, rather than comparing predetermined hypotheses. Specific themes that developed according to associated data are detailed in Chapter 5.

This study acknowledged Walter (2010), who described a research paradigm as the model directing structural choices to inform how the research project is conducted. Walter argued an Indigenous research paradigm ought to recognise what is valued as knowledge from the given Indigenous perspective and thereby, sometimes challenge traditional Western thinking. For example, compare the understanding of nature by using Dreamtime theories with the teaching of scientific supposedly factual evolution theories. The Dreamtime stories usually hold a spiritual or creation philosophy, often posing an alternative depiction to science-based evolutionary theories of the world that claim an evolving nature of life on Earth (Yerbury, 2003). For this research, the relevance of Indigenous knowledge was introduced in Chapter 1 and acknowledged by applying the Indigenous research paradigm.

Hooley's (2002) definition of an Indigenous research paradigm provided a synopsis of other literature (Carjuzaa & Fenimore-Smith, 2010; M. A. Hart, 2010; Shahid et al., 2009). Hooley argued:

The Indigenous paradigm or native way of knowing relies on an awareness and respect for all things. There is a holistic and relational way of perceiving the world and a striving to live in harmony within that sphere. (p. 13)

The terms 'holistic', 'awareness' and 'respect' were considered fundamental to this definition. The claim is, rather than focusing on one single culture or individual position, the situation should be perceived from all viewpoints. The aim for this research was to accept all positions, not to find one so-called correct answer. This accepts that the ultimatum is to 'live in harmony' (see Section 1.4).

The key advice from L. T. Smith (1997, 1999, 2005, 2006, 2014) was that Indigenous research techniques usually enable recognition of Indigenous ideas and practice, applied for this study using an Indigenous research paradigm. This

recommendation has been supported by other authors (Gale, 2008; see also Carjuzaa & Fenimore-Smith, 2010; Macleod & Wilbraham, 2006; Ward et al., 2020).

Further advice from L. T. Smith (1999) was to apply an emancipatory praxis allowing participant input during the research. The purpose is to understand the argument associated with connecting philosophies of various groups involved in the research (L. T. Smith, 1999). Further to the above point about acknowledging Dreamtime, a reason for using an Indigenous research paradigm was to make space for Indigenous cultural knowledge by overlooking some traditional Western academic boundaries that may distort results (Nakata, 2007). One example is accepting Indigenous stories as a valuable educational tool (Nakata, 2010). Another example is the plan to be prepared to overlook set times to complete interviews. Therefore, as explained above with worldviews, accepting an Indigenous perception of time and being prepared to interview when necessary was justified. This research is another step in the field of Indigenous research accepting the importance of Indigenous knowledge and appreciating an Indigenous definition of success as a useful interpretation of this topic (M. Hart, 2007; L. T. Smith, 1999).

3.2.4 Indigenous Knowledge

Comparing Western and Indigenous research paradigms, Getty (2010) claimed that Indigenous knowledge has typically been dismissed as folklore. Getty argued that this has resulted in loss owing to the failure to recognise the knowledge. For example, the food sources and survival techniques in many lands have been dismissed. An example of dismissing Indigenous knowledge by Cochran et al. (2008) referred to the Indigenous Hawaiian's understanding of how to sail a yacht upwind. On first meetings with Europeans, the First Nation Hawaiian techniques were dismissed outright. After later discoveries, the Europeans adapted their boats and eventually realised sailing towards the

wind was possible by utilising a properly prepared yacht combined with the correct sailing technique (Science@unsw, 2002; A. Tilley, 1994). The method is now fundamental globally for sailing a yacht.

In Australia, colonists dismissed Indigenous knowledge of the bushland, which varies across the continent in a wide variety of lands, where examples include dense bushland in some places compared with vast desert land elsewhere (Kildea et al., 2009). The colonists ignored that people had survived and prospered in Australia for tens of thousands of years and the ability to survive with the available food was dismissed outrightly by the newcomers (Singley, 2012). The example noted in Chapter 1 was that European agricultural techniques were introduced because colonisers believed their methods were superior. Zur (2007) suggested that traditional research and Indigenous knowledge were opposed, and a more reasonable approach was necessary (Nichols & LaFrance, 2006). This study is an example of administering a useful approach.

Life experiences have helped some to realise that important knowledge is available by listening to modern Indigenous Australians (Gott, 2008). For example, edible plants are present at a range of homes and there is plenty of historical detail available in various regions. To understand the extent that Indigenous culture has been ignored in Australia, consider the enormity of the difference in the Australian environment that might be possible if Western colonisers had asked for help and tried to learn how to live with the land as people had been doing productively for 60,000 years or more. For example, by appreciating the Indigenous methods, Australians would perhaps have a different view of irrigation and agricultural techniques. There is plenty of knowledge available about Indigenous skills such as basket weaving (Carmichael, 2017; De Groot, 2018). In the twenty-first century and depicted in the modern media, the kangaroo is eventually becoming accepted as a valuable food source (Ding & Xu, 1999; Grigg, 1997).

Described above, and utilised in Chapter 5, the value of oral history was part of the construction of the methodology for this study.

Rintoul (1993) discussed Australian history from the Indigenous perspective regarding the Australian invasion. Powerful illustrations of the hurt, discomfort and sense of loss are provided. Even the title, *The Wailing: A National Black Oral History*, gives a sense of how things might have been portrayed if the Indigenous situation had been carefully acknowledged. Rintoul (1993) posed the question, 'We failed to ask: How would I feel if this were done to me?' (p. 1). This was also discussed by Gardner (1994).

Considering the answer to Rintoul's question is one reason for the selection of the qualitative interview as a method of recording data for this study. Rintoul's (1993) quotation suggests that never being asked for advice or questioned about historical knowledge is a problem prevalent within Australian Indigenous communities. Information about the hurt, as claimed by Rintoul, is accessible for anyone prepared to converse with the Indigenous population. There are also many positive stories available, and the concept of success is one segment. Although nothing will ever compensate for the original invasion of Australia, arguably most Australians now have an opportunity to show compassion (see Chapter 7). One example of contributing is the completion of research in cooperation with Indigenous participants being asked to share knowledge.

3.2.5 Critical Theory and Feminist Methods

Other theories designed for human research with marginal groups assist with the structure of this study. For example, critical theory provides a theory for establishing the emancipation of marginal groups, introduced in Chapter 1 and discussed further in Sections 2.1 and 2.3.3 (Olesen, 2005). Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) argued that the notion of emancipation should be treated carefully because all groups are affected to some extent by the incumbent society. Thus, ideal emancipation is difficult, if not

impossible. With the purpose of empowering Indigenous Australians, this study borrowed from the feminist tradition to establish appropriate research methods. Feminist methods are an important part of researching marginalised groups because there is little doubt in modern times that women may be regarded as marginalised in an Australian community (dé Ishtar, 2005; Evelyn, 2005; Gatenby & Humphries, 2000; Office of Women's Policy, 2000). For example, consider the number of women compared with the number of men assuming a leadership role in any political party or business group. Women still often take a subservient role in Australian society. Reinharz (1992) linked feminist methods directly with marginalisation using examples of the marginalisation of women in society. Foley (2003a) supported L. T. Smith (1999) that feminist methodology is relevant to Indigenous research owing to the insider position of the researcher within a so-called marginal group, and the resulting relationship to results (Moreton-Robinson, 2007). Using examples of participatory research, dé Ishtar (2005) drew a parallel between white feminist methods and methods suitable for Indigenous research.

The prejudice experienced by marginal groups is often addressed in feminist methodology that has been associated with examples of prejudicial issues in relation to women's groups. A. Walker (2008) and Reinharz (1992) offered examples of difficulties caused by prejudice experienced by women in various societies: for example, the enforced subservient roles when undertaking regular duties. Therefore, the use of narratives and the conversational approach for qualitative research methods has been advocated for by various authors associated with feminist research (Evelyn, 2005; Olesen, 2005). This approach was relevant to this study (see Section 3.3).

The findings for this research could be extended using more methods but the available time frame set limits. For example, every interview was associated with a time delay to recognise, organise, record, pause and confirm the original data, which then

involved the exercises of transcribing and analysing. Therefore, only a limited number of interviews could be completed in the available time frame. A participatory philosophy was used to collect interviews. The digital audio recordings of qualitative interviews combined with a grounded theory technique discussed below were central to the methodology. The methods provided a means to manage cross-cultural research.

3.2.6 Cross-Cultural Research

Mainstream Australian culture is often recognised as typical of a Western European culture (Frow, 2007; Larbalestier, 2004). Hence, spending a lifetime within a mainstream Australian culture resulted in my personal alignment to this culture. Since this research studied aspects of the Indigenous Australian culture, the research was, by definition, cross-cultural.

This study has supported the views of Hollinsworth et al. (2017, p. 36), who quoted a research participant:

[cultural safety] was a light bulb moment for me because it all made sense. This movement away from culture being somebody else's issue that I have to deal with, to being what I bring into it and I how I interact. (p. 36)

The authors argued that people too often adopt the attitude that cultural understanding involves a belief that something fatal or offensive can be said. The result is that comfort with people interacting is deterred. The claim by Hollinsworth et al. was that showing respect and preparedness to listen as well as readiness to alter opinions is a preferred attitude. Acknowledgement, for this research, is focusing on the positives of cultural interaction as useful rather than making assumptions based on misjudgement or negatively biased behaviour. For example, someone ought to appreciate the positives for all when sharing materials.

Seale (2004) provided a succinct definition of cross-cultural research, ‘researching cultures, races or nations other than our own’ (p. 24). Palmisano (2001) provided a more detailed definition and used this interchangeably with cross-cultural analysis. This concurred with Seale’s definition but does not fit exactly with the personal position above because of the perception as part of the local Indigenous community. For example, at least four people from the local community confirmed this and visitors recently at home called me ‘part of our family’ (see Section 1.5 for more detail). As indicated above, this research effectively involved people living in two different cultural climates.

Brislin (1983) focused on researching the differences between cultures while acknowledging that similarities may be observed and gave an alternative definition for cross-cultural research:

Cross-cultural research is the empirical study of members of various cultural [defined by the author] groups who have had significant and identifiable experiences leading to predictable, and theoretically important, similarities and differences in behaviour. (p. 368)

Using the idea of studying an empirical group and acknowledging similarities within the group, Brislin made less of an issue about the cultures being studied are something other than our own. Brislin discussed researching comparisons, similarities or differences observed when researching two or more cultures in a single study.

The discussion by Brislin (1983) was directed towards the uses and benefits of cross-cultural research with emphasis on extra variables becoming available when comparing situations usually used for more orthodox research: for example, enabling the realisation of various outcomes by comparing results from a range of cultures. Similarly, for this research, various views about the concept of success were pursued by reaching a

wider group than those pertaining to the Western culture. The concept of success was studied for people living in two different cultural climates.

Cross-cultural research has importance when someone values the learning that may not be available or accessible within one's own culture. For example, new cultural knowledge can provide opportunities to learn about artistic creations, a new cuisine, health support and sociological techniques (Priest, 2005). The issues raised in this section are related to the ethical issues discussed in Section 3.1. Being prepared to directly challenge traditional Western thinking was an accepted aspect of the cross-cultural nature of this study (Walter, 2010). The points made above about acknowledging oral history techniques and employing emancipatory methods were the basis of the qualitative interview methods used to create narratives.

3.2.7 Conclusion

This section concludes by emphasising the comparison between narratives and oral history to reiterate the link between the data collection process used in adherence with the Indigenous research paradigm (Bodle et al., 2018). This comparison acknowledges the possibility of the cultural connection a participant may have with information they provided, although differences may be observed owing to a participant offering their own individual opinion. For example, Evelyn (2005) argued the narratives are provided as per the participant's choice with a participant gaining a sense of ownership of the data. The conversational method is sometimes described as yarning within an Indigenous group (Geia et al., 2013; Shay, 2021). This supported the ethical plan to integrate the research with the expected cultural preferences of participants.

Restraint ought to be stated following the Sandelowski (2000) argument introduced above that claiming all qualitative interviews and accompanying analyses to be labelled as narrative analysis is an oversimplification. For instance, in some cases

rather than interpreted as a narrative the qualitative interview data is more correctly termed as descriptive. The essence of the qualitative interview method is to place the interview comments into pre-prepared categories. Categories may be created as data are collected and analysed. To explain the method used for this study, see Section 3.4.

For this research, the plan was for potential participants to provide oral recordings of information that they considered accurate according to their local Indigenous and possibly historical knowledge. Therefore, this showed respect for the oral history by acknowledging the value of the audio transmission of information and using the narratives of individual participants (Jupp, 2006). Although definitely related, the interviews were not technically oral history and a deeper discussion of qualitative research is required to clarify the methods used.

3.3 Qualitative Research Interviews

This section describes the qualitative interview, explaining reasons for selecting the method, the interview structure, advantages and disadvantages, as well as the process of transcription. An explanation of the method limits and plans prepared to address potential problems completes the section.

3.3.1 Interview Issues

The creative method of recording narratives as qualitative interviews respects the participant's ability to construct a narrative and is related to the oral history techniques of recording knowledge discussed in detail above (see Fontana & Frey, 2008, p. 368). Hence, the method aligned with the Indigenous research paradigm, discussed above, recognising oral history as an information transfer method used by Indigenous Australians for tens of thousands of years (Bowden, 1990; Gorman & Toombs, 2009; Michie & Linkson, 1999). The prime purpose of oral history is usually concerning the

storyteller initiating the narration to pass on ideas but in comparison, for the qualitative interview, the listener/interviewer is generally the initiator of the conversation, while often attempting to expand on ideas. The similarities are evident, but differences may be apparent since the type of information stored may differ for the purpose to the qualitative interview (Gorman & Toombs, 2009, p. 6).

Braun et al. (2013) linked qualitative research with a decolonising approach to research, avoiding negative effects often present when positivist philosophy was applied to Indigenous research, as stated previously. Braun et al. advocated the postpositivist approach, avoiding many of the positivist drawbacks. During the early years of colonisation and as indicated in Chapter 1, the researchers set their standards for what is correct by applying standards framed on a European ideal and dismissing Indigenous perspectives. The researchers associated with the colonisers apparently assumed the researcher was the expert and Indigenous people were inferior (Coburn et al., 2013, pp. 9–11). The author, Moreton-Robinson (2006), confirmed the Australian coloniser's misuse of the reference to the so-called inferior race when referring to Indigenous people.

For the positivist research philosophy, most of the early research assumed that observations were distant, value-free and always objective. When effectively ignoring the input efforts of the participant and applying the belief that the researcher had done all the work collecting data, the positivist researcher assumed that the researcher owned all ensuing knowledge or/and research data. In positivist research, the researcher usually maintains control of results (Braun et al., 2013; Kvale, 1996). A qualitative interview is a method that records the participant's portrayal of the topic under investigation (Bradshaw et al., 2017). Thus, while attempting to portray an objective stance, the postpositivist usually recognises that the researcher affects results. The postpositivist avoids the positivist assumption of owning knowledge. Significantly, the participant has an

opportunity to direct the development of the interview. The interview technique used for this research to create data enabled the success concept to be investigated, whether the success concept is claimed to be objective or more correctly resides within the individual, as argued by Hebert (2003b) for tertiary education.

In modern research, many fields that have previously relied on positivist techniques have now accepted qualitative methods, often as a result of the opportunity to triangulate data sources (Decrop, 1999). For example, in Western medicine, long accepted as a science, many modern professionals now argue for the personable interaction with patients describing an ailment to be recognised as a qualitative method; this is a necessary part of medicine (Scambler & Hopkins, 1986). Methods of rigour and reliability in medical science have been described as directly relevant to the qualitative methods used (Prinjha et al., 2005). J. Green and Britten (1998) argued that qualitative methods have been used to answer research questions that positivist techniques have been unable to address: for example, an open question from a medic used with the purpose of diagnosing personal concerns posed by specific patients.

Free-flowing semi-structured interviews are a method of avoiding the problems of lengthy time-consuming surveys. For example, the interview can be shortened if necessary and allows for a participant to redirect or pause a conversation whenever required. This is compared with the surveys by Cairney et al. (2017) that took almost one hour to complete and thereby precluded anyone with little time available. Available time is often dependent on responsibilities for others, attention span and personal commitments. Considering the needs of anyone with limited time was important to comply with the research ethics (see Section 3.1). Therefore, individuals were accepted as participants whenever time was available because the method used for this study was designed to fit the purpose and make allowances for participants when required.

The qualitative method lessens the problem of interviewer superiority by accepting the participant as the knowledgeable party creating data (Rabionet, 2011). Following the Indigenous research paradigm explained above, and the data confirmation plans described below, the approach applied for this study was to appreciate Indigenous knowledge as a valuable resource requiring acknowledgement. Since the qualitative interviewer introduces the research associated with the interview and usually initiates a conversation in which the participant provides information considered relevant to the research topic, a researcher's influence on the data should not be ignored (Fiese & Bickham, 1998, p. 80; McKewan et al., 2004, p. 16). More detail related to this issue is available in Section 1.5.

When used properly, a key advantage of the qualitative interview avoids the ethical problem discussed above of researcher(s) gaining overwhelming power advantage over participants (Evelyn, 2005, pp. 125–126; Geia et al., 2013; L. T. Smith, 1999). The reason is that interviewees have freedom to present their own ideas. For example, by using a conversational or participatory approach to record interviews the participant is given an opportunity to frame data. Therefore, the participant gains a sense of control and ownership of the final product. The researcher is expected to have a broad set of influences such as organisation of the interviewing process used to collect data.

3.3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The unstructured interview used for qualitative research and the structured interview used to collect data for quantitative research is a distinguishing difference between the methods (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, pp. 2–3). All unstructured interviews are technically what is often described as semi-structured because the interview nearly always begins with a question from the interviewer that ultimately guides the interview (Kvale, 1996). Semi-structured interviews involve questions that guide an interview with

a little more direction than unstructured interviews. For example, compare the open question:

What do you know about life?

The more directive question is:

Is life for a city dweller easier than life in the country?

In the second case, the question aims to direct the interviewee's answer towards comparing the urban detail with life in the country. In this example, lifestyle in a regional town is not separated from life on a farm, and thereby still allows the participant some freedom. This is an example of how semi-structured interviews differ from the quantitative survey that requests more specific answers (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The attempt to direct the interviewee's thought process towards predetermined topics is what is commonly known as a semi-structured interview (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

All questions have at least some direction (Leech, 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). See for example the word 'life' in the first question above, when the question attempts to ask the participant about their perception of life. Therefore, the variance between a totally unstructured and a semi-structured interview is more accurately known as a continuum (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). Interviews used for this research were technically semi-structured, although the interview was associated with the unstructured style of interview. The first set of questions used were updated during interviews and when required during the progress of recording the interviews. For example, if a participant required more information to clarify a detail or was keen to pursue another point, extra time was provided. This was necessary to satisfy the requirements of a participant and improve the quality of questions as the understanding increased about the research topics investigated. This is discussed further in Section 3.4.2. Specific aspects of the interviewing exercise can be defined as an interview praxis. More

detailed actions taken are described in Chapter 4 and further practicalities of the research process are discussed in Section 3.3.3.

3.3.3 Interview Praxis

When completing interviews, the goal was to keep researcher comments to a minimum and accept individual idiosyncrasies or individualities. Since data collected will necessarily be different for nearly all participants, a qualitative interview is in effect an individualised sample (Patton, 2002). Therefore, a general summary for a population is usually at best an approximation drawn by the researcher. The analysis process should allow for this when attempting to provide summaries and to review the aims of the study.

Ideally, an introductory comment and an opening question would suffice. However, several brief interview questions were prepared because the aim of this research was to learn about the concept of success and associated issues. An initial opening comment was usually followed with several short questions and the use of other prompting questions when required (Rabionet, 2011, p. 564). These questions took the general form:

- (What) Can you tell me about your life history?
- How do you describe your own personal history?
- Do you see yourself as successful?
- What would be your advice, to succeed?
- What are the barriers to success?
- What factors help explain success? or How would you describe success?
- What advice would you offer others?

And considered as required:

- When talking about success what are your (the) general ideas?

- How/why would you describe yourself as successful?
- Who would you ask for advice about success?

Questions were adjusted as necessary to complete the interview with a conversational approach. An example is adjusting the word ‘success’, favoured by synonyms when necessary for participants who were apparently not comfortable with the term ‘success’ as discussed in Section 5.1.1.

After the initial interview was completed, questions were revised to further discuss the interviewee’s thoughts. This was the method used to maximise meaning and direction of the interview as well as an ethical way to enable the withdrawing of material if required (Seidmann, 2006, p. 13). All interviewee preferences were considered. The continual development of associated theories as data accumulated resulted in use of the grounded theory approach, discussed in Section 3.4. The limits of the qualitative interview technique also need consideration.

3.3.4 Limits

As with all research methods, the qualitative interview has limitations (Suddaby, 2006). A qualitative interview requires at least some skill from the interviewee being asked to offer a level of lucidity for the recording. For example, the interviewee is requested to provide a certain level of creativity and presentation skill to produce a narrative that has meaning in the result. A basic example is the ability to speak clearly enough to be later interpreted productively. Even the basic act of switching on the recorder probably affects the free flow conversation (Opdenakker, 2006). Here, the recording device may interrupt the interviewee’s thoughts. The interviewee may feel confronted by the recorder or even the initial greeting. Importantly, the researcher needs to address the problems whenever possible. For example, the interviews for this research

involved handling the recorder discreetly and using informative introductions and positive-style communication techniques.

A potential limit relates to the point that the flow of an interview should be valued by the researcher and possibly divert from the topic being investigated. Expecting a precise direction for the conversation or specific interview content is unreasonable because the conversational nature necessarily provides for the interviewee to participate in the interview content. This is one reason researchers supporting a positivist framework might doubt the use of qualitative interviews as a method for collecting realistic results. With research often based on a stated theory, a positivist philosophy usually requires a clearly formed plan about expected results before data collection begins (MacKenzie & Knipe, 2006). However, the postpositivist philosophy provides for the researcher to be prepared to pursue unexpected comments. This practice allows for extra useful results but may impinge on time available for contact with other participants.

Fontana and Frey (2008) stated that owing to the time required to collect results, qualitative methods will always provide a limited sample space compared with quantitative counterparts. The sample size is always an aspired goal by the researcher before data collection begins. Interviewing an entire population is virtually impossible (Patton, 2002, pp. 240–245). For example, in this study, there was always likely to be certain members of the local Indigenous community unavailable or unwilling to offer an interview.

To address sampling problems in this research, theoretical sampling and snowballing were used to recruit. By allowing information about the research to pass around the community, the selected sample developed throughout the research with changes as theories developed. Specifics were recorded for individuals who satisfied the criteria for inclusion. When necessary, these details and the sampling conditions have

been reported when introducing participants with results, in Chapters 4 and 5 (Coyne, 1997). Sampling details are discussed further in Section 3.4.

The precise nature of the sample is another limit. The detail of exactly who is interviewed, where the interview takes place and when the interview occurs is not always readily available. For example, opinions might change as time progresses, comfort varies, opinions alter and other personal circumstances are affected. As indicated earlier, a qualitative interview is necessarily selective. Since it is virtually impossible to observe all situations with a single interview, a given interview is usually selected detail.

Before data collection begins, there might be an opportunity to include several people in various places. However, this is usually expected to be difficult since even a single interview is obtained when circumstances suit. In this research, for every interview, the interviewee as well as other conditions were selected when suitable. Patton (2002) stated that limits are dependent on observing external factors used to gain knowledge about internal items, such as personal opinions. Hence, for this research, relevant information was physical surroundings and other specific detail, and were recorded for each interview. Limits are one part of the difficulties that require consideration when conducting a qualitative interview.

3.3.5 Potential Interviewing Problems

Potential problems of qualitative research deemed relevant to this research project are considered in this section (Opdenakker, 2006; Southall, 2009). For this study, the recording device was chosen from a local supplier who had some understanding of the device. The importance of this decision proved valuable soon after acquiring equipment and enabling early problems to be quickly rectified.

The possibility of losing large quantities of data is relevant when collecting audio data, although this is usually an unfortunate or maybe careless occurrence. To minimise

the possibility of data loss, the advice of Travers (2009) to prepare back-up material as soon as possible was followed. This was an example of researcher bias given that the specific interview detail acquiring back-up was necessarily a researcher decision.

The researcher position discussed in Section 1.5 provides for the Whorton (2016) argument that at least some bias is present in almost every qualitative interview. For example, the researcher or/and the interviewee will have some personal opinions about the topic being discussed and interviews will almost necessarily retain at least some bias affecting the opinions offered owing to personalities of researcher and interviewee (Patton, 2002, pp. 306–307). For example, a view may be distorted to at least some extent according to personal ideas. Therefore, effort is required during the interview to maintain the focus of relevant subject matter and during analysis the final interpretation depends on the researcher's ability to use relevant details. However, the personality factor for an interview is advantageous in one way because the research is an attempt to draw on specific personal knowledge (Travers, 2009). For example, interviewee comments begin to identify specifics and the personal style of each interviewee provides a way of presenting data for later judgement.

Potential ambiguity, emphases and open endings may hinder results during the interview process (MacKenzie & Knipe, 2006; Patton, 2002; Whorton, 2016). For example, the emphasis of a single word in a sentence may alter the meaning. A sentence left possibly incomplete by an interviewee may also alter a meaning. This might happen owing to comfort, thought process or consideration of others. The problem may be minimised by revisiting the conversational memories of the interview and using recordings in conjunction with field notes, when completing the analytical interpretation of an interview. Whorton advised that an open-ended comment should be left to the reader to surmise the most probable scenario. This approach was followed in this study

because the interviewee's desire was always respected; specific examples are described in Chapter 4. Failure to acknowledge interviewee needs would have been considered unethical, as noted in Section 3.1. Increasing pressure on the interviewee to summarise an interview is likely to cause misinterpretation, by increasing possible emphases or incomplete statements of the interviewee's thoughts. For example, whenever an interviewee has other commitments organised and prefers to move on, the interview ought to be allowed to cease and any problems of demanding rushed answers are avoided.

Remaining focused during an interview by a participant is not easy and effects the final interview. To address this, a short break was introduced for each interview and careful interaction with participants was part of the process. The communicative style employed also helped manage other problems (see Chapter 4 for more detail).

Although problems identified in this section are often ignored when using quantitative data, problems do exist. There are nearly always some individuals in a sample experiencing negative feelings. For example, the pressure of providing an interview may be a problem. Participant bias is present as a result of personal situations such as anger, anxiety, lack of awareness and politics (Patton, 2002, p. 563). Other problems include the interviewee avoiding detail or even a distorted story owing to a fear of including unacceptable comments (Whorton, 2016). The process of creating a concluding interview summary was an effort made in this study to minimise the problem, used for every interview except when participant needs prevented this. For example, in at least one case, an interviewee had an obvious desire to terminate the interview early. Several problems are related to digital recording of data (Travers, 2009). The issue of data storage is described in Section 3.3.9.

3.3.6 Confirming Data

Despite the potential issues and data limitations, the material collected for this research has strong validity and authenticity, justified applying the Indigenous research paradigm discussed in Section 3.2.3. This is detailed in this section clarifying the approach used to confirm data for this study. Kvale (1995) argued that validity in qualitative research is established through a pragmatic understanding of validity. This correlates with Bailey and Tilley (2002), who argued that the presentation of a story by a storyteller is formed in the style the storyteller prefers the listener to understand. The logical corollary of this is that the narrative presentation of an interview is most likely the narrative that the participant wants us to hear (Squire et al., 2014). The significance of the knowledge presented by the interviewee and exactly how valid this is ultimately is left up to the listener's judgement. This is comparable to an observer judging the value of a piece of artwork because the audio data are effectively an artistic creation and the listener makes decisions about the value and/or validity (Schmücker, 2017).

Cochran et al. (2008) argued that methodology is a way of knowing and epistemology is learning to understand the philosophy of how we approach the research. Examples used by Cochran et al. supported claims that epistemology determines which methods we ought to use to gain knowledge. The examples included Indigenous ways of knowing the whale populous, where Inuit Whalers located whales by listening to their breathing. In contrast, the International Whaling Commission counted only whales that could be visually observed at the ice edge. The logic used by Cochran et al. suggested that the Indigenous ways of knowing were valid: that is, learning from processes that were related to narrative guidance or effectively a type of qualitative interview (see Section 3.2.3, in which the link is drawn between oral history and qualitative inquiry). The example relates to the validity for this study because the oral methods have been used

by Australian Indigenous cultures for tens of thousands of years to both record and communicate oral history and are thereby safely assumed to have a useful level of validity (Abrams, 2010).

Western and Indigenous methods are compatible in various areas such as learning from elders (Ward et al., 2020). For example, consider the extended family nature of Indigenous societies. This is very comparable to the Western method of learning from our parents as a child when one of the first things many people learn is the process of eating food; this soon advances to something as complicated as learning a language. This type of knowledge is gained by trusting our elders rather than doubting everything, which might be the case when using oral methods. For example, usually developing views in accordance with significant elders, and presumably this varies for almost everyone, often affecting the opinions stated about a philosophical issue such as the concept of success. Therefore, results in this study are presumed to be an individual opinion but most likely to be affected by significant others.

As a guide for authenticity of oral history Abrams (2010) referred to a quotation, ‘The truth of the telling versus the telling of the truth’ (Frank, 1995, p. 145, as cited by Abrams). Pursuing the idea that this quotation poses questions about the validity of an individual’s words, further explanation by Abrams argued that no narrative or story provided by an individual is ever free of adjustments owing to memory, perception, emphases or personal changes. For example, adjustments might be viewed as an effort to make the piece more interesting to listen to. The important point by Abrams was that alterations are not made to mislead people, but to help them. The result is that something more significant than the truth is created. The resulting information is the narrative presented by the interviewee not the actual truth. An example of this type of creation is the narrative enabling us to understand history (Abrams, 2010).

Lather (1993) investigated the complex issue of validity, raising a range of questions that refer to disjoining and colliding hegemonic codes. Questions are related to items such as the possibilities of findings outside normal validity, reasons for validity attracting such consideration, the nature of sensitive validity criteria and the relationship of validity to the normal disciplinary nature of societal confession or conscience. Lather claimed that all these kinds of questions are important and provided an extensive answer to a problematic issue. A key point investigated by Lather (1993) as a suitable approach is the possibility of the impossible. Lather advocated that this is not an everlasting way of managing the issue but by situating ourselves in the position of the impossible, we manage to gain knowledge and to build on what we believe to be already understood. For example, when collecting data during a qualitative interview, the aim was to learn about participant knowledge that was possibly previously considered worthless or even incorrect.

Polkinghorne (2007) pointed out that a reasonable approach for the use of a qualitative interview is to judge as valid the reliability, possibility and trustworthiness. This is built on summaries of earlier literature. Polkinghorne also argued that conventional ideas of induction and logic are not necessarily available when considering qualitative research data. For example, there is doubt connected to the belief that an absolute truth is available. Kvale (1995) supported this and argued that the data for qualitative research are accompanied with validity issues, as for a piece of artwork. That is, the construction of the work and any ultimate interpretations are left to the reader or observer to judge. Notably, various levels of ambiguity, interpretation and emphases are present within any set of qualitative data. Agreeing with this point, Polkinghorne argued that all research is credible only to the extent of the reader's assessment and this was accepted as credible for this study when all data was confirmed.

Polkinghorne's (2007) practical approach was to consider logic and the degree of acceptance of an argument. Polkinghorne advocated for seeking clarification of stories, interpretations and richness in detail and the consideration of presentational aspects. This study followed Polkinghorne's logic that validity judgements should not be taken to the extreme, nor treated as an indisputable fact. The central point being that for any research data the final judgement is ultimately left to the reader of the results.

Another useful tool for validation is to return transcripts to participants for review (Polkinghorne, 2007). For this study, recorded notes and memories of relevant conversations and repeated listening of the audio recording allowed for the point made by Holliday and MacDonald (2020) that a transcript does not exactly replace an audio interview. S. A. Tilley (1998) supported this practice and argued for a second check of the response, thereby allowing the interviewee to check editing and interpretation, as well as providing an avenue for further comments. This was followed when possible in this study and reported whenever relevant with results in Chapters 4 and 5. Practical circumstances dictated the availability of an interviewee to review the transcript.

By employing the Indigenous research paradigm for the methodology, this study accepted the approach used by Cochran et al. (2008), who acknowledged that Indigenous research methods explained in Section 3.2.2 may be used to gain knowledge. Applicable to this study was the was gaining oral confirmation of results as justification of the oral method to gain knowledge. Kovach (2010) argued that this was a method supporting an Indigenous research paradigm. Lather (1993) supported the philosophical idea of learning to understand the possibility of the impossible, particularly preparing for any possibly doubtful creations.

This study accepted the view of Neale et al. (2005), who argued that qualitative research provides increased ecological validity at the cost of reproducibility and

generalisability. Obtaining in-depth personal narratives of individual items is one of the reasons a qualitative research methodology was selected here. The resulting thematic analysis of this study was the assessment of conversational points made by the research community. Further research is needed if the findings are to be extended to a wider proportion of the Australian Indigenous community, providing a more reliable sample foundation (see Chapter 6). The interview transcriptions were the data used primarily as the basis of the thematic analysis. Field notes were recorded with transcriptions and reported with data when required.

3.3.7 Interview Transcriptions

A transcription process was required for this study to encrypt audio files to an accessible text. This required a high workload, and the process is explained in this section. The Indigenous research paradigm was the reason for collecting audio data with a conversational approach comparable to an oral history technique. Transcribing verbatim was chosen as the preferred method since the conversational aspect is most accurately retained (Matheson, 2007). The initial record of data was retained as accurately as possible and accepted after a second listening to the interview while checking the transcript. The textual record will never completely replace audio data (McLellan et al., 2003, p. 66). However, in combination with the audio file, the text record was the form of data chosen to complete analysis (see Chapter 5). The transcript also provided a method of presenting analytical interpretations of the conversations to the reader. Therefore, interview comments reported in this thesis text have been retained as per the transcript.

Transcription was deemed part of the research process accepting the arguments made by McLellan et al. (2003, p. 64). The authors noted that transcribing enables the researcher to gain a finer understanding of the conversation. The transcription process increases the understanding of a conversation by gaining another perspective on the

original audio interview. For the purpose of retaining information available in the original interview, pauses and various utterance sounds were noted using an approximation of English spelling.

3.3.8 Pauses and Utterances

The pause in the interviewee's conversational flow was retained in the transcript because the pause in a conversation was considered part of the data. A pause in conversation or a short audible sound has significance that is discussed here. How this was included as part of the transcript is also explained. The pause has been retained because this maintains conversational style, respects the participant and saves the simulated language for the local region of the participant (McLellan et al., 2003; Qu & Dumay, 2011).

