The Effects of Event Schema on Prosocial Behaviour in Australia and Malaysia: A Cross-Cultural Interpretation of Helping Behaviour

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Abstract

This exploratory qualitative research study explores the effects of event schema on Australian prosocial behaviour in comparison to Malaysian. Through the dimension of individualistic and interdependent cultural orientation, the research examines Australian and Malaysian interpretations of helping behaviour (and non-helping) in diverse help-seeking events. Malaysian participants were undergraduate and graduate students attending universities in Malaysia as well as staff-members of diverse government bodies, while Australian participants were sourced from students or ex-students attending a university in Melbourne, Australia. This research study used unstructured in-depth conversational interview techniques as the data collection method. Participants were asked to respond to a series of oral vignettes ranging from non-serious situations to high cost emergencies. From the vignettes, participants were also asked to respond to an interview guide for greater detail of findings. Interviews were translated and transcribed, and data were analysed using an interpretive interactionist approach. Interviews were coded, and codes were evaluated, from which conceptual themes were extracted. The identified themes were organised into a structured analysis by clustering concepts together and establishing hierarchical relationships. In addition, a summary table of final themes was produced using participant quotations as illustration of the identified themes. Existing literature relating to the cross-cultural comparison of Australian and Malaysian interpretation of helping behaviour (or non-helping) has little to offer. First, the event schemas were conceptualised and structured as three primary schemas: personal, affective and behavioural. Both cultures stated characteristics of these schemas, and preference of reaction, from which similarities and differences in individual experience, containing motivation, thoughts, and emotion, emerged. Second, Australian and Malaysian have mostly identical contributors to helping behaviour, from which the concept of intrinsic moral value, empathic understanding, and emergency conditions surfaced. However,

Australians identified explicit helping request as another reinforcement for helpfulness in emergency situations, whereas religious obedience is a central concern for Malaysians in deciding whether to help. Third, both Australians and Malaysians identified experience as an important and complex aspect in helping responses requiring holistic cognitive processing.

Declaration of Authenticity

Doctor of Philosophy Declaration

"I, Fazliyaton Ramley, declare that the PhD thesis entitled The Effects of Event Schema on Prosocial Behaviour in Australia and Malaysia: A Cross-Cultural Interpretation of Helping Behaviour is no more than 100,000 words in length including codes, and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

Signature ■   Date 19/10/16

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I would like to thank Allah Who has given all the unimaginable things to me- hope, perseverance, guidance, and comforts when I was damaged. This journey has taken from me a lot of precious things, but with Allah's greatest blessing, I've started to comprehend there's a great reason behind every single thing You have destined for me. Without Your help, this journey could not have been beautiful.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Investigations and explorations of prosocial behaviour have over a long period of time been a topic of much interest within Social Psychology. For example, there is a wide literature in the area as evidenced in a series of handbooks published over the years (i.e., Schroeder & Graziano, 2015). My study further examines an aspect of the broad area of prosocial behaviour through an examination of cultural contrast in collectivist and individualist notions of helping behaviour. The examination contrasts prosocial behaviour as it is enacted in Australia as an individualist culture and in Malaysia as a collectivist culture. [1]

Human behaviour is the cornerstone of an effectively functioning human society. Altruism as reflected in prosocial behaviour including helping behaviour in particular is integral in enacting and reinforcing what is good and proper in a contemporary micro local and or macro global society. For example, at the macro global level, The *United Nations Children's Emergency Fund* (UNICEF) through their executive director, Anthony Lake, reached out to the vulnerable children in besieged areas of war in Syria in enabling access to water, shelter, health services, education and counselling (Lake, 2016). Such programmes and humanitarian gestures centre on restoring peace and humanity to troubled communities and associated citizens including men, women and children. At the micro local level, examples of altruism are evident in the day-to-day lives of the everyday person, with some more-involved than others but particularly plays out with those in need largely through the act of

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[1] According to Hofstede's (2015) categorisation of individualism and collectivism, a score of 90 on the individualism dimension categorises Australia as a highly individualistic cultural group. In contrast, a score of 26 categorises Malaysia as collectivist. This score demonstrates the degree of importance that Australians put on the independence and distinctiveness, in contrast to Malaysians who value belongingness and responsibility toward a larger unit of community.

volunteering 'the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others' (Mahatma Gandhi, n.d.).

Altruism and volunteerism is evident among incidences of human indifference which tend to occur across regions and variable cultures. For example, the Wang Yue incident in Guangdong Province in China in which a two-year old toddler was hit and run by two successive vehicles and ignored by 18 passers-by. The child subsequently died as a consequence of serious injury. Tragic incidents such as this motivated social psychologists to continuously investigate altruism and determinants of helping. The importance of altruism and prosocial behaviour is supported in the vast amount of research in the area and includes investigations of relationships with social connection (Castano, 2013), life satisfaction (Oarga, Stavrova & Fetchenhauer, 2015), working standards (Shoss, Callison & Witt, 2015) and psychological well-being (Duarte & Pinto-Gouveia, 2015).