A pause during a conversation has several purposes. The purpose of a pause as part of the data includes:

- the interviewee considering an answer
- the importance or emphasis an interviewee gives to a specific issue
- the interviewee feeling uncomfortable about answering
- an interviewee who is not readily providing data
- an interviewee feeling that they need a break
- a simple break in the conversational nature of the interview
- judging the timing of an interview question
- consideration of the interview equipment and/or the environment.

Whenever required, the reason for the pause was retained in the transcript with the associated interpretation of the pause noted in square brackets. The length of the pause is associated with the interpretation. Therefore, the length of the pause was also indicated in

the transcript. The shortest pauses were transcribed as the word pause within parentheses. Slightly longer pauses were shown with the same word and a short space. Longer pauses were indicated using a larger space. The length of the space was used to reflect the time elapse associated with the pause as part of the conversation.

Short conversational terms also have purpose for reasons analogous to the pause. These terms were approximated by what was deemed the most similar English spelling: for example, ‘umm’, ‘ahh’ and ‘eh’. These sounds or non-verbal indicators were retained when considered necessary. Examples of non-verbal communicators are the smile or frown (Matheson, 2007). When these indicators or some other factors were considered a point of emphasis during the interview, the word ‘emphasis’ was included in the transcript.

There are various reasons that researchers sometimes present a transcript without indicating either a pause or a short utterance. Reasons this choice is made include the point that extra work is necessary when transcribing, the transcript is slower to read, and sounds are sometimes viewed as an overuse of non-English (Matheson, 2007). The exclusion of the sounds may be preferred by a participant but every participant during this study accepted the inclusion of the sounds. An advantage of completing the transcription process as soon as possible after recording was to retain the correct interpretation of the pause or other conversational indicator (Oliver, D. G. et al., 2005).

3.3.9 Transcribing Software and Data Storage

This section discusses the use of digital data, which have advantages such as ease of playback and general sound quality. The digital data also have disadvantages (Travers, 2009). Southall (2009) claimed that transcripts are an accepted legitimate technique of data presentation, but transcripts necessarily change the so-called raw data. The Dragon software that was acquired with the purchase of the audio recorder was designed to

develop a computerised transcription of raw data. The transcribing software was tested to prepare the transcripts, but lack of clarity soon resulted in dismissing the viability of the product. Therefore, audio files were saved, accepting Southall's comments that editing still alters raw data. The text files are useful for reporting since the audio files are much larger than text files and the archiving of digital audio files is difficult compared with archiving text.

Section 3.3.8 discussed various sounds or pauses, available from a speaker when recognised as part of the conversation. The sounds are not always easily recorded using the digital record although when available, the sound or pause effectively becomes part of the analytical interpretation of the interview.

Editing transcripts was managed by including participants in the process whenever possible. However, there are limits as to how much ought to be expected of a participant. Participants were contacted for reference when possible and other relevant people also included when necessary. In some cases, the transcripts depended on individual efforts to produce accurate results. Participants were not always easily located and at other times unavailable to offer comments. Ensuring that the participant remained satisfied with the final version of the interview was effective in some cases but not always possible. The ethics of saved data was in accordance with ethics approval (see Section 3.1).

The written transcripts were treated as a support for the relevance of data. Written transcripts cannot show everything. The software was used to obtain audio data not for transcribing nor specialised analysis for this project (Bergin, 2011). NVivo software was considered to complete the analysis of the transcripts but was rejected as a viable tool owing to perceived problems attempting to judge a conversation as a collection of building blocks, either as single words or short phrases (McLellan et al., 2003; Sotiriadou

et al., 2014; Zamawe, 2015; see Appendix C for a detailed assessment of the NVivo software). The analytical process applied during this study always valued the conversational nature of the qualitative interviews. The final decision to analyse interviews as full conversations was built on points made in this section combined with paying respect to each participant and was achievable using a grounded theory approach.

3.4 Analytical Procedure and Grounded Theory

This section outlines the grounded theory technique used to create theories analysing the data collected during this project. The method is referred to as grounded theory for analysis of data because theories are grounded in the data and develop as the data are analysed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The intention for this study, explained in Chapter 1, was to approach data collection by focusing on data that were a product of the participants' knowledge (Stern, 1980, 1994; Suddaby, 2006; Urquhart, 2001). A grounded theory method satisfied the aims of this project. Grounded theory can be viewed in various formats and this section outlines the key ideas of the method used in accordance with literature (Shindo, 2017/2021). The section continues with a description of sample collection, limits and possible method adjustments for this study.

Suddaby (2006) explained that grounded theory was originally developed for qualitative methods in social science research, despite criticisms of many positivists. Criticisms were usually referring to verification standards (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As shown below, there are several specific ways of interpretation but a central view for grounded theory is applying analysis as data are collected. Themes are realised as they become apparent in the data being collected. Using a constant comparative method, parts of the data are continually compared, and relevant categories or themes are developed as required (Charmaz, 1996). Grounded theory analysis begins with data and continues as

data are collected. These theories are thereby ‘grounded’ in the data. Extra samples are selected as required. Both the immediate analysis and frequent comparisons of data are not usually part of a more traditional research approach nor a typical positivist regime (Suddaby, 2006). The positivist position preferred to maintain that all data collection should be completed before the analytical stage becomes effective, although extra data might be obtained, for example when checking the validity of results.

Grounded theory is sometimes assumed to mean that the researcher approaches the topic without an accurate preconceived conceptual framework. Suddaby (2006) claimed that this is not accurate, arguing that planning of the research is necessary and therefore usually contains at least some motive from the researcher. Following this advice, the relevance of literature related to the topic of success is discussed as part of a literature review in Chapter 2. These preparatory concepts of success were not considered to preclude theories that formed part of each stage of the analytical procedure. For example, a sampling group needed to be identified before data were collected and any relevant themes were considered a product of the collected data. The recognition of available interviews was an important stage of data collection.

3.4.1 Sampling

As already explained, the qualitative interview usually requires a level of skill from the participant being asked to provide a recognisable narrative (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Hence, a narrowly focused sample with interviewees well versed in a topic might be considered necessary. Some authors have argued that participants with fewer skills or less knowledge should be included in the research and methods improved to compensate when necessary (Lloyd et al., 2006). For example, more appropriate sampling might be achieved by the inclusion of a carer/compatriot to allow for a

participant with limited language skills. Being prepared to repeat questions or pause interviews when required was a useful strategy for this study.

For qualitative research, some authors have claimed that results will be more precisely attained using a narrow sampling group allowing deeper analysis of each interview, while others claimed that a wider variation of samples is more likely to provide authentic results (Cutcliffe, 2000, p. 40). Related arguments are applied to sampling in grounded theory (Cutcliffe, 2000, Coyne, 1997). The more common view for grounded theory is the use of a theoretical sample (Coyne, 1997; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). This study used an approach involving the selection of extra samples when required to satisfy completeness of data as new theories developed and the availability of participants changed.

Samples for this project were selected following the advice of both Coyne (1997) and Cutcliffe (2000), who claimed that participants ought to be carefully selected to provide at least some direction for the project. To begin sampling, participants were selected as justified above with research limits (see Section 3.3.4). See Section 6.5 for further acknowledgement of the limits and see Section 5.1.3.2 for discussion of specific examples of women not discussing success. Gender differences are an issue that may often relate to success although the issue is beyond the scope of this thesis (see Stronach et al, 2022; Vanderbilt University, 2014). Participants were first defined as Indigenous people from the central Gippsland region and prepared to discuss points about success, as well as other Indigenous Australians when the project began to take shape and theories began to develop. In this research, the availability of participants, the expected contribution to theory and the process of theory development provided the precise time a participant was selected.

By selecting a range according to gender, age and personality according to availability, the assumption was that the region of the Indigenous population was reasonably represented. This is because most participants resided in central Gippsland and/or claimed direct association with the region. An equivocal assumption was not made for the region in Sydney since there were fewer participants and they were not all from the same place. Chapter 5 presents the analysis of results, discussed further in Chapter 6.

A sampling size of 25 was considered sufficient as an initial target (Birks & Mills, 2015; Saunders & Townsend, 2016). This number was considered to satisfy the research purpose in the time frame available. This number was considered to allow for a range of individuals within the target group in central Gippsland and still include at least a small group of other Indigenous individuals. Further interviews were collected as required when theories were developed.

Participant selection was primarily via community networks that were already available. This involved encouraging participants to pass on their knowledge of the project. Therefore, this was the snowballing method referred to above. Personal introductions using a friendly approach and minimising officialdom as well as written notices proved valuable (see Chapter 4 for more detail). Examples of organisations considered for contact were the Central Gippsland Aboriginal and Housing Co-Operative and the Koorie Heritage Trust. Organisations were approached and a research introduction was provided. An advantage here was that these organisations were readily available and had contacts with individuals not living in the Gippsland region who were considered potential participants.

The areas in Gippsland that proved useful because participants were located as participant recruitment regions were small cities with populations of approximately 15,000 people. The lifestyle within these towns is essentially suburban. For example,

most participants lived on a single block of land or small group of flats. Most general living needs were obtained from a nearby central business district. People's needs in terms of entertainment and education were typically via a larger but not huge group of people. The participants interviewed in Sydney described a similar type of lifestyle for their situation (see Chapter 4 for specific details). This segment of Australian Indigenous people usually claims to be living within two cultures, and the exact influence as to what extent the Western lifestyle affects people is varied (Gibson et al., 2008; Kiag, 2019; Schnarch, 2004). The specific details of the relevancy of each culture are beyond the scope of this research because a large range of issues are introduced, and the positioning of each interviewee was difficult to deduce. Hence, ultimately, the extent of Westernisation influence on the sample is left to reader judgement.

This project followed the notion that the aim is not necessarily to achieve a representative sample because topics researched in grounded theory often serve as an initial investigation for further study (Saunders & Townsend, 2016; Suddaby, 2006). All results were accepted as data. For example, an indirect contribution to potential theory development, such as avoiding the interview, was still considered useful (Suddaby, 2006). For example, a participant avoiding a given topic may be deemed to place no importance on that topic, or possibly to be unaffected by it; for this research, such a participant would be considered under the theme of 'difficulty discussing success'. In other cases, these types of interviews were considered an example of when the method required adjustment. The introduction and sampling details raised the need to discuss adjustments to grounded theory as appropriate.

3.4.2 Differing Views and Adjusting Methods

This section provides detail regarding specific details of method application for this research, acknowledging that some critics argue adjusting a method alters results and

claim that a given method needs to be strictly adhered to maintain validity and to gain full value of the method (Kvale, 1995; Stern, 1994; Polkinghorne, 2007; also see Section 3.4.4). However, other authors have argued that a method should be altered as required. There are two schools of thought (Cutcliffe, 2000). Queries often arise about grounded theory because it has been used with varied styles, as indicated in this section (Cutcliffe, 2000; Shindo, 2017/2021). Consider the analogy of two chefs. One chef claims that a recipe, or ‘method’, must be followed precisely to produce the correct dish, while the other chef suggests that we ought to make recipe adjustments according to ingredients availability and diner needs. Ultimately, the satisfaction of the diner and the chef are the important factors. For this research, the readers’ judgement, participant satisfaction and the researcher confidence were the requirements. Following the advice of Cutcliffe (2000), various adjustments were made when necessary and whenever required. Explanations for specific interviews are stated in Chapter 4, referring to data collection. Reasons for adjustment, the way changes were implemented and relevant reasons for change are further explained in the Chapter 5 analysis, allowing the reader to evaluate results according to the situation.

For this study, thematic analysis used a grounded theory method, developing theories as data were analysed. Since first used, changes have been observed with grounded theory. For example, Glaser and to a greater extent by Strauss, have made adjustments (Shindo, 2017/2021; Cutcliffe, 2000; Stern, 1994). To analyse interviews, Glaser developed a coding type of analysis in specific segments of data while checking theory relevance and considering every possibility aiming to allow the data to tell the story (Cutcliffe, 2000). This varied with Strauss, who preferred to focus on data as a whole or as stories within the data and to develop theories when appropriate (Cutcliffe,

2000; Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp. 2–14). The technique more in the Strauss style was used for this study because the sample size was limited to 30 participants and the data were viewed in the conversational sense, that is the story provided by the participant was considered a complete set of data (Kovach, 2010). Themes were developed by considering the overall conversation and selecting appropriate portions when required.

Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 2) claimed outright that as for most methods, grounded theory has changed over time (Cutcliffe, 2000). Consider the examples of computers introduced to any reporting technique, new laboratory equipment for any scientific method or the introduction of new transport for long distance sampling. Questioning the authenticity of a newer approach, Glaser claimed that the method of Strauss was not actually grounded theory (Cutcliffe, 2000). Strauss developed the method to analyse much larger data portions. Glaser and Strauss remained associates and Glaser questioned the fundamental Strauss philosophy rather than defending a purist's perception of the original method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). There is literature available explaining various ways different authors have viewed grounded theory and the complete detail is beyond the scope of this report (Shindo, 2017/2021; Cutcliffe, 2000; Charmaz, 1996; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Limits should be considered.

3.4.3 Limits

As with all methodology, grounded theory has limits (Cutcliffe, 2000). Too many interviews with no theory input are a potential limitation of grounded theory because the method requires some input to theory from the data collection process. For example, as mentioned above, the qualitative interview that produces virtually no usable data has little theory input and does have benefits but is time-consuming. To apply the method usefully, at least some interviews need to provide theory input. Flexibility with pursuing extra participants when needed is a way of addressing this problem.

A serious limitation of grounded theory is that research is, to some extent, dependent on the original philosophical position of the researcher (Birks & Mills, 2015). For details relevant to this research, see Section 1.5. The likelihood of the researcher affecting results is arguably present in most research but particularly affects grounded theory because a certain stance on any topic will necessarily affect the development of theories. For example, consider the comparison of finding your way in a new town. Previous knowledge of the town and the availability of maps or similar tools will necessarily affect decisions and indirect routes are sometimes the result. However, taking an indirect path is sometimes a bonus because unexpected new knowledge might result. The unexpected course is an example of possible problems and opportunities present when using a grounded theory method.

As theories developed, the initial research position was reconsidered with alterations made when required to either this position or to the research methods. The continual contact with the relevant Indigenous community and the wider research community was considered important for this study. As indicated above and discussed further below, this affected the organisation of interviews. For example, one purpose of research community contact was the belief that for analysis more minds considering an interview provides a greater chance of developing a relevant theory.

Another limitation of grounded theory is the level of difficulty for application because it involves an element of creativity and even good fortune (Suddaby, 2006). The research plan applied was to attempt to discover new ideas within uncharted territory. Arguably these issues are part of any research. This problem was addressed in this research by maintaining regular contact with relevant people, analysing with an open mind and rechecking data as required. New data were collected when the opportunity arose. Specific examples of showing the value of establishing contact with the research

community and the value of being prepared to collect data are discussed in Chapter 4.

Grounded theory was accepted as a method assisting this strategy.

3.4.4 Collecting Data in a Natural Environment

This section explains how this study adhered to Kenealy's (2008) advice for collecting data, that grounded theory ought to be used with the researcher becoming active and involving themselves with the research community. The aim for this approach was to better understand real-life situations and recognise the need to maintain a readiness to collect data. Kenealy explained that to learn about real-life situations, the most logical course is to become part of the activity concerned and learn from one's experiences. And this is an argument possibly not supported by a more traditional positivist researcher. The example for this study includes the aims relating to observing the success of a given group in order to gain an improved understanding from the participant's perspective. As already outlined in the literature review, the available literature is minimal when considering Indigenous issues from the Indigenous perspective (L. T. Smith, 1999; Vos et al., 2007).

To learn about a lifestyle issue in a natural living environment, interviews were acquired from participants who were involved in another activity. For example, a discussion began at a railway station with a person I had met the previous day. This discussion developed into a deeper conversation during the train journey, and I suggested recording an interview. The participant was happy to participate, and a worthy interview was completed. The interviews that took place in Sydney are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.6. Examples of interview preparation includes the interesting conversations occurring when raising the topic of the study and interviews were agreed to by several people although not ready until the next day. Three interviews were recorded after returning and being asked to wait. I had no problems waiting for about three hours, since

I almost expected these performers not to adhere to a rigid clock. Two of these interviews in Sydney were lengthy and included plenty of detail. The links of this group and the Indigenous people in central Gippsland are fascinating and discussed more deeply in Chapter 6. Other interviews were collected in comparable situations, although sometimes not quite so spontaneous. Field notes to record each individual situation were recorded when relevant and used when deriving the transcripts, reported when necessary with data in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.4.5 Summary

The section has provided an outline of grounded theory. The sampling method used in this project has been described and initially accepted Indigenous Australians from the central Gippsland region who were prepared to discuss the concept of success. Other Indigenous Australians were selected when appropriate. The main limitations of the method as applied in this project have been shown to relate to interview contributions to theories, participant skill and representative sampling.

Grounded theory has been applied with various styles by different researchers. Major variations observed in grounded theory involve analysing every possible word of an interview, compared with analysing in sections because the sections become relevant to theory development using what has been described as a Straussian grounded theory approach and refers to checking data as a whole (Cutcliffe, 2000). For this study, the Straussian philosophy was preferred, analysing data as a total conversation. The reason being that interview stories or whole conversations rather than individual words or phrases were considered to provide the most insightful meaning when discussing the concept of success. The themes presented in Chapter 5 were developed as they became apparent during the general analysis of data and following deeper analysis with reassessment of each individual narrative.

3.5 Method Conclusion

An ethical approach was considered essential to the research and the ethical practice was discussed first. The qualitative audio interviews enabling participants to portray a range of Indigenous views was the central method in this research. The advantages and disadvantages were explained, including the link between this method claiming to respect the historically established Indigenous methods of oral history. The qualitative interview also provided for the presentation of the preferences of individual interviewees. The limits of the data collection with this method were argued to depend on the ability to collect the interviews, availability of participants, reproduction of data and interpretation of results. Electronic methods of data storage were discussed and deemed useful owing to reliability and the availability of data for checking when necessary. The benefits of the method were claimed to outweigh the problems, especially for the opportunity to collect data whenever the opportunity arises. A discussion of transcribing interviews illustrated how this method prepared for the application of the grounded theory method. This was the basis of the thematic analysis reported in Chapter 5. The methods chosen for this study coincided with the research question and align with Indigenous standpoint theory, applying the overall goal to listen to and respect Indigenous perspectives. The data collection stage was incumbent to obtain data. Important situations when collecting this data are explained in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Data Collection Reflections

Data collection was an important stage of this study and a product of the qualitative interviewing method detailed in Chapter 3. The associated experiences left indelible memories when collecting data and this chapter is necessary to explain activities that affected the overall result. This chapter shows the value of the qualitative interviewing tool for this study, providing quotations of participants in interviews and others who were not technically participants, but influenced the collection of data. The interviews and associated incidents were all important learning processes for myself and for anyone else interested in the results, more than simply for the content of interviews. Interacting with the research community was a significant stage of the data collection.

The value of qualitative interviews was highlighted by Charmaz (1996) when justifying the use of this method applying a grounded theory approach the claim made was the data is:

portraying the participants' lives and voices. Their concerns shape the direction and form of the research. The researcher seeks to learn how they construct their experience through their actions, intentions, beliefs and feelings. (p. 30)

This statement emphasises the qualitative data viability for the researcher to become part of the research community and enable participants to offer their views and help shape the research. See Section 6.4 for a discussion of the significance of listening exemplified during this research.

The qualitative interviews helped provide for Indigenous views while maintaining a positive rapport with the research community. The process of preparing and conducting qualitative interviews supported the argument of DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006)

that the researcher's presence in the field is both significant and relevant for all interviews, discussed further in this section.

The interview that began the data collection is described first. Two specific participants are discussed next; they were contributors very early in the research process and thereby helped direct exactly how interviews were conducted. The next section explains the importance of preparation by discussing interviews that occurred at unexpected moments. A seemingly awkward situation that ultimately turned positive emphasises the importance of being prepared and readiness to interview was also important in Sydney. Two more interviews illustrate techniques used to overcome seemingly difficult situations. This illustrates the complexities of informal interactions while maintaining the ethical approval details described in Section 3.1. Finally considered are the potential interviews that did not take place but were still important data collection stages.

4.1 Jarrod

The initial interview during the data collection stage happened when Jarrod was ready to discuss his own problems. These problems included the loss of his father, monetary issues, bowel cancer and living arrangements. Listening to Jarrod was important for his own wellbeing. I later asked for 'examples of any good history' and Jarrod mentioned community contacts, food sources and friends. Neither of us considered ourselves busy and, after listening to more problems, I asked Jarrod about the possibility of an interview. Jarrod was initially uncomfortable thinking about the topic of success, but soon reconsidered and was happy to think about answers. Allowing time and providing the opportunity to pause when needed enabled an acceptable interview to

unfold. I appreciated the effort Jarrod made to ensure he paid compliments, giving a sincere thank you for:

friendship, help and bread [homemade bread given to his family].

This occurred at the beginning of the interview and was thereby most likely at least as important to Jarrod as discussing success. The positive points were important because the interview was preceded by the problems Jarrod had and continued to be a little awkward, with signs of discomfort including frequent pauses and speech that was somewhat mumbled. Nonetheless, it was all understandable. This was a useful interview because it initiated the data collection to investigate questions about the concept of success. For example, after being asked about viewing himself as successful, Jarrod's answer seemed to try to steer the conversation away from his own personal success:

My head still there and I can't say I'm right or wrong but everyone can be wrong, no one's perfect. And thanks Bill [selected name used]. But sorry, sorry, no.

After a brief pause, the conversation returned to the topic of success and there was a second short interview completed to confirm comments. Jarrod was in no hurry to make any changes. Jarrod has now passed away and the conversations cannot be revisited. I still have regular contact with his brother who knows about the research but has never agreed to an interview.

The interview with Jarrod is comparable to examples presented in the literature. For example, there have been numerous studies making sense of chance encounters in the field and authors highlighting the value of being prepared (Johnston et al., 2012). Sandelowski (2012, p. 112) noticed the value of maintaining contact with the participant community (see AIATSI, 2020). Examples were common when conducting interviews for this research. Being available for Jarrod to have a conversation and listening to the issues was appreciated. Other examples discussed below include maintaining contact for

several days with all participants in Sydney as well as re-establishing contact with Jack several months after an initial awkward situation.

4.2 Jack

The regular use of the local bus service and other services proved important when collecting interviews. For example, I met Jack on a local bus one day and the assistance I provided for Jack was appreciated. The contact that was initiated eventually led to an interview. A casual conversation started, and Jack stated that he was a relative of several local people. This confirmed an initial expectation that Jack was an Indigenous Australian.

I soon reached a judgement that Jack was a friendly, happy individual. Jack said, ‘this was a successful evening’ as result of his comfort in an unfamiliar town. This was when Jack’s notion of success first appeared to be tailored differently to what has been described as a Western definition of success in the definition presented in Section 2.4.

I met Jack again the following day while was waiting at the train station. Jack was also travelling to Melbourne beginning his return journey to Western Australia. After we boarded a train, Jack discussed historical factors relating to Albany, leading me to assume that Jack was originally from this south-west region of Australia. However, this was apparently not the case. During the interview, Jack said Bairnsdale was his original home and he indicated its significance when he said:

And finally come back this week to actually see some of my family and to be able to fetch along properly.

Owing to limited time, the interview was not possible to conduct while waiting for the train. However, when travelling to Melbourne on the train, I located Jack and there was plenty of time available for further research introductions, consent form signing and

completing a short interview. Having previously tested the recorder for background noise, I was confident that a recording would be useful even though completed in the noisy environment experienced on a moving train.

After completing the main interview, the conversation with Jack continued. The recorder was switched on again. More ideas about the concept of success became clear and Jack was included as part of the achieving goals theme as a result of comments like:

IH: What is success?

JB: not matter much what you do. Just achieve that goal for yourself. Stick to that goal and you will not fall [metaphor for fail].

The interview with Jack illustrated the importance to an Indigenous person of birthplace, even for someone who has spent much of their life in a different location. Jack apparently still retained connections with the local Indigenous group, known as Gunnai/Kurnai (note that the term is used in this format hereon since the two versions are used locally; Thorpe, 2011). The discussion of links to the local group was the main part of Jack's answer to a question that sought an introduction. My familiarity with Jack's relatives was useful when initiating the interview because the familiarisation with others was comforting for both Jack and myself.

Having the audio recorder ready for use in an environment such as travelling on the train enabled useful data collection. The interview with Jack happened owing to a casual approach avoiding an over-official style and the continued readiness to collect data. Other interviews occurred in an even more unexpected way.

4.3 Interviews from Nowhere

Several interviews ought to be described as materialising unexpectedly and with minimal planning. Examples are described here and showed that an important benefit of

the qualitative method is the interviews can be adaptable and adjusted as circumstances dictate.

A missed bus one day was related to the regular bus failing to arrive at the usual bus stop. This altered the daily plan. Two other people also missed this bus and initially accepted my offer to share a taxi fare although they soon decided not to accept. Their personal appearance and the offering of a small gift to myself, led me to assume they were probably Indigenous. I was soon ready to complete an interview. However, I was then informed that one person was from Papua New Guinea and the other was probably not Indigenous. When I visited a nearby taxi rank, the small gift I had already received earlier was then given to another person, Graham, who was also waiting. The random encounters were not necessarily part of the methodology framework for the research stated in Section 3.1.2 but were part of my own daily operations. For example, being known as part of the local community was useful and, when the possibility of an interview occurred, the research introductions began before an interview happened. This was one example of recruitment of people who were considered participants after listening to the research introduction, readily signing a consent form and accepting the interview request.

My initial assessment when I met Graham suggested he had similar historical circumstances to another participant, Harry. However, these two interviewees had a very different interpretation of the interview questions. Harry appeared to have a very optimistic view of success, as indicated in the advice he offered:

just look at everything and give everything a ... good chance and let's just work together.

Graham had a more pessimistic outlook. When considering success early in the interview, he outlined problems he had faced:

people ... just don't understand why people enlist themselves on the streets pickin' up butts and askin' people for things they haven't got.

Even though this diverted from the topic I had hoped to discuss, careful listening to the first comments helped to initiate the main interview regarding the concept of success. Listening was important and I was aware there are many people in the community who face problems (see Ali et al., 2021; Foley, 2007).

Listening carefully and not pausing the interview too often was a useful technique for interviews when someone showed any sign of discomfort. This was noticed in the first meeting, mentioned above, with Graham, in which personal feelings needed to be monitored. Graham had mentioned ceasing the interview but immediately offered more information. The recorder was still switched on. Afterwards, checking twice with Graham that this extra information ought to be used as data was an important ethical step. The complete interview and transcript were retained for analysis.

The first two people referred to in this section were not Indigenous Australians and were not interested in the interviewing exercise. However, the associated discussion helped prepare for the interview that occurred as a result of altering daily plans, listening carefully and being ready to interview.

4.4 Negative Turns Positive

Even when a situation appeared not quite right, the practice of being constantly prepared proved a useful resource. For example, when leaving a local shop one day, I was attacked by a dog. I tried to react, but Raymond burst from the doorway of the shop and intervened, ensuring he protected the dog. I still felt safe with a torn shirt and a minimal amount of drawn blood that did not bother me. Also waiting at the shop doorway with the dog was an apparent friend of Raymond's, who joined the situation and offered support,

explaining to Raymond that the dog had caused the problem. Following a series of apologies and discussion, everything settled and finished on a positive note. After confirming the Indigeneity of both people, I asked about the possibility of an interview. Raymond agreed but was not quite ready at that time.

Six months later, I met Raymond at a bus stop and a positive discussion developed. Raymond appeared to be excusing the dog for the attack when referring to the ‘dog’s hard life’ and then offered to begin an interview. I continued to sense the apologetic feeling for the dog incident. Raymond continued conversing and claimed a fight approach was necessary in life, while I was more in support of a flight philosophy (Mahadevan et al., 2018). An interview occurred with only a very small amount of data. However, it was a useful interview because it was provided by a participant of differing personal philosophies of other research participants, with varying positions on the fight-or-flight approach to life. Allowing an awkward situation to become positive and listening to Raymond’s requests were significant stages preparing for this interview with a new acquaintance.

4.5 Cameron

Maintaining long-time acquaintances was a viable way of finding participants. I had known Cameron for more than 20 years and when I first mentioned the research, he did not seem keen to participate. I had accepted this as Cameron’s primary choice. However, after collecting data for a period of three months, I met Cameron again and he asked questions about the research. Following my answer that included a brief description of other interviews, Cameron said he would be happy to provide an interview.

After Cameron signed the consent form, I provided a written copy of the interview questions, as preparation before an interview began. Previewing the interview questions

proved useful because both Cameron and I agreed that the interview was enhanced. This might not suit other situations and would be dependent on the interviewees' needs and reading skills. The opportunity to peruse interview questions provided more time for Cameron to formulate his answers. After the initial interview, Cameron continued asking questions. I reset the recorder and continued collecting information. Completion of the interview with Cameron highlighted the importance of maintaining personal contact with potential participants, listening to questions and reacting as required.

4.6 Circular Quay

The visit to Circular Quay in Sydney was an example of the value of being ready to interview even when not expecting an interview to occur. I had the recorder with me in case of need, although I had not anticipated any interviews. An initial introduction to a group that had been presenting Indigenous music and dancing eventually led to a scenario in which interviews were mentioned. Terry was happy to record an interview after I had offered a careful introduction to the study that included the officialdom associated with ethics forms. Our conversation included consideration of a philosophical question I had posed in an earlier thesis (Hamilton, 2014). With approval, Terry reworded the question when he said:

What Australia would be like today if people had asked for help [and] not dictated? [During colonisation.]

The question was designed to show respect to our Indigenous culture and recognise past problems. Terry's positive response suggested he understood this purpose.

Discussion took place about completing interviews with Ned as well as others at Circular Quay who showed interest. No one was immediately ready to interview and there was a request to return the following day to revisit the opportunities to complete

interviews. Beginning the conversation about success, Terry referred to the above question with:

you know I think we talked about it yesterday. And you said it beautifully. ...

'cause I did believe exactly what you said.

I quietly made the point about not forcing new lifestyle onto people:

Instead of pushin' it on.

Terry emphasised the need for mutual support:

And if I don't know something I'll be askin' you for help to help me. So we really got to help each other. Umm not umm um not dictate what we should do. We should ... be sharing all this knowledge.

Initial positive conversations were important steps establishing rapport, thereby helping prepare the interview and complete the ethical forms. For example, the process of completing consent forms and the checking stage with Terry was recorded:

IH: you OK here. What was the name here?

Terry: [short phrase including participant's name]

IH: [name] you right with it?

Terry: That's alright.

IH: [name spelled slowly] and that's where you're from, wherever. Do want it?

This was a method used to check that Terry understood all the details. There was high-level background noise in a public place, but the final recording was acceptable. To state his original place of birth Terry said:

Kooka Dar play nation [original language used], Torres Strait Islander, yep.

To ensure Terry understood the interview was to be ultimately controlled by his comments, I restated that the structure was to ensure the result was Terry's own ideas:

your pictures not mine.

It's up to you, not me.

Two other people had accepted the interview invitation and agreed that I would return the next day. I arrived after the dance and music had begun. I spent approximately three hours enjoying the performance. After lunch and another wait, I was asked to 'chill out' and interview later. While waiting, I met another potential participant, Gary, who was from Northern territory. Another conversation developed. Gary began by answering a question that asked for examples of successful people:

Any of my friends.

After I had asked for names of successful people Gary named several well-known musicians, and then said:

amazing artists. Yeah.

Gary had named a range of musicians and stated that being successful may change for various cultures and many different people. This interview is further discussed in Chapter 5 with the relevant theme, success available to all, because the comments apparently implied that success is available to everyone.

Before finishing the day at Circular Quay, another talk with Terry was joined by nearby spectators who had asked Terry if they were allowed to listen to the interview. The spectators said they were students and had witnessed part of the interview with Terry for this study. The students apparently gained confidence to prepare an interview of their own and there was obvious progression from their earlier, more cautionary, position of not feeling confident approaching the performers. There had been a large audience appreciating the Indigenous artists earlier, although I was the only one who initiated personal contact that quickly developed into conversations. The performers were happy to have a discussion and showed their appreciation. This is an example of being welcomed

into what Terry called ‘family’ as a result of the desire to show friendship, instead of the caution sometimes portrayed by people when meeting a new acquaintance. During Terry’s interview, he testified this welcoming attitude when he said:

the simplicity of wantin’ to be ... part of this one culture or part of this ... our songline is to ask, sit in any circle approach ask any Aboriginal person or per se and just ask them ... any question you want, and you will see the connection when we as cultural ambassadors adopt you into this country. And you become family.

The welcoming attitude was enhanced when I received the gifts of interviews and a published compact audio disc, more compliments and friendship. I have experienced similar sharing experiences when interacting with other Indigenous groups, discussed in greater depth in Section 1.4. The acquaintances and associated interviews at Circular Quay were all examples supporting the claim that every Australian has the opportunity to benefit by befriending Indigenous Australians (see J. Maynard & Haskins, 2016; Ormiston, 2010).

4.7 Ned Didgeridoo

Another interview at Circular Quay provided specific traditional cultural examples. After hearing the interview introduction and casually listening to two other interviews, Ned’s reference to his own success began with:

And um, I’m from the mob, umm songline comes from the [spelling as per sound] Yukkanjurraputtin’ jurra people, Warrupi. All the way through the desert and I have the blessing and the cultural respect and permission to do my culture just about anywhere in this country and I can walk this country with um no problems at all because I’ve been around the world four times. Worked for the Australian

Tourism commission ... um, everywhere in the world I've seen about 38 countries. I'm really proud of it.

Many interjecting comments from a background audience assisted the relaxed atmosphere during the interview but had the disadvantage of increasing the difficulty of asking questions. For example, it was awkward to ask all questions accurately. There were at least three interruptions and the time available for Ned was limited.

Ned was happy to complete a didgeridoo performance. When asked about considering this as successful, the reply was a distinct 'yes' with a comment added using Indigenous language:

That's them butta [brother]. Kurrmubutta ememburra yingi. Yurrawunga oongi warruni yem wunenya [spelling interpreted from sound of lyrics].

Even though the interview diverged from the usual question sequence, this was still an important interview because the data are almost definitely unavailable anywhere else, and this was an alternative example of portraying the concept of success for this participant as distinct from verbal descriptions of other participants.

4.8 Kelvin

At a local shopping complex, I met a long-time acquaintance, Kelvin, and we discussed the research. The consent form was signed, and an initial interview happened. I had given a verbal summary of everything including the ethical forms because Kelvin's eyesight issues caused difficulty reading the forms in their current format. Kelvin's first reaction about success was:

What I would say is ... become active politically and have a word. Like your dad [A retired state minister] has done.

Also listen to the children and value the children's word.

The recorder was at first on pause, but I soon noticed this and remedied the problem by questioning. This resulted in a productive interview that should be described as a type of active listening with a pre-planning stage. My questions were closely connected to the comments I had just heard.