The initial emphasis in the research was on situational factors and was highlighted with a number of seminal studies. This research focused on situational factors that people consider when thinking of the possibility of helping. Among the seminal pieces of research in this area is Latanè and Darley's (1968) investigation of bystander intervention and diffusion of responsibility. This study was in part a reaction to the infamous circumstances and behaviours surrounding the 1964 sexual assault and murder of a young woman, Kitty Genovese, in the Kew Gardens district of Queens, New York. This sexual assault and murder occurred as a significant number of Kitty's neighbors and bystanders decided to not intervene despite watching the attack from their windows and or hearing her screams for help.Latanè and Darley (1968) in their related laboratory-based study in part explains the 'non-response' of the neighbours and bystanders in suggesting that their presence complicates an individual's decision to intervene, particularly in the instance where an unnecessary response could be seen as foolish even though apathy may invoke feelings of shame and guilt. Cacioppo, Petty

and Losch (1986) further explain confusion of responsibility among reinforcing events to

bystander apathy:

> *People anticipate being assigned greater responsibility for doing harm when they are*
>
> *helping a victim when bystanders are standing about than when the helper and the*
>
> *victim are alone, then this expectation of a confusion of responsibility would*
>
> *constitute a perceived social cost to helping that varies with the number of extant*
>
> *bystanders* (p. 105).

Each of the aforementioned studies examined the bystander effect from within a

Western individualist perspective. My thesis contrasts the beliefs and associated intentions to

act in a collectivist culture (Malaysia) in contrast to the beliefs and associated intentions to

act from within an individualist culture (Australia).

The presence of other bystanders is not the only situational determinant of helping

behaviour. Such behaviour can also be driven by the nature of the relationship between

benefactor and recipient. In support of the theory of relational prosocial behaviour, where

helping is directed toward related individuals such as friends, parents, siblings, spouse, and

relatives, such behaviour '…*is differentially motivated; with socialization, relationship*

quality, and relationship roles playing a more significant role' (Padilla-Walker & Carlo,

2014, p. 11-12). Understanding the nature of the benefactor-recipient relationship is

paramount in furthering understanding of the less discovered functional dimension of

evolutionary perspectives of prosocial behaviour which postulate that helping related kin can

guarantee the reproduction of the same genotype (Hamilton, 1963). Nonetheless, much

spontaneous helping involves a stranger and the individual is still concerned about the

consequences of not helping. People tend to display prosocial tendencies to those whom they

like (Carnevale, Pruitt & Carrington, 1982), are similar to them (Batson, 2010) and perceived

to be helpless (Peterson, 1993). My thesis adds to the knowledge in characteristics of the

victim that could cause or deter a helping response in two different contexts and how individualist and collectivist cultures interplay with individual interpretations of those in need. The final situational determinant to helping behaviour resides within the situation that in itself begets help-seeking behaviour. People may forsake bystander effects if the contextual nature of help-seeking event is non-ambiguous and severe enough to warrant spontaneous helping (Clark &Word, 1972).

Factors associated with personality and related affective states also contribute to a benefactor's prosocial tendencies and or inhibitions. The further exploration of such dispositional influences on helping behaviour is important given that people's interest and traits tend to be relatively stable over time. The difference is also reflected in individuals who live in diverse and non-Western cultures who model existing knowledge reflecting non-western cultural values and beliefs. Cultural values are a plausible explanation of individual differences in cognitive, emotion, and motivation domains (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Cultural factors are also influential in explaining the different regulation of behaviour in Western and non-Western cultures (Cross, Hardin & Gercek-Swing, 2011).

Earlier research in dispositional factors that influence helping behaviour tends to discuss the basic affective requirement of helping behaviour without specifying groups who were likely to have different level of those traits. For example, much is known about empathy and its components and how it functions to activate helping behaviour, but little has been written of which cultures have an enduring tendency to feel more sympathy and concern for others. Research that overlooks cultural norms and rules needs to be more refined in order to ensure that findings are more inclusive and overarching. Furthermore, there is very little exploration in the cultural research in affective and cognitive elements of empathy.

An additional dispositional determinant of prosocial behaviour is learning. Its classification however is problematic. On one hand learning may be considered as situational

(Singh, 2015), wherein helping is a result of socialisation and interaction with the external environment. On the other hand, the process of internalisation of prosocial values and attitudes is perceived as dispositional (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). Bandura (1977) through his Social Learning Theory identified that humans are active beings who constantly interact with exposure to the environment. This exposure fosters learning and the acquisition of behaviour and attitudes, particularly with the existence of reinforcement. Social psychologists often associate modelling (Grusec, 1991) and parenting and attachment styles (Blandon & Scrimgeour, 2015) with the development of prosocial behaviour among adults and children.

Another learning process which has been widely applied in understanding how prosocial behaviour could be increased is operant conditioning. On the basis of the theory of operant conditioning (Skinner, 1948), helping behaviour is reinforced if the helper found the behaviour as rewarding as in the previous helping responses (Aknin, Broesch, Hamlin & Van de Vondervoort, 2015); conversely he or she could avoid helping if a previous response had brought adverse consequences (Sierksma, Thijs, Verkuyten & Komter, 2014). The majority of these studies quantified learning experiences as well as the positive and negative consequences of behaviour associated with various learning mechanisms. Consequently, the participant's responses were limited by the researcher's tools and predetermined frameworks; hence, they were not illustrative of the reality of personal experiences. The present qualitative study overcomes this limitation by exploring the overall feeling and learning experiences of participants in two different contexts, individualistic and collectivistic groups.