With plans of a more detailed interview two days later, I visited Kelvin, who lived in the central Gippsland town of Moe. A door sign, 'please no knocking', resulted in me waiting but eventually I knocked gently. Kelvin answered the door, and I was able to help solve a problem caused by Kelvin's restricted eyesight. We found a set of misplaced keys.

In the second interview, Kelvin discussed his personal history and some interesting comments about success were made, reported in Sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2. Overcoming the methodological hurdles was an important part of completing this interview. This included repeating the first interview, verbalising ethical forms, overcoming the door sign and helping to find the keys. Kelvin was comfortable with all the solutions.

4.9 Pen and Paper

This section describes another example of overcoming a problem with the recording instrument. Peter had agreed to an interview but when I began the questioning, I realised that the recorder memory was full of data. To avoid adding the extra time required to reset the recorder, I used a pen and paper to continue the data collection. I reassessed what I had heard Peter say and recorded the answers with Peter's consent. Peter provided an address to locate him at a later date. However, I attempted twice and did not find Peter at this address.

Eventually I found Peter in the Morwell central business district and he confirmed his comfort with answers so far but was too busy to complete a second interview. Peter's responsibility to care for young children was more important than the interview and the original notes were retained as viable data.

4.10 Kerry

The interview with Kerry was an example of solving perceived problems for participants, required both ethically and productively when collecting interviews. When first asked, Kerry was not keen to be interviewed. However, after three more introductions, Kerry changed her mind. Patience and a willingness to answer the questions of the interviewee were valuable resources when organising this interview.

Kerry agreed to be interviewed in the large space of a nearby place where background noise was a problem. There were music sources nearby and many other people talking. This noise possibly eased the pressure for Kerry. To manage this noise, the recorder was at first held close to Kerry. However, this did not seem comfortable for Kerry. Adjustments were necessary and the final result was acceptable. Pausing the interview twice increased Kerry's comfort.

For research methods in psychological research, Pietkiewicz and J. A. Smith (2014) discussed data collection and stressed the value of establishing rapport with participants. The example with Kerry supported the practice as with Jarrod, Jack and Kelvin, while satisfying research ethics, as detailed in Section 3.1. Participant recruiting, interview quality and enjoyment of the study all have relevance when maintaining the positive rapport. Examples of applying this technique include allowing for short breaks before and during an interview and assisting participants to discuss any problems. Spending time with participants whenever required adds depth to the interaction and

indicates to participants that they are valued. Pietkiewicz and Smith suggested using what they refer to as silence time as well as monitoring the feelings of the participant. This technique helped during interviews with Jarrod, Kerry, Terry, Gary and Graham. This includes, for example, allowing time to listen to participant needs and providing a short pause to enable a participant to ponder an answer. Interview questions were adjusted in accordance with participant needs.

Early in the interview, Kerry had apparently interpreted the interview questions as asking specifically about her own success. This was easy to manage by listening properly and asking extra questions when required. A short but useful interview developed with a participant who lived a comparable but different lifestyle to most other participants who participated in this study. Participant age and early lifestyle for Kerry were similar but current living arrangements and employment in an administrative position was different to others interviewed.

4.11 Potential Participants

Some potential interviews never actually happened but provided a possibility for data collection. For example, Helen and Meg stated their agreement to interview when first asked but did not accept when the time arrived. The introductions helped the preparation for other interviews because the act of introducing the research was important.

Aaron offered assistance to meet with elders in the community. I spoke to Aaron about the study, and he visited later to inquire about interviews. However, he was not ready to interview. Instead, Aaron offered the invitation to a community meeting scheduled for the following day and informed me about regular Thursday lunches at a meeting place in Morwell known as the Gathering Place. These seemed useful

opportunities to meet new people and reconnect with older acquaintances. The first community meeting did not result in an interview but at a lunchtime meeting, two interviews were completed. Although Aaron did not provide an interview, his own interest in the project was useful to organise interviews.

Another opportunity occurred at a local shopping centre. However, at first, I located only one person at a place where Indigenous people were often available. This person was a young mother who did not appear to be ready to interview and she said others had gone to the nearby town of Moe. I decided to go to Moe and prepare for possible interview opportunities.

During the visit to Moe, I located only one other possible participant, and this person was too busy to complete the interview on this day. He was not in a conversant mood, and I avoided waiting for an interview. With extra time available, I located four more Indigenous people, and more interview invitations were offered. Even though interviews did not result, the process helped me practise the interview introductions, maintain contact with the research community, improve understanding of participant needs and find new ways to contact other participants. All this helped facilitate more interviews.

One more example was another person who was considered a potential interviewee because they were one of my most frequent contacts within the local Indigenous community, although they had at first indicated little interest in completing an interview. However, after a short period, this person happily signed a consent form and said, 'I'm in'. Unfortunately, this person never reached the stage of completing the interview. All specific examples in this section are related and the chapter conclusion clarifies why the interviewing process was a major part of the study.

4.12 Conclusion

The various data collection points were all interesting parts of the research. Some interviews were useful for learning about more than the topic of success. Managing issues within the community and developing interviewing techniques were parts of the learning process. A positive interaction with participants was always a valuable step. According to Sandelowski (2000, 2012), becoming close to the data is crucial. Noted in Chapter 1, the thought that researchers ought to recognise themselves as being part of a group is important in relation to this research methodology. For example, a range of conversations with individuals proved important, even though interviews did not eventuate. The examples in this chapter have illustrated significant incidents that were fundamental for data collection, thereby having direct influence on the research. The chapter has described an important stage of the research, essential for completing data collection and preparing the data analysis described in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Thematic Analysis of Interviews

This chapter explains the findings of the thematic analysis used to establish the meanings of the 26 qualitative interviews completed during this study. Three more interviews were rated as not retaining useful comments. Common themes identified for the interviews are described in detail. The field notes used have provided extra data and the supporting evidence is stated in square parentheses when relevant with the participant quotes used for each theme. A pause in the conversation is indicated using the word ‘pause’ used in square brackets detailed further in Section 3.3.8. Extra spacing is used with comments to indicate a longer pause in the conversation.

This chapter is divided into two major sections, labelled 5.1 and 5.2. Both use the numeral 5 to allow the reader to appreciate the interconnection, and second level heading used to indicate the difference of these two analytical groups (see Schwartz, 2016). The first group of themes discussed are the five different themes identified as general-comment themes; success is different, success available to all with a secondary sub-theme added, difficulty discussing success, determination and creativity or spirituality. The second major section of the chapter presents themes classified as definitions for the concept of success provided by participants, and five themes were observed. The titles of the success definition themes are family support, contribution to community, achieving goals, happiness and continuing culture.

Each theme includes four sub-sections. The first section illustrates the clearest correlations shown by the participants with each relevant theme. The second section discusses participants that showed a less obvious relationship with the themes, the third section discusses relevant literature to place this research in context with other work and a concluding section gives the reader an opportunity to assess each theme. Where

applicable, the broad range of participant comments are discussed for each theme. The observed themes resulted from the grounded theory approach, using primarily an inductive reasoning method, with elements of deductive reasoning used for the analysis of qualitative data, as detailed in Section 3.4 (see Hyde, 2000).

5.1 General-Comment Themes

At least 23 participants were judged to prefer to comment about the concept of success rather than either define the concept of success or speak specifically about individual circumstances of success. The exact number of relevant interviews was not easily adjudicated because at least one more interview was required to confirm the point with participants.

For three general-comment themes—‘success is different’, ‘success available to all’ and ‘difficulty discussing success’—there was no observed desire to state the definition of success. However, two of the general-comment themes—‘determination’ and ‘creativity or spirituality’—include participants that did propose a definition of the concept of success, as well as other participants who did not show a desire to define success. Referred to in Chapter 1, the theme ‘success is different’ is evidenced by the proposition made by a potential participant who claimed that Indigenous people challenge dominant understandings of success. Hence, this theme was an example of the deductive reasoning aspect of the analysis and is the first general-comment theme discussed.

5.1.1 Success is Different

The definition of this theme was identified early in the study and the comment from a local person was both insightful and instructive, agreeing that the concept of success was described as different by research participants compared to what was perceived to be the mainstream Westernised Australian community’s version of success.

Potential participants who were not ready to join the interview process were considered under this theme because they may have declined the interview resulting from the assumption that their responses would be outside the understanding of anyone listening to the interview.

The first section illustrates five participants who considered directly supporting this theme. Next discussed are six participants who were interpreted as being less obviously relevant to the theme, although their interviews revealed related material. Finally, related claims in the literature are canvassed.

5.1.1.1 Specific Examples

The first example is easily identified because Terry stated directly that success was different for him from the concept held by the general society:

Well I don't want to measure success as the way society sees it.

And Terry gave more explanation:

That success of havin' material objects is not success in ... I believe for me and my people eyes ... Success for me ... just being, your true self ... and offering wider audience your true self and sharing our culture. And um everything comes from the very core of culture and I'm not tryin' to water it down.

Terry separated the concepts of success and materialism. He then provided more information, identifying areas of success that are different for his local community from those ideas held by what he has described as 'society', presumably the mainstream Australian community. 'Your true self', offering to a larger audience and sharing culture are topics that Terry used to show the differences between Indigenous success and societal success.

Steering away from the mainstream picture of success was similar in Daryl's response, which inferred that success was not even an important issue:

I'm black and I'm free and that's all that matters.

Daryl had thought about the research information statement and the interview questions. Presumably, his message was that a mainstream society concept of success is not a high priority for him. He used the term 'black' to indicate cultural specifics of his own life and discussed his freedom to identify important factors for himself. This relates to Jim's comments, which also seemed to place a low value on the concept of success. Freedom and daily routine are examples of areas considered more important. Jim was referring to his own family life:

We kind of have this thing where we don't like to talk about our successes. ... just really our daily routine.

The single interpretation that either Daryl or Jim place low value on success is not conclusive because the interviewees would need to confirm the point and follow-up interviews would be necessary. However, this was not possible: Daryl was difficult to relocate because of his other commitments and Jim did not wish to address the issue further during a follow-up interview owing to time commitments. Both interviews were related to other research and are discussed further below (Grass, 2014; Herbert, 2003a; Mrabure, 2019).

Another participant apparently placing low value on success was John, who responded to a query about who are the successful people with a question himself: 'like what?' Apparently, John had no preconceptions of exactly who is successful. He also followed questions about specific people in his own community with qualified approval, saying, 'yeah, he's alright'. The people mentioned to John during this interview were regarded as successful using the definitions outlined in Section 2.4.4, referring to success as a favourable result and to the respondents considering themselves to be successful. The definition was intended to allow for two different cultures as well as the subjective nature

of the success concept. The interpretation was that the participant was avoiding specific recognition of successful people, therefore implying that a person who had been named as successful in the traditional Western society, or in another scenario, did not warrant special significance or distinction from others. This is discussed further in Section 6.2.

John's comments, apparently not recognising success in the Western society, related to Terry's comment above about 'not seeing success the way society sees it'. Another participant, Neil, who has completed at least one academic degree, made comparable comments aiming to separate Indigenous success from the Western version. He answered a question about a different kind of success in an Indigenous community:

Well it is [different]. There's been many, well from a political standpoint all they see as success is so-called academic experts or whatever ...

Neil also named other people who are considered successful in their field, suggesting that without given decorations, someone is often not considered successful in the mainstream society. Supporting this point, the comment added here is that when awarded with many or high accolades, a person might even be 'idolised' (Boyle, 2003). This is discussed in greater detail in Section 2.4. Suggesting that success for some people is overlooked, Neil said:

And many people are experts in their chosen field but they don't [...] they're not given that ... they're not given the acknowledgement of it.

The point that people are 'not given the acknowledgement of it' is supported here because, apparently, too often, examples such as the expert cleaner or domestic carer are overlooked as successful in Western societies. The concept is discussed further in Section 6.2. Neil's description of success was:

For me success is ... is ... doing the best I can not just for me but to help further generations recover from the untold truth of this country.

Neil's interview has been interpreted as claiming that success is different in his local Indigenous community. He said that success can be recognised in ways that are not the same as what is commonly noticed in mainstream society. 'Doing the best I can' qualified with 'not just for me' and 'helping future generations' appear to be the significant factors for him. Steering the success idea away from simply his own individualised achievements was a key point of the interpretation of the comments by Neil.

The examples in this section were interpreted as succinct evidence of the theme that success is different for people for an Indigenous community. These examples might not always be explicit because of participant references to 'our own family', 'for me' and 'future generations'. However, most Indigenous people who discussed the issue showed a preference to identify themselves or their immediate family as part of a community not as an individual entity, and this observation has been supported by others (Ermine, 2000, p. 99; Foley, 2006a). Therefore, the examples here have been interpreted as referring to a community view, not an individual opinion. Other participants seemed to support the 'success is different' claim, but not as readily, with indirect or less explicit references.

5.1.1.2 Less Explicit Examples

This section illustrates six interviews that suggest success is different, albeit less obviously than above. Kelvin's answer when asked whether he considered himself successful immediately raised the question about the success definition:

Ohh ... [pause] I dunno. ... Well what do we call successful?

Kelvin continued with other comments that might be interpreted as defining success in monetary or academic terms:

Well if I was a millionaire then I'd say then I'm really successful. And to be a millionaire I'd have to have a successful business I s'pse.

Which I don't have. Well the only success I had really was I went and got myself a master's degree. Well that was to me.

However, Kelvin did not expand on these comments. The fact that the comments appear to be implicit, as well as his first question about the definition of success, have led to the conclusion that Kelvin considered his own success not easy to define. Therefore, the interpretation for Kelvin was, his own success is not the same as success often seen in a mainstream Western community, although he was prepared to acknowledge the success in Western society. Possibly Kelvin's use of the Western societal version of success was saying what he thought was expected to be heard. The detail of Kelvin's answers also indicates an awareness of the complexities of defining success. When asked for examples of other successful people, Kelvin said:

No well success I s'pose comes in different range of things.

This comment confirmed the interpretation that Kelvin showed a personal picture of success that is different to common definitions he has heard. The monetary definition of success did not seem appropriate for Kelvin to describe his own success because he referred to the academic version as more appropriate for himself.

Similarly, Jack posed a question about defining success. When asked, how do you describe successful? Jack's first response was:

What is?

He paused to think about the question indicating that he did not have an immediate answer and then said:

Umm ... You can be successful in life in your own doing. It doesn't matter very much what you do. Just head down bum [sic] up just get on with it, to where you're heading just get on with it ... You will achieve so much ... in your life it will just make your life so much better.

Asking the question about success and other comments, directing the conversation away from the word success, have been interpreted as implying there is probably a type of success that for himself is different to success in a mainstream Australian community. Jack's answer indicated that something positive is achievable, by completing something and making life better.

Early in an interview, Peter raised two ideas he wanted to relate to success. Discussed in Chapter 4, both these ideas were used as part of an interview question and were constructed to make use of an active listening technique. That is, since Peter himself had used the words 'reach' and 'join', these words were used as part of the interview question:

How would you describe success? Reach people? Join everyone?

Peter himself answered:

Reach other people. Join everyone. Older people, elders. Deal with problems head on. No lies and deal with problems when they're there.

This answer has been interpreted as Peter aiming to introduce concepts about success that differ to what is often thought of as success in a mainstream community. The analysis of Peter's comments resulted in Peter identifying success as having a social aspect, which he described by the reference to connecting and joining with other people, including elders. Another dimension of success for Peter was being prepared to confront and then resolve potential problems. The analysis could be questioned because Peter had not given many further comments. To help confirm these results, an extra interview had been sought for Peter. However, when the contact address Peter had provided was visited twice, Peter was not available. When Peter was located in a public space, the interview did not happen because Peter said he was busy caring for children.

Kerry indicated that her own success is something different to many other Indigenous people she knows and said:

seeing a lot of the other ... a lot of the Indigenous people here who are actually experiencing success ... In ways that are you know actually different to what I'm experiencing. And you know I think that their experiences are really valuable. ... because even though it's not the same ... it might be employment success ... it's life success where they've made differences ...

Kerry said that numerous Indigenous people have experienced something different to herself. She then insisted their experience was 'valuable'. Therefore, Kerry considered this success important. The phrase 'life success' confirms this. Kerry then mentioned employment success and her own 'relationship':

I have ... started a relationship. I don't ... [have anything] to be worried about in my life.

Paid employment achievements and her personal relationships have been interpreted by Kerry as success. This is perhaps similar to a typical Western type of success, as defined in Section 2.4. However, this conclusion is not easily drawn because there is likely to be more detail to Kerry's perception of success. For example, Kerry might consider an idea of Indigenous success to be broader than her own definition, given the value she placed on the experiences of her Indigenous friends. Significantly, Kerry did not openly identify her own success. This is possibly influenced by a wider societal desirability because another comment Kerry made was interpreted as seeing success in the way a broader group appears to prefer:

Actually taking their life back into their own hands and um getting stable jobs stable accommodation back ... [omission] ... that's something you know that I see as a ... really big success ... you know ... within every community there's ...

but especially so in our Indigenous community ... [pause] Because there's a lot against ... [emphasis]

By first using the phrase 'really big success', Kerry seemed to be claiming this was important. Then, adding emphasis with the phrase, 'especially so in our Indigenous community', Kerry implied that a definition of success is likely more dependent upon a wider group, than her own independent understanding.

A second interview would have helped to clarify Kerry's thoughts. A key factor when deciding not to pursue a follow-up interview was Kerry's discomfort with the interview process. Kerry delayed the interview after accepting the invitation. After the interview had begun, Kerry requested a specific place to conduct the interview, then indicated discomfort with the recorder being too close and kept the interview timing short. Each of these factors suggest that Kerry was not completely comfortable with the interview situation.

When discussing her own success, Mary appeared to imply that success was different for her than what she perceived as the government or maybe the coloniser version of success. Her comment separated the government from her own desires:

What I wanted to achieve... in successful wise ... is I wanted to get umm ... everything completed an' especially with all the history an' stuff. ... And um ... yeah and basically that ... an' see if they can give us a treaty. The government ... that's what we want. That's ...

Mary said that a treaty was required for success, apparently indicating a different kind of success for Indigenous groups. Other themes were also relevant for this interview. The phrase 'everything completed' appears to indicate the achievement of goals (see Section 5.2.3) and Mary showed that a reluctance to talk about success, that probably implied a difficulty to discuss the topic (see Section 5.1.3).

Another participant who questioned how success ought to be considered was Sally. Her answers raised the topic that success involves several types of mediums, as shown in the comment:

Do I call myself successful? Well I guess success comes in different types of mediums. ... I'm an artist. I bring in painting and drawing, since I was very little. It was a way of escape I'd say.

First, asking the question about calling herself successful and then referring to the different types of mediums, Sally appeared to be questioning the overall meaning of the success concept. The point 'success comes in different types of mediums' has been interpreted as claiming that success ought to be thought of as having several definitions, which are probably different for many connected with an Indigenous as opposed to a mainstream Western society. Sally's interview and the other indirect examples of 'success is different' probably require further research for clarity. For example, whether or not Sally separated the artistic and Indigenous aspects of her life is a question that requires further explanation from Sally. The artwork showed during the interview process suggested there was a connection because Sally was using artwork to restore historical records of what she described as 'required freedom certificates' for Indigenous people leaving a local mission, to which they were relegated by the colonisers more than 150 years ago. Sally's interview is discussed further in Section 5.1.5. Consideration of the literature provides for clarification of observations in this thesis in comparison to other work.

5.1.1.3 Literature

The evidence from participants that success is often different within an Indigenous community is supported in the literature. Despite the limited material regarding the topic

of Indigenous success in Australia, there are examples of authors discussing the notion that success is different.

Foley (2003a, 2006c, 2004) argued in several papers that success for what he called the Indigenous society, and specifically the entrepreneur, is somewhat different than that of the mainstream society. Foley noted that many Indigenous entrepreneurs were not even readily discussing the topic of success—an observation noted with participants in this study, who were not entrepreneurs. Foley's arguments have been supported by others (Lindsay, 2005; Morley, 2014; Schaper, 1999).

Results in this section support research in Canada by Grass (2014, p. 78), who claimed that Indigenous perspectives of success often differ when compared to mainstream versions. Discussing the educational process, Grass (2014, p. 83) argued that the whole concept of success opens a wider debate. Questions have arisen about how educational success varies, with a different idea of success for Indigenous communities (Herbert, 2003b). These arguments were supported by the interviewees in this study, Daryl and Jim, when raising the question about whether the concept of success was even important. Also supporting the argument by Grass that an Indigenous version of an educational idea of success is at variance to a Western version were Terry, Kelvin, Neil and Sally. The examples in this section suggest that all these interviewees recognised their own educational success but also made comments to separate this from Indigenous success and were not ready to transfer educational success to an Indigenous conception of success.

As suggested above, Neil, who has been active in academia, argued that success is different for himself. Referring to other Indigenous people, he suggested that:

Successful not in just gaining the knowledge, but also by being able to argue cases and by being able to hold strong firm views they'll help shape the nation for the next generation.

Neil seemed to suggest that success in academia for Indigenous people has several indicators (see also R. Oliver et al., 2016; Trudgett, 2013). Adding to the value of gaining knowledge, Neil claimed that stating firm views and being able to help configure the views of another generation are important. Barney (2016) agreed with the claim that there is a range of aspects to Indigenous academic success. For example, returning skills to the local community, social networking, achieving goals and providing support for other Indigenous students.

Tripcony (2003) supported the argument that there are often differences achieving academic success for individuals in an Indigenous community. Relative to the academic success, Tripcony discussed barriers such as racism and monetary aspects. Tripcony also discussed other problems. Examples included the demands on someone's time considering funerals, as well as different perceptions of the time concept and family commitments.

Extant literature discussing Indigenous academic success appears to assume that success for the Indigenous student is similar, if not the same as, for the mainstream student (Fan & Karnilowicz, 1997; Devlin, 2015). This literature appears to overlook or maybe devalue the other literature and comments of participants mentioned in this section. For example, other authors mentioned in this section, as well as the participants Kelvin and Neil, suggested that success, including in academia, is judged differently within an Indigenous community to by the mainstream society. This section identifies literature referring to general Indigenous success and supporting the 'success is different' notion. The claim for this study is that success for Indigenous people in academic terms

needs to be reviewed or updated to consider the idea that success is often seen differently by Indigenous people; this point is discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.1.1.4 Summary

The theme that success is different for Indigenous communities compared to mainstream Australian society has been supported by Indigenous participants in this project. Four participants have been interpreted as making this claim in a direct sense. Five others supported the idea less obviously. Foley (2003a, 2004, 2006b) claimed that success is not the same in an Indigenous community as in a Western community. Similar arguments were made by Grass (2014) in Canadian research. The theory that success is different for Indigenous people is further supported if we assume that the concept of success is different when participants compare what they consider to be a mainstream version of success to what is termed an Indigenous version of success. The definitions of success acknowledged for this study are stated in Section 2.4. A mainstream idea of success was suggested to be undesirable by participants mentioned in this section, as well by the other examples of potential participants who seemed unwilling to discuss the topic. Considering success in a different way is the foundation of the following section, wherein success is deemed not to be restricted to the realms of the few.

5.1.2 Success Available to All

The definition of this theme is that the participant perceived the concept of success to be available to all of society. The term ‘all’ should be thought of here as the ‘majority of the community’, since more research is required to distinguish any variance from the participants’ perspective. The term ‘all’ is used here because participants apparently had the idea of ‘everyone’.

Discussed first are four participants who made directly associated comments clearly indicating success was available to everyone and not restricted to a few gifted

people. The second section gives four examples of the interviewees referring to the theme, although not as obviously connected. A sub-theme is included, considering eight participants who avoided naming specific people as successful. This theme suggests success should be thought of as allowing success to be available to everyone and not restricted to, maybe gifted, individuals. The relevant literature is discussed and the summary follows.

5.1.2.1 Major Association

Four participants directly stated that success is available to all. The first was Adam who is discussed in more detail below with theme ‘spirituality or creativity’. Adam showed explicit acceptance of success being open to the majority of people. When asked about examples of successful people, Adam’s reply was:

I mean anybody can get to, as far as I’m concerned, in order to get it eventually ...

The term ‘anybody’ was a clear reference to the majority. Qualifying this term with the phrases ‘I mean’ and ‘as far as I’m concerned’ was interpreted as indicative of Adam expressing his own personal view. The addition of the word ‘eventually’ seemed to be an attempt to explain that success is reached by anyone spending enough time to achieve their needs.

Cameron is a member of various local community groups and is always willing to offer input. Cameron is part of the local Gunnai/Kurnai community. His personal history includes higher education, corporate employment and a wide assortment of living arrangements. Cameron answered the question about any examples of other successful people, saying:

No I don’t really judge it like that.

Cameron then asserted that he viewed all people as equal, and this point, combined with his reluctance to name individuals, resulted in the interpretation that Cameron viewed success as available to everyone not only to a selected group.

Another example was Mary, who was born in Northern Queensland and has spent much of her life focusing on the responsibilities involved in caring for her family. Mary took her time to accept the invitation to converse about the concept of success. Mary completed a short interview and her answer, when asked about a definition of success, was:

Ahh, no just everybody that's come about ... That's been really good. Yeah.

The utterance at the beginning of the answer seemed to indicate a slight surprise at being asked this question, then Mary's naming of 'everybody' with emphasis on the phrase, 'come about', resulted in the interpretation that Mary believed success was available to most people and not restricted to a few. A similar type of interview was completed with Gary.

Gary was a middle-aged male who was interviewed in Sydney. He was part of a busking group. He said that the goal of this group was to share the culture not to raise funds. He was comfortable talking about his own experiences. When asked about naming specific individuals, Gary named several famous people: Mark Atkins, Phillip Glass, Santana, John Fogerty and Stephen Tyler. He then made the comments, 'any of my friends', and '... amazing artists. Yeah'. He continued with the statement:

You know. [*Pause*] ... I haven't just got my Aboriginal my Indigenous brothers and sisters that I look up to. I'll give credit to anyone where it's due. [*pause*] Whitefella, blackfella, Asian. ... We might be here for a couple of hours ... talking about people who inspired me.

Therefore, even though Gary did name several famous people during his interview, he implied that the opportunity of success was open to the majority of people. This section has shown examples of participants who suggested that success was available to everyone. Observations in other interviews were related but not quite so straightforward.

5.1.2.2 Inferred Comments

Heather was teaching art at a local art school. Heather said that she was promoting this art group both as support for individuals and as a way of advancement for culture. Heather stated that she aimed to help students develop visual art skills, generally with ceramics, painting and textiles. An implication during the interview with Heather was that success is available to most people. For example, Heather apparently believed that success was available to any student who attended the art group. When asked, ‘What do you want to call successful?’, Heather responded:

[Pause] Well when a student completes a class, that’s successful, and then goes on to do something else.

From the interview, it was interpreted that Heather believed the opportunity for artistic achievement provided a path to success for anyone who wished to take part. Therefore, Heather’s comment was considered to indicate that success was available for everyone.

Also including others with a personal description of success was Peter. Mentioned in Section 5.1.1.2, Peter was a middle-aged male and part of the local Indigenous group. Both humour and philosophical issues were part of Peter’s conversations. Peter showed interest in the success research project and was pleased to offer his opinions about defining success:

Reach other people.

Join everyone. Older people, elders. Deal with problems head on.

This answer has been interpreted to mean that success is available to most people. Peter appeared to be saying that individuals dealing with their problems was important regarding the concept of success. Nobody was named as a successful individual during the interview nor in any other conversations with Peter. Therefore, Peter was interpreted as suggesting success was available to everyone.

Sally was a visual artist who readily discussed her artwork and other Indigenous issues; she was studying art at university level. Discussing successful artists, Sally said that she wanted to avoid specific names. However, she did casually mention the name Peter Warples-Crow and, when asked to name successful people, she stated, with emphasis:

Wow. There are heaps of them.

Hence, the extra emphasis on many without adding any more specific examples led to the conclusion that Sally had the opinion that success was readily available to most people.

A participant who described successful people emphasising an example group was Jim, who did name his own uncle soon after being asked about success. When asked, ‘do you call yourself successful, then?’. He said:

Ummm ... I suppose, yeah, you ahh ... I’ve accomplished a number of things I want to accomplish. And I guess that's a measure of success ... and having such, such role models as Albert Mullet or Uncle Albert Mullet as he’s known to other people ...

However, when questioned further, Jim avoided offering names and later preferred to mention a ‘team’. He did mention the coach, although not by name. When asked for examples, Jim replied:

That's a very good question because I guess they're people that you look up to.

Umm ... people of success ummm ... not all of them mind you ... but there's ones that you sort of [have] a base umm and they're more ... you relate to more I guess ...

This comment suggests that Jim viewed a large field of people as potentially successful, most people apparently. Jim also mentioned the famous names Michael Jordan and Thomas Edison and referred to his mother and father. Therefore, his comments were construed as more subtle than those of other interviewees referred to in this section. With a wide range of examples, the exact notion of success was not clear, in this interview.

This section has presented examples from various interviews used to imply that success is available to anyone who chooses to be considered successful. The conversational nature of the interview helped direct the interviewees to reach conclusions. Closely related to the theme 'success is available to all' was another motif among participants, called here a sub-theme, in which participants preferred not to name specific individuals as successful.

5.1.2.3 Avoiding Specific Names

The definition of this part of the 'success is available to all' theme is that participants avoided naming specific individuals when asked for examples of successful people. This has been interpreted as the equalisation of a community and, therefore, it was considered a reference to success as available to most if not all of society. Other reasons for avoiding names might include issues such as memory, caution or personal embarrassment.

The first participant who was not prepared to name others as successful was Kelvin, who was recognised as a person always ready to join the conversation and offer

help to others. Kelvin has faced his own challenges with physical health and other issues. When first informed about this research, Kelvin immediately began offering ideas.

The preference to not provide specific names combined with other comments was interpreted as Kelvin indicating that success has a range of meanings. For example, when first asked for examples of successful people, Kelvin stated that the relevant details of success are vast. When asked the question designed to provide for the identification of successful people—, ‘anyone else you want to talk about who’s successful?’—Kelvin replied:

No ... well success I s’pose comes in different range of things.

This statement was one example of comments made during the interview where Kelvin did not find specific names when talking about examples of success. There was one reference to an individual who was a past member of State Parliament, which was apparently what Kelvin thought was an expected statement.

John was a young male who inquired about the project and claimed that his main interest was keeping himself occupied. A short interview developed slowly. John did not immediately state any names when asked for examples of successful people. This was interpreted as a reluctance to name anyone and was checked by following up with another question during the interview as well as by listening to John’s answers. When two people from the local community were named as part of the interview questions, John was reluctant and slow to agree that they were successful. The implication is that John displayed a communal attitude for his description of success because he was not prepared to begin stating names.

The Jarrod interview is relevant here and closely related in Jarrod’s response to the request to name successful people: he began by apparently paying a compliment to me:

You ... You been a family friend all our lives,

Well ... everybody in general. My father [now deceased] a big role model. A big eye opener ...

Both these examples seem to imply that Jarrod chose what he thought was a satisfying answer because he was aware and approved of my personal friendship with his now deceased father. Significantly, he provided no other names during this conversation.

Another Jarrod statement was:

Sssuccess. [speech manner] That's a big thing in our culture. ... Anybody in life is successful anybody if you have kids. That is successful.

And anybody, if you have kids in life is successful. In life, without that you wouldn't have life.

The interpretation of these comments was this was a direct attempt by Jarrod to avoid naming specific people as successful. This answer is also related to comments from Amelia, a middle-aged woman, who claimed that she models herself on elder mentors and avoids confronting situations. Amelia did not readily offer her own opinions after being asked for examples of successful people. Amelia's first reply was:

Most successful?

Then, Amelia named her partner. This was interpreted as avoiding general names because, apparently, Amelia thought her partner's name was the expected answer and no other examples were offered.

Kerry was a participant mentioned in Chapter 4 as well as Section 5.1.1.2. Kerry responded to the request for examples of successful people with a generalised community reference:

Absolutely. You know, the more people that have success stories like that in our community the more other members of the community see you know how good it is ... so our success um that we experience really provides others ...

The references to more people and the community have been interpreted as Kerry's examples of success and these examples did not specify individual names.

The five participants discussed above provide straightforward examples of avoiding the act of giving specific names for successful people. Three other participants were relevant although not quite so obviously related to the theme.

5.1.2.4 Less Obvious Examples

A participant crediting elder members of the community was a middle-aged male, Tom, who supported his own idea of values emanating from role models by stating his desire to help others. He claimed that he tried to follow general rules and avoid disputes. Instead of giving specific names, Tom first said, 'You? And who else?'. Then, he followed up with the more descriptive comment:

And I'm tryin' to just keep goin' with it. Just do the right thing. Keep updatin' with the community. With whoever I'm stayin' and wherever I'm doin it.

Tom was given further opportunity to name people, but there were no individuals named as successful people.

Terry provided relevant information for this theme with his response when asked about successful individuals. A reference was made to elders, referred to as a group of people, not as individual examples deemed 'qualified' to achieve this status. Terry's view appeared to judge success as much from a subjective as by an objective perspective because he implied these were his own views. Terry's idea may well be interpreted as demonstrating that many concepts within an Indigenous community are somewhat different to those held by a common Western view. The point requires further research as

well as more study of the literature but this is beyond the scope of discussion in this study because time did not allow for the extra interviews needed. Terry's interview comments seem to ensure many people were included as successful:

Terry: ... many of my brothers ... you look around ... They're happy with themselves.

IH: Any names [of successful people]?

Terry: No I don't have any names.

This apparent reluctance to name anyone during the interview was interpreted as an indication that Terry did not associate successful people with specific names.

Nellie did not name anyone as successful and the interview answers were considered as avoiding the question. When asked about people from whom she would seek advice, the answer was provided cautiously, and advisories were mentioned with a group focus. The group Nellie referred to was her 'sisters', referring to all women within her local community. The terms 'brother' and 'sister' are frequently used by most members of the community. The example from the conversation with Nellie was not as clear cut as others in this section. Nellie provided no names, using the comment, 'No one I know personally'. This comment was interpreted as an example of success being connected to a wide range of people and was related to recent literature.

5.1.2.5 Link to Literature

The question of success being available to everyone, or many, has been explored in specific studies. Ramírez et al. (2016) discussed success in Mexican Indigenous communities and raised the importance of what they argue as a type of communal availability of success, apparently referring to success as a concept available to the overall community.

Herbert (2003b) analysed success as a part of academic achievement when training teachers, thus acknowledging the Western perception of success as an individualistic pursuit. Barney (2016) also referred to academic success and mentioned the need to ‘give back’ to the community when discussing success. This point supported Herbert’s (2000) argument that effective liaison with the relevant community is crucial when trying to address problems faced by primary school students, such as absence from school. Both authors provided strong examples of the logic used in this research applying an Indigenous research paradigm to appreciate the interviewees, as explained in detail in Section 3.2.