This study critically examines similarities and differences in how persons from within an individualist culture (Australian) and from within a collectivist culture (Malaysia) experience and engage in help-seeking events. The study is especially significant in that it presents an observation of patterns of helping behaviour through a cultural lens reflecting

local values and norms typically incorporated into representations of helping behaviour. The intent is to investigate and meaningfully present significant aspects of an individual's interpretation of what it is to help or not help within a broad collective interpretation of the event.

1.1 Research questions and aims

Investigations in prosocial behaviour continue to be relevant and important in contemporary society. For example, individuals often respond apathetically when confronted with an emergency, especially towards individuals considered members of an 'out-group' (Hewstone, Rubin & Willis, 2002) and strangers (Knafo, Schwartz & Levine, 2009). This research focuses on event schema as stored information on what is expected and occurring in a given help-seeking event (Kumar, 2010). Schema predicts many forms of prosociality (Froming, Nasby & McManus, 1998). However, event schema related to prosocial behaviour has not been examined in a wide variety of different sociocultural contexts and instead has been largely limited to investigations within western individualist cultural contexts. This research investigates the role of event schema in shaping prosocial acts within an individualist culture, Australia, and a collectivist culture, Malaysia. Specifically, this study explores the influence of community context on prosocial behaviour. The goal is to explore cognitive processes among Australians and Malaysians when each is confronted by a help-seeking event. The study attends to the following research questions:

1. How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret the experience of a help-seeking event?

2. How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence perceive helping and not helping?

3. How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret preference when confronted by a help-seeking event?

4. How memories of past experience interact with how persons of Australian and

Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret a help-seeking event?

5. What are the differences in event schema of persons of Australian and Malaysian

birth and place of residence when perceiving and interpreting a help-seeking event?

1.2 Key terms

1.2.1 Event Schema

Schemas provide a cognitive shortcut to understanding the world. They comprise information on everyday situations and are subject to rapid cognitive processing. Schemas are also often problematic, particularly when people reject current and new knowledge which contradict preconceived ideas (Baron & Byrne, 2000). This rejection leads to the false social conceptions of stereotypes and prejudice (Baron & Byrne, 2000). This is further complicated when considering cultural factors which specifically influence the development of specific schema (Kumar, 2010). Baron and Byrne (2000) posit three kinds of schema including person schema; role schema; and, event schema. This study focuses on event schema defined as stored information on what is expected and occurs in a given help-seeking situation (Baron & Byrne, 2000).

1.2.2 Prosocial Behaviour and Helping Behaviour

Prosocial behaviour includes helping, altruism and cooperation (Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder & Penner, 2006). Helping is the broadest and most general of prosocial behaviours. It is defined as an action intended to benefit others (Dovidio et. al., 2006). Forms of help vary relative to the characteristic of the situation. For example, assistance given during an emergency is different from volunteering. Altruism differs from helping in emphasising the absence of personal reward and not involving self-fulfilling motives (Dovidio et. al., 2006). Normally, there are two factors that influence an individual when

enacting altruistic prosocial behaviour. The first of the factors is sympathy in response to another's distress; and, second, internalized norms and principles regarding helping (Carlo & Randall, 2002). Finally, cooperation is as an orientation toward sharing equal responsibility and mutual helping in attaining an agreed goal (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005).

Types of prosocial behaviour are also interpersonal (an individual helping another) and intergroup (a group or an organization helping another) (Brewer, 2007). These types generally reflect earlier definitions and conceptualizations of prosocial behaviour but in contrast explicitly focus on individual and or group behaviours. For example prosocial behaviour is categorized into cooperation, long-term assistance, and spontaneous helping (Penner et al. 2005; Sturmer, Snyder, & Omoto, 2005). Cooperation involves two persons or two groups of persons assuming shared and equal responsibility towards attaining a mutually-agreed goal (Penner et al., 2005). Long term assistance refers to an extended period of time in which individuals and or groups act responsibly, ethically, legally and or with familiarity toward a an agreed goal (Simon, Sturmer, & Steffens, 2000).Volunteerism is planned helping behaviour in which people block times in daily routine schedules to help needy individuals or groups (Penner et al., 2005). For example, a group of people provided moral support and or a monetary donation to help victims of the tsunami in Aceh (Indonesia) and India. . Cooperation, long term assistance and volunteerism are similar to the extent that the prosocial behaviour requires a degree of readiness within time and space. In contrast, spontaneous helping refers to an immediate emergency and requires helpers to respond altruistically and without readiness or preparation (Sturmer et al., 2005).

1.2.3 Individualism

Individualism is a popular cultural dimension (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1996) which is evident in predominately Western societies including the USA, Western Europe, and

Australia. Relationships within an individualistic culture relative to a collectivist culture are more voluntary and less bounded by cultural expectations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). People from individualistic cultures are more independent in their interpretations of themselves, view themselves as separate from others and characterise themselves and their associated personality traits as relatively stable (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

1.2.4 Collectivism

The definition of collectivism in this study has been drawn from a consensus of literature, particularly from Hofstede (1980), Triandis (1996) and Markus and Kitayama (1991). Collectivist cultures, in contrast to individualistic cultures, emphasize the group dynamic. They tend to focus on a group of persons in terms of moral behaviour and harmony. Collectivist cultures are found in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 1996). Collectivism is a cultural dimension in which the meaning of self is embedded with other members in the group; therefore, the culture stresses collective identity, interdependent self, obligation and group harmony. Emphasis on group unity has led collectivist people to forsake their personal goals over the majority's interest. While behaviour is normally a reaction to the environment and immediate contexts, the collectivists emphasise social norms in regulating their everyday behaviour.

1.2.5 Interdependent and Independent Self-Construal

Based on Singelis' (1994) Self Construal Scale (SCS), self-construal is defined within the framework of an individual's sense of self as individualist and/or collectivist. This sense of self is dependent upon the social context and drives how one feels, thinks and acts. Consistent with the SCS (Singelis, 1994), self-construal is defined as interdependent and (IntSC) independent (IndSC). IntSC refers to one's sense of connectedness with others and the extent to which it influences (a) attending to external attributes such as roles and

environment; (b) flexibility and adaptability; (c) knowing where one stands in the society and acting accordingly; and, (d) understanding others and engaging in indirect communication. In contrast, IndSC is defined as a strong sense of separateness from others independent from social context (a) owning abilities, thoughts and emotions; (b) unique identity and manifesting the self openly (c) prioritizing own goal and achievement; and, (d) directly conveying thoughts and feelings.

1.3 Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter Two is the literature review chapter, which presents a discussion of prominent theories in helping behaviour and various personal characteristics, as well as environmental features that are responsible for influencing such behaviour. It explores how cultural dimensions have affected these dispositional and situational factors on prosocial behaviour. It also discusses current research exploring the influence of cultural value dimensions, such as individualism and collectivism, on helping behaviour and explaining links between these dominant cultural values and the psychology of prosocial behaviour. The chapter then moves to an analysis of the characteristics of the meaning of self in these two cultures that distinguishes them from each another. The chapter concludes with an exploration of current objective assessments of independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal, which provides an overview of empirical work on the SCS (Singelis, 1994). The scale has been used in this study for the purpose of assessing participants' differences related to independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal.

Chapter Three is devoted to detailing the design and methodology employed, covering the need to use qualitative research methods and semi-structured in-depth conversational interview techniques. Also identified are the uses of social constructionism and phenomenology as the selected philosophical epistemology for this study, specifically as they suit the research aims and questions. The review also attempts to introduce participants from

both cultures with brief demographic information and the selected research analysis
highlights how the data have been coded, analysed and interpreted. The final section of the
chapter incorporates a discussion of researcher position in the study to account for any
potential influence from the researcher's worldview and background on the data collection
and interpretation.

Chapter Four provides details of the research findings. The intent is to describe the
participants' experiences and interpretation of helping behaviour, as well as how those
experiences and interpretations compared among the different help-seeking situations.
Excerpts of participants' interview transcripts are provided to evidence the emerging
important themes and categories for this study. The chapter provides detailed discussion of
the emerging main themes and subthemes of Australians' and Malaysians' event schemas
across help-seeking situations. Through thorough review of the data, it is also evident that
participants identified both similar and distinct antecedents of charitable help-giving
behaviour in Australia and Malaysia. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of
previous helping experience, from the perspective of both benefactor and recipient, as
imperative to the participant's current helping responses toward similar help-seeking
situations.

Chapter Five identifies the similarities and differences of Australian and Malaysian
interpretation of helping behaviour across various help-seeking events. In addition, a
conclusion of the thesis leads to a comprehensive list of major findings of the study. The
strengths and limitations of the current inquiry are described for the use of future practices of
related study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Prosocial behaviour and/or the drive to help[2] are central to the effective functioning of a productive humanistic society. Prosocial behaviour is the most basic of human attributes. It transcends geographical boundaries and is constantly reinforced and valued, albeit varying in form and practice, across cultures. This variability in practice is best illustrated as a continuum. At one end is the person who even while in a perilous and life-threatening position helps wholeheartedly and without hesitation. At the opposite end of this continuum are people who in response to another's need and for whatever reason(s) decide to not help.

The act of helping as a prosocial behaviour encompasses a broad array of behaviours and interpretations including comforting, sharing and rescuing. As a result, the study of helping is also broad and all-encompassing. This review of the literature examines the act of helping at four levels: (a) theoretical perspectives of helping behaviour; (b) situational factors of helping behaviour; (c) dispositional factors of helping behaviour; (d) culture and level of helpfulness; and, (d) self-construal.