Bucholz (1978) argued that work ethic should be reconsidered, and this position agrees with Schewitz (2014), who claimed that the welfare myths should be debunked and that success is available for welfare recipients. This argument resonated with participants in this study since no one related success to paid employment and at least six participants devalued any material aspect of success.

The authors mentioned in this section support this study, in which participants referred to success being available to everyone. The theme relating success is available to all, was either specifically referred to by participants or was part of a more general conversation about success, discussing who might be perceived as successful. Therefore, the findings have been discussed in this section.

5.1.2.6 Summary

The interviews discussed in this section indicate that success is accessible to everyone, or at least to the majority of people in society. Fourteen participants of a total of 26 showed signs of believing that success is available to everyone. The participants suggested that success is not the domain of a select group of high achievers. In the first seven examples, the participants directly stated this point. The next four examples were

observed to indicate a similar position, although less obviously. Section 5.1.2.3 provided eight examples of participants who seemed to have this opinion by avoiding the naming of specific individuals as successful, arguably because they were reluctant to discuss the topic of success. This is the basis of the next theme.

5.1.3 Difficulty Discussing Success

A challenge dealt with during the research process was conducting interviews with the group of participants who appeared to have difficulty discussing the concept of success. The definition of this theme is participants who were observed to have notable aversion to discuss the topic of success. The interview answers of seven participants discussed in the first section argues that participants experienced a type of shame, possibly for over exemplifying oneself or maybe shame for nominating others as special. Also discussed are four potential participants who were reluctant to fulfil the position of interviewee. Further detail for participant reactions noticed in this section are discussed in Chapter 6, in which the personal feelings of an interviewee feeling judged are discussed.

This section considers whether or not people feel comfortable. Sections 3.1 and 3.3 explain recruitment issues and how samples were recruited for this research, considering the exclusion of participants with certain views (see Kvale, 1996, p. 21–33). The interviews presented in this study disclose the views of Indigenous individuals willing to discuss success, and the identification of those who refused to discuss the topic. Relevant literature is also discussed with associated examples of participants; the final section reassesses the analysis in preparation for later chapters referring to limits, further research, recruiting and discussion of results.

5.1.3.1 Avoiding the Topic

In seven cases, the interviewee apparently did not wish to even discuss the concept of success, and this was interpreted as difficulty discussing success. Mary's

interview raised points about discussing success. Mary stated that she did not have problems interviewing but three approaches were required before the interview happened. Mary had interviewed readily and informatively when interviewed in another project (Hamilton, 2014). Therefore, the main problem for Mary was probably the interview subject of success. Even when the interview began, Mary seemed reticent about interviewing although no obvious discomforting factors were apparent. The interview was held at the time Mary indicated she was ready at her own home. And there had been an effort to avoid rushing. When the interview was introduced, Mary said:

... [quietly] wait for it to be pretty quiet I s'pose. [pause] Leave it and do it another time?

When the interview was eventually begun in the home environment, the only noise apparent was a nearby television. After gentle encouragement and reminding Mary about previous delays, she agreed to continue, and a short interview was completed. Mary said:

Still embarrassed I s'pose.

This interview almost certainly indicated that Mary experienced a kind of embarrassment. Mary apparently presumed that she was being asked specifically about her own success and this affected how she felt. Therefore, she was apparently experiencing at least some embarrassment about openly speaking of her own individual success indicators. A possible feeling of shame or embarrassment about a participant portraying their own virtues are referred to in Foley's (2003a, 2004) points described below.

During the research introductory stages, Kerry exhibited interest. For example, her comments when introduced to this study were, 'if at first you don't succeed try again', apparently saying that success is desired and if not achieved immediately then further

attempts are favourable. Sandra also asked questions about the study according to project goals, methods and findings to date. At first, Sandra seemed ready to discuss success, but the rest of her input suggested that this was not the case. Nearby distractions were observed, and when signing the consent form Sandra added extra marks to the completed form. Verbal confirmation of the interview was used to satisfy any ethical doubts because the slightly slurred speech suggested Sandra might not be in her best condition. This could affect Sandra's concentration, but the extent is difficult to judge (L. H. Smith, 1941). See Section 3.3 for more detail about concentration requirements for an interviewee completing a qualitative interview.

Sandra had not shown any signs of resistance to the request about beginning the interview but when the recorder was switched on Sandra never addressed the questions asked of her, staying away from the topic of success. Sandra simply spoke of other things. For example, quietly singing:

Amelia.

Purchase my own Mercedes Benz ...

Whether this was Sandra finding a way to avoid the topic of success, unwilling to be interviewed, an attempt to say what she thought was expected or simply not ready to have the conversation is difficult to decide. Since health effects seemed minimal, the most likely conclusion is her unwillingness to discuss success.

Other examples illustrate that there were other forms of resistance to the interview process and/or the interview content. For example, another respondent, Ned, used another method that may be interpreted as avoiding questions. Ned preferred to play the didgeridoo rather than answer questions about success. Ned is discussed further in Section 5.2.4. The verbal portion of the interview provided comments, but Ned was not ready to answer all interview questions. The observation was that most of Ned's

interview was not a discussion of the concept of success. Authors have stated that interviewees might avoid the topic to simplify the process of concentrating enough to provide useful comments with the diversion into another area where they feel more comfortable (Kvale, 1996).

The interview with Jarrod is worth considering here. The interview began without much prompting after Jarrod had initiated contact with an obvious need for someone to listen to his problems. When the interview began, he paused before answering questions about success. He had already mentioned the research topic but in fact his first statement about success was, 'I'm havin trouble sayin' that word'. There was a short break during the interview and no detailed answers about success were provided by Jarrod. See Chapter 4 for more details of this interview.

Related to the Jarrod interview was that of John, who required two short preparatory recordings before an interview began. This is probably a sign that he was not comfortable in the interviewing scenario. John's speech was not clear. He mentioned football early. Therefore, he was asked if he was good at football and his reply was:

Yeah, I'm good at footy.

In an attempt to relate this to success, he was asked if he called this successful and his response was:

I dunno.

The interview progressed attempting to minimise use of the word 'success' and John's answer when asked for advice about success was:

I got no advice.

Therefore, the question was adjusted to:

How would you tell me to be good at footy?

The answer was again:

I dunno.

John's reluctance to name himself as successful playing football, as well as the lack of any detail as soon as the word successful was raised and the reluctance to offer advice, suggested that John was not comfortable talking about the concept of success.

Amelia was another participant who did not seem comfortable with the interview process. The interview began slowly, and prompting was required to complete the exercise. The interview is part of the difficulty discussing success theme because the most noticeable feature of Amelia's interview was her avoidance of the term 'success', especially during the introductory stages. As a result, use of this the term 'success' as an interview question was minimised during this conversation. Amelia was asked about the 'good' aspects of her life. This is an example of the interview technique being adjusted to suit the interviewee. Amelia's answer about the definition of success was interpreted as Amelia perceiving success as a positive result for people within the community with which she is associated. Owing to other comments, her interview is discussed further in Sections 5.1.4, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3.

Heather's interview was completed in two stages, with an introductory interview followed by a more topic focused interview later that was only acceptable after three prompting type talks. Even in the second interview, Heather was cautious to openly discuss success. Discussing success was considered the major problem for Heather because the interview was followed with a more freely flowing discussion about other items. The introductory interview occurred in a more relaxed atmosphere and in the second interview the discussion of success required more thinking time for Heather. This could have been related to other problems such as too much officialdom, concern with the interview situation or limited time available.

The section has shown examples of participants seemingly not ready to discuss the topic of success, sometimes discussing issues with which they feel comfortable or familiar to avoid topics they perceive as more difficult. For example, Ned preferring to play the didgeridoo might be seen as an avoidance strategy. Related situations during this study were observed where potential interviews did not even occur.

5.1.3.2 Interviews Not Happening

Several potential interviewees were not ready to take part. Examples of non-interviews are included with the theme difficulty discussing success because the individuals were deemed most likely to have had problems dealing with this research topic (see Sections 5.1.3.2 and 6.1.1). For example, Taylor usually appeared comfortable with a small group conversation but when the interview topic was introduced, the response was:

I don't get into personal stuff.

The phrase 'personal stuff' suggested that rather than being unwilling to interview, this is likely to have been a comment claiming there was something disturbing about discussing the success of individuals. Therefore, this is included in the difficulty discussing success theme.

Two women who had agreed in advance to interview did not agree to take part when requested. One answer was '... not today'. These are examples of potential participants who may have not been ready to discuss the success concept or possibly have been uncomfortable when placed into the interviewee position. Both Helen and Meg were met at least three times and were still not ready to interview when asked during friendly conversations. The topic of success was not raised during these informal conversations. Therefore, the discomfort with the interview process was considered a possible reason for the interviews not being accepted. The possibility that these potential participants might

have had a gender bias issue regarding the interview has been considered unlikely because of the harmony of earlier conversations and the original agreement to complete the interview. The prime reason for not interviewing is difficult to judge. Since the potential interviewees had previously agreed to the interview, the most probable reason for avoiding the interview was considered avoiding the topic of success.

When first asked about an interview, Susan did not seem keen to take part. However, when Susan was met several weeks later, she said, 'I'm in' and signed the consent form. However, she decided not to take part as soon as the term 'success' was mentioned. Susan was deemed a participant who was not willing to discuss this topic, in line with Foley's (2003a) claims regarding discomfort discussing success and further discussed in the following section regarding literature connections.

5.1.3.3 Relevant Literature

Literature referring to interviewee avoidance to discuss the topic of success was not easily located. The authors mentioned in this section were in accordance with Foley's (2003a, 2000d) work, showing Australian Indigenous peoples' reluctance to discuss success. Fan and Karnilowicz (1997) investigated multicultural reluctance about discussing the topic of success, generally for Chinese people in Australia. Lawford (2016) is another researcher who investigated successful Indigenous Australian entrepreneurs and agreed with Foley (2000d, 2003a) that successful Indigenous entrepreneurs were often not keen to discuss the topic of success during qualitative interviews. Foley stated that four of five entrepreneurs interviewed in one of his studies openly exhibited some form of embarrassment or in the participant's words, 'shame' about detailing success in business. According to Foley (2000b), the high level of income was viewed as leaving behind the Indigenous values within the community of the specific entrepreneur. For example, the entrepreneur's financial success could well be perceived within an

Indigenous community as the individual being unwilling to share. The conclusion regarding reluctance to share might well be drawn for any entrepreneur always expecting monetary payment, often from someone who has fewer assets: for example, an owner of real estate expecting the rent from a low-income person.

Habibis et al. (2016b) was supported by a current affairs news presentation claiming university studies have shown Indigenous people experience high pressure from mainstream society to lose traditional values and their cultural domain (Lawford, 2016). This is similar to the claims by Foley (2000a; 2005) arguing entrepreneurs feeling pressured to leave traditional values behind. Adam's comments, that colonised people have felt assimilation style pressure to change values are succinctly in line with these studies. This is probably associated with participants treating the topic of success as difficult to approach, that is viewing success as a requirement to lose traditional values. Adam's interview is discussed further in Section 5.2.3 because of the importance placed on personal achievements and is also mentioned in Chapter 6.

Westby (2007) made the point about difficulty discussing success for children living in an intercultural environment and related the issue to language capacity where the children may not have even grown up with English as a first language. This is often true for older people forced to live in two cultures at once. The language capacity may limit their ability to talk about various items. This is especially so when we consider a potentially philosophical subject such as success. In this research, it might be argued that this was the problem for Jarrod claiming he could not even say the word success related to Jarrod's difficulty with the success issue. Moreover, the formal approach to the interview involving the completing of a consent form and discussing the university PLIS might cause a participant to feel they are having judgements made about the results.

5.1.3.4 Summary

This section has argued that there was a group of participants during this research who appeared to have difficulty discussing the concept of success. Other examples of participants were identified whose problem was closely related but the main problem may have been the interview process. The most notable examples in the section were Mary and Amelia, who both almost certainly exhibited problems whenever the topic of success was raised. Potential participants Helen and Meg exhibited similar features and never completed an interview. They did indicate a readiness to interview when first asked but did not take part when given the chance.

There is literature available that relates to the examples in this study. The most notable is Foley (2000d, 2003a), who made related claims about individuals who indicated reluctance to discuss the topic of success. The next theme is arguably related because rather than join a conversation specifically about success participants directed the conversation towards the issue of determination.

5.1.4 Determination

This theme is defined as determination being a key component for obtaining success. The comments of interviewees analysed in this section were observed to perceive determination, interpreted as a type of fixed intention to achieve a desired result, as a key aspect of success (see Dictionary, 2002). The topic was directly mentioned by five participants and less noticeably by seven others. The exact reasoning of participants mentioning determination is difficult to establish but the conclusion for this research is that if success is to be reached by anyone then a major factor is an individual's determination. The meaning of this theme acknowledges that the English language was most likely learned in a different setting for the Indigenous individual compared with a mainstream Australian (Thorpe, 2011). For example, learning from significant others who

have lived in situations where the language was used differently and maybe was not even the first-choice language. Therefore, a philosophical debate opens when wondering if determination is the real need for success or if the more important factor is passion, interest or motivation since all these words are considered here to be related to determination (see the quotation below from the interview with Cameron).

Determination often differs for the individual compared with the group. For example, pursuance of an individual's needs compared with the majority of the group to maintain an accepted route to complete a task. Accepted here is that community forms of determination are realistic. However, this section argues that determination is spoken about by participants as an individualised feature of success. Some claim that with support from individuals, determination may be maintained. The support from within a group will probably assist determination for the individual but other people, such as racists or non-believers, pose problems and maintaining focus can be difficult. For example, the racist or non-believer often creates a barrier by showing disbelief in positive outcomes to someone attempting to find improvement with skills (Loftin et al., 2012). Therefore, the outcome of someone's actions might be viewed as not desirable. Determination is perceived here as a challenge requiring belief in oneself.

5.1.4.1 Direct Association

The first interviewee considered in this section is Graham. When asked, 'tell me what success is?', Graham said, 'my success is determination'. Hence, the central facet of success for Graham was conclusive, interpreted as determination. Graham's interview is also discussed in Sections 5.1.4 and 5.2.1. Graham's interview is used to illustrate a need for the actions that are claimed to be necessary by another participant.

Several relevant themes were illustrated by Cameron's answer to a question about what has helped him to succeed. Cameron emphasised determination and wellbeing.

Determination was central when Cameron began to explain success:

Determination. Determination at succeeding ... and not letting life or others... or other things around me get me down. ... You know and just enjoyin' life ... and lovin' family ... Family main thing... You know stayin' contact with family and close friends.

He began by emphasising determination and stressed the idea with the phrase, 'determination at succeeding ...'. Hence, determination has been interpreted as a significant attribute for Cameron to reach success. Other relevant themes for Cameron are discussed further with the appropriate themes (see Section 5.2.4), '... You know and just enjoyin' life ... and lovin' family', see also Sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.1.2.

Amelia completed a short interview, and her explanation of success emphasised the value of determination:

Never give up. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.

This seems to be strong statement apparently suggesting that someone should expect to benefit when they keep pursuing their needs and the general interpretation was Amelia promoting determination when aiming for success.

Jack was an example of viewing determination as essential to success with his answer to, 'how do you describe success or what does success mean?':

It doesn't matter very much what you do. Just head down bum up just get on with it, to where you're heading just get on with it. ... You will achieve so much ... in your life it will just make your life so much better.

‘... head down bum up ...’ is a slang metaphor that has common meaning to many people (Craig, 2015). Many interpret this as determination and Jack’s answer has been interpreted as such for this interview.

Dale’s comments were interpreted as valuing determination. The advice he offered to gain success was:

Well look never lose your hope, never lose your dreams. Keep pursuin’. Life is hard. Keep hard at it do your best.

Similar to Amelia’s comment above, the first sentence has been interpreted as relating to a determined attitude when aiming for success. More specifically relating to determination is the phrase, ‘keep hard at it’. By using this phrase, Dale was almost certainly encouraging a determined attitude. Other interviews were considered relevant for this theme but were not as directly related to determination as the examples above.

5.1.4.2 Subtle Implication

The interviewees in this section have been interpreted as suggesting determination is an applicable quality when aiming for success but the connection is not as directly obvious as interviews reported in the previous section.

After considering the pre-interview formalities, Terry began the interview about success by explaining the persistence required for him to attend a dance school. He revealed detail saying, ‘one of the hardest things was wearing a pair of tights’. His first response when asked the question about how he defines success was, ‘You gotta believe ...’. Combined with the ‘persistence’ he mentioned, this phrase has been interpreted as suggesting that determination is important in Terry’s definition of success because belief in oneself is often considered part of a determined attitude (Reid & Fisher, 2010). Terry’s discussion continued, acknowledging happiness and devaluing monetary issues as significant. Hence, the interview is discussed in Section 5.2.4 and Chapter 6.

Kelvin offered advice for people to be successful:

I'll always believe that if you want to do something then you got to do it on your own merits. ... And you can use them as that [goal] but until you get to that point, and you prove that, not to anyone else but prove to yourself that you are capable of doing it.

The phrases 'do it on your own merits' and 'prove to yourself' have been interpreted here as someone needing self-belief and therefore most likely apply a determined attitude when achieving success. This is another example of the term self-belief being related to a determined attitude (Reid & Fisher, 2010; Thelwell et al., 2005). Kelvin explained the idea of self-belief further:

... says that you will never be my so and so, and you just say that I'll just prove to you that I can do that. I'll just prove that I can do it. It doesn't mean that I can but I will try cause it's all about trying to get ahead and making a name for yourself. But you don't have to prove it to no one but to yourself.

The phrases 'I'll just prove' and 'prove that I can do it' as well as 'I will try 'cause it's all about trying' and 'don't have to prove to no one but yourself' have all been interpreted as comments relating to self-belief emphasising Kelvin's idea of the determination related to self-belief, similar to the case for Terry.

The comment interpreted as referring to determination for Jarrod was '... keep your head up ...' because this phrase is often a metaphor for determination (Mäntylä, 2015, p. 1). Continuing culture was explained in greater detail by Jarrod, who used the comment 'stick together with culture start talkin' 'n takin' notice'. Promoting cultural recognition and encouragement to discuss is symptomatic of Jarrod considering the cultural traditions valuable and maintaining a type of determination to pursue these values. Jarrod's view of success is discussed in greater detail in Section 5.2.5.

Sally was included as part of the determination theme after consideration of her comment:

... I think success comes in all different manners. In all different ways. Every time I have a show or every time I venture out with other artists and doing things with them I feel a success. ... You know. ... And so success for me is being able to get my artwork there. You know. I'm producing it. But, if I don't show it ... then I'm not a failure by not showing it.

Sally began this comment saying that success has various formats. Thus, determination may be considered one possible form for Sally. The phrase '... being able to get my artwork there ...' is the phrase interpreted as most closely relating to determination. Being enabled to get the artwork on show was interpreted as requiring a determined nature.

For Jim, the use of the term 'resilience' was interpreted as determination being connected to success. He repeated this term and was deemed to be promoting a determined attitude to achieve success:

... Because you're, often going to face a lot of challenges and barriers in your life and I guess being resilient in those sort of times of challenging times ... It is good to have that resilience ... and also to have that support too ...

... But speaking back on that umm bit of resilience and persistence. Because you've obviously gotta be able to stand on your own two feet as well.

I think having those two things is really important ... umm ... and I think for me they're measures of success. Umm

The final sentence in Jim's comment emphasised that Jim places his own measurements of success related to the determination he had already referred to. That is resilience and persistence; therefore, determination essential to result in success.

Answering questions for an introduction about who he is and where he comes from, Tom responded:

Come from Melbourne. Tryin' to live here. Tryin' to settle in. Tryin... to get my kids up here, tryin' to see them on the weekends. And helpin' the community.

Using the word 'try' four times has been interpreted as Tom believing that determination is necessary to achieve his needs. However, since Tom's belief in his own success was not clarified, this probably required another interview that was not available for this study owing to lack of contact. Considering the above observations in comparison with the literature helps clarify the findings.

5.1.4.3 Literature

Connections between success and determination were made by Frawley et al. (2017). Researching success for Indigenous students in higher education, Frawley et al. included observations of interviewees stressing the importance of determination. Supporting this was James (2000), who focused on economic challenges for non-traditional students. Indigenous students were part of this study; thus, determination is noted as a part of success, and this is related to the observations in this theme with participants promoting self-belief in order to reach their needs.

Pechenkina (2016) argued that the notion of academic success differs for Indigenous compared with Westernised students. The claim was arguably reflected with examples for this theme, success is often an act of defiance for the Indigenous student through overcoming barriers faced. Using qualitative interviews, Pechenkina argued that some Indigenous students are not necessarily perceived as Indigenous by the wider community and made the claim that determination is necessary to fulfil the goals. Fogarty and White (1994, p. 3) argued that Indigenous people often maintain determination to continue traditional cultural regime rather than change to the Westernised system. This

work is also discussed to with the related theme in Section 5.2.5. This was clearly related to Jarrod's encouragement above showing determination being enacted to maintain cultural traditions.

Barney (2016) noted determination first as a factor to achieve success for students in higher education and argued that listening combined with understanding are actions facilitating success in higher education. Barney claimed that supporting these attributes for students would allow more students to enrol and become able to complete university. If determination is considered important for the enhancement of listening and understanding, the Barney argument may be related to participants in this section, promoting determination as a factor required to facilitate success. The determination is related to the willingness to discuss needs if required. Since discussing needs is a two-way process the point by Barney relates to further research suggestions in this study, arguing for more communication with Indigenous Australians.

5.1.4.4. Summary

The observations in this section are examples of participants noting an individual concept of determination as a key aspect of success. The examples of determination identified in this chapter showed examples of participants relating determination to success.

The link between determination is clear for the five examples but not so obvious for the next six examples discussed. The observations here support the literature identifying determination as part of an overall concept of success. Other ideas of success were shown by participants.

5.1.5 Creativity or Spirituality

This section argues that creative and spiritual characteristics were observed as related to success for certain participants in this study. Definitions of spirituality and

creativity are presented in this section owing to the lack of distinction in the literature (Fisher, 2011; Henriksen et al., 2016). A relationship between the two areas is framed on recent literature as well as comments made by participants. For eight participants, creativity or spirituality was relevant when interviewed about the concept of success. This section discusses five participants who showed relevance to this theme but were not as obviously relevant. The discussion continues about this theme showing associated participants related to modern literature.

A definition of spirituality is difficult since there does not seem to be a generally accepted definition in the literature (Fisher, 2011; Peteet et al., 2019). For the purposes of this research, the definition used is from Cavanagh et al. (2003, p. 6), who presented a definition using the idea of combining a worldview and the path of life. As explained in Chapter 1, worldview is not easily defined because there is no universal worldview satisfying everyone's needs; similarly the path of life is also difficult to clarify. Spirituality is an acceptance of a way of life for a person with the course influenced by the acceptance of a universal outer guiding force (Cavanagh et al., 2003). This is applicable to many people in some form but followed far more openly by some more than others. This definition of spirituality allows for the individual who pursues a creative lifestyle because creativity is often a guiding force for the individual involved (Cavanagh et al., 2003). Related to Cavanagh et al. was Martineau (2006, pp. 46, 61) who argued that for Indigenous artists the creative activity is the path of life and is often a method of escape from unwanted influential forces. This was shown by Sally's comment claiming that her art was originally 'a way of escape' and this is similar to comments by Adam referring to music. Therefore, this represents a type of guiding force or spirituality. Consider the example of someone aiming for a non-racist lifestyle where racist overtones or assimilation are examples of unwanted forces in someone's life.

Creativity is not easily defined because there are many different views (Henriksen et al., 2016). The definition used here is Corazza's (2016, p. 262) dynamic definition of creativity, which aimed to enhance earlier standard definitions. Corazza argued that a dynamic definition allows for differences in culture and other areas of human persona claiming that 'creativity requires potential originality and effectiveness'.

Corazza (2016) added more possible definitions for creativity and discussed these in detail. The main point noted here is the inclusion of the word 'potential' to an otherwise more standard definition to provide for the dynamic nature of creativity and this allows for changes with time as well as variance within and between groups. For the sake of this research, the portrayal of someone's original pursuits and the active development were recognised as creativity.

5.1.5.1 Specific Examples

The first participant in this section is the most obvious example because both spirituality and creativity were the prime subjects during the interview. Other participants were less clear about this, but nevertheless indicated the connection and have been interpreted as closely related to the theme. The connection made between spirituality and creativity for this theme was summed up with Trevor's comment:

... I travel with an art piece called God's Dreaming. ... 17 individual pieces of artwork ... Which were put together by 17 artists. Half of them were Indigenous and half of them were non-Indigenous.

... it depicts the original redemptive story from the bible. From Genesis through the revelation ... but it has all the Indigenous artwork and symbolism. ... and so we take people through that and explain to them ...

... It's a great way to tell the story because most of the Indigenous communication was through either the artwork or through ... oral not a lot of written.

Describing the art piece as ‘God’s dreaming’ has been interpreted as Trevor linking spirituality and creativity using Indigenous cultural methods of passing on the story. The ‘redemptive story’ is interpreted as Trevor portraying his religious tendencies or spirituality and is linked to art with the phrase claiming it uses ‘Indigenous artwork and symbolism’. This was interpreted as Trevor’s way of explaining that art is a way of telling stories, thereby relating the use of the art and culture with the spiritual story.

Trevor used spirituality examples for his idea of success:

Ahhm ... Yes. You know all of our success, Bill [selected name], is in Christ because he’s the one that makes us successful.

... And you don’t need to actually be successful in the world’s eyes because when Jesus went to the cross ... um everyone thought that he failed. But that was his mission because not only did he die on a physical cross but he was taken down into the very depths of hell to defeat evil. ... the cross of Calvary.

The interpretation here is that Trevor claimed success can be experienced by following a religious or spiritual path and does not need approval from a massive audience at a given time. The idea may also be that success is available to the individual who has deemed themselves successful.

Spiritual connections were also raised by Peter who had referred to his own ideas of success during the interview preparation. When asked about success during the interview, Peter referred to ‘spiritual and cultural success’. Following this reference to success Peter said:

My god spiritual understanding. Deal with problems head on. Treat problems as the elephant and the mosquito. No lies because just covers up.

The interpretation was that Peter’s, ‘God spiritual understanding’ implied a spiritual aspect of success. An acceptance of spirituality is common and often part of the

culture for Australian Indigenous groups (Dudgeon & Bray, 2018; Myers, 1991). The relevance to success has been interpreted as dealing with problems as one's success and acknowledging spirituality as useful.

Also showing the link between creativity and spirituality was Gary, who is included with this theme considering the poem he presented creatively. Using the term 'mantra' to introduce the poem resulted in the interpretation that Gary has related success to his guiding force, that is his spirituality. When asked for advice about success Gary responded with the poem he had written:

My simple mantra. It's a seven-verse poem. But the first verse and the last two [sic] verse is ...

Give me the knowledge, of enlightened Scholars.

Don't wanna be ruled by all conquering dollars.

You may certainly keep your material wealth.

I have my sanity, my culture my health.

I don't care at all for motor cars.

I'd rather sit an' gaze at stars.

Appreciating all of their glory. I'll relate them to a Dreamtime story.

Just to listen to the humming bees. The thunder of the pounding seas.

To watch the waves caress the shore.

Is payment enough. Why would I want more?

Just hear the birds sing and play.

Is the reason I go each day.

To be physically healthy. Spiritually free.

Is the aaaaaawesome wealth.

Is fine for me.

Gary's ability to write and present the poem has been interpreted as creativity. The content is inviting the listener to think beyond issues such as material wealth and instead consider Gary's ideas of personal wellbeing. Saying 'keep your material wealth', Gary prefers '... sanity, my culture my health'. When this is considered in relation to the phrases 'watch the waves caress the shore' and 'hear the birds sing and play', the aesthetic value of nature is relevant, most probably part of Gary's lifestyle and guiding force.

Interesting in relation to this theme is that the poem also includes the phrases, 'physically healthy' and 'spiritually free' regarding Gary's motivation in life. He said, 'why I go on each day'. This has been interpreted as placing high value on physical health and the freedom for his spirituality to be his own choice not directed by enforcers. Field notes were recorded indicating Gary's spirituality and creativity. These notes mentioned Gary's description of a published compact audio disc and a description of the spiritual nature of his life within an Indigenous community.

Adam discussed his life as a songwriter and performer. Another interviewee who stated that art was 'a way of life':

So we performed with them in Adelaide as well. In December, that same year, in 1980. So I guess that's my life in those sort of terms, it's been sort of ... in the music industry. Most of time, performing across Australia and end up touring going to England and touring.

The phrase 'my life in those sort of terms' has been interpreted as Adam stating that art was his guiding force. This is comparable to Gary's creative lifestyle and Trevor's acknowledgement of both Christianity and art, likely showing a Western influence. The discussion of relevant literature connections for art and spirituality continues below.

Adam's description of music as part of his life continued:

Ahh, started off with friends, [two names stated] ... Had a band called Black Satin and we performed in Morwell.

... We'd made a movie that year called "Wrong Side of the Road." "Wrong Side of the Road,"

I was doing a Bachelor of Arts in Aboriginal Fairs [sic] Administration, so anyway, between times of course I was working ... doin' some work in public service like sort of clerical work, but always played music sort of thing.

So anyway umm, that's how my own see my life mainly as ahh, being a musician.

Ahh, but [emphasised], on the other hand, also song writing as well is sort of like being at research. Lookin' at historical stuff and that so sort of knowledgeable in Aboriginal history, culture, I would say. And so ... there' that's the... I guess a lot from universities sort of started me off a doin' all that research so ...

The interpretation was that art was an important part of Adam's lifestyle, judged from comments such as 'always played music'. This is related to a visual artist Sally discussed below, who said that she has 'always drawn'. The comments by Adam relating 'song writing' to 'like being at research' has been interpreted as Adam's spiritual inclination stating that art was a guiding force. Adam also talked about music as part of his idea of success:

Umm, in terms of ... yeah. In terms of um leaving our mark on the industry...in terms and you know of being inducted into South Australia Music [Hall of Fame] in 2016. It was sort of recognition by my peers in South Australia that you know, I'd done all the hard work and was worthy of it sort of thing. So, with the band [the band known as] No Fixed Address of course. But um, so I guess, it's gettin' recognition like that,

... Success in music to me was more like because we were just starting out too and there wasn't really like an industry. Where, there wasn't really a lot of Aboriginal bands around, like there may have been you know, there may have been Harry Williams, or Black Lace. Later ... Hard Times.

This comment by Adam indicating the recognition of his band within the industry, including from peers, has been interpreted as a kind of success for Adam. The next comment saying he was 'just starting out' when 'there wasn't a lot of Aboriginal bands around' has also been interpreted as Adam experiencing success as a result of being one of the first to achieve the status.

Also acknowledging art as part of his lifestyle was Terry, who was part of the group of performing artists located in Circular Quay, Sydney. The dancing has been interpreted as creativity and his comments reinforced his commitment to creativity as part of a cultural lifestyle:

... So that I could learn umm, different languages of dance, so that I could add my traditional elements to it ... to ... speak to the wider audience. Our stories, ... and our history.

...I just dance for my culture, for our people. And it's been looking after me since. Took me all over the world for free. I've seen so many cultures, so many countries, and um dance for... me is um... is just um part of our life, so it isn't wasn't a 'job'.

The phrase 'looking after me since' has been interpreted as Terry acknowledging the value of dance in his lifestyle. The final phrase devaluing a 'job' has been interpreted as claiming that the dance was more than a job to him. Terry's idea of relating of the dance to culture and experience is discussed further in Section 5.2.5, as part of the theme continuing culture.

The significance of an artistic outlet as a form of escape was apparent with all participants discussed above for this theme as well as the literature below and highlighted during Sally's interview:

I'm an artist. I bring in painting and drawing, since I was very little. It was a way of escape I'd say. We did a routine in the way of our life. Growing up with my father's mother, who was very religious. They were Seventh Day Adventists. So on the weekend there wasn't a lot to do ...

Sally indicated not only that art was 'a way of escape' but an alternative to the religious values of others. Sally suggested that the weekend, presumably including the days of rest and worship, left her with not 'a lot to do'. The artwork presumably became part of Sally's guiding force as alternative to Seventh Day Adventist, Christianity.

Sally's comments seemed to connect art and spirituality. Interesting is the mention of her carer's religious nature, apparently not followed by Sally. This was potentially an acknowledgement of spirituality but not an adherence to Christianity. Another interview would be useful. Further comments indicated that art was Sally's guiding force:

So ... I've always drawn ... So art has been a big saviour in my life. As far as ... being able to do something. And make a sort of miniature success out of it I'd say. Not a huge success but it has taken me to a few places where I never thought I'd been before... so that's a good thing about my artwork.

I'm a contemporary artist. I don't do dots. And I'm a contemporary political artist. And I guess the politics comes from living with my grandparents. On both sides. Both the women on my mother's side and my father's side were very strong women. And with very strong ethics. So um which I guess taught me a lot about being an Aboriginal woman.

When urged for further comments about the political nature of her artwork Sally said:

Yes, I could make lots of comments with my artwork. Let me see? I have some pieces here. Which are ... In this drawer here ... I did a piece called ... *Just For the Record*.

Sally's artwork was a record of the certificate of leave from a local mission. The purpose of this work was to provide an example of the serious discrimination people suffered during the years of forced assimilation in Australia. Sally explained this further:

And it was a print ... If I can find it, here it is here. It was general exemption certificate that Aboriginal people had during their time on reservations. And to be able to leave the reservation and go to other places they would have to carry this exemption certificate on them.

Yeah really. I've done other pieces. I've done other artwork so ... I'd like to show you 'Political People'. People who were heroes ... and leaders in their own time. William Barrack was a leader. Michael Anderson. Gary Foley. You know, they were all leaders.

Still going, yes. Artwork is never ending. [gentle laugh] ... each contemporary piece that you draw leads on to another contemporary piece. I'm working on one at the moment which is just basically all about words. Because words are very hurtful and words can mean lot of things. And umm the piece it's called 'Black and White. It's a Colourful Thing'. ... And there's this fine line of blackness and white ...

Exhibiting her artwork and explaining the meaning have been interpreted as Sally showing her creative talent. The phrases 'still going' and 'never ending' have been interpreted as the art being a major part of Sally's life and a guiding force. In a thesis

assessing decolonising powers of artwork, Martineau (2006) used the example of political activity linked to an Indigenous person choosing to pursue artistic production, claiming this was a way to refuse to succumb to assimilative pressures.

Ned was the didgeridoo player for the group of dancers performing in Circular Quay, Sydney. Playing the didgeridoo was a creative outlet for Ned. He did not speak about creativity nor the arts but completed the interview, indicating he was keen to have his playing of the didgeridoo included as part of records. Therefore, creativity has been interpreted as part of Ned's concept of success:

... I'll play ya's a tune hey?

[An audio presentation given. Various didgeridoo sounds.]

Providing these didgeridoo sounds has been interpreted as creativity for Ned. When asked, did he call that successful, Ned answered with an emphatic, 'yes'.

Ned immediately followed his presentation of the didgeridoo and offering of an example of language, although a translation is not available. Saved here because this is an example of creativity and is probably useful for future studies of Indigenous languages:

That's them butta [brother]. Kurrmu butta emem burrayingi. Yurra wungaoon
ngiwarrunI yemwun enya.

The spelling here is an English version of the audio on the recorded interview. The term 'butta', sometimes spelled as 'budda', is assumed to mean brother and is a word still used by a range of Indigenous groups in Australia who have adopted English as the language of communication, ultimately a result of forced assimilation (Malcolm, 2017). There were more sounds of the didgeridoo to complete the interview with Ned, further emphasised the creative feature of his character.

Harry discussed his spirituality and related this to success:

I'll consider that what I call a success in my life now was becoming a dedicated spiritual Christian and working towards helping men out of that black hole of despair and drugs and alcohol and get a productive life. Where they can have family and bring up kids. And just build self-esteem in themselves that's what I had to do. And that's what I try and do with others and that's my success.

The comments from Harry have been interpreted as having a spiritual aspect of his definition of success owing to the religious nature of the Christianity. A creative aspect is not as easily disseminated from the interview comments but is debatably part of the prepared courses by Harry. A second interview would help clarify this.

5.1.5.2 Less Obvious Examples

An interview recorded with Heather showed creative implications. Compared with the interview activity, Heather gave higher priority to her work at the art instruction group only by accepting the interview offer that agreed to keep the time required short. Heather's role at the art group has justified the interpretation that Heather acknowledged creativity as part of her lifestyle. Heather's own creativity was judged as significant in her lifestyle although whether her input when helping others is more relevant to success for Heather, requires another interview. When asked about a definition of success, Heather said:

[Pause] Well when a student completes a class, that's successful, and then goes on to do something else.

The phrases 'student completes a class' and 'then goes on' indicated creative significance because this is related to actions at the art group. The pause here has been interpreted as Heather not having an immediate answer ready about defining success, even though the interview followed an earlier introductory interview and a lengthy wait.

Therefore, Heather was judged as finding it awkward to discuss success and the interview is mentioned in Sections 5.1.2 and 5.2.3.

Cameron discussed his artwork when he described his own success:

... stage an' that's makin' me successful [Overcoming challenges] ... an' art too art and enjoyment of art an' classical music all that ... music yeah ... thank you.

Cameron also participated with various dancing groups and said, 'yeah dancing. Hey Bros' that was envisaged as part of his success. The dancing is both performance and communicative art because performance of the dance sequences are used to tell a story. The phrase 'enjoyment of art' resulted in Cameron's interview being included in the theme happiness (see Section 5.2.4) because enjoying art was important as well as the practice. This point is debatably true for most artists (Frey, 2019; Noy, 1989).

Another interviewee who discussed art was Nellie and the interview is also discussed with the happiness theme, since she pointed out her love of art and said she 'enjoys life' as part of her lifestyle. This was part of her interview introduction:

Ah. Um. I'm just an ordinary chick that enjoys life. ... Love art. Love music. Um ... what else? ... yeah just love the side of people Different nationalities besides my own, yeah ... Basically it yeah.

The two phrases 'love art' and 'love music' have resulted in the interpretation that art was a valuable part of Nellie's lifestyle.

Daryl referred to music as part of his life that he considered 'good':

The good stuff. Yeah. I learnt music ... and um I aint gonna stop. I wanna keep movin'. I wanna play guitar on stage. I wanna play drums on stage. I wanna sing on stage ... And I be doin it one day.

A question was asked about Daryl's music and he said:

I got a plan. To improvise and survive.

The interpretation of Daryl's words was that, since he said music is part of helping him to make plans, this had become a guiding force. Thus, creativity and spirituality had relevance for Daryl regarding his idea of success.

There was an indication of spirituality acknowledged by another interviewee, Dale as part of his life:

Well we had the wars between ourselves. But we are the true Christians and we are in a sense and we are ... the true communists. We ... do not have a dictatorship. And in doing so we are the true Christians. ...we give an eye for an eye.

The phrases 'we are the true Christians' and 'true communists' made during Dale's interview have been interpreted as Dale also recognising spirituality and claiming he preferred to refer to associated elements: for example, apparently being included as part of his own community's structure. Therefore, this had guiding influence. The issues observed for participants mentioned in this section have been recognised in the literature.

5.1.5.3. Literature

Myers (1991) analysed Australian Indigenous art and made the connection to spirituality claiming that in many Indigenous circles everyone is an artist. Describing links between culture and art for the Indigenous groups, Myers argued that art for some groups is a means of retaining culture and spirituality: for example, telling the traditional stories and linking art with spirituality.

Myers (1991) noted the significance of art in placing Australian Indigenous artists with respect on the world stage. Art was tied to spirituality by Myers using examples from other authors to indicate that there is a school of thought supporting his claim that all Australian Indigenous people are artists. Myers encouraged the artwork showing the art is valued by many and used as a communication medium within most Indigenous

groups. This idea is supported by the examples of Trevor, Terry, Gary, Ned, Sally and Cameron in the examples in this section. They discussed accessing artwork in this way. All these participants mentioned how they have accessed art to pass on information.

Fisher (2011, p. 17) offered ‘the four domains model’, arguing that spirituality is in fact present in everyone in some form. Not necessarily religiously but in some way the guiding stance of one’s way of life. This argument may be supported using examples of a keen sports enthusiast following the sport, a politician pursuing their desires in the world of politics or even an academic endorsing their area of interest. All three of these examples often include people not directly recognising their interests as ‘spiritual’, but when Fisher’s model is considered, the spirituality tag is applicable. Fisher related the spiritual aspects for an individual pursuing their creative outlets, as for both Sally and Adam in this section, mentioning the reasons for their artistic lifestyle.

Lepherd (2015) argued a similar case considering nurses dealing with patients in a health crisis who pursue spirituality to overcome the challenges. This is also related to Myers (1991), who linked art to the way of life, arguing that for Indigenous groups, art is often a pursuance of the culture for both investigating and promotion.

The murals discussed by Edmonds (2009) described a statement of political and artistic recognition of the artists involved. These murals showed remnants of a pictorially painted cupboard given as a gift and painted by an elder with three juniors, during the 1980s. Each of these artists talked about the representation of their own identity as part of the total piece of artwork. The murals discussed by Edmonds are also related to the banner discussed by Trevor in this section designed with the purpose of promoting Christian values and using Indigenous artistic symbolism to pass on the message. Edmonds (2010, p. 12) reported the story of artist Vicki Couzans describing her work. Couzans had named the work *Wireeyaar*, with the meaning of ‘women’s spirit’ and

described the artist's spiritual journey. Spiritual references in Edmonds's (2010) paper referred generally to visual artists from South-Eastern Australia reclaiming cultural heritage and finding self-determination. Edmonds used examples to relate spirituality to creative art. Both these areas have been treated in this section as a way of referring to success for the artists and/or spiritualists involved.

5.1.5.4 Summary

The concept of success in this section has been considered for participants related to creativity and spirituality. These two fields have been connected and used here as a single theme, with links described for research participants and also reported in relation to the literature.

This theme has described the nine participants who referenced creativity or spirituality as part their lifestyle and treated the area as a key part of their idea of success. Five more participants were identified who mentioned the theme less obviously. The relationship between creativity and spirituality was present in interviews with Trevor who gave a spiritual definition of success. This was related to the interviews with Harry also using a religious or spiritual notion when describing success. With a related lifestyle, both Adam and Sally focused on their creative notions as part of the explanation of success. This was connected to the lifestyle choice for the performing artists Terry, Ned and Gary. Similar to other themes, the observations in this research regarding the spirituality as well as creativity were supported in recent literature.

The theme creativity or spirituality has been included as a commentary theme and might also be thought of as a success definition theme. Most of the comments were observed as exhibiting a general nature. However, some participant comments involved as added reference to a definition of success. For example, Trevor was most obvious

when he referred to success as being Christian. This has completed the group of commentary themes and has established the link with the success definition themes.

5.2 Success Definition Themes

The first part of this chapter described the general-comment themes about the concept of success because participants were keen to follow this kind of issue during interviews about the concept of success. There were references to a definition of success, but these were not as common as the general comments. This chapter continues, identifying the themes considered direct definitions of success. The five separate themes satisfy the main research query for this study that posed the question about finding an Australian Indigenous definition of success.

5.2.1 Family Support

Interviews analysed in this section illustrate that recognising family support was a recurring theme for at least 11 participants in this study though this was not always stated as a definition of success. Three participants did mention providing family support as part of their definition of success and are thereby directly related to the definitions of success. Eight other participants noted family support as an important issue when completing the interview, and these interviews acknowledge family issues as important for Australian Indigenous people. See Section 1.4 about worldviews for a more detailed discussion that for many Australian Indigenous groups the word ‘family’ usually relates to a wider group than a nuclear or even the extended family.

5.2.1.1 Specific Examples

Harry discussed helping others return to their preferred lifestyle and re-enter the workforce, after experiencing the trauma of incarceration (Shepherd et al., 2020). The claim that Indigenous Australians are often incarcerated incorrectly with dire

consequences and little support is accepted for this study and the topic is discussed further in literature section below (see R. Hogg, 2001; McKeich, n.d.). Harry gave a definition of success that included a direct reference to an individual's family. Another relevant theme for Harry was contribution to community because his comments about helping others when referring to his own success indicated the connection:

... get a productive life. Where they can have family and bring up kids. And just build self-esteem in themselves that's what I had to do. And that's what I try and do with others and that's my success.

The phrase 'have a family' has been interpreted as significant for Harry's idea of success, assuming that this refers to the success of the people Harry has helped. Harry mentioned 'family', but his own personal success seems more directed at supporting the person recovering from the restrictions of incarceration as they return to a satisfying lifestyle (R. Hogg, 2001; R. Jones et al., 2002). A comment made by Graham during this study suggests the plan by Harry has merit:

When I was placed in prison and ohh mate, it's been a downhill run from there. I'll get back to me home now.

The comment 'downhill from there' probably refers to disconnection from family links, likely the case because the next sentence mentions 'home' and another reference to family was made almost immediately. Harry's comment also inferred that self-esteem for incarcerated people is important and for this reason Harry was added to the happiness theme. A range of related questions were raised regarding Harry's points referring to the success of those incarcerated with further complications when different cultures are considered. Section 5.2.1.3 below refers to specific literature, but a full discussion is beyond the scope of this report.

Kelvin referred directly to his own family when he explained success. He discussed helping his own family by passing on a successful business within his family:

... to be a success you'd have to come from nowhere ... Get to the top of what you are doing and retiring ... And either ... handing that business down in your family as in your son or daughter and then it's up to them to keep the business a success.

... Influencing. Cause you're the influence to help that child. Like I said they are your number one priority. More so than your mother, your father, your siblings. You can love them. But you also have to love that child. ... And I hope that helped.

Kelvin referred to 'establishing a successful business' as one possible way of finding success. Kelvin almost definitely perceived business as a Western factor. The interpretation was Kelvin used the business example because he perceived he was talking to a Western individual. The interpretation was Kelvin had intended to satisfy the listener. Presumably he perceives the Western culture as positively accepting the successful business. Kelvin had apparently become accustomed to living in two cultures. The issue is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1. Satisfying the listener is also related to Kelvin's first interview example of success when he referred to personal connections. To define success Kelvin said:

What I would say is ... become active politically and have a word. Like your dad [member of State parliament, 1988–2002] has done. As your dad would put it.

An interpretation for this comment is that Kelvin acknowledged another person as successful. Kelvin's comment also implied that 'politically active' is an example of success and for this reason Kelvin is mentioned with the theme discussing creative and spiritual outlets (see Section 5.1.5). Combined with the above example of a successful

business, Kelvin used the more family-specific example referring to my father. The business example used by Kelvin was family oriented because he emphasised the important factor for successful business was passing the business on to others within the family:

And if they do that then you can put your hand up and say that was my child. Who would most likely say, 'well my success comes about cause I had a good teacher in my father or my mother.'

The reference to mother, father and siblings and one's own children adds weight to Kelvin's family values.

Cameron showed the importance he places on family connections when introducing himself and stating names of people within his own extended family:

Descendant of ah ... Charlie Foster, Laurence Moffat. Yeah. [Pause]

Granmother, Louise Logan, Boliver Parsons. Parents

All these people were part of Cameron's family. Therefore, this was interpreted as indicating that Cameron be included with the family support theme. The Cameron interview is also a key part in Section 5.2.3. Other relevant themes were also illustrated by his answer to a question about what helped him succeed. Cameron's comments are discussed further in Sections 5.1.4 and 5.2.5.

The phrases 'family main thing' and 'stayin' in contact with family' are further evidence of Cameron placing high precedence on family support. With Cameron's indication of other themes developing, another interview would be needed to accurately decide the significance of family support as part of his success. This section has discussed participants who showed a direct illustration of family support values. There were other less obvious examples of participants with similar ideas.

5.2.1.2 Less Obvious Examples

This section shows the other comments about family support that were not as directly concerned with defining success as the examples above but nevertheless were interpreted as placing an importance on family support.

Terry's reference to the 'family' was different to the examples above because he was alluding to the large expanse of a family within a community. Terry stated that a satisfactory response for a newcomer would result in them being 'welcomed into the family'. Hence, Terry claimed that a person asking for help and showing respect would be welcomed into the extended family circle. Terry further displayed his family support values when discussing his dance skills. Terry acknowledged the importance of passing these skills on to children, also observed for Kelvin, Jarrod and Harry above. A related claim was made by Gary.

Gary mentioned learning skills from elders and passing those skills on to children with an implication of pursuing family heritage. Although he did not specifically refer to the family, he used the term 'mentors':

I don't own this talent, it's only a talent given to me temporarily, which I must pass on. And the cultural obligation is ... it's only a talent given to by somebody else.

Therefore, Gary was apparently referring to family issues and not as obviously as other participants above.

Jim made the point that both parents were relevant by identifying specific contributions of both to his lifestyle. For example, this included his mother providing care as well as the personal values instilled by his father. He also mentioned siblings and the importance of the relationships he developed. With reference to success Jim said:

And yeah, and so I can say he's quite successful. A successful family ... We kind of have this thing where we don't like to talk about our successes. I guess because it's just really our daily routine. We just go about our day-to-day stuff. And yeah, ... but ummm yeah in umm ... the interest of the topic yeah, I'd consider those successes.

The phrase Jim used, '... have this thing ... we don't talk about success ...' saying success is part of the 'daily routine' has been interpreted as suggesting that success was probably something expected to happen although not considered important enough to promote to friends. Placing significance on various family members when discussing success has been interpreted as Jim viewing family support as meaningful for his success.

Several factors were interpreted as Graham treating family support as important when he described the purpose of his visit to Bairnsdale to visit his family, '... Aboriginal members of me family ...'. The mention of 'family' in this phrase has been interpreted as Graham stating that he valued family connections and/or support. A second point is the effort made by Graham to travel long distance to visit family giving another reason this interpretation was made. A closely related interview was with Jack who was a participant discussing visiting his family in Gippsland:

... originally born in Bairnsdale. Come back to see some of my family

Jack said he had made the effort to visit from the distant location, Albany in Western Australia. Therefore, the comment was interpreted as Jack placing a high precedence on family values.

When Nellie was asked about who she would seek for advice, her response was: If I was gonna ask? Probably my family. My sisters. That'd be my most applied advisory, to my life wellbeing.

Nellie is included as part of the family support theme because she named her family as the appropriate people to approach for advice. Nellie's information has also resulted in her inclusion in the success definition theme, happiness as well as commentary themes, contribution to community, success available to all and creativity or spirituality.

Neil made brief comments indicating the family of his upbringing was important at least during his young days. Discussing family needs when he mentioned success, Neil said:

And that, the drive from meeting family helps build internal success ... Because family help and support and nurture you even as you get older. Even parents in my age now are supportive.

'Meeting family', 'support and nurture' and 'even as you get older' are all phrases that have been interpreted as Neil valuing family support. Neil did not expand on this. Therefore, the family support was interpreted a secondary issue for Neil. Neil's interview is discussed further with the themes contribution to community and success is different. Another interview is required to help clarify Neil's preferred interpretation.

Heather did indicate the importance of the family to herself. Late in her interview when discussing the importance of the personal telephone, Heather stated that she does not give her telephone number to everybody:

I only give the number to family. And leave the other phone for business.

This suggests that family was a high priority for Heather at least as a contact group of people and has resulted in Heather being included in the family support theme. Heather's interview is discussed further in Sections 5.1.5 and 5.1.2.

Some difficult times were mentioned by Sally about her early life and are not referred to here for ethical reasons. Sally was discussing herself when she referred to her family surroundings while she was young and indicated the effect this had on herself:

... And I guess the politics comes from living with my grandparents. On both sides. Both the women on my mother's side and my father's side were very strong women. And with very strong ethics.

Mentioning 'grandparents' and other 'women' in her family in high regard has resulted in Sally's addition to the family support theme. Sally's views are discussed in greater detail in Section 5.1.5.

I met Liz in the local central business district, and she was telling me how well she was. Pleased with how well she felt and how long she had lived, Liz said, 'must be 'cause we have good family and friends'. Using the phrase 'family and friends' and relating this directly to her own positive situation is evidence of Liz's recognition of family and has resulted in inclusion with the family support theme. Notably acknowledging family as well as friends and relating these factors to her good feelings suggested that family support was important for Liz. The significance of research observations in this section related to recent literature is worth noting.

5.2.1.3 Literature

A literature search using the key words 'family', 'Indigenous' and 'Australia' resulted in nine out of the first ten items about family violence. This is an important issue in any society that needs addressing but the results of this search are an example of the literature concerning Indigenous Australians focusing on the problems rather than positives, as noted in Chapter 2 (Cripps & McGlade, 2008; Keel, 2004; Nancarrow, 2006; Strang & Braithwaite, 2002). Illustrated in Chapter 2, the literature exploring positive Indigenous aspects is available but is more difficult to locate (Tsey et al., 2010).

Foley (2003a, 2008a) addressed the issue of entrepreneur success competing with family support. Foley stated that family support was part of the definition of success for the Indigenous entrepreneur and claimed success is not usually measured in tangible

assets. This assertion agreed with participants in this research who have either ignored or deliberately reduced the importance of any monetary issues. Terry began his interview saying that success is not a monetary issue, and the point was backed up by Gary, Nellie, Sally, Trevor, Kerry, Mary, Neil and Tom. This research agrees with Foley (2003a), who argued that money should not be thought of as the key to success for Indigenous entrepreneurs, differing from the mainstream entrepreneur who usually considers monetary gains a measure of success.

Tam et al. (2017) studied family in Canada and noticed a similarity with Indigenous people's experiences in Australia. In colonised systems of government, such as in the US or Australia, the legal basis of family is built on the European idea of the nuclear family and this does not adhere neatly with Australian Indigenous values (Tam et al., 2017). As stated above the Indigenous family often has a much broader meaning, usually at least acknowledging a wider group and this was indicated by Jarrod with his comments to me being invited into the family circle. The family definition even accepts an outsider being welcomed into the family when the person shows they accept and respect the family's values. The point was reinforced by Terry's comment that with mutual respect, you had the right to be invited into the family. Grass (2014) stated that improving conditions for the family was an important idea related to the success concept.

Related to the participants who raised the topic of incarceration, there is widely available material that has investigated Indigenous incarceration. For example, Nichols (2014) talked specifically about the colonised place, Canada, and argued that incarceration is very biased in many countries and is a direct result of sovereignty problems. Nichols claimed the data are not available for Australia and agreed with McKeich (n. d.) that work is required. Wijesekere (2004) provided some understanding of the disputative situation in Australia that is worse in Australia compared with Canada,

United States and New Zealand (Langton, 2001). Another example related to a relevant current affairs issue that occurred with protests happening in Australia sparked by police murders of Indigenous individuals in the US (Crowe, 2020).

Scruton and McCulloch (2008) compiled a collection of 13 papers to show the Western liberal democracy intention to use imprisonment with ‘good conscience’, denying the violence, which nearly always has potential following the dehumanisation and demonisation of those incarcerated. Cunneen’s (2008) paper in this collection investigated difficulties associated with Indigenous incarceration, including the point that addressing the problems is a type of community support. Interviewee comments in this section, by both Harry and Graham supported these claims and referred to family while acknowledging the impact of the problems confronted by people who face incarceration. The literature referred to prepares the summary of this section.

5.2.1.4 Summary

The material in this section has identified examples of 11 interviewees in this research who have indicated family support as a significant theme for a definition of success. The three examples showing a specific association with the theme were discussed first. The next section included seven participants who indicated they valued family support but were not as clearly connected to this theme. The relevance of participants identified for this theme have been associated with the literature, where there is material available, though not in abundance, investigating family support for Indigenous people (Lydster & Murray, 2018). This theme is closely linked with the next theme if it is accepted that personal associations within a community are often somewhat related to the family type connections, and the point is expanded below (J. Maynard & Haskins, 2016).

5.2.2 Contribution to Community

An important theme considered in this section for an Australian Indigenous definition of success is the contribution to the local community and was observed for at least 12 participants. This section offers a definition of the theme, the specifically related interview observations and the examples that were less obviously associated with the theme. The discussion of modern literature indicates the significance of this theme related to other research.

This title for this theme is used because during the conversations about success the specific phrase was used by at least two participants and very similar comments were made by others. The theme is defined as, a participant's viewpoint of success being manifest when someone has provided an effective contribution to locally associated people often referred to as the 'community'.

The theme necessitates the philosophy that the term 'community' and the subsequent relevance of the term 'family' should be noted. This complex issue is raised again because the community is most often a broader group than the family although various comparable types of relationships within the community are apparent and as mentioned above, correct use of the term 'community' is not always immediately obvious (see Shay & Lambert, 2022). Confirming the examples above, the Australian Indigenous family is usually viewed as a wider group than an individual's immediate nuclear family (J. Maynard & Haskins, 2016). The broader group, usually known as community and relevant contacts, are often recognised according to various types of family links. In a comparable Western society, people sometimes described as being part of a friendship circle are possibly considered in a similar way (J. Maynard & Haskins, 2016). Common examples of being considered part of the community among interviewees during this study included usage of the terms brother or sister, someone providing support whenever

necessary, as a researcher I was welcomed into social networks and almost always had common accessibility for any material assets. According to interviewees for this study, all members of the community are treated as part of an extended family. For example, one participant, Terry at Circular Quay in Sydney, interviewed January 2019, provided a pertinent example when beginning to discuss success:

... adopt you into this country. And you become family.

Terry was a Torres Strait Islander who moved to Sydney. He was a middle-aged friendly person with an open conversational personality. He openly discussed cultural ideas and concepts with many different people during busking dance and music sessions at Circular Quay, Sydney. His stories referred to his own personal history of both country and urban lifestyle.

Terry's comment was related to the interview with Jarrod, discussed in Section 4.1, who implied I had become part of the recognised family. Both these examples showed members of a community who were always ready to accept the dynamic and changing nature of the family. Anyone who effectively qualifies will become part of the family. This ought to be read as a subjective acceptance because there is no official qualifying definition of family used here and all individuals are expected to have their own perception. During the interview, Terry encouraged outsiders to accept and enjoy the community's cultural activities, demonstrating the action of welcoming people into the family. This is an experience I have witnessed on numerous occasions. For example, I received Jarrod's artistic gifts, regular praise, complementary introductions to others and shared meals. These connections between family and community relate to the importance participants placed on being able to contribute to a significant group, thought of as the community.

When asked about success, the response from participants was often referred to the community contribution, rather than limiting this contribution to a family group. The term family being considered too restricted when referring to a definition of success. For example, the first response used by Jack was:

... actually able to help other people [with] my experience, [more than family]

Adding to the concise illustration of contribution to community being thought of as a type of success, Jack's interview is discussed further below. Examples of offerings for the community include experience, food, tools, knowledge and friendship. Comments were made by participants, indicating a personal trait directly referring to community contribution.

5.2.2.1 Direct Examples

Terry gave a clear example for contribution to community and the connection with success. He also noted the link for someone maintaining the cultural affiliations. For example, when Terry began to discuss success, he said:

... I just dance for my culture, for our people ...

I came, I came down with umm only one vision in to learn is to dance and is to go back and to teach kids.

Then Terry made the point he was attempting to reach a wider audience. For Terry the important aspect of sharing the ceremonial dance ritual was to offer the cultural significance viewed as valuable knowledge, and as a result support his own culture. This was interpreted as providing for his own community. Listening to the interview indicated the adjective 'just' was used to emphasise, not devalue, the importance of dancing for his culture. The use of the word 'kids', insisting that he intends to help children, also showed Terry's contribution to the community. When describing success, Terry mentioned the importance of sharing the culture and not diluting the culture. Therefore, the apparent

purpose for Terry was to contribute to the community. The interview is part of the continuing culture theme below.

Another clear example was the interview with Harry, discussed above, who said:

I run a program ... helping men into the workforce.

... help men ... have family and bring up kids. And just build self-esteem ...

And that's what I try and do with others and that's my success.

Harry was describing his interaction with the male gender within his own community. The interview has been interpreted as Harry placing value on his own ability to assist others into the workforce. The assistance provided was Harry's contribution to the community. Since different types of work are available, Harry's support plan allows for individual needs and assistance in many parts of the community. Other comments from Harry described his intent to help others as well as build self-esteem and this was further indication of Harry aiming to contribute to his community.

Similar to Harry, part of Jack's success was when he is able to '... actually help other people' and the 'people' are most likely those who Jack interacts with to make up his own community. Therefore, via helping other people Jack, was interpreted as offering another way of a contributing to the community. Jack stated this was a key part of success.

In another interview, Tom said:

A couple of ... things about myself. Well, loyal, trustworthy, honest, respect.

Tryin' to help the community more.

This was one of Tom's comments at the beginning of the interview. Tom had been introduced to the project and he made this point before answering any specific interview questions about success. Trying to help the community with which he is involved was thereby interpreted as, always an important factor for Tom. He mentioned contributing to

his community in two other interview answers to the question, ‘is that where you see success as well?’:

Yeah. Tryin to blend in with each other. Takes time to get to know each other. I mean just tryin’ to do the right things. Obviously, we see each other's faces day by day. It’s a small community ...

And I’m tryin’ to just keep goin’ with it. Just do the right thing. Keep updatin’ with the community. With whoever I’m stayin and wherever I’m doin it.

These comments by Tom showed that combining or blending, as Tom said, with other members of the local community, was central to his idea of the concept of success. The feeling of being valued is most likely a major factor here. Less obvious examples of this theme were also observed.

5.2.2.2 Implied Examples

A long-time personal acquaintance of myself was Cameron and the answer when asked how he described successful was:

Yeah, achieve your goals. The main things in life you know ... and you look after you know other people ... as well, you become successful with that sort of thing.

Presumably, the phrase ‘you know’ was supposed to both claim this was common knowledge and state that others were expected to be aware. Providing help for others is a part of Cameron’s picture of success, thereby contributing to the community. When discussing success of his own, Cameron also placed importance on ‘... helping people into employment ...’; this is directly related to the comments of Harry. However, when compared with Harry, Cameron gave little detail about his specific activities nor how he achieved the tasks. Therefore, the factor was possibly less important for Cameron or maybe he was less keen to portray his personal details.

Dale was an example of a participant who at first did not seem comfortable with the word success during the interview introductory stage, and interviews were adjusted to ask about 'good things'. When asked about what he considered to be good in his community, Dale stated:

... good stuff I have seen ... the bondness

Dale placed importance on the positive experience of connecting with each other or 'bonding' in Dale's words. By referring to bonding as significant when asked about 'examples of good things', Dale was interpreted as suggesting that his own input to the community was an important factor because bonding is usually viewed as a two-way process.

Related to Dale's claims, was Peter who claimed that success was:

Reach people join everyone.

This is another way of showing the need to connect with others when one is associating with the community where they are living. Another example of talking about connecting was when Gary referred to passing on his talents.

Gary supported this theme when he said:

... talent given to me ... which I must pass on ...

When asked about success, Gary referred to 'passing on' and thereby teaching others the talents or skills that he had previously learned from people within his own community. This was Gary's way of offering a contribution to the community that he perceives as his own and to which he belongs.

When asked about good things in her life, Amelia said:

... good things about Gunnai [pause] Band together help each other improve.

This is similar to Dale's 'personal bonding' comment. Likewise, when asked about the meaning of success, Amelia chose to use the words 'band together' instead of

‘personal bonding’ and referred to observing each other improve as a good aspect of the community. Thus, this was related to Kerry, mentioned below referring to the importance of community links. Amelia placed value on her own community and presumably her own contributions as part of her own idea of success.

Nellie is included in this theme following the comments:

... helping others, anyone who needs help.

just being me. Yeah, doing everyday good things, just like ... helping the everyday person that needs help. Yeah ...

Nellie had been identified as a participant, but she was not immediately asked for an interview because she was busy helping others. This added to the interpretation of Nellie indicating that providing help is important for her. The people Nellie has been most likely to contact and therefore able to offer help to, has been people in the local community. ‘Helping’ is another way of indicating a contribution. Thus, since Nellie discussed this when asked about success, Nellie effectively said that she considered contributing to the community as a form of success. And related were two comments made by Heather:

... well when a student completes a class that’s successful and then goes on to complete something else.

... when someone goes on to do something else that’s when I feel like I’ve done my job.

This is an example of Heather observing the value of her own contributions by observing the productivity of others. This is related to priorities of both Harry and Cameron, referred to above, who mentioned helping people into the workforce. Heather indicated that perceiving success as not just her own personal assets but also the associated gains for people around her.

Kerry said:

... going forward ... important that we all see each other's success and the success is [to] celebrate it ...

This was the main example of the various comments from Kerry talking about community interaction. 'Seeing each other's success ...' was a way of noting the importance of people interacting with each other to offer help and to acknowledge the positive results. For this theme, the range of participant responses was broad.

5.2.2.3 Theme Range

There was a vast range of participants' ideas of considering success as contributing to the community. The range of examples vary but all are related. For example, one person perceiving their own successful activities as enabling them to contribute to the community compared with others who perceive success as satisfying their goal of making the contribution. Explicit examples are discussed in this section.

The ideas of Harry were compared with the comment by Nellie who said, '... helping others, anyone who needs help'. Nellie has indicated that she wishes to provide whatever kind of help is needed. While the comments from Harry were specifically about helping others into the workforce and this was the key factor of Harry's success. This most likely conclusion is associated with assisting someone to obtain a satisfying employment of their time because Harry did not refer to a work ethic and his focus was about thinking of a person's needs as noted above, both Cameron and Harry mentioned helping others into employment although each had a different way of showing this. Cameron was less explicit, and Kerry's comment had similarities because she referred to the achievements in her own community. Since both Cameron and Kerry did not provide specific detail, there are not enough data available for further detailed analysis of their ideas. The range of participant ideas observed for the contribution to community theme

have been discussed in this section and the theme is closely connected with modern literature.

5.2.2.4 Links to Literature

The data observations were generally in conjunction with modern literature. Schaper's (1999) research has been completed working with Indigenous groups. Schaper claimed that success is linked with the contribution to family or a wider circle of individuals often known as a community. Therefore, the studies agreed with the comments of participants discussed in this section. With a detailed study of the academic educational desires for Indigenous groups Grass (2014) supported the view and stated that improving conditions for the family or community was an important idea related to the success concept.

Continuity of business, not money, was the meaning of success for participants as argued by Gorgievski et al. (2011). This was related to Foley, who has generally focused on the success of Indigenous entrepreneurs (Foley, 2004, 2003a). Foley (2003a) claimed participants stated that continuation of the business or contributing to the community were signs of success, in coherence with the examples of participants in this study and noted in this section.

Fan and Karnilowicz (1997) referred to a what they called a common success approach, considering cultural definitions of success in a Chinese society. The idea of success stated was referred to as a contribution to the community. Therefore, this was related to the examples for Australia, mentioned in this section.

R. Jones et al. (2002) did not focus explicitly on the concept of success but offered many examples of the significance of family to many within the Indigenous communities: for example, a reference to the damaging effect of forced incarceration since it disconnects a community member from their family.

Researching in the US, Carson (2004) provided several definitions of success for Indigenous males. Absent in each of these definitions was the idea of financial achievement. The main definitions acknowledged by Carson, researching Toledo in Mexico, was for six out of eight participants success meant being able to contribute more to the community. Carson reported that this idea was discussed both in individual interviews and focus groups. Carson also said helping people, supporting the family and satisfying spiritual requirements are relevant, thereby relating to Sections 5.2.1 and 5.1.5. Carson recommended further research. The qualitative research was completed with participants who Carson defined as successful black males and stated:

of the eight participants were quick to say that God was ‘foremost’ in contributing to their success (p. 75)

The quotation undoubtedly has a spiritual aspect, but the contribution of the spiritual being was of primary significance for the success.

Mirvis and Hall (1994) described one of the definitions for psychological success as the satisfaction when someone is giving back to the community. Therefore, the link between success and giving back, or contributing, to one’s local community was similar to what was observed for participants stated in this section for this study. The work by Mirvis and Hall also relates to other themes in this study. For example, giving back to a community might be dependent on how the participant perceives their own personal goal, shown with examples above and discussed below.

5.2.2.5 Summary

This section has given a general comparison of different participants associated with the theme contribution to community. The participant examples given all used this concept as important in their description of success although in various ways, and the point is relevant to available literature.

Participants Dale, Peter and Amelia all used words related to connecting or bonding within a community, as a way of relating success to contributing to the community. Although each participant had their own way of describing this. Both Heather and Kerry offered examples, of observing and acknowledging as well as assisting others for their community progress. This was another type of community contribution. The theme might be considered one type of goal and is the basis of the next theme discussed.

5.2.3 Achieving Goals

The section identifies participants who perceived that the concept of success was defined by achieving goals. The definition of a goal for the participants has been inferred as the individual's own concept of the goal, either for their personal needs or with the input of others as well. This is an important theme for this study because it was the most supported theme. Thirteen participants indicated relevance.

First discussed are the seven participants whose comments have been interpreted as showing a direct link to defining success by achieving perceived goals. Two participants used the word 'goal' as part of their definition of success. Another five participants did not specifically mention goals but defined success using a related term. The second section includes six participants who defined success in a related manner but were less obviously associated with this theme. The third section relates the interviews mentioned in this section with currently available literature. An overview of the range of opinions completes the section.

5.2.3.1 Full Support

Cameron's interview was interpreted as directly related to defining success by achieving one's personal goals. He illustrated this clearly with his answer when asked about the definition of success:

Yeah, achieve your goals. The main things in life you know ... and you look after, you know, other people ... as well, you become successful with that sort of thing.