2.2 Theoretical perspectives on helping behaviour

2.2.1 Multilevel approach of prosocial behaviour

The relevance and importance of prosocial behaviour as part of a functioning contemporary society has resulted in it being the subject of a considerable amount of research activity. This research has contributed to an overwhelming increase in data, knowledge and generation of theory. However, the enormous breadth and quantity, along with variations in

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[2] The act of and or intention to help are considered pro-social and for the purpose of this thesis the terms will be used interchangeably.

the quality of the research, problematizes any attempt to obtain a coherent interpretation and summary of this field of study. In order to make some sense of this broad literature, one needs to locate the literature within an area of emphasis. Among a range of approaches used to encapsulate the characteristics of prosocial behaviour, a useful means for interpreting its position is through the lens of a multilevel perspective incorporating micro, meso and macro levels of analysis (Penner et al., 2005). The meso level analysis considers one-on-one helping and/or helper-recipient interaction; the micro level is defined in terms of individual distinctiveness of pro-sociality and its various sources; and the macro level analysis considers the interdependence of human and institution, assessing prosocial behaviour in a bigger context such as within a large organisation (Penner et al., 2005). A clear delineation between these three levels of analysis acknowledges the various roots of prosocial behaviour, provides for different interpretation of prosocial tendencies and reports on the interaction of similarities and varying origins of human intervention in helping behaviour.

2.2.1.1 Meso level of analysis

The scope of prosocial actions at the meso level of analysis includes contact or interaction between helper and recipient in a particular context within a specific situation (Penner et al., 2005). For example, research at this level investigates the influence of various emergency and non-emergency situations on human intervention in prosocial behaviour. More contemporary theory and research has shifted to investigations of a person's internal and external motivation in engaging in prosocial behaviour. The 1980s and 1990s documented the significant role of previous experience, helping values and emotional influence on manifestations of prosocial behaviours. The meso level of analysis may also be used to categorise an examination of collective conceptions of prosocial behaviour (Dovidio et al., 1997). Relevant to this study was the investigation of perceptions of favouritism related

to 'in-group' memberships in contrast to their behaviour related to those perceived as members of the 'out-group' (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000).

2.2.1.2 Micro level of analysis

The micro level of analysis is particularly relevant in investigations of personality difference linked to mechanisms of prosocial behaviour, for example, childhood memories related to the promotion of prosocial behaviour (Gino & Desai, 2012) in which the scope of research helping behaviour is narrowed to the characteristics of the helper (Penner et al., 2005). Based on the literature and theories, evolutionary mechanisms within prosocial behaviour may be considered a function of altruistic genetic inheritance and altruistic group dominance. Fundamentally, prosocial behaviour in the micro level of analysis is the result of physiological and environmental interactions within the recognition of a human as a genetically structured social being.

2.2.1.3 Macro level of analysis

Macro analysis considers the organised and structured context of being human as a platform for individuals to help others in need. Prosocial behaviour is meaningful when situated within an organisational context. With organisation and structure comes the willingness to perform actions limited not to oneself but also toward attaining a mutual advantage. Under these conditions contextualising prosocial acts considers a prosocial response as planned and not necessarily subject to spontaneous reaction. The macro level of analysis refers to a combination of interpersonal interaction and inhibiting/driving factors of prosocial behaviour that directly influence the context-defining society and associated ideological systems (Penner et al., 2005), for example, the importance of context related to governing society. These factors include structural social-class and socio-cultural levels of analysis. At the meso level, the research explores and investigates event schema as a

predictor of prosocial behaviour and at the macro level it links the exploration to a broader context including the historical and ideological base of culture.

2.2.2 Cost-reward analysis

There are alternatives to the meso, micro and macro frame of analysis in categorising the literature in prosocial behaviour. Some of the alternatives are concerned with less expansive examinations of prosocial behaviour by limiting categorisations to basic psychological models or theories. The situational determinants of prosocial behaviour have been identified and approached from a more direct and in-depth analysis of the costs and rewards associated with the act of helping. For example, there is a robust and significant amount of research investigating motives which underpin prosocial behaviour (e.g., Anker & Feeley, 2011; Conway & Peetz, 2012) interpreted within an arousal cost-reward analysis. This perspective contends that help is more likely to occur if the benefits outweigh the costs (Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Clark, 1981). If the act of helping is considered too risky and the costs outweigh the benefits, potential helpers will withdraw from prosocial acts (Pilliavin et al., 1981). Risks include the threat of personal (Midlarsky & Midlarsky, 1973) and emotional harm (Midlarsky & Hannah, 1985). Recognition (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998), reputation (Johnson, Erez, Kiker & Motowidlo, 2002) and personal gratification (Smith, Keating & Stotland, 1989) are additional motivating forces increasing the likelihood of individuals engaging in prosocial acts.

The cost-reward model demonstrates the thinking and analysis process that may underlie helping pro-social behaviour, suggesting that the decision to help or not help is a choice based on the weighing of potential risks and benefits associated with the behaviour. A person experiences an aroused state when confronted by an emergency. This state incorporates an array of emotional responses including fear, personal distress, sympathy, and/or urgency. The cost-reward model suggests that to reduce this arousal people are drawn

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to a consideration of relative costs and rewards, and select an action that minimises cost and maximises reward (Piliavin et al., 1969). The actions and the relative rewards and costs may include decisions to act or to not act (Silveri, 2007). Derived from an egoistic frame of reference rather than from altruistic hypotheses of prosocial behaviour, the cost-reward model demonstrates that the person in deciding to act or not act perceives a reward in either case of one sort or another. The general consensus is that a person is more likely to engage in prosocial behaviour when the perception of an associated reward is greatest (Pilliavin et al., 1981).

2.2.3 Empathy-altruism hypothesis

However, while those who are acutely aware of the rewards are more likely to help, in its purest form helping is altruistic, displayed as a selfless act devoid of personal reward. The altruistic thesis, in contrast to the cost-reward model, contends that a person when confronted by one in need will act unselfishly and solely to benefit the other. Within this analysis, prosocial behaviour has been examined from various perspectives. The hypothesis introduced the intrapsychic determinants of helping which examine the desire and feelings in doing 'good' for others. Toi and Batson (1982) extended empathy theory associated with pro-social behaviour in positing an *'empathy-altruism hypothesis'*. This hypothesis is based on the contention that a person will help another without feeling a need for reward if the behaviour is imbued with a degree of empathy. Initially, empathy referred to the emotional aspects of a person who experienced compassion, care, and sympathy toward a person in need (Batson, 1987, 1991). Built on the existing concept of empathic concern, Batson (1987, 1991) further included perspective-taking to acknowledge and highlight the multidimensional nature of empathy. Specifically, this dichotomy of affective-based and cognitive-based empathy shows that some individuals behave pro-socially when they experience empathic concern, while

others behave pro-socially when they understand the feelings and thoughts associated with the feeling of distress by imaginatively placing themselves in the place of the distressed.

The *empathy-altruism hypothesis* was formerly tested by Toi and Batson (1982) in their investigation of college students' reactions to interviews from a radio program. One of the interviewees, Carol, related her story of a serious car accident in which both her legs were broken. Carol expressed her associated struggles and in particular how these related to her falling behind in class. Students listening to this interview were issued with a letter asking them to meet with and to share their lecture notes with her. Toi and Batson (1982) manipulated the degree of empathy by telling one group to focus on how she was feeling (high empathy level) while instructing another group to not be concerned with Carol's feelings (low empathy level). Toi and Batson (1982) also manipulated the cost of not helping. Under a high cost condition, students were informed that Carol on returning to school would be in their psychology class. Under the low cost condition, students were informed that Carol would finish the class at home. The results supported the empathy-altruism hypothesis. Consistent with the hypothesis, people in the high empathy condition helped regardless of cost, while those in the low empathy condition helped only if the cost of not helping was high.

2.2.4 Negative state relief model

In contrast to Toi and Batson's (1982) analysis of humanistic motivation related to helping behaviour, Cialdini, Schaller, Houlihan, Arps, Fultz, and Beaman (1987) posited that the motivation to help associated with empathic emotion was egoistic and focused on helping behaviours acting to rid the helper of negative states. Cialdini et al., (1987) coined the term 'Negative State Relief' in which guilt and shame are associated with increased unhelpfulness. The central tenet to this form of relief is in the arousal of a sense of responsibility to help someone in need since ignoring might induce a sense of guilt. The probability of helping is

positively correlated with the drive to reduce or remove a state of guilt. Thus, egoistic preferences, in which prosocial engagement is aimed at reducing one's own distress and restoring a mental state, is not wholly altruistic, given that the benefactor's motive for helping is not selfless. The Psychological Being is active and constantly affected by the fluctuation of their mental and emotional state in the act of helping. This model challenges onlooker's consistency in engaging a selfless motive in helping behaviour.

In addition to Negative State Relief and guilt as it relates to helping behaviour, others (i.e., Carlson & Miller, 1987) suggest a relationship between negative mood and helping acts. Prosocial behaviour plays a critical role in establishing a 'good' mood, given that behaviour of this type is intrinsically rewarding. A positive mood is powerful in many cases and may play out indirectly, i.e., through a bystander's positive transitory psychological state influencing one's decision to intervene. Vrugt and Vet (2009) induced positive mood by displaying a smile expression prior to a request to help. A request for help accompanied by a smile is more likely to be responded to positively than is a request for help accompanied by a neutral expression.

In contrast to the effects of positive mood, the reaction to negative mood was more complex and controversial. Benevolence as in the act of helping is likely to decrease if the perception is that it was not effective in reducing a negative mood (Batson, 1990). Nonetheless, it is important to consider that not all helping behaviour is mood-elevated. The decision to help is dependent upon whether a person feels positively and emotionally reinforced by helping, is attentive to another rather than to him- or herself and is aware of the causes of the negative event. Although negative states such as sadness and guilt are associated with the act of helping (e.g., Piliavin et al., 1969), not all negative affect is positively associated with helping behaviour. For example, people who are angry and/or frustrated are less likely to intervene and help (Manucia, Baumann, & Cialdini, 1984). On the

other hand, negative moods may enhance helping when the act is perceived as restoring mood and mental state (Piliavin et al., 1969).