Cameron first mentioned 'achieve your goals'. The next sentence infers that this is a major part of our lifestyle needs. The phrase about 'looking after other people' suggests that another interview is needed to distinguish whether this is the outcome after achieving goals, another method of defining success or was stated for some other reason. Cameron discussed his achievements reaching certain levels in education and this was assumed to be a reference to Cameron's goals. He did not expand on this point any further.

Further comments from Cameron were about participating in various committees with an aim to help others. The areas were employment, housing and health care. The achievements in education and the input to the committees have been interpreted as reaching goals, for himself as well as others. These comments could also be interpreted as relevant for the theme contribution to community (see Section 5.2.2). This may be part of Cameron's social interaction or responsibility. Achieving goals was the most relevant theme after considering Cameron's full interview as well as related field notes, in which the idea of achieving goals was observed in further discussions with Cameron. For example, Cameron's feeling of fulfilment was noticed when he spoke about his own personal achievements. And his history has included finding secure shelter after living on the streets, and when Cameron lived in a youth hostel his own cup being filled would help him feel extremely satisfied.

Daryl was another participant who used the word 'goals' for part of his answer regarding the definition of success:

Successful? Well if they've kicked all their goals ... what they planned to do ... just the start or the walk of life.

The first phrase, ‘they’ve kicked all their goals’ is directly connected to this theme. This is a type of metaphorical statement about achieving goals. The following phrases, ‘what they planned to do’ and ‘the walk of life’ have been interpreted as adding directly to the concept of reaching goals for Daryl’s definition of success. Since Daryl made the comments immediately after he talked about goals the idea of achieving the goals has been interpreted as the reason Daryl made these comments about lifestyle. The interview phrases might be viewed in a broader context such as the example of defining the personal history of an individual, relating closely to another interviewee, Kelvin.

The first interview with Kelvin had implications of describing success as achieving goals. His comments implied that someone with useful thoughts had implications for lifestyle, and suggested to be successful, someone ought to become involved with the wider community and therefore apparently share their goals:

... become active politically and have a word.

The idea of reaching a goal became clearer when Kelvin described his own success as obtaining certain levels with his education:

Which I don’t have [a fortune or large business]. Well the only success I had really was I went and got myself a master’s degree. Well that was to me.

To describe success Kelvin said:

... that to be a success you’d have to come from nowhere ... Get to the top of what you are doing and retiring.

This point is closely connected to achieving a goal because Kelvin referred to someone with few accolades, another phrase for ‘come from nowhere’, in achieving personal goals. Kelvin went further and explained success in greater depth. For example:

And either ... handing that business down in your family as in your son or daughter and then is up to them to keep the business a success.

Kelvin is part of the achieving goals theme because this reference to a goal was one of his initial comments in the main interview. Kelvin's interview is discussed further with the theme family support (see Section 5.2.1).

The word 'goals' was not used by Jim. However, 'accomplish' was a directly related choice. Discussing his own success, Jim said:

Ummm ... I suppose, yeah, you ahh ... I've accomplished a number of things I want to accomplish. And I guess that's a measure of success.

By adding the phrase 'things I want to accomplish', Jim indicated that the personal goals were important when talking about success.

Sport is an area in which reaching goals is often the prime concern (I. Maynard, 2006). For example, the word 'goal' is often used as the measure of achievement in various competitions. Examples include all versions of football, basketball, netball and hockey. The concept of goals often has a wider meaning for further achievement in sport (I. Maynard, 2006). For example, the goal concept might be deemed as winning a series of events, a position reached at the culmination of a season, achieving one's personal best or obtaining a particular level. Interestingly, personal best being considered the goal is common in sport and many Indigenous people have reached a high level in sport (Rüst et al., 2011). Stronach et al. (2022) showed examples of impressive achievements in sport by Australian Indigenous women.

Jim discussed experiences with Australian Rules Football. The goals in football were an important part of success for Jim:

... I'll probably have to use football as an example ummm. For me ummm, in 2008 we ended up winning, ... that 2008 ... the senior premiership ummm the senior premiership ...

The fact that Jim reinforced the success definition stating that this was an example as well as with the memory of the ‘winning the premiership’, which is another reason that achieving a goal was deemed ‘success’ for himself. The examples used by Jim might be perceived to have other meanings. For example, team participation or satisfying spectators. Achieving goals is the valid selection because this correlates with the other points made during the interview.

The visual artwork was an important part of Sally’s interview. The artwork, mentioned above was the first thing Sally said when referring to success and the artwork was used as an example of success:

Every time I have a show or every time I venture out with other artists and doing things with them I feel a success. ... You know. [Pause] ... And so success for me is being able to get my artwork there. You know. I’m producing it. But, if I don’t show it ... then I’m not a failure by not showing ...

Sally’s comment has a range of meanings. For example, exhibiting the artwork and interacting with other artists. The phrase ‘able to get my artwork there’ indicated the interpretation that Sally viewed achieving goals for the definition of success. Then Sally stated that ‘producing it’ or in other words completing the artwork or effectively reaching this goal is still a success in Sally’s case. There are other meanings attached and Sally is mentioned in the determination theme (see Section 5.1.4) and the theme of creativity or spirituality (see Section 5.1.5).

Another participant who used the term ‘completed’ was Mary, who responded to a query about success saying:

What I wanted to achieve ..., in successful wise ... is I wanted to get umm ... everything completed an’ especially with all the history an’ stuff.

‘Achieve’ is mentioned at the start of the comment. After a short pause Mary referred to ‘successful’ and then adjusted her phrase to ‘I wanted to get everything completed’. Hence the interpretation of Mary’s concept of success has been viewed as achieving goals. This comment does have complications when considered in combination with Mary’s other comments. For advice about success, Mary used the metaphorical example of the Berlin wall indicating that overcoming obstacles was a definition of success (Baker, 1993). This was considered achieving a goal since it may be considered the goal:

Umm just yeah just keep at it and keep on it ... knocking that ... keep on knockin’ the Berlin wall I dunno ... [laughs] you know what I mean ... yeah, the wall down ...

Using the phrase ‘you know what I mean’ most likely means that Mary has said to the listener that she presumes they understand her reference to success was ‘knocking down the Berlin wall’. Overall analysis was not easily reached in Mary’s case because the interview is short and without confirmation of results. Mary was at first cautious talking about the topic of success. There was minimal time available for the interview. Mary’s attitude resulted in the ethical approach, when necessary, of avoiding extra pressure and minimising the request for confirmation of the transcript. Mary’s situation is discussed further in Section 5.1.3, which considers difficulties discussing success.

Heather was the leading supervisor at an Indigenous art studio primarily for young Indigenous people in the region. After an initial preparatory interview Heather began her second interview saying:

[Pause] Well when a student completes a class, that’s successful, and then goes on to do something else.

‘Completes a class’ and immediately relating this to successful is the reason this interview has been interpreted as achieving a goal. More comments from Heather about the student’s own success to ‘do something else’ supports this conclusion because this refers to students reaching their own goals. When Heather expanded on her thoughts on achieving goals, the theme connection was clearer:

When they can achieve stuff for themselves. You know? And go away to do ... the things that they want to do. ... And they can get further education, they can get jobs. ... So I think that’s important.

Heather apparently referred to achieving goals for herself as well as for others as a key part of success. As well as others achieving their goals, another interpretation for Heather’s feelings might be referring to someone becoming personally occupied. Considering the total interview, Heather seemed very much related to achieving goals. Other participants were relevant for this theme but with a less obvious association.

5.2.3.2 Less Obvious Support

Harry described his life history. A major feature was his effort organising a program helping other Indigenous men into the workforce. For measurements of success, he specifically mentioned:

... work program to help others, [pause] help have a family and bring up kids.

All three examples here, work program, have a family and raising children were identified as a type of goal. Other reasons for the comment might be applicable including continuing culture and contributing to the community. Notice that Harry’s comments almost necessarily involve others within the community. Since the comment was directed more at men than at woman, thereby only a portion of the community, achieving goals has been interpreted as the most relevant theme. This was considered as achieving the goals for himself and for the group of men involved.

Jack was a participant who made a metaphorical description of success:

... head down bum up just get on with it, to where you're heading just get on with it. [pause] ... You will achieve so much ... in your life it will just make your life so much better ...

Jack's first reference to success used the metaphor about a physical position apparently advising an attitude of determination. The discussion is expanded for Jack with the relevant theme (see Section 5.1.4). The phrase 'to where you're heading' has a specific inference of achieving pre-set goals further supported with the comment:

Just achieve that goal for yourself. Stick to that goal and you will not fall ...

Thus, achieving goals is also an appropriate interpretation of Jack's definition of success.

Dale provided his own description of what was apparently achieving one's own goals:

Well look never lose your hope, never lose your dreams ... Life is hard. Keep hard at it do your best.

Pointing out that someone ought to be aware that they will face challenges, Dale advised to keep working and aim to do your best. This has been interpreted here as maintaining determination to be successful. Dale's views about never losing your hope or dreams have been perceived as keeping aware of your goals and keep striving to achieve. The next phrase, 'keep hard at it', has resulted in Dale being included with the determination theme.

Amelia's interview could be included with direct support for the theme because a comment about success correlated with achieving a goal:

When thing's that we've been working for come to us.

This sentence has been interpreted as achieving one's personal goals. Although, this was not Amelia's answer when asked for a definition of success. This was Amelia's answer to '... how do we know?', which was asked after the definition of success had already been discussed and Amelia had given a brief answer. This was Amelia's example of good times or a feeling of success.

The word 'success' was used minimally during Amelia's interview. When Amelia had her introductory discussion about the interview topic, she accepted the interview invitation with caution. Other people, especially women, had shown signs of caution when the term 'success' was used, and this is discussed further below about problems with the concept of success (see Section 6.2).

Adam was a major contributor to a well-known band (Donald, 1980). The second interview began with a question about considering himself successful and Adam began with the summary:

Umm, in terms of ... yeah. In terms of um leaving our mark on the industry ... in terms and you know of being inducted into South Australia Music Hall of Fame in 2016.

Adam then said:

It was sort of a big feather in your cap to speak.

This comment has been interpreted as a metaphorical summary of achieving a goal. Almost definitely this is a symbol of achievement, but maybe not a set goal. Therefore, this has been combined with the obscure support group.

Neil provided a detailed interview that has been interpreted as exhibiting a range of ideas for the meaning of success. Neil's comments are discussed further above. The following comment was part of his answer when asked about success:

... all they see as success is so-called academic experts, or whatever but someone who's had a successful motor mechanics business or whatever for the last 20 years is an expert in their own field ...

Neil continued:

... become successful in whatever chosen field ...

The answers apparently refer to someone achieving success by reaching a given level in a chosen field, therefore a kind of personal goal. The answers did not specifically mention goals, but the implication of goal was probable. Neil's answer has resulted in the interpretation of obscure support for defining success as reaching a goal, and the answer is mentioned again with the assessment of literature.

5.2.3.3 Literature Links

Examples in this section indicate how participants describing success as achieving goals was related to modern literature. Most relevant participants were Cameron, Kelvin, Neil, Heather and Harry.

Achieving a goal was inferred as success by Lindsay (2005) for the Indigenous entrepreneur. Lindsay used a distinct definition for Indigenous entrepreneurs that differed when compared with Western entrepreneurs. Similarly, Foley (2003a) agreed that there are differences. For example, claiming monetary gains are usually interpreted as success within the non-Indigenous system, while this is often not so for Indigenous entrepreneurs. Lindsay and Foley both claimed there are cultural barriers for the Indigenous entrepreneur. For example, the monetary success might be seen by others within an Indigenous community as the entrepreneur refusing to acknowledge cultural regimes such as failing to share one's own resources. The capitalist philosophy is often misaligned with the Australian Indigenous community. For example, in a capitalist regime, a competitive nature often results in greater achievement being interpreted as morally strong, while a

more equitable attitude is usually considered desirable within an Indigenous community (Foley, 2003a). The notion of equity was supported by participants in this study, for example with the success is available to all and the contribution to community themes. A related example of cultural difference is apparent with the concept of a gift. A gift is often associated with special circumstances in a capitalist style regime. The gift is virtually always considered desirable in the Indigenous community (see examples in Section 1.4 and Chapter 4 showing examples of the gifts received during data collection).

Spencer et al. (2016) discussed Indigenous social entrepreneurial systems that focus on non-profit achievements of the group. The claim was the source for the family or community becomes the function of the entrepreneurial group. The authors stated that this is effectively the goal of the business. Arguably, the family is the prime concern and profits of the business are supplementary. This is related to participants in this section referring to reaching goals as well as points discussed above with family support (see Section 5.2.1). For example, when Kelvin first related success to maintaining ‘big business’ and stated the importance was passing this on to family members not huge monetary profits, as discussed by Foley (2008a).

Studying Navajo in the US as well as other cultural groups, McInerney et al. (1998) claimed goals are increasingly important to Indigenous students. McInerney et al. supported their theory with literature claiming non-Western Indigenous goals are often the antithesis of the Western goals. The argument related to Jim who has been employed in a position of Indigenous support at university level and supported the conception of achieving goals as relevant for the success of Indigenous tertiary students. For his own success, Jim used football as an example to compare success with achieving the goals. An Indigenous artist and academic student who was another participant discussed above;

Sally also supported the idea with her summation suggesting that achieving goals is a form of success.

Audrey (2011) used the term ‘goals’ when describing wholistic success.

Analysing the situation of Indigenous people in the US, this had parallels to most Australian Indigenous people involved in higher education (R. Oliver et al., 2013, p. 23; N. White et al., 2002):

The goal was not to go to university to invest in oneself, but more necessary in terms of self-development, self-respect, and self-motivation. In addition, a successful person was someone that people looked up to, they were a role model for others to follow, and they were happy and kind to others. (Audrey, 2011, p. 43)

There were similar thoughts observed in Neil’s general comments in which Neil devalued reaching predetermined levels set by others and receiving accolades. Neil pointed to the achievement of one’s own life goals for self-development as well as being able to argue your case. This is related to Kelvin who encouraged political activity to promote your own views.

Analysing higher education, Street et al. (2020) stated more research is needed about Indigenous success and promoting the need to consider whose success is paramount. Success within the higher education system is assessed, decade by decade from 1960s, basically using an assimilationist attitude until 2000s. From this time, success was viewed effectively as achieving outcomes, that is, reaching the goals. By the 2000s, there was more importance placed on listening to the thoughts of the Indigenous people being affected (Fredericks & Bradfield, 2021b; Herbert, 2003a). This can be aligned with both Neil and Kelvin, who advocated the action of listening to Indigenous people.

5.2.3.4 Summary

There has been a wide range of descriptions by participants defining success in terms of achieving goals. Examples of comments by Gary indicated variance even for a single participant. Gary referred to goals for the success of other people but for his own success, he stated that the goals were not important. When questioned about the success definition he said:

Ohh. That's a good question. I umm ... [pause] I don't set out with expectations. I didn't expect to be here where I am. Look I look back on my life so far, I will achieve a lot more. ... Look did I set out to do that? Did I have goals? No. I just loved to playin' these instruments. Just a passion.

Goals were implicit in the interview, but the use of the phrase 'don't set out with expectations' apparently acknowledged the goals but devalued the achievement of goals for himself. Gary showed signs of his own success as contributing to the community, discussed above.

This chapter has illustrated the participants whose evidence aligned with the theme of defining success as achieving goals. Participants directly related to this have been discussed first. Two participants used the phrase 'achieving goals' as their definition. Five others did not use the term 'goal' but used a phrase specifically related to achieving a goal: for example, completing a task. Six participants are discussed who gave a less explicit statement about achieving a goal. Comments varied from participants who gave examples like raising a family. The findings in this study data regarding the achievement of goals as success for Indigenous groups, agreed with the literature considered in this section, since a goal is arguably a way of some people feeling a sense of wellbeing or happiness that is the next theme discussed.

5.2.4 Happiness

The happiness theme is defined as participants who have indicated their prime interpretation of success is to achieve personal happiness. Participants who have shown the closest connection to this theme are discussed first. The second group of examples are not as clear, but the interviews have been interpreted as participants suggesting personal happiness is a major part of success. These examples are then related to various authors in the literature.

5.2.4.1 Specific Examples

Terry linked success to being happy and was asked for examples of happiness:

I guess ... happiness. Oh sorry let me go back to successful. Successful is success in yourself. You have to be successful in yourself first before you can be successful in doing other things. You know ... in life. One has to be happy with themselves, and no matter, in um ... not seeing others and go for other wants and needs ... for them.

Terry claimed that for success, one ought to be feeling happy. He indicated that there is a distinction between the terms, success and happiness. The first two sentences separated the terms. However, he also claimed that success in life is dependent on happiness by saying, 'one has to be happy with themselves' and emphasising this point with the phrases that followed immediately.

Nellie was an affable person and nearly always ready to chat. Nellie usually mingled with many different people and enjoyed a visit a wide range of places. Ready to offer support whenever able. For example, this included physical support to elders, assisting with the diffusion of arguments and discussing problems with individuals.

When considering the concept of success, Nellie referred to the significance of being happy. Nellie's interview began with the answer, directly related to her own wellbeing:

Ah. Um. I'm just an ordinary chick that enjoys life. ... Love art. Love music.

When introducing herself Nellie placed importance on being happy or 'enjoying life'.

The main interview happened soon after Nellie's efforts to help others. This was used as a compliment during the interview:

IH: And tell me about your success, your fun. What have you done well?

Nellie: Um well, just being me. Yeah, doing everyday good things, just like ... helping the everyday person that needs help. Yeah ...

IH: Beautiful. Just like helpin', before, when I met you this morning?

Nellie's ideas of happiness were expanded upon when Nellie was asked specifically about the meaning of success. Nellie indicated that fame and monetary fortune were not her own perception of enjoying herself:

Um ... I dunno, fame and fortune I suppose. ... But my fortune is not to have ... not to be rich, it's just enjoying life itself is more rich. Yeah.

The answer from Nellie when asked about advice when discussing success was: Enjoy life. ... Don't take things for granted. um. ... Yeah, that's about it, I think.

Another comment about advice from Nellie was:

If I was gonna ask? Probably my family. My sistas. That'd be my most applied advisory, to my life wellbeing yep.

The interpretation of these comments was Nellie considering enjoying life and thereby happiness as the major factor when thinking about success.

Gary was another participant who made the distinction between happiness and money. When asked about a meaning of success, he said:

... I measure success in happiness not money.

Ahh, emotionally [pause]. I would ... well successful I measure success in happiness not money. Although money is pretty easy to ... come by sometimes. And sometimes it's not. On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy I am, my career achievement for my life. I'd have to say 10 out of 10 definitely. I'm absolutely honoured. And it's only because of my mentors.

This statement was interpreted as being happy and this was central to Gary's idea of success. The examples in Section 5.2.4.2 were not as clear cut, although happiness did appear to be at the forefront for the participant talking about success.

5.2.4.2 Indirect Reference to Happiness

Owing to his general mannerism Ned seemingly associated success with happiness: for example, mannerisms concerned body language, laughing and welcoming other listeners. This is apparently part of Ned's description of success because after listening to the interview introduction and casually listening to two other interviews, he began with:

And um ... I'm from the mob, umm songline comes from the Yukkanjurraputtin' jurra people, Warrupi. All the way through the desert and I have the blessing and the cultural respect and permission to do my culture just about anywhere in this country and I can walk this country with um no problems at all because I've been around the world four times. Worked for the Australian Tourism commission ... um, everywhere in the world I've seen about 38 countries. I'm really proud of it.

This interview finished with:

I don't tell anyone about it ... because it's my own achievement.

The last sentence might be interpreted as Ned not wanting to tell many about his success and the rest of the interview had few comments about success. Therefore, interview questions were minimal, and Ned began a 3-minute, 45-second didgeridoo presentation. Maybe this was another way of Ned avoiding the topic. However, this was an important part of data collection and is discussed further with data collection reflections (see Chapter 4). The didgeridoo apparently aligned with Ned's idea of success because when asked, 'Do you call that successful?', he responded with emphasis:

Yes, even betta.

The phrase 'even betta' has been interpreted here as a state of happiness. Ned's use of the Indigenous language is worth including here because it will not be easy to find anywhere else and the comment immediately followed the question about success. Assuming he addressed the topic of success with his next comment, Ned was credited with providing a deeper understanding of success, even though this is another language:

That's them butta [brother]. Kurrmubuttaememburayingi.

Yurrawungaoongiwaruniyemwunnya.

Further research is needed to understand whether this is an Indigenous language definition of success or a way of avoiding the topic. Ned's interview was not easy to interpret precisely.

Harry apparently suggested a kind of happiness when asked about success by using the terms 'productive life' and 'self-esteem'. These are further terms related to wellbeing. Discussing people he plans to help, Harry offered this answer for a meaning of success:

... and get a productive life. Where they can have family and bring up kids. And just build self-esteem in themselves that's what I had to do. And that's what I try and do with others and that's my success.

Harry was adamant that this was how he views success in his own eyes.

Adam was another participant who appeared to avoid a detailed explanation when asked for the meaning of success:

I guess ... yeah, umm, I guess you've gotta really love what you're doin'. I s'pose, to get there. If they stick at it. Ya know? I mean you can always change you know ...

Happiness was interpreted as implicit here since Adam talked about, '...really love what you're doin' ...'.

With trepidation, Adam was quick to criticise recommendations from the colonisers to gain success:

Umm, yeah, [slowly] ... I guess, and in terms of when, ... when people are distracted from what they really want to do in life. So ...

The comments by Adam have been interpreted as devaluing the pressure from colonisers to reach an assumed success that was placed on Indigenous individuals, thereby distracting individuals from their own needs. Another example of Adam implying happiness as relevant was his use of the similar phrase, '... really want to do'. He then followed up with another comment that traditional people were distracted by colonisers:

Well no. I'm just sayin', as an example ... like ahh people were distracted from their traditional ways back then. Yeah. So it was there ahh you know, their love I guess ... their way, their culture everything and they were distracted, in taken away and put on missions or in places where they were kept.

Assimilation seemed prominent for Adam when thinking about success. This assumption is made because he also raised the issue of missions and other forced living arrangements. Therefore, this answer is complex in nature and more research is needed to increase the knowledge of Adam's point. The first part of the answer has been identified

as relating success to satisfaction and thereby a happy lifestyle required by Indigenous people. The issue of living in two cultures and utilising success in two different ways was inherent in these answers by Adam, discussed further in Chapter 6.

The indirect references to happiness might be interpreted as portraying another aspect of life when describing success because the topic seemed to vary for each answer. The apparent reference to happiness had a range of forms. For example, Adam discussed what people preferred whereas Harry raised the idea of self-esteem, while Ned used his didgeridoo to demonstrate his own wellbeing. However, in this section the point is, success is necessarily dependant on happiness if keeping oneself happy is understood as enjoying oneself, personal satisfaction or achieving a productive lifestyle. Related examples were evident in the literature.

5.2.4.3 Literature

Success being related to happiness was reflected in the research of Cairney et al. (2017) investigating Indigenous success, if we accept the interchangeable use of the terms, happiness and wellbeing. This is a reasonable assumption since a range of authors have used a similar approach (Kasser, 2011; Kasser & Sheldon, 2000; Michalos, 2017; Roche & Rolley, 2011). Sometimes the term used is well-being or wellbeing. In research with Indigenous Australians, Cairney et al. argued that Indigenous success and wellbeing are closely connected for most participants.

Schaper (1999) used qualitative interviews to consider the success of Indigenous entrepreneurs. He argued that more than a financial view of success is commonplace. Similarly, this applied to participants in this study. Schaper stated that happiness is important for the Indigenous entrepreneur and argued that this is a cultural norm. Therefore, this agreed with (Foley, 2003a), a key author in the area who has advocated the point of happiness being part of success.

Using qualitative interviews with Indigenous entrepreneurs, Gallagher (2008) studied identity for Indigenous entrepreneurs in Canada and Australia and alluded to happiness when referring to success. Gallagher used happiness as a prerequisite when studying successful participants and claimed happiness to be essential for the successful business.

Participants referred to in this section were closely related to Colquhoun and Dockery (2012) who investigated factors that described wellbeing for Indigenous people growing up in the colonised society. The interview samples were from 11 different regions in Australia using a combination of qualitative and quantitative interviews. The authors claimed to be the ‘carer who knew the child best’ and judged that many people use the terms wellbeing and happiness interchangeably. They argued that Indigenous people have rated happiness and strength of personal ties to culture and family connections to be essential for success. By accepting the connection between wellbeing and happiness, the authors placed happiness as closely related to success. This was similarly observed with the comments above by both Nellie and Terry. A closely related connection was made in Barney’s (2016) study of tertiary students that concluded students require happiness to achieve success.

Katz (1964) offered ideas that correlated with the examples from comments of participants in this study. Katz argued that success reflects various culturally prescribed value systems. Katz stated happiness has been used as a prerequisite for success in most Indigenous communities reiterated in the summary of this section.

5.2.4.4 Summary

This section has shown that some participants used happiness as either a prerequisite for achieving success or as a direct definition of success. The literature is not inundated with references. Relevant authors supported the connection between happiness

and success. Terry, Nellie and Gary were the clearest examples of participants observed directly relating the concepts of happiness and success with statements displaying an obvious association. Ned, Harry and Adam were less obvious examples supporting the literature, Ned's use of language and story of passing on examples of cultural knowledge was one example of participants mentioned in this section who also referred to cultural values.

5.2.5 Continuing Culture

This section first identifies the significant classification of the theme. Followed by major examples, minor examples and finally the links to modern literature. The findings described in this section have identified the significance to participants of being able to actively continue the cultural particulars of the Indigenous community of which they are part. These findings are parallel to Bolt (2009) who used the term 'Aboriginal identity' and researched the establishment of this identity. In a lengthy thesis, Bolt argued a major point about retaining cultural specifics as a valid factor when retaining the Aboriginal identity. For this study, the connection to Bolt's work was the use of qualitative interviews and finding a position for collecting data as part of the research community, by gaining trust and insight with participants providing information.

The lyrics of a song in Deborah Cheetham's paper (2015, p. 109) relate to Bolt's (2009) work and summarises the subject of this theme:

I know you, but do you know me? When you hear the word *Aboriginal*,
tell me what do you see. Do you see you? Or do you see me?

We are our own people, our own community. We walk with pride as a family,
we stand tall, we stand free. So I ask you again, do you know me?

The history you belong to, is just a fragment of our past, we sing and dance
our culture, that's how we made it last.

I belong to this land, it belongs to me. My culture, my ancestors were free.

An important ultimatum, ‘... how we made it last’, is the basis of the central argument for this theme. That is, nine participants have claimed that their Indigenous cultural values continue today and the continuation of this culture is fundamental to a definition of success. Seven participants were interpreted as clear examples of mentioning continuing culture as success and are discussed first.

5.2.5.1 Major Examples

Terry referred to continuing his culture when being introduced to this study and associated comments were recorded in field notes. Terry claimed that the purpose of the Indigenous performing artists at Circular Quay, Sydney was to maintain the continuity of the Australian Indigenous culture. When asked about success, Terry emphasised comments claiming that continuing the culture was viewed as success for the artists:

That success of havin’ materials objects is not success in ... I believe for me and my people eyes ... Success for me [is] ... just being, your true self ... [pause] ... and offering wider audience your true self and sharing our culture. And um everything come from the very core of culture and I’m not tryin’ to water it down.

The phrases ‘sharing our culture’ and ‘everything come from the very core of culture’ have been interpreted as Terry being included with the theme continuing culture. The interpretation is further justified considering the phrases ‘wider audience’ and ‘not trying to water it down’. Also, the phrase, ‘just being your true self’ has been interpreted as continuing the culture since the implication for Terry was that his ‘true self’ was part of the culture.

The field notes supported the importance of continuing the culture because during the research introduction Terry’s claim for the Circular Quay Indigenous dancing and busking group was to maintain and continue Indigenous cultural practices, not for

monetary profits. Funds accepted might be misunderstood by some audiences as the purpose of this group, sometimes known as buskers, while in fact promoting the culture was the purpose of this group. This was an example of a situation in which racism or another prejudice could have been a serious hindrance. For example, people arguing against busking might pursue their conceptions by claiming that busking is a method of begging and a nuisance to a society (McNamara & Quilter, 2017).

As confirmed by Terry's comments, artists often claim that the purpose of busking is usually to share the artwork and thereby continue cultural practice. Terry's interview is further discussed as an important example with the themes happiness (see Section 5.2.4), contribution to community (see Section 5.2.2), creativity or spirituality (see Section 5.1.5) and success is different (see Section 5.1.1), also mentioned with family support (see Section 5.2.1) and determination (see Section 5.1.4).

Heather was the leader and teacher of an Indigenous art group in Gippsland. This role showed that Heather had a desire to promote Indigenous art and Indigenous culture. Further conversation and comments during the interview confirmed Heather's support for maintaining the Indigenous traditional artwork and thereby promoting the continued culture. When asked about success, Heather referred to her feeling of satisfaction witnessing the creative talent develop:

... well when a student completes a task and then goes on to achieve something else.

Helping students complete the artwork is a way of promoting cultural activities, Heather's interview is part of this theme continuing culture considering the phrase, 'when a student completes a task ...', interpreted as Heather aiming to achieve her goal of assisting others maintaining Indigenous art techniques in the community. The interview is discussed further below regarding literature as well as in Section 5.1.5. The interview is

further discussed with the themes contribution to community (see Section 5.2.2) and achieving goals (see Section 5.2.3).

Gary provided examples of maintaining the culture. His first comment featured, ‘pass it on ...’, suggesting that the culture ought to be passed to a younger generation. He also referred to his ancestors and stated that his own talents are a credit to these people who were ‘... good teachers’. With the statement regarding the teachers Gary was presumably acknowledging the importance of elders to maintain cultural knowledge and thereby contribute to the continuation of culture. Gary’s interview is further discussed with the themes, creativity or spirituality and happiness.

Jarrold’s interview was completed in three stages and has resulted with the interpretation that Jarrold was keen to promote the continuing of culture. Jarrold’s comments about the importance of youth in the community learning about culture helped clarify the desire to see the culture was maintained:

Because I know where I’m from and I know my culture an’ where I’m from. You know, yeah. If you haven’t got that, knowin’ you culture, you not a ... a Aboriginal man. Cause you gotta know your culture. To live on this world still. And we’re still here. But you gotta have your culture, deep down down inside of your heart.

Continuing culture has been interpreted as important to Jarrold, as indicated by the phrases, ‘know my culture an’ where I’m from’, ‘knowin’ you’ culture’, ‘gotta have your culture’ and ‘we’re still here’. These three phrases have been part of the interpretation that Jarrold claimed maintaining the culture is important. Jarrold’s advice for achieving success referred to the continuation of culture when he said:

We all gotta stick together with culture start talkin’ ‘n’ takin’ notice of it ... talkin’ about this stuff.

He immediately followed this with the phrase, 'keep it goin'', further confirming his idea of continuing culture. Jarrod is also discussed with the themes difficulty discussing success, success available to all and determination.

Trevor was the leader of a group preparing a Christian art banner with an Indigenous flavour. The banner, called God's Dreaming, was completed by a combination of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and involves 17 individual pieces of artwork. Trevor described this banner:

So we're finding great success. It's a great way to tell the story because most of the Indigenous communication was through either the artwork or through, another, not a lot of written.

Trevor's summation of success with the phrase 'finding great success' has resulted in the interpretation that success has been experienced by Trevor. The banner is designed to promote Christianity. The Indigenous artwork input has been interpreted as continuing culture and combining this with an established religion. The Indigenous characteristics of the banner were considered significant. Therefore, Trevor's practice was an example of Indigenous individuals combining traditional culture with the Christian religion. For example, continuing Indigenous culture was connected to the use of the word 'dreaming' in the title and the application of the Indigenous style visual artwork in the banner. Trevor's interview is also part of creativity or spirituality.

During Sally's interview, comments made were interpreted as the propagation of Indigenous culture:

So still that reference to black people. Withstands the test of time. Through the language of the media. Which we accept. Reading you know. And there's this fine line of blackness and white.

I responded with the comment, ‘what’s this colour?’. I was pointing to my own skin, that has been interpreted as both colours and Sally continued:

That’s exactly right. Darwin’s theory of ... of eventually being overthrown by white power through genetics ... [see literature discussion below]

And you know. Through the struggle of Aboriginal people. So I’m exploring this. Not just through the words. And through font. And through the way black and white meet one another on a contextual plane. So ... that’s my artwork with that.

These comments from Sally and as the pre-interview discussion have ensured that her interview has been included as an example of continuing culture. Raising the issues of the Darwinian evolution theory being misused as justification for the colonising acts, as well as Sally using the phrases ‘black and white meet one another’ and the ‘contextual pane’ has resulted in the interpretation that the artwork was used as a way of challenging the racism issues as well as advocating the continuation of culture. This supports the interpretation that Sally was keen for the Indigenous community to maintain cultural recognition in the face of many challenges. Sally’s interview is discussed in more detail in section about creativity as well as with the theme success is different.

Ned was the didgeridoo player in the Circular Quay busking group. Ned stated that continuing culture was a major reason for his use of the didgeridoo:

All the way through the desert and I have the blessing and the cultural respect and permission to do my culture just about anywhere in this country ...

Ned played the five-minute didgeridoo performance when he was interviewed about success. After playing didgeridoo he was asked, ‘You call that successful?’ and he not only stated an informed yes, he gave an example of Indigenous language:

Yes. That’s even betta ... [emphasis] Yoomung Waringi ma. Yung urriowungum ginunngiwoora bungiwaa Goomeeee bungawooee.

Ned played the didgeridoo some more. The use of the didgeridoo and the language example have been interpreted as examples of Ned promoting the continuation of cultural traditions. Since this happened when being asked to think about success, the implication was seen as Ned connecting the cultural practice to success. Ned's interview is also discussed above in Section 5.1.5.

Other interview examples supported the notion that continuing culture was a possible definition of success although not as obviously as examples described above.

5.2.5.2 Minor Examples

Field notes suggested the inclusion of Cameron with this theme. He has participated with a group of Gunnai/Kurnai dancers performing in various parts of Gippsland. He has also produced visual art in the form of burnt wood carvings. The following comment during his interview supports the interpretation that Cameron supports the continuation of culture:

I have been doin' cultural heritage, and my main things are getting my education ... housing, health ... And my rights to the lands. Um ... in Gippsland ... and you know getting people into employment. ... An' currently I'm applyin' for Gunnai/Kurnai Land and Water Corporation Board ... to become a member.

Referrals to the issue of land rights and the Gunnai/Kurnai position with the Water Corporation Board have been interpreted as suggesting Cameron was keen to promote the continuing culture theme. He stated his own desire to contribute to the continuation of cultural traditions.