2.2.5 Social psychological approach to prosocial behaviour

Theories of and perspectives on helping behaviour are not restricted to notions of egoism and altruism. Other perspectives view helping behaviour through the lens of common societal rules and practices. Thus the decision to benefit others implies a societal influence of (in)action which acknowledges humans as social beings not necessarily subjugated by individual preferences. For example, the norm of reciprocity expects that the experience of being helped promotes helpfulness in the form of a favour-in-return. Helping those who helped is associated with a sense of gratefulness. Simpson and Willer (2008) investigated the question of the link between indirect reciprocity and altruism. They reported that altruists, in comparison to egoists, were significantly more likely to indirectly reciprocate a prosocial behaviour. Simpson and Willer (2008) also suggested that reciprocity manifests in maintaining equity in a relationship. This occurs because a human interpersonal relationship is framed within an economic perspective in which those who in the past received help will seek to equalise the ratio of benefits by and with the opportunity in the future and in turn engage in an act to helping. Furthermore, a potential benefactor responds positively to helping in order to construct a trustworthy character that guarantees that he or she receives help from others (Frank, 1988). Adhering to an internalised system of social values reinforces the importance of returning a favour in the form of a helpful act. In contrast to an emphasis on other's perspectives on creating self-image (Burger, Sanchez, Imberi & Grande, 2009), an act according to an internalised system of values is concerned with living up to expectations consistent with inner values and or adhering to a personal list of items of what is 'right and legitimate' (Perugini, Gallucci, Presaghi & Ercolani, 2003).

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With reciprocity there is the associated social attribute of social responsibility. There is a general, albeit not consistently behaviourally supported, cultural view that the strong should help the weak; the rich should help the poor and the healthy should help the sick. It is reasonable to assume that collectivistic cultures, in contrast to individualist cultures, have value structures higher on dependency and a connection with others and community and emphasise a compliance with this norm of social responsibility(Baron & Miller, 2000). Building on the existing construal of the self and others within collectivistic cultures, selfish responses to the help-seeking behaviour are inappropriate and deviant from the societal expectations and are associated with social disapproval (Hechter & Opp, 2001).

2.3 Situational determinants of prosocial behaviour: When do people help?

Situational and dispositional factors are also integral to understanding prosocial behaviour (Baron & Byrne, 2000). Situational factors revolve around the characteristics of the situation and constitute a direct influence on a person's decision to help or not help. For example, bystanders to an event or circumstance in and of themselves and dependent upon context are more-or-less likely to engage in prosocial behaviour. A bystander to an event in which another is injured or attacked may or may not decide to help, based on their perception of the seriousness of the event and the presence of other observers and/or actors.

The 'bystander effect' suggests a diffusion of responsibility in the company of others which reduces the enactment of a prosocial behaviour. This reluctance to act is positively correlated with the number of bystanders witnessing an event (Latané & Darley, 1968). Without the bystanders, a person is engaged in a circumstance of sole responsibility and therefore may be forced into a position in which they feel they have to act. The performance or non-performance of a prosocial behaviour is also directly associated with the perception of an emergency in contrast to a context considered a non-emergency. Latané and Darley (1968) proposed a series of decision-making processes undertaken when faced with an emergency or

non-emergency. This five-step model of the decision-making process includes: (1) the onlooker was immediately and consciously aware of the event; (2) the event provided cues that help is needed; (3) the observer assumed he or she was part of the event and duty-bound to help; (4) the observer decided on the type of prosocial behaviour to be undertaken consistent with the characteristics of the event; and (5) the enacting of the prosocial behaviour was feasible. Throughout the five stages and in deciding to act or not act, the observer goes through an assessment of the associated personal and emotional probable risks and rewards.

The presence of an 'other' has the potential to discourage prosocial behaviour. For example, the cue given by an emotional and/or physically unresponsive observer may be interpreted as indicating a non-emergency. This is generally referred to as 'pluralistic ignorance'. The level and characteristics of pluralistic ignorance defines the 'non-emergency' and ultimately influences other observers in terms of their interpretations of the characteristics of the event, i.e. help not needed (Latané & Darley, 1970). Moreover, enacting a behaviour which is inconsistent with the interpretation by the other observers of the appropriate reaction to an event may be embarrassing, particularly if the actor misinterprets the characteristics of the event (Bierhoff, 2002).

Less obvious examples of context and how it affects prosocial behaviour is in the choice to act or not act for the benefit of the public good, for example organ donation. Organ non-donors are significantly less likely than donors to interpret an organ shortage as a cry for help, are less likely to accept personal responsibility to help and often do not have the level of knowledge deemed necessary to engage or intervene (Anker & Feeley, 2011). Other examples of the effects of context associated with engaging in or not engaging in a prosocial acts includes the witnessing of an emergency or crime, such as sexual violence (Banyard, 2008), the presence of security camera within the vicinity of the help-seeking spot (van

Bommel, van Prooijen, Elffers & van Lange, 2014); interpersonal events such as the retrieval and return of dropped personal articles (Prevos, 2014) and sensitivity toward and activity around and in reaction to bullying among peers (Howard, Landau & Pryor, 2013) particularly enacted in schoolyards and playgrounds. Information overload (Milgram, 1970) in terms of context may also influence the enacting of a prosocial behaviour. The impact of information overload has been examined in investigations of rural environs in contrast to urban environs. Urbanites in contrast to rural dwellers are less likely to intervene in the presence of others (Steblay, 1987; Amato, 1981). Consistent with the principle of information overload, the hectic nature of and irritations of living in the city results in the filtering of and processing of information, particularly in terms of external cues. As a result, this reduction in information processing directly influences the frequency of and engagement in prosocial behaviour.