Adam showed signs that have been interpreted as supporting the continuing culture theme, with the comments:

... song writing as well is sort of like being at research. Lookin' at historical stuff and that so sort of knowledgeable in Aboriginal history, culture, I would say.

Living in groups. Individuals focused in special areas. Examples say women in given fields, someone who was a hunter, another who and people who knew a lot about health. Everyone knew about Rib Grass, antiseptic and other healing.

Needed boiling up. [A plant used for healing. A Sample from the nearby lawn was shown by Adam.]

The interest Adam showed in historical issues and other traditions suggested Adam be included with the theme continuing culture (see Section 5.2.5). Adam's interview is further discussed in Sections 5.1.5 (creativity or spirituality), 5.2.4 (happiness) and 5.2.3 (achieving goals).

Observations of other individuals, observed during completing of various interviews, included displaying Indigenous colours of red, black and yellow; showing artwork and using long-time established greeting methods and were all considered part of this theme. All three interviewees in Sydney were contributing the continuation of cultural practice. The interviews discussed in this section generally correlated with literature that has claimed Indigenous people in many global regions have maintained their culture.

5.2.5.3 Literature

This section is an example of the vast literature available on this topic, from a range of places and cultures. Umland (2018) discussed effects of colonisation on a group in the US and the relevance for people involved. Records remained in the Mashpee Wampanoag Museum. Umland explained how acts of colonisation outlawing native culture was a way of assimilating Indigenous people. Tracts of the original people have nevertheless remained, even with many assimilative actions happening. Umland made the point that not only is the original culture still here, but the intention is for it to remain for many years. This is comparable to many of the Indigenous groups in Australia and

confirmed for Indigenous Australians by interviewees in this section. The Christian artwork banner described by a participant during this research thesis, Trevor, was an example of the Australian culture remaining strong, even with the inundation of another religion.

The importance of maintaining cultural links for many individuals within an Indigenous community has been illustrated in this section. That is, a definition of success has been interpreted as continuing culture; therefore, the significance of the cultural links requires discussion. For Australian Indigenous cultures Cheetham (2015) made the point that for the world's oldest cultures the arts have been a prime tool to maintain cultural features. For example, knowledge and culture has often been passed on by performing arts. The performing artists from Circular Quay, Sydney, interviewed during this research thesis claimed that sharing culture was their prime purpose. Cheetham argued that many Australians find it too difficult to learn to know the Indigenous population and many others are simply too far away. Cheetham claimed these people do not understand Indigenous culture. This is reminiscent of the experience in Sydney observing the audience while introducing myself to the performing group as well as waiting the following day when preparing to interview. While the crowd enjoying the Sydney performance was sizeable, I noticed I was the only person who made personal contact with the Indigenous performers. Hence, this was an example of many Australians missing the opportunity to interact with the Indigenous community. Gary's poem was an attempt to question the doubts of many cross-cultural observers who have portrayed negative intimations of Indigenous Australians.

In Australia, there have been efforts to either destroy or detach people from the established culture. This contrasts with other examples in other regions, for example making use of recorded operas to preserve cultural information (Cheetham, 2015).

Cheetham compared the enormous amount of cultural information in a famous opera with the Indigenous Australian cultural information that has been almost ignored, stating that mainstream Australia has overlooked so much of the world's oldest cultures. This same reasoning applies to many fields of Australian cultural information. For example, consider the quantity of material available about either the Chinese cuisine or the Western diet, and in comparison, the scarce quantity of information available about Australian dietary history. This section has supported the aim to preserve as well as understand some of Australian Indigenous cultural knowledge that is still available. Further, the completion of this study is an example of how to address the problem of diminishing the oldest cultures in the world.

Continuing culture and acknowledging this as a type of success has been considered here as a way participants in this research have kept themselves separated from the assimilative approach of the colonisers. Anthony (2015) focused on the excessive force that colonial law has used to interrogate the Australian Indigenous community. Examples include comparing how capital punishment was used in excess for more than 100 years against Indigenous offenders compared with non-Indigenous offenders. Still nowadays over one-quarter of the incarcerated population in Australia are Indigenous people even though Indigenous people are only approximately two percent of the total population. Anthony discussed how there were substantial efforts to eradicate any realms of Indigenous cultural laws but even with this happening, Indigenous rules remained in place for people in local communities. The reestablishment of these cultural laws, or lore as it is better known in an Indigenous community, was the type of issue being pursued by the artwork of Sally who was interviewed in this study. Sally's work confronted racism and addressed many effects of racism resulting from the disparity of

two different styles of law enforcement applied by colonisers. Thus, continuation of culture was a way for Sally to expose the racism.

Sally referred to continuation of culture when talking of the use of her own artwork to alert the misinformed about the abuse of Darwin's theory. This supported Gibbons (2015), who indicated how Darwin's theory of the 'survival of the fittest' was misused as justification for many of the colonising acts that took place during the eighteenth century. That is, the power-seeking colonisers tried to argue that the fact they had survived in some way justified their actions of eliminating other groups. The colonisers were ignoring the Indigenous Australian people's survival for tens of thousands of years.

Peng and Wei (2018) explained how the street art or busking is often used as a way of enhancing the cultural environment of a city. The argument was the artistic nature of the artists is a way of sharing the cultural values. This paper is supported here via the agreement with the attitudes of all the buskers interviewed at Circular Quay, Sydney and discussed in this section. Thus, literature discussed in this section generally adheres to at least some of the viewpoints expressed by participants interviewed.

5.2.5.4 Summary

This section started with the lyrics of a tune that reinforces the idea that preservation of Indigenous culture is paramount to many people especially the members of an Indigenous community. Seven examples were a clear indication that this was fundamental for the idea of success. Two more interviewees were interpreted as supporting the continuing culture theme although less obviously. Literature related to this topic is readily available and examples here show that the literature supported the claims of participants in this theme.

5.3 Conclusion

This section provides a summary of observed themes for this study, and theories are introduced for further discussion in Chapter 6. The grounded theory method was used for the thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews and results are summarised below to clarify this chapter. The chapter is divided into two main sections. First presented are the general-comment themes and second are the success definition themes. General-comment themes observed were:

- success is different
- success available to all
- difficulty discussing success
- determination
- creativity or spirituality.

The next five themes establish definitions for the concept of success:

- family support
- contribution to community
- achieving goals
- happiness
- continuing culture.

These themes have been discussed by first considering participants who were interpreted as indicating full support of the theme and secondly other participants were who were interpreted as showing at least some sort of support of the theme. The project has identified five themes that related to participants offering general comments about the concept of success and the five more themes related to the definition of success.

The most prominent general-comment themes showed 11 participants who claimed success is perceived differently within an Indigenous culture compared with a mainstream version of success. This was relevant when considering the literature definitions presented in Chapter 2 and the personal communication referred to in Chapter 1.

The theory offered here is a common perception of success being different within the participant community; a communal approach has been adopted to recognise success for most participants contacted during this research. A major example was the related theme of participants claiming that success is available to everyone not restricted to a selected few. Further illustrations of the theory were illustrated by themes referring to an Indigenous definition of success. For example, the two themes family support and contribution to community were examples of themes enabling the inclusion of a broad group to be included as successful. Hence, the more communal-based philosophy was observed compared with the more individualised versions of success typified in the Western definition stated with literature information in Section 2.4.

The chapter has overviewed the observed themes as well as providing the introduction to the discussion of themes. Chapter 6 draws conclusions about the collected data in the study related to the research goals stated in Chapter 1.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The chapter provides insight into how the concept of success was perceived and managed by Australian Indigenous research participants. The discussion explores the observations of collected data. The research premise discussed in Chapter 1 acknowledged that Indigenous people in Australia are now generally living amid two different cultures resulting from the impacts of colonisation. The thematic analysis in Chapter 5 established the findings that are drawn together in this chapter with regard to the research goals searching for an understanding of Indigenous perspectives of success. The research findings indicated that participants' understandings of success offered a range of commentary and alternative definitions of success when compared with what were perceived as common Western societal definitions.

Significant points identified in this chapter argue that the majority of participants perceive success with a communal vision and aim for an alternative view of success when compared with a Western mainstream view. A frequent claim discussed was that the Indigenous participants were seeking a different version of success compared with what they termed to be materialistic success. The discussion of links between themes continues with a consideration of inadequacies of a mainstream version of the concept of success. After the consideration of the meaning of success, another section presents the examples of participants considered to be successful individuals. This is followed by a discussion of listening. The research limits for this study are stated and the recommendations for further research are discussed.

The research limits consider the participant sample as a representative sample but not a conclusive sample because most participants were selected from one portion of the Australian Indigenous population. Twenty-three interviews were judged as usable for

participants living a suburban lifestyle as part of the local Indigenous community from the central Gippsland of Victoria. Three participants from Sydney stated they lived a comparable lifestyle. Connecting links were observed for the analytical themes presented in Chapter 5.

6.1 Research Theme Connections

This section presents examples of patterns and other factors that illustrated connections for the themes identified as a result of analysis of the data collected during this research. The concept of success is explored by noting the links between themes.

A prominent linking factor for observed themes explaining the concept of success was the Indigenous perspectives of participants exhibiting a communal configuration compared with a more individualistic genre of success accepted as the Western mainstream definition stated in Chapter 2. Another linking factor for the Indigenous participants was the devaluation of materialism to define success. These two observations were the prime differences for success when perceived from the Indigenous viewpoint compared with the more regular Western definitions.

A communal nature of success was deemed the preferred choice of participants for many cases, where the theme success is available to all was the prime example highlighting the choice. This was apparently a way of attempting to include an overall community to access at least some type of success. This might well be thought of as the opposite to a Western view where success is often reserved for a special group, even when there is not any open acknowledgement of the selective nature of the concept of success. For the Western mainstream society, the successful people are usually assumed to have displayed some sort of special characteristic (Lawford, 2016). See Section 2.4 for

a stated definition of success. For this study, Section 5.1 gives themes regarding commentary and 5.2 gives themes of the definition of success as stated by participants.

The communal aspect of success was further supported by two themes relating directly to the community-based attribute of the concept of success. The two themes, contribution to community and family support, were undoubtedly closely related, as indicated in Section 5.2.2. Both these themes showed a desire by the participant to define success as enabling an individual to give positive input for the immediate group of people with whom they were associated. Therefore, displaying a communal feature for the definition of success.

With reference to participant comments, the community mindset was directly stated by a range of participants, especially when the term family is considered in the essence of an extended family or an even wider group and includes welcoming new people into the group as argued by J. Maynard and Haskins (2016). Examples observed during this study illustrated this kind of support. Terry referred to ‘family’ and showed the approval was associated with welcoming a newcomer saying:

... we as cultural ambassadors adopt you into this country. And you become family ...

Jarrold made the related comment:

You been a family friend all our lives, and you showed us. All the go in our family. A Gunnai man.

Another participant, Kelvin referred to the family when mentioning being able to pass things on within the family, with a comment directly relating success to the family group:

... you would call [that] a successful type of family, sorta ...

Therefore, the family mindset for success was observed for participants in this research.

The themes directly related to the community mindset for the concept of success were interpreted as understanding that someone is able to provide input for the relevant group, whether known of as family or as community that probably refers to a wider group. Importantly the participants connected with these themes indicated an intention to allow everyone or at least everyone associated with a given group of people the opportunity to achieve success. This has been accepted here as having various interpretations for various individuals. For example, some will accept a community as a wider or more diverse group than others and the exact definition of this success varies for various individuals. While the preferred input to the group necessarily has a range of meanings. Examples include material supplements, mental support, assisting with children and helping people with limited abilities. The support was acknowledged as important by participants during this research without questioning the need for help. For example, participants during this research who promoted success being available to everyone did not show any qualifying nor limiting descriptions of success, as for the theme, success available to all, Section 5.1.2. This avoided any stigmatisation of small groups and tendencies to devalue the weaker or less able to the margins that often occurs in a Western mainstream society (Rohwerder, 2018; Susman, 1994). Other theme connections were less obvious.

6.1.1 Less Explicitly Associated Themes

This section is related to the previous section, but the themes noted had fewer participants indicating an association with the stated link. Themes linked to success being accessible for an entire community where success is different, continuing culture and difficulty discussing success. These themes showed this link because participants

indicated the desire to challenge colonised societal interpretations of success in their lifestyle. For example, both the themes success is different and difficulty discussing success appeared, in most cases, to be attempts to claim a generally accepted mainstream societal definition of success was not appropriate within the Indigenous community. Linked to this was the theme continuing culture that showed a desire for participants to maintain long established habits within the Indigenous community while rejecting new lifestyle demands. Most likely related to the communal mindset because cultural items typically involve a broad community group (Cowlshaw, 2004).

There is of course an array of meanings possible for an individual participant. For example, an individual's idea of supporting others in the themes contribution to community and family support may refer to assisting someone whenever required, rather than focusing on a whole community and the exact idea of the input provided would probably change for various participants. For example, helping children, aged people or anyone else with limited abilities. And most participants avoided questioning the need for help. The communal attitude observed in the Indigenous community aiming to offer support whenever needed makes an interesting comparison to the stigmatisation typically happening within the Western society (see Getty, 2009). The negatively proposed attitude has been observed within the mainstream Western societal group, often out casting anyone perceived as weaker or less able (de Vet et al., 2012; Ditchman et al., 2013; Rohwerder, 2018) This problem is indeed starting to be addressed but many agree there is still a long way to go.

The theme creativity or spirituality was also considered relevant to the communal aspect of success because someone aiming to create something might begin with the aim to create something in order to exhibit the work to others and often in a public place. And the artwork is usually considered a community asset appreciated by a range of people.

Significantly, the skills used to create the work are usually the skills learned from others in the community, as emphasised by Gary during this study making the comment about playing the didgeridoo:

So if I'm playing didgeridoo that you like and you think it's good. Well it's not because I'm good, it's only because I've been taught by someone good.

When considering Gary's desire to pass on skills, combined with the acknowledgement of others, the example is related to a communal attitude for the concept of success. When accepting the artistry of the didgeridoo and the feeling of satisfaction for the artist, playing the didgeridoo for Gary may be related to the theme happiness (Greco & Stenner, 2013).

The theme happiness is related to communal support, using the views of Lin and Huang (2018) that people are likely to be pursuing wellbeing or happiness for themselves when they find their place in a given group. Achieving goals is related to happiness, since when someone claims reaching goals is important the person's self-satisfaction may be related as hence the wellbeing (Joly-Burra et al., 2010). And even if the goal is not reached, the road toward achieving the goal probably provides satisfaction.

The communal aspect of success observed in this study agreed with available literature. For example, Bodle et al. (2018) argued for the idea of a communal flavour of success for the Indigenous entrepreneur. Foley (2003a) also researched Indigenous entrepreneurs and claimed success was rarely defined in monetary terms for the Indigenous entrepreneurs but rather had communal attributes, such as supporting the needs of others. Foley (2000a) gave examples of the successful Indigenous entrepreneur being disturbed by the thought of the success being regarded as a loss of Aboriginal values.

Another example of an author arguing for inclusion of everyone into the successful community was Lenskyj (2017), arguing that single athletes ought not be placed above all the community. Lenskyj criticised specific advertisements of the International Olympic Committee and described them as self-admiring displays. Lenskyj questioned the advertisements of individual heroes arguing these were ‘self-congratulatory’ statements. Lenskyj claimed the implication of the advertisement was one individual athlete who overcomes social barriers to gain sporting success represents a symbol of social change.

Lenskyj (2017) argued success ought not be reduced to individual achievements, which agreed with this study, where themes discussed in this section as well as specific participant comments indicated success has communal implications. The equalisation of a community was the essence of the relevant themes and suggests people should not simply acknowledge individuals and their achievements when thinking about success. Several examples of individuals who did acknowledge success during this research are presented below.

This section indicated analytical themes related to the communal nature of the concept of success for participants. Examples of relevant themes included success is available to all, contribution to community and family support. All three themes may be thought of as purposeful attempts to include the full community when considering a definition of success. This was also considered evidence of participants in this study showing no intention to relegate any specific or less able groups from the successful group. Further examples of community-oriented themes were illustrated with the themes success is different and difficulty discussing success where participants were most likely avoiding raising themselves above peers as well as participants also showing a desire to move away from what they perceived as an accepted Western definition of success. Also,

not so clear examples were the themes spirituality or creativity and continuing culture, judged as participants making related comments. For example, both themes indicated a desire to acknowledge others while retaining Indigenous cultural affiliations. The themes happiness and achieving goals were claimed as possibly associated. Other links between themes were also observed, although less often.

6.1.2 Additional Links

Another interpretation of the research data was the observation of participants avoiding a materialist interpretation of success. Indeed, this might have been merely a desire not to display the materialist outlook but even this attitude was a prominent sign of participants hoping to leave the materialist view out of a success definition. This section argues a direct interpretation of avoiding materialism may be adjudged for the statement of success is different and a less obvious connection link was the theme difficulty discussing success. Both themes show signs of the participants' intention to avoid a perceived Westernised view of success as stated in Section 2.4, considered by some to have materialist aspects. Other success commentary themes avoiding the materialist outlook were, success available to all, determination and creativity or spirituality. The five success definition themes family support, contribution to community, achieving goals, happiness and continuing culture had virtually no sign of a materialist fold to success.

Three other themes that were connected were happiness, achieving goals and determination because the themes all showed signs of participants intending to satisfy personal needs. See Chapter 5 for specific examples. These three themes are arguably the most likely themes associated with possible Western definitions of success as per Section 2.4, acknowledging that success is a complex phenomenon and varies for different individuals. Another theme, family support ought to be argued as relevant for some

people within the mainstream Western community although the term ‘support’ will have a range of interpretations and the term ‘family’ is often perceived differently for Western compared with Australian Indigenous cultures. (See the worldview examples in Chapter 1 and participant comments in Chapter 4). The Foley (2005) research reviewed in Chapter 2 is an example of exploring comparisons between the cultures with the acknowledgement of differences. This study is more closely aligned with the Herbert (2003a) research that investigated variances in higher education and acknowledged cultural connections that have been significant for individuals experiencing two different cultural lifestyles. The desire avoid materialism as well as defusing personal accolades was observed by both Foley and Herbert.

The Worldview, Section 1.4, claims materialism has usually been considered less significant than many other commodities within an Australian Indigenous group. When success is viewed materialistically, the theme success is different effectively states this point (Coburn, 2014). A clear example during this study was Terry who denounced material values claiming this was not success and continuing to claim this was not his own success. Terry emphasised the importance of his individual identity and the connection to cultural values. This was related to other participant comments showing an aversion to materialism. The findings agreed with the claims by Foley (2003a), noted above, who referred to research examining Indigenous entrepreneurs and argued materialistic views of success were almost always devalued.

The theme success available to all may be associated with avoiding materialism when the theme is taken as an example of materialism being pushed into non-significance. For example, participants showed evidence that they assumed material assets differed for everyone, hence claiming success ought not be the provision of the people with the riches. A question arising from this study is whether Western views of

success in terms of money, status, power, are evident in the majority of the Western community or else occur primarily among those who have achieved such a position? Various participants questioned the concept of success by noting individual failings of a Western view. For example, the weakness of viewing success with minimal definitions when many people were affected and the necessity of including everyone. Discussed further in Chapter 7.

After making the above claims the statement needs to be made that avoiding materialism was not considered a straightforward conclusion because even though the matter was effectively stated directly by a small number of participants, there were others who did not make the reference and even though participants who did indicate success was different, Section 5.1.1, they generally ceased to state directly what this difference was. The success is different theme included at least four participants who indicated at least a vague description of this difference. For example, as well as the themes suggesting success was about supporting others as discussed above, various participants referred to happiness or personal wellbeing when claiming success was different. For example, producing artwork was a way for Sally to reach success by experiencing wellbeing or happiness, as discussed with the happiness theme.

Specific examples of participant comments pursuing their own needs included Sally when questioning the concept of success. Neil made closely connected comments when claiming that success ought to be available for a range of mediums and not just the so-called recognised areas that were aligned with awards. Neil used the example raising a family that agreed with Jarrod who also related success to having a family. The interviews of both Neil and Sally are explained further in the success is different theme, Section 5.1.1. Both these participants continued to state that success in general society is not the same as Indigenous success. These points are linked directly with the personal

conversation referred to in Chapter 1 suggesting, success is usually different for an Indigenous individual. Terry and Gary both made comments intended to eliminate materialism when defining success. The explanations of links between themes in this section were examples of Indigenous individuals intending to move away from the assimilated society that has occurred in Australia as a result of colonisation. This was also an interpretation of participants aiming to retain historical links.

6.1.3 Historical Bases

Staying in touch with historical bases was an issue that connected several themes. The theme continuing culture was interpreted as the most straightforward of these themes because this is effectively stating that one feels successful when maintaining the links with historical bases. This is almost definitely showing respect as well as appreciation of the historical links, therefore recognising and valuing past people. The links to history were interpreted in some cases related to the two themes success is different and difficulty discussing success when an assumed reason for the relevance of both these themes was not wanting to raise oneself above others, past or present. An alternative possible claim by the participant was suggesting success differed for the participant attempting to avoid perceiving success in a way they assumed they were expected to see it, that might have been viewed as a modern variation.

The direct interpretation for the themes success is different was a move away from the assimilative actions of the colonising nations. Naturally related to continuing culture because this necessarily directly confronted the assimilative practices. Possibly related to difficulty discussing success if the feeling of not wanting to discuss success was perceived as a product of assimilation. That is, success being seen as a concept introduced as a product of assimilation.

Whenever materialism was perceived as a product of assimilation the historical links were related to the previous section discussing participants avoiding materialism. The attempt to retain the historical links and thereby avoid assimilative actions was most likely the reasoning for the observation of participants avoiding the materialist attitudes. Assimilation issues are discussed further below.

The theme creativity or spirituality was likely to be another way of participants intending to retain historical links since both these areas often show attachment to past practice, such as the examples of artists applying traditional artistic methods. Although this is probably less obviously and maybe not in all cases because both creativity and spirituality may include people following modern influence. For example, the artist using modern techniques to show their creativity.

The three themes, success available to all, contribution to community and family support are also minor examples of relating to historical links if participants are judged as attaching these values to past influences. However, the themes also almost undoubtedly include participants showing a desire to support current happenings. The links between themes were evident and considering the points with regard to literature will help clarity.

6.1.4 Relevant Literature

There are authors in modern literature who made arguments related to points made in this section. For example, McGinty (2002) noted differences for a definition of success for Indigenous people in an educational setting, Devlin (2015) who researched marginal groups in higher education and LaFrance and Nichols (2008, 2009) who completed research with Indigenous people in America (see also Devlin & McKay, 2016; Herbert, 2003a). Devlin's research argued for a view of success for Indigenous Australian students who applied two different definitions of success, for the group living in an environment influenced by two cultures. The work by LaFrance and Nichols identified

the communal nature of a success concept for Indigenous Americans. The arguments were supported by the results of this study for the participants in Australia, in Central Gippsland and Sydney.

Connected to this research and notable regarding the theme success is available to all was Maslow's (1975, as cited in Moriarty, 2013, p. 107) hierarchy of needs, applying the philosophical claim that by pursuing personal wellbeing almost everyone has the ability to reach their level of peak performance. Maslow's theory is further related to the themes achieving goals and happiness, assuming personal wellbeing is the result when a goal is reached. Likewise, this may be compared with an Indigenous idea of success discussed above, Section 5.2, in which individual success is considered matter of fact, and the needs of community or family support necessarily valued as more important. An example of Indigenous application of this was the Cathy Freeman example, see Section 2.2, in which cultural input as well as the devaluation of material rewards were deemed as more important than winning a gold medal. This was related to further literature examples, showing differences of materialism and sharing for Australian Indigenous people when compared with Western mainstream cultures (Mrabure, 2019, Tripcony, 2003; Weaver, 2001).

In the book written with support and reviewed in Chapter 2, Freeman reached the conclusion (Freeman & Gullan, 2003, p. 380):

I want to make a difference.

That's why I have told my story.

The Olympic gold medal for Freeman was indeed special and fulfilling her own desires, although more important was emphasising her equitable status with the general community:

I crave normality. I often want to shake people and tell them that they don't have to tread wearily around me because I'm Cathy Freeman. I'm so much like you. (p. 377)

Freeman claimed that she sees herself as an ambassador for Australia and Indigenous people recognising a range of cultural stringencies. The emphasis to be treated as similar and not someone special suggests Freeman has not placed herself on a perceived pedestal because of her personal achievements. Freeman claimed her place as ambassador of the country was her prime place in society, not simply gaining status due to individual achievements. A related comment by a participant during this study was Adam who referred to the achievements of a group and avoided placing the high achievement label specifically on himself. Discussed in Section 5.1.2, the interview with Adam indicated the acknowledgement for everyone, not only the members of the band that had gained recognition in the music industry. A summary for this section of Chapter 6 completes this section, to allow assessment of the major arguments.

6.1.5 Summary

This section has discussed significance of the observed themes and the observed links relating various themes. The clearest example of the issues related to themes was the communal aspect of both the commentary about success as well as the definitions of success. Avoiding materialism was another major factor relating the themes. These observations have been argued as examples of challenging the assimilative actions in Australia. Apparent overlaps between cultures have been noted. The research has been shown to support available literature. Another area that was deemed a connecting link for the observed themes was the inadequacies of a regular view of the concept of success as defined in Section 2.4.4.

6.2 Inadequacies of the Success Concept

This section extends the discussion of connecting links for themes observed for the interviews completed during this study. The discussion considers inadequacies regarding the concept of success, especially for Indigenous people living in a modern society. Significant authors and associated issues are discussed regarding the concept of success where the general mainstream view is nearly always believed to relate success to a positive scenario. For the specific definitions of success see Section 2.4. Several issues raised in the literature review were observed during this research.

The issues discussed here are associated with the relevance of the assimilation factors, referred to above and discussed further below, when attempting to apply a Western version of success to everyone. The inherent difficulties include those who miss success, creating barriers to the attainment of success and the demands forced onto individuals within a group. For the comparisons of Indigenous with Western mainstream definitions of success, participants indicated several fundamental differences for the concept of success including the communal nature of success for an Indigenous community, the avoidance of a materialistic version of success, the significance of the continuation of cultural regime and the importance of both creativity and spirituality. Therefore, the success for an Australian Indigenous group was attempting to avoid perceived difficulties and often has different implications when compared with a Western version of success (Foley, 2006a; Herbert, 2003a, p. 78).

Explained in detail above, the themes difficulty discussing success and success is different were prime examples of participants exhibiting a problem with what they perceived as a Westernised idea of the concept of success. To a lesser extent, related examples of themes included success is available to all and creativity or spirituality

because both these themes involved examples of participants moving away from established Western views of success, especially the idea of success being open only to those with a type of special vocation. The same argument may be applied to the themes family support and contribution to community. For example, both these themes showed a tendency to include other people when considering the concept of success.

The examples above showed that a large group of participants in this research were most likely in agreeance with de Plevitz (2007a, 2007b) who argued so-called neutral race policies of a government can discriminate against Indigenous groups. In the de Plevitz research, a policy assuming a Western version of success for schools was investigated and compared with the perceptions of Indigenous groups (Woodroffe, 2016). An example of the arguably incorrect implementation of government policies was the use of Westernised success definitions for a measure of progress in education for Indigenous people. Therefore, this was effectively an example of the implementation of assimilative actions because the Indigenous student was probably forced to apply the assumed Western measures to attain progress (see Herbert, 2003a).

For the research regarding cultural differences for success in the education environment, both de Plevitz (2007a) and Woodroffe (2016) argued an Indigenous knowledge system differs to a Western version. According to this study, this knowledge difference may well be extended to broader groups within the Indigenous community. Participants in this study indicated a Western concept of success usually exhibits problems for an Indigenous individual. For example, this study supported modern literature, given that at least 11 participants stated directly the concept of success was different within an Indigenous community (Bodle et al., 2018; Foley, 2003a, 2006c; Lindsay, 2005; Morley, 2014; Mrabure, 2019). See Section 5.1.1 for more examples.

Woodroffe (2016) used examples of differences of success for Indigenous students regarding relationships to the teacher and methods of acknowledging results. Related examples during this study were the 17 participants who showed an intention to identify differences regarding success, such as the nature of success not limited to a privileged few, reported as the theme success available to all (see Section 5.1.2). Less obviously connected were the themes difficulty discussing success, continuing culture and creativity or spirituality since all these themes indicated signs of people exhibiting a desire to defuse the success definitions posed by the colonising culture. For example, participants moving away from success being always connected with quantitative measurements or restricted to the best, see Section 2.4 for specific definitions. Examples were observed during this study of participants downgrading common mainstream views of success such as the of nine participants directly challenging a monetary aspect of success (see also Foley, 2003a, 2008c; Schaper, 1999).

In this research, specific participant comments such as Adam referring to a ‘forced existence’ agreed with authors who challenged established ideas of success with examples of the Indigenous person being expected to select the individualist role as well as a typical materialist value of success (Dato-on et al., 2006; Ellinghaus, 2006). For example, even success being identified by the need to win trophies might be equated with either a materialist value of success or establishing personal accolades (Belk, 1985; Kwak, 2022). Explained in Section 6.1, the misdirection of the colonised society toward Indigenous people was challenged by the actions of Cathy Freeman after winning the Olympic gold medal for the 400 metres sprint (Freeman & Gullan, 2003). The Cathy Freeman victory lap displaying the Indigenous flag was undoubtedly a comment about the two-tiered cultural society that Freeman considered herself to be part of and made the statement about the importance of her own culture. This attitude was similar for

individuals interviewed for this study, especially for people claiming an Indigenous version of success ought to be defined as continuing culture, Section 5.2.5 and for other examples noting success is different when compared with Western success, see Section 5.1.1. The revisioning of success for Indigenous individuals may also be applied to themes, success is available to all and creativity or spirituality. And likely for those exhibiting a difficulty to discuss the concept of success. All these themes suggest participants prefer to move away from recognised mainstream definitions of the concept of success. That is all the themes attempted to focus on Indigenous cultural factors.

Avoiding a materialistic approach to success mentioned above was illustrated by participant comments in this study who pertained the thought of a different perspective of success, thus agreeing with Foley (2003a) who claimed that success for the Indigenous entrepreneur differs from the monetary perception of success that is usual for the Western entrepreneur. The arguments were supported by Habibis et al. (2016a, 2016b) who claimed Indigenous values are often different to the Western perception especially when monetary issues are considered. Avoiding materialism was supported in this research, wherein participants were not selected to represent specific portions of the community.

The most relevant theme relating to the overall community was success is available to all and to a less extent success is different, implying a Western style of success, as stated in Section 2.4, that does usually have positive implications for the benefactor but portrays problems for those who do not realise the success being left behind or even exploited (Donnelly, 2008; Vanderbilt University, 2014). This often creates an aversion to some activity for some people, as a result of rewarding only those who achieve. Unfortunately, those who miss out on the successful scenario are left out and are often relegated to lower fields or a more difficult lifestyle. Examples include the player who misses the sporting team, politicians left without the opportunity to serve,

entrepreneurs unable to pursue the business and so-called failed academics forced out of the system. Reasons for the exclusion are necessarily varied but may be judged as challenging anyone missing the expected goal while providing opportunities to those who excel or succeed.

Accepting the arguments above, participants in this study showed a preference to avoid a Westernised version of success being available to a privileged group. The above examples of inequitable opportunities may be extended with the view that those most in need are often left without opportunity to reach success. Using the example of sport, Donnelly (2008) argued the competitive demands are often used in the positive sense, such as promoting personal growth but are often abused by insisting all people reach a given level. And for many this is not a feasible position. Thus, creating an inherent difficulty often experienced by a marginalised group.

Related to personal growth of individuals is the moral aspect sometimes noticed as connected to success. Significantly, no one during this study referred to the moral values sometimes linked to success, especially common in a Western mainstream society, although rarely acknowledged as significant (Bucholz, 1978; Fung, 2016; Ichheiser, 1943). Examples have been observed when a child is encouraged enthusiastically, as ‘good boy/girl’ apparently implying a moral achievement, after the child reports reaching a high level in their schooling or competition. Another example of the moral association is the successful sports champion in Australia with morally attached attributes (Ciulla, 2020; Kavussanu, 2008; Reid, 2007). The champion’s values are usually presumed to be of a high level but are questioned perennially whenever stumbling. In Western culture moral values linked to success are likely to be associated with what is commonly known as the protestant work ethic, presuming the successful individual has worked rewardingly (Fung, 2016).

Ichheiser (1943) held the view that linking morality to success is akin to a myth attached to irrational primitive beliefs where an accident happened because the victim deserved the occurrence. The person was destroyed physically due to the accident and morally since this was deserved. Ichheiser stated both the modern view of success happening to someone who ought to have success and the primitive analogy serve the same purpose, that is to justify the order of life. And accordingly, people believe they fail because they have wronged morally. For example, believing the disadvantaged deserve their place, while the privileged deserve their position (McGregor, 2009; Schewitz, 2014). The relevance of attaching moral values directly to success is ultimately the choice of anyone making the judgement. For example, people might believe moral values have no influence regarding success since many other variables are in place such as societal events, effort, culture, luck, privilege, health and family background.

For this study participants avoided any direct moral implications for defining success. Arguably, the most relevant themes were happiness and achieving goals. Therefore, participants agreed with many in modern society that happiness or family life pleasures are measures of success with the rejection of both moral and material values (Herndon, 2014). Herndon claimed this was a justification for the order of life for the typical American, comparable to Australia. The factor was certainly observed in this study, where the themes family support and contribution to community were relevant and the effort to reject materialism was clear, further discussed above. While a person's wellbeing was undoubtably the key factor, the resulting question is, are individuals rejecting material values or are they simply not prepared to admit they have these values? Based on personal observations during this study as well as passed experience, the judgement here is individuals in the Indigenous community usually reject material values. The claim is this is more typical of an Indigenous community than for the Westernised

group. For example, a gift is usually either accepted or offered, within an Indigenous community showing a common acceptance to share. And sharing without the feeling of any demand to return the favour (Foley, 2003a). While in the Western community the opposite is often true. In an Indigenous community gifts are usually passed on far more freely. I have experienced numerous examples of sharing as part of Indigenous cultures, including specific examples during this study, stated in Chapter 4.

Arguably the theme determination might relate to barriers to achieving success. To a lesser extent even the themes difficulty discussing success and success is different are relevant because participants related to these themes were judged to most likely be claiming there were necessarily problems associated with achieving success. Examples by Loftin et al. (2012) of barriers to success were evident in a literature review specifically in the field of nursing students, with arguments relevant for more people. For example, the authors discussed barriers for minority students who have issues with emotional support, financial aids, academic assistance, mentor availability, technical assistance and socialisation (Audrey, 2011; Furneaux & Brown, 2008).

This section has claimed many people have automatic positive assertions with the concept of success although when considering the findings from this study as well as the arguments of certain authors, the concept of success may be perceived as involving inherent difficulties. Inadequacies with the concept of success considered were assimilative properties, relegation of the unsuccessful, inherent monetary bias, the inadvertent attachment of moral implications and the presence of barriers.

The apparent inadequacies of the concept of success have been identified in this section and various themes have been argued as showing some participants avoiding being designated as successful individuals. However, for suitable instances the research

has provided examples of participants judged as successful, as per the definition in Section 2.4.4 and considering themselves to be successful.

6.3 Participant Success Examples

This section highlights the most relevant examples, intending to illustrate that at least six participants interviewed during this research were judged as enjoying a feeling of success in both an Australian Indigenous as well as Western sense. These participants showed signs of being comfortable if acknowledged as successful and were not referring to themselves as special individuals. The point ought to be made here, that most other participants were judged as successful, as per the definition stated in Section 2.4.4, although not obviously because too little information was available. Therefore, further research is required to learn more and to provide studies for Indigenous Australians who have reached levels of success with the understanding that success has a range of interpretations. Personal influence as an analyst for the definition of success in this section is relevant because of the subjective nature and is discussed below in Section 6.5, Limits and Recommended Further Research.

Terry was the first person approached in Circular Quay, amongst the group of Indigenous cultural performers. Terry immediately presented visions of success due to his confidence as a performer and comfort conversing with a new person. The image of success was enhanced when Terry spoke in detail about positive experiences at Circular Quay, the value of Indigenous stories and his own success with Indigenous dance. Terry's satisfaction travelling broadly was another factor that ought to be regarded as successful since this was probably part of his personal wellbeing.

Cameron was easy to converse with and was judged as showing examples of his own success due to training, artwork and work experience. All three areas were judged as

Cameron feeling satisfied as well as reaching a level of competence. Cameron showed comfort talking about the topic of success and was happy to provide the second interview. He made further offers at later dates but time limitations for completion of the research proved to be the final restriction.

Jack has been classified as successful due to the extent and diversity of his training in the areas of landscape, roadwork, paramedicine and nursing. Jack's satisfaction with his own paid employment experience was another factor contributing to him being classified as successful. In Jack's case, the successful image was increased when he described his own achievements, helping others as part of his own feeling of success.

The judgement of Trevor's success was made due to his achievements with his visual art and travelling. Trevor was obviously a person satisfied with his lifestyle and taking part in this study was one example. Trevor showed other examples of his own satisfaction by making comments acknowledging the value of creative endeavours:

... it's a pleasure to meet [Ian Hamilton] and to see that he's doing something constructive. And so it's a blessing to be a part of it.

Adam was an artist whose prime talent was in music. Adam showed many signs of personal satisfaction as well as various achievements and he had other interests in both visual art and poetry. He was a member of a band that has now been inducted into the South Australian Music Hall of Fame (Verass, 2016). Adam indicated during the interviews that this band has always been an important interest, assisting with personal goals and establishing cultural recognition for Indigenous Australians. The lyrics of various tunes attributed to Adam's band are now renowned amongst Indigenous Australians (Opie, 2016). For example, an interviewee in Sydney during this study spoke highly of one of these tunes, describing it as an 'anthem'.

Neil talked about growing up in the inner and outer suburbs of Melbourne before happily moving to regional Victoria. He said he is now working on his second postgraduate degree. He also spoke of his achievements both coaching and playing Australian Rules Football. Neil's personal history and his satisfaction with his family credentials all added to his classification as successful.

Talking less obviously about his own achievements was Harry. Significantly, the comments made during the interview were related to his own achievements and Harry was satisfied with the results. Providing support for others to overcome earlier difficulties was the result of his work. Other participants considered successful in a similar light, that is offering the support for others, were Kelvin, Kerry, Jim, and Heather. See Chapter 5 for the examples of comments made by these participants.

This section has presented examples of six participants who were judged as successful individuals and five others who were judged as less obviously successful. The recommendation is that further research is expected to learn more especially when considering success from various viewpoints, regarding detailed studies of successful Indigenous Australians. Listening is often necessary to learn more about another perspective and is discussed in detail in the next section since it was essential to complete this study.

6.4 Listening

This section highlights the significance of listening, that was necessary to complete the interviews for this study. These comments were a product of the analysis and therefore considered part of the discussion. For specific examples of listening carefully see Chapter 4 referring to data collection reflections. While focusing on the importance of listening, the section is intended to reinforce the value of joining the

conversations with an Indigenous community. Therefore, this is related to the benefits of this study that are explored in Chapter 7.

A major claim for this study is the opportunity to converse with an Indigenous community is available for almost everyone in the Australian society, first stated in Chapter 1 and repeated here for emphasis (Habibis et al., 2016b; Short, 2003, 2005; N. White et al., 2002). Examples of the benefits of the conversations include learning about viewing Western issues from an Australian Indigenous perspective, enumeration of the oldest culture in the world and gaining an understanding of the unsettling factors associated with colonisation. The researching of the concept of success is one example of the numerous issues available for discussion.

Investigating perspectives of the concept of success provided a deeper understanding of the Getty (2010) argument, stated in Chapter 1, that the experiences of Indigenous people have often been totally dismissed or devalued (Habibis et al., 2016a; Larbalestier, 2004). Anyone with improved awareness has arguably received improved personal wellbeing. For example, obtaining the benefits associated with sharing knowledge and retaining historical detail.

Listening to and acknowledgement of the Indigenous voice is one way to confront assimilation within an Australian society and was identified in Chapter 1 as part of the justification of this research, supporting Ellinghaus (2006) who agreed with others, claiming assimilative practices ought to be challenged (Dockery, 2010; Short, 2003, 2005). For example, when accepting that Indigenous versions of success often exhibit differences to a Westernised version, then assimilation is necessarily associated with the act of applying a universal definition of success to the entire group of people. The completion of this study has established one step toward dealing with assimilation, and related discussion continues.

The following section discusses the limits of this study as well as suggestions for further research. Accepted here is the understanding that conclusions resulting from this study were all related to collected data affected by the limits of the research.

6.5 Limits and Recommended Further Research

The research limits and associated advice for further research are described in this section. Details of limits are stated, according to the qualitative method, sample size and the interviewing restrictions. Appropriate further research is suggested.

Described in detail in Section 3.3, the qualitative method was used as an advantage for this study regarding ethical issues, and to enable the collection of individual descriptions of data to describe the concept of success. As a result, limitations of the method were accepted. The findings were checked by completing extra interviews although not available for every interview. Thus, another researcher might arguably focus on different interpretations, dependent on different connections with the sample group. The restricted sample size was dependent on time required and geographic location realistically accessible to collect results. Providing the reader with details of researcher personal position, Section 1.5 was intended to allow for necessary judgement according to the grounded theory thematic analysis method detailed in Section 3.4. Interviews completed by another researcher would enhance or challenge the significance of themes observed in this study. For example, providing an analysis by a different person with different participants at another time. The claim for this study is the findings were comparable in Central Gippsland and Sydney according to the research sample accessed, supported by examples from modern literature. Therefore, another sample is expected to produce similar results.

The geographic location of participants for this study has resulted in the selected sample nature of the interviews. Most samples were collected in a limited area in Australia, Central Gippsland, because the study was necessarily based on samples that were readily available. The sampling was dependent on time limits and restricted by travelling possibilities. The problem was addressed by interviewing the three participants when available during a visit to Sydney. The suburban lifestyle of participants is discussed in Section 3.4.1. Similar participant groups in other regions in Australia with related interview questions would help confirm or deny the results. Interviews with participants living different lifestyles is another option for further research.

Another consideration would be to complete extra interviews with a new method. For example, using a more structured interview format to collect more refined results. For example, using more specific interview questions. The aim would be to establish quantitative type data measuring participant preferences for predetermined success definitions or commentary. The disadvantage of this type of interview would be reducing the opportunities for both participants and researchers to benefit from the conversational approach. A compromise ought to be considered.

The sample size in this project was 26 interviews with some interviews retaining more information than others. When data collection was ceased during this study a sense of saturation was established for the themes that developed and participants interviewed, due to the number of participants related to each observed theme described in Chapter 5. However, since every interview was different and the individuality of interviewees was relevant due to the casual conversation approach, more research is necessarily an option because new researchers will notice more ideas and new participants will provide more comments.

An attempt to deal with the restricted timeframe, age range and geographical locations was the use of a random sampling process to initiate the data collection and the use the snowballing method as required, described in detail in Section 3.1.2. The limitation related to age range was a result of obtaining data only for participants who were readily available. Most participants were in the age range 30–60 years. There is a possibility that there was less interest in completing interviews from potential participants outside this age range due to life experiences or health. Two younger participants were interviewed during this study, but the interviews were brief.

Another issue was the possible gender limitation due to predominantly male participants and this point could be addressed by completing more interviews with women. This is possibly an issue related to a women's position regarding the concept of success and is judged as the most likely reason because five out of six women interviewed were judged as reluctant to talk about success. Three other women agreed early to provide an interview but refrained when given the opportunity to talk about success. The small number of interviews might be related to women conversing with a male researcher, but the judgement made when collecting data was this was not the case because all women participants as well as potential participants had happily joined personal conversations. For example, Nellie kept the opinions of herself brief and described herself as an 'ordinary woman', Kerry was careful to request specific interviewing conditions as well as ensure a short interview, Mary waited for prompting before beginning the interview then steered the conversation away from the topic of success and Heather interviewed freely during the introductory interview but talked less openly when discussing success. Another interview happened that produced only a small amount of data because the participant chose to sing a well-known tune instead of answering interview questions. More confident was Sally who conversed freely and was

happy to show her artwork. The question of women's position regarding the concept of success could be compared with interviews of participants by a women researcher.

Various participant comments were considered useful advice for further research.

6.5.1 Participant Advice

Participants involved in this study made comments directly related to further research ideas. Kelvin advised that the research ought to be carried out with various cultural groups. For example, similar type interviews to compare the concept of success for other cultures could be completed with Chinese, Indian, Indigenous American, various European or African groups (Nichols & LaFrance, 2006). These cultures include examples of groups who have faced a history of colonisation and the resulting effects of acts such as assimilation need to be judged.

An example of the assimilation effects within an Indigenous group may be observed from the comments made by Adam that people were distracted from traditional ways in forced situations, such as missions and other aspects of the assimilation process. Adam claimed the forced lifestyle was associated with people's perception of success. For example, the assimilationist attitude of success showed situations where individuals were forced to accept a second version of success while success in a communal sense was devalued compared with an individualistic nature of success. See Section 5.1.1 for examples of participant comments referring to cultural differences regarding success, and further research with more participants would help investigate this point.

The section has acknowledged advice of participants regarding further research with more cultural groups and the significance of the assimilative process, and a summary of the section follows.

6.5.2 Summary

The further research proposed by this study has been recognised related to the research limits and involves research with more participants from different regions in Australia as well as overseas. Conducting longer interviews allowing more time for participants to expand their views would be a method of attempting to gain useful data. Extra samples may also include increasing the timeframe and age range of participants to help either confirm or challenge results. A comparable research problem studied via another research methodology is another way to check results. For example, using a quantitative style survey asking participants whether success is different for an Indigenous community compared with Western style society. The other observations that could be investigated further are the communal attitude as well as the materialist implications of the success concept.

6.6 Conclusion

The researcher's influence on the study is discussed in Section 3.4.3, accepting that the researcher influence is undoubted. For example, the definitions of success stated in Section 5.2 have been recorded by a single researcher. The research findings that identified the theories and associated links for the observed themes, resulted from the grounded theory analysis presented in Chapter 5.

The most significant of the connecting links for observed themes were the communal aspect attributed to the concept of success, avoiding individual accolades and the devaluing of a materialistic approach to a definition of success. Further discussion argued the links between themes were associated with inadequacies of a mainstream definition of success. For example, success being only available to a selected group. With an understanding of the differences of the concept of success, six specific examples of

participants, as well as five less obvious examples, were identified by the researcher as successful, with consideration of success definitions offered in Section 2.4.4.

The content of the chapter was dependant on the research limits discussed above for this study. The recommended further research argues the research by different researchers is a method of obtaining a broader assessment of the concept of success. More interviews completed with participants from other regions as well as other social groups and further analysis will necessarily produce useful evidence. The final chapter builds on the discussion by considering the benefits of completing this study.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Research Benefits

The major achievements of the study are identified in the final chapter, discussing how the study has developed the understanding of the concept of success. It provides a method of rectifying some of the difficulties that have resulted from the assimilative actions sanctioned by colonising groups in Australia. The research question asks how contemporary Australian Indigenous individuals living in an urban setting explain the concept of success. This has been satisfied by the research findings, presented as analytical themes in Chapter 5 and discussed in detail in Chapter 6. Specific benefits for research participants are identified in this chapter, predominantly in sections 7.1 and 7.2.

The objectives associated with the aim and the research question were achieved by completing qualitative interviews and employing a grounded theory approach for thematic analysis, developing the themes as analysis was completed. The findings are now available for future researchers. A synthesis of the overall study is presented below and restates the analytical themes. The chapter includes recommendations for societal groups to enhance public awareness by sharing Indigenous perceptions of the concept of success.

This study was comparable to Bonta (1997), who claimed that research was not an attempt to portray a statistical analysis. Rather, it was a comparison of the different views within society, necessarily dependant on much individual variance. The Bonta argument for cooperation being likely to foster a tranquil society was reiterated by participants in this study who displayed cooperative attitude when discussing the concept of success. For example, relevant themes were success available to all, family support and contribution to community. These all indicated a communal attitude for the concept of success and ought to be considered a way of terming cooperative attitude within a community.

Significantly, most participants in this research displayed interest in conversing about the concept of success, showing an intention to improve understanding from an Indigenous perspective. The promotion of an Australian Indigenous cultural lifestyle was undoubtably imperative to adjust to the effects of colonisation. The contribution of this study supports this process.

7.1 Achievements of the Success Research

This section discusses the major achievements of this study. These factors are related to relevant literature. This research has explored perspectives of the concept of success for Indigenous participants, offering their views, primarily from the central Gippsland region of Australia. During the data collection and analytical stages of the research, the grounded theory thematic analysis established the themes. Participants showed a readiness to comment on the concept of success and the five general-comment themes were success is different (discussed further below, the only theme directly related to the pre-data collection stage of the study), success is available to all, difficulty discussing success, determination and creativity or spirituality. Five themes that were classified as the definition of success were family support, contribution to community, achieving goals, happiness and continuing culture. The range of observed themes highlighted the broad range of views offered by the research community.

The links between interview themes were discussed in detail in Chapter 6 and formed the basis of theories that have ensued from this research. These theories have been identified as the essentiality of a communal nature of the concept of success, the devaluation of any materialist aspects for success and the apparent inadequacies associated with common Western notions of a definition of success. A further claim was that participants avoided any need to claim individual accolades for their own success.

By providing the perspectives of an Australian Indigenous research community, this study promoted the process of reconciliation and addressed some of the assimilation resulting from the colonisation of Australia. Examples of assimilation were introduced Chapter 1 and details related to rectifying this process were pursued in Chapter 6, which discusses the perspectives of the Australian Indigenous research community. Many authors have agreed that missing in the literature is the voicing of Indigenous perspectives in a colonised society (Coates et al., 2006; Habibis et al., 2016a; Nelson, 1992; Walter, 2016). The claim made in Chapter 1 is that this literature gap is currently prevalent in Australia and certainly includes the central Gippsland region. This acknowledges the argument by Habibis et al. that Indigenous people in Australia have had too few chances to voice their views. This study illustrated an example of a useful method of recognising Indigenous perspectives, otherwise known as the voicing of Indigenous views. The work is an addition to current public actions, aiming to officially accept and recognise an Indigenous voice within the Australian Constitution (Fredericks & Bradfield, 2021b; McIlroy, 2022; Morris, 2015; Rigney, 2017).

Providing for comments and recognition of the preferences of participants was an important purpose of the qualitative interview methodology used to collect data for this study. This was on the advice of Altman and Klein (2018), who supported the commonly held view that even events occurring in a positive light have too often been portrayed in a paternalistic manner, as mentioned in Chapter 1 (Habibis et al., 2016b; Thompson & Hil, 2007). The findings for this study have contributed to the correction of the dearth of published views for Indigenous Australians.

First mentioned in Chapter 1 and confirmed by the research data, the meaning of the concept of success was questioned and the Indigenous perceptions agreed with literature that argued the views of an Indigenous community often differ compared with

those of mainstream Western societies (Kreuter & Moltner, 2014; Fan & Karnilowicz, 1997; Pechenkina, 2016). This study has shown examples of Indigenous individuals emphasising cultural differences when comparing Indigenous and mainstream Western viewpoints of success.

The preservation of, as well as the attempt to understand, participant interviews were major achievements of this study. The theme continuing culture identified as a definition of success, was directly linked to this benefit. Thus, the research has helped address the perceived failings of the assimilation process that have resulted from the colonisation of Australia, discussed further, Section 1.2. To further assist Indigenous Australians, the advice is for Australian policymakers, educationists and the general community to interact with the Indigenous community and expect to discover new ideas regarding the concept of success. This is discussed further by expanding the detail of research benefits.

7.2 Further Research Benefits and Recommendations

The useful outcomes of this research are explored further in this section. The discussion advocates conversing with Indigenous communities for a variety of reasons: for example, using research to promote the decolonisation and reconciliation processes by allowing Indigenous people to discuss positive actions and report their feelings or needs (Bissell & Korteweg, 2016). An example in Chapter 4 illustrates the hesitancy continuing in the twenty-first century for Australians to converse with Indigenous individuals. There was a large audience at Circular Quay who were interested in the actions of the performers but remained reluctant to converse with Indigenous individuals. Significantly, after the interviews were completed for this study, several students stated they had gained confidence and were ready to follow the lead for their own studies, see p. 123 for specific

details. The improvement of the interaction for the students and the performers was a benefit for both groups and was therefore one example of reconciliation in Australia (see Short, 2003).

This research subscribed to the thoughts of Sherwood (2010), who argued that conversing with members of a cultural group ought to be thought of as a positive exercise (Geia et al., 2013). The research methods used for this study were considered a way to address various negative aspects of the assimilation practices. For example, positive conversations were initiated that were an opportunity for Indigenous Australians to voice their perspective (see Chapters 4 and 5 for examples of specific interviews).

In addition to learning about the concept of success, I was rewarded with various gifts and personal compliments. These types of benefits were understood to be reciprocated for each participant who completed the interview with an amiable ‘thank you’ message. The comment from Trevor, Section 6.3, stating the privileged feeling of being included in the research was one example of participants voicing their approval. This illustrated how the interviewing technique followed the advice from L. T. Smith (1999) that one way of obtaining benefits for the research community is to use casual conversations and accept a participatory approach for data collection. The participatory factor for this research involved participants helping to direct conversations during the semi-structured interviews. Ormiston (2010) supported this research method, arguing for opportunities to be provided for Indigenous individuals to discuss their own views.

The communal characteristic of success discussed above was considered a key difference for success when compared with Western definitions stated in Section 2.4. The outcomes of researching the concept of success have indicated that an Indigenous community often exhibits different views to those of the mainstream Australian community. When comparing two societal groups, differences may be observed, and a

suitable technique was discussed further in Section 3.2.6 regarding cross-cultural research. An important point is acknowledging the differences with no attempt to apply some type of rating or cross-cultural judgement. Assimilative policies have apparently devalued the importance of these differences. In addition to the example of the concept of success, Section 1.4 provides examples of differences for time, place and possession. The list goes on (Donovan, 2008; Shahid et al., 2009). A discussion of individual variances is also relevant, but beyond the scope of this research because another branch of philosophy is eminent concerning individual differences (see Nicholls et al., 1989). Relevant suggestions for further research are stated in Chapter 6.

A recommendation following this study is that researchers, policymakers, educationists and others need to converse with Indigenous Australians and learn about the nuances of items such as the concept of success to understand issues faced by modern Indigenous Australians and enhance the understanding of relevant issues for certain members of society. The claim here is that conversations with Indigenous Australians with policymakers, educationists and the public ought to promote reconciliation to learn more about what is preferred. This acknowledges the arguments by Herbert (2003a) for education and Foley (2005) for entrepreneurship about being prepared to alter policies and actions when required (Barney, 2016; Bodle et al., 2018; Herbert, 2015; Hollinsworth et al., 2017; Mellor, 2022; A. Moran, 2005; Mrabure, 2019).

The results of this study are considered an encouragement for anyone with any interest to move past any demeaning aspects of colonisation, as noted in Chapter 1, and liaise in a positive manner with Indigenous people and develop the general understanding of the Indigenous culture. Gaining a wider understanding of the views of success observed in this research is an example of learning more by interacting with another culture.

7.3 Synthesis

To reinforce the major points, this section presents a synthesis of the study. The exploration of the perspectives of the concept of success has been achieved and definitions of success have been stated, see the themes restated below. The 26 usable qualitative interviews adhered to the needs of this research and enabled thematic analysis to establish the findings.

The qualitative interview methodology enabled Indigenous perspectives to be heard, while inquiring about positive aspects of the Indigenous community, focusing on the concept of success as the research topic and allowing related issues to be explored when necessary. Therefore, the achievements of this study are claimed to support reconciliation and provide a step towards resurrecting the assimilative practices of the colonisers in Australia.

Literature reviewed in Chapter 2 explored the research by Foley in the field of entrepreneurship and Herbert in higher education. The research by both Foley and Herbert has been extended by this study, which has assisted the understanding of the concept of success within the general community sample.

The grounded theory thematic analysis was used to establish the observed themes. Themes classified as general-comment were success is different, difficulty discussing success, determination and creativity, or spirituality and success available to all that had the sub-theme avoiding specific names. The success definition themes were family support, contribution to community, achieving goals, happiness and continuing culture.

Major links between themes included the communal nature of success and rejection of perceived Westernised views of the topic, exemplified by the success is different theme. This agreed with modern literature (Bruce & Hallinan, 2001; Bull, 2021).

Other links between the interview themes included the devaluation of materialism and avoidance of personal accolades. For example, the themes happiness, creativity or spiritually, continuing culture and achieving goals all involved participants making this claim. The subjectivity and individual opinions regarding of the concept of success necessitates the claim that overlaps will exist for various cultures and facilitating conversations is one method of further exploring possible links and differences.

Research limits dependent on qualitative research limitations were the selective nature of the sample and ability to interpret results according to interviewee intentions. Further research is required in more geographic locations and a broader consideration for participant gender, age and living arrangements, and research with other cultural groups.

This research supports the notions of Donovan (2008) arguing for policymakers to communicate and recognise variances of preferences for First Nations people. This was achieved during this research by enabling participants to contribute and the opportunity to explain Indigenous perspectives. The thesis has claimed that different needs or desires of Indigenous groups need understanding to reduce the prejudice and damage of assimilative attitudes. A summarisation of this chapter will complete this thesis.

7.4 Final Words

The concept of success as perceived within an Australian Indigenous community has been researched by obtaining interviews with Indigenous Australians. The absence of Indigenous perspectives in the literature was a key reason to undertake this study (Cowlshaw, 2003; Habibis et al., 2016a; Raciti, 2021; Roman, 2021). With minimal past research on the concept of success available, that is undoubtedly prevalent in the central Gippsland region, this research has filled an important role (see Chapter 2 for literature details).

To complete this research, qualitative interviews discussing the concept of success with Indigenous participants were analysed using a thematic analysis and major links between interview themes identified. Participants' general comments about success exhibited community-minded features with the purpose of providing for everyone. Another key link was the devaluation of a materialistic attitude towards defining success.

The recommendations stated above intend to support the reconciliation process in Australia. These are that policymakers, educationists and the public should acknowledge cultural differences and pursue understanding by increasing communication with Indigenous communities. The necessity for a positive approach with an aim for everyone to enjoy the process needs to be encouraged since too many have shown caution or even fear when considering interaction with Indigenous groups (see example above from this research referring to collecting interviews in Circular Quay, Sydney). Increasing interaction with Indigenous communities is expected to have relevance for people with the opportunity to offer support and learn from Australian Indigenous culture. Policymakers, educationists, bureaucrats and the public involve people with specific opportunities to help. For example, each group has a specific role to play to contact people within an Indigenous community.

The need for future research to further investigate the concept of success from an Indigenous perspective was exemplified by participants in this study showing a desire to dismiss what were perceived as common Western ideals of success. For example, participants indicated a desire to include everyone when referring to success, dismiss materialist factors of success and avoid personal accolades. Information regarding the perspectives of other groups in Australia and further afield would deepen understanding of the significance of these observations.

The findings of this study indicate that the perspectives of Indigenous individuals living in a colonised society ought to be pursued. This has begun to happen on a global scale (Montero & Dénoimé-Welch, 2018). An Australian example is the group attempting to include an Indigenous voice into the constitution, even with some people doubting the changes (Fredericks & Bradfield, 2021a; Habibis et al., 2016a).

The study identified six participants (see Section 6.3) who defined themselves as successful individuals; these were people who did not attempt to claim individual accolades, thereby reiterating the desire within the research community to perceive success with a communal attitude. These examples of successful individuals were additions to the literary examples reviewed in Chapter 2.

The findings of this research indicate that future research is required to consult a range of people about the concept of success that may take many forms for different individuals and to question the assumption that success is always beneficial for everyone concerned as accepted throughout this study (see Sections 6.2 and 5.1.3). Whether or not the findings of this study are replicated for other groups remains a question for future researchers.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

Version August 2, 2018

PROJECT TITLE:	Success Stories of Indigenous Australians
RESEARCHERS:	Ian Hamilton & Erik Eklund

Consent – Please complete the following information:

I _____ of

_____ +

hereby consent to participate as a subject in the above research study.

The research program in which I am being asked to participate has been explained fully to me, verbally and in writing and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that:

- I will participate in one or two interviews, which will be recorded up to two hours each,
- the focus of these interviews will be Indigenous people defining and experiencing success in their lives,
- the recorded and written copies of interviews will be used for research purposes and may be reported in a, PhD thesis, academic journals and conference papers,
- I am free to withdraw my consent at any time. My participation in the research will immediately cease with information/data I offered not used,
- I will have the opportunity to review copies of the interview and to request changes to the interview and written copies. Inclusion in this study is voluntary and there is no obligation to agree to participate,

- I understand that this material is for use in a post graduate thesis, journal articles and conference/community papers.
- I further understand that my permission will be required if material I have provided is published or reproduced in any publication not described in the Information Statement. Data will be stored for 5 years.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____.

Appendix B: Plain Language Information Statement

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND ARTS

August 2, 2018

PROJECT TITLE:	Success Stories of Indigenous Australians
PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER:	Professor Erik Eklund
OTHER/STUDENT RESEARCHERS:	Ian Hamilton

This information sheet is for you to keep:

- I am George (Ian) Hamilton and I am conducting a research project with Professor Erik Eklund in the Faculty of Education and Arts at Federation University.
- I request your help because you might wish to share some information. I would like to interview you to learn about success, cultural knowledge or other relevant issues for use in a post graduate thesis, journals and conference/community papers
- This project is approved by the HREC, Human Research Ethics Committee.

The aims of the project are to work with Indigenous Australians to:

- Identify success stories of the Indigenous culture in a contemporary Australian society,
- Provide benefits for Indigenous groups involved,
- Preserve narratives for future reference.

Possible benefits.

Benefits will be further identified as the research develops with the support of participants but the following benefits are already clear. The project will:

- Gain a better understanding of Indigenous success.
- Publicise any information not well known or understood by the public in Australia.
- Expected benefits include having knowledge valued and gaining the opportunity to express views in public.
- The interview also provides an opportunity for self-reflection and discussion. Also an understanding of 'success', including how to define or achieve it, is expected to improve.

What does the research involve?

- The study involves recording audio interviews. The focus of these interviews will be the way that Indigenous people define and experience success in their lives. Participants will have the opportunity to review written copies of the interview and to decide on long term use of the material. My permission provided by me for any of material I have offered that is published or reproduced in any publication. Further contact will allow adjustment or

continuation of original interviews. After approval the recordings will be used for inclusion in a PhD thesis, academic journals and conference papers.

How much time will the research take?

The interview has no time demands but may take a maximum of two hours. A follow-up interview is possible. The venue for the interview will be a place where you are comfortable with minimum disruption.

Inconvenience/discomfort

Possible inconvenience or discomfort may be caused by:

- Personal discomfort is possible for anyone attempting to provide interviews.
- The need to concentrate for lengthy time periods might be awkward.
- Identification of recorded information by another person might be uncomfortable. Anonymity should help if requested.

You have the right to finish whenever you wish or to ask for previous information to be deleted. People may change their mind about the availability of interview recordings. Final publication and broadcast of these audio recordings will only happen after final approval.

Counselling is available by contacting local Health Services such as Central Gippsland Health Services: 5136 5100, Latrobe Community Health Service, Buckley St, Morwell, 5136 5400, Latrobe Regional Hospital, 1300 363 322 or Medicare Australia Access Line available for Indigenous people – 1800 556 955.

Payment

There is no direct payment or reward offered for participation in this research.

Can I withdraw from the research?

Individuals will have opportunity to review interviews and to request changes to the interview and written copies. Inclusion in this study is voluntary and there is no obligation to agree to participation. You may withdraw at any stage including after final approval of the interview. You may request deletion of any information.

Confidentiality

Absolute confidentiality is not possible since someone might recognise a recorded voice. As a participant, you will be identified unless you choose an alias or anonymous (or fictitious name) which you would rather be known by. The fictitious name may be used for recorded voices and for written copies. Any information given a final agreement by participants for public access will eventually be made available to the public.

Storage of data

Storage of the data collected will adhere to the University regulations and will be stored on the researcher's computers (one at university and a backup at the researcher's home). Any written documentation will be kept in a locked filing cabinet on University premises for 5 years.

If you would like to be informed of the research findings, please contact George (Ian) Hamilton at i.hamilton@federation.edu.au via email. The research data are accessible for 5 years.

Thank you.
George (Ian) Hamilton

If you have any questions, or you would like further information regarding the project titled ***Success Stories of Indigenous Australians*** please contact the Principal Researcher, **Prof Erik Eklund** of the ***Faculty of Arts / Education***:

EMAIL: erik.eklund@federation.edu.au

PH: **51 226 692**

Should you (i.e. the participant) have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research project, please contact the Federation University Ethics Officers, Research Services, Federation University Australia,

Telephone: (03) 5327 9765

Email: research.ethics@federation.edu.au

CRICOS Provider Number 00103D

Appendix C

NVivo Software

The NVivo tool was considered for use in this research since it has been accepted as analytical tool, by a range of researchers conducting qualitative research and this appendix considers the debate in the literature about the value of software tools such as NVivo (Bergin, 2011; Welsh, 2002; Zamawe, 2015). Another comparable tool is known as Leximancer (Sotiriadou et al., 2014). This section presents a summary of the NVivo software followed by consideration of the positive as well as negative aspects plus the reasons for rejecting the method. The query regarding NVivo is an example of a question, that was judged during this study as having no correct answer and ultimately the final decision is up to the user.

NVivo is a software tool that provides a computerised method of organising a selection of codes that relate to the data being analysed. The software also provides for a means of counting how often the coded segments occur in the research data. The software is now somewhat more complex than the original versions allowing for other aspects of the data such as nodes whereby the recorded audio code is not appearing (see M. L Jones, 2007).

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NVivo Negatives and Positives

The software technique for analysing data is not faultless. The technique is more accurately known as a data management process because no software will totally replace the analysis of qualitative data (Zamawae, 2015). The first point to note is that the conversation has been altered to some extent by exchanging the audio data into a transcribed text, as explained in Section 3.3.7. Analysing the text with the aim to count and categorise single words or short segments loses one major advantage of qualitative methods. That is, this software is missing the advantage of listening to an interview and assessing data from a conversational perspective (Kovach, 2010). That is attempting to gain one's interpretation of the conversation. NVivo was also judged as a technique of basically ignoring the emphases on words and implying exactly the same meaning for a given word. To restate a point discussed above, all interviews for this study were conducted with a conversational nature.

Interviews were in situ with the importance of emphases as well as the interview pause, where each has various meanings, discussed in more detail in Section 3.3.8. Note that the pause might emphasise a point, or maybe caution with extra thinking time required. NVivo tends to devalue the significance of the Interview pauses or emphases and focuses on the words.

The coded software technique is analogous with attempting to reduce a visual artist's painting to a collection colours or coded segments, overlooking the visualised picture as whole. As with all computer methods this can save time and is excellent when operational but probably useless when not operating properly.

NVivo is measuring the frequency of particular words or phrases. Arguably, this is an attempt to quantify the qualitative data, effectively using a statistical approach to a

non-statistical methodology. The technique can be viewed as a block by block (or words) analysis rather than a themed style. M. L Jones (2007) claimed that even over-coding can be a problem. For example, parts of a conversation deemed as additive to a given code when in fact the participant may have had some other reason for using the term(s).

Naturally, there is also the problem as for any computer software that time is required to learn to use it then something new is released and the old version becomes redundant. There will be improvements but apart from the work required to replace the old software more time is required to become ofay again and possibly the need to reassess results.

Using the software to support analysis in combination with the researcher perspective is probably more suited to large data sets (M. L. Jones, 2007). For example, attempting to assess several hundred participants becomes an almost unachievable task for a single researcher attempting to gain an overall population picture. The software coding method provides a way of creating an understanding of the large set of data.

The software coding method is time saving because the technique is not nearly as laborious as the personalised interpretative tasks that involves carefully analysing a given transcript whatever form the data takes. This stage of analysis is followed by finding similar interpretations and moving on to compare the available data. In short, the more data available the more significant a software tool such as NVivo becomes. See Section 3.4, for the grounded theory methods used in this research thesis to interpret data.

There are other positive points. This includes providing visualisable interpretation of results for analysis and reporting (Zamawe, 2015). This is the feature that initially drew the attention of the tool for acceptance in this research project. Another positive aspect of the coding software is that it allows reproducible connections between different parts of data. This is achievable because the software provides for the establishment of

various categories or codes, and this adds to the visualisation of the data for the final reader.

NVivo can improve the accuracy of the analysis process (Zamawe, 2015).

Arguably more data used for the research will provide a more precise analytical process. Thus the application of coding software enhances the quality of the research results. At some point the researcher is required to decide whether a personal analysis of data is required or the software tool is preferred.

Rejecting the Software

The sample size for this study was 26 interviews. Therefore, when the final number of interviews was reached, extra work was required including double checking transcribes and analysis. This significant amount of work remained compatible with the time available to complete the research.

These factors cannot be part of NVivo's toolkit because the software is prepared in a single location published in America. Therefore, Nvivo almost definitely is not even aware of local slang nor personalised issues and therefore unable to manage this part of the conversation. A similar argument is evident when we consider the participant's accent. The software approach devalues the Indigenous research paradigm because the specific language used for conversations is important for the Indigenous oral history method detailed in Section 3.2.4. The analysis of conversations required is discussed in this Section 3.4 and was achieved using the grounded theory approach.