Prosocial behaviour is generally considered an artefact of socialisation. Important others exert an enormous influence on an individual's propensity and/or capacity to engage in prosocial behaviour. For example, the drive for social approval is an important situational factor which, dependent upon circumstance, may act to promote prosocial behaviour as appropriate and expected. Prosocial behaviour in this circumstance is and associated with and complemented by increased social status and feelings of self-worth. The choice to act or not act is affected by the presence of others, with the decision to act in some cases allowing the indiviudal to avoid feelings of shame and guilt (Dovidio, Piliavin, Gaertner, Schroeder & Clark, 1991). At the extreme, the display of a 'heroic' action is deemed to be responsible and reputable (Haley & Fessler, 2005).

Societal expectation in terms of social behaviour is derived from what is considered ideal and appropriate behaviour performed within and considering a particular context. These behaviours often occur almost subconsciously, while other behaviours are consciously considered in terms of the perceived expectations of the particular context. For example,

Yoeli (2009) in a field-based study investigating a residential electricity market reported that customers of a large electric utility were more likely to endorse and sign up for a blackout intervention program if their decision was revealed to their neighbours. However, the influence of others in terms of a person engaging or not engaging in prosocial behaviour does not always motivate action. For example, there is lack of consensus on whether the individual would independently be more or less likely to respond to improve the welfare of someone in need (Burger, Sanchez, Imberi & Grande, 2009).

As stated previously, context is an extremely important consideration when attempting to understand the characteristics of prosocial behaviour. Subsequent bystander's attention to act selflessness is largely focused on the perceived seriousness of the situation. In short, events ranging from non-serious or non-intense circumstances to a life-threatening emergency elicited different reactions. The intensity of the situation significantly influenced the behaviour of participants (Thornberg, 2007). Environmental factors such as time, noise and odours are also key determinants in influencing whether a person decides to help or not help. People who are under time constraints are less likely to stop and offer help (Darley & Batson, 1973). Noise is an additional factor in decreasing helping behaviour (Darley & Batson, 1973; Mathews Jr. & Canon, 1975; Geller & Malia, 1981). The presence of increasing noise levels may decrease helping as the attention to another's distress is constrained and/or obscured by sound. Another less common influence on action to help is smell. A pleasant ambient fragrance may result in heightened levels of positive mood, which in turn increases the likelihood of an act to help (Baron, 1997; Guèguen, 2012). Smell more commonly plays out in a response to personal body odour. The response to a person's body odour if unpleasant will commonly result in avoidance. However, less frequently, an individual's unpleasant body odour contributes to an act to help since such an odour may invoke pity (Camps, Stouten, Tuteleers & van Son, 2014).

2.4 Dispositional factors in helping behaviour: Why do people help?

The research in prosocial behaviour has tended to focus on considerations of context and physical characteristics. Dispositional factors, by contrast, have received less attention. The research in dispositional factors indicates that an individual with strong values and positive emotional reflection will engage more frequently in prosocial altruistic acts (Richman, Brown, & Clark, 1984). The higher the level of empathy, the more willing the individual is to engage in prosocial behaviour (Batson, Lishner, Cook, & Sawyer, 2005); this encompass feelings towards others including sympathy, compassion, softheartedness, tenderness and emotional warmth. These feelings are often strengthened toward a vulnerable target such as a child (Batson et al., 2005). Compassion, emotional concern and caring when activated in response to a person in distress contribute directly to an altruistic act to help (Weng, Fox, Hessenthaler, Stodola and Davidson, 2015).

The importance of focus on empathy as indicative and predictive of prosocial behaviour has coincided with the greater recognition of empathy as multidimensional. A cognitive aspect is central to the multidimensionality of the construct and includes critical factors such as the individual's capacity to accurately imagine a person's feelings and thoughts in assessing an act to help (Sun, Lao, Li & Lv, 2011). The capacity to accurately assess feelings and thoughts dovetails into the capacity to understand a person's perspective, particularly when that person is in a distressed state. For example, bystanders will vary in the capacity to take the perspective of another and this in turn will inform their behaviour. A bystander is more likely to engage in act to help when they perceive some similarities and connections with the victim (Sturme, Snyder & Omoto, 2005), assume an 'imagined self' in which they position themselves cognitively within the thoughts and feelings of the distressed victim (Myers, Laurent & Hodges, 2014), and the situation involves a sympathetic victim (Batson, Chang, Orr & Rowland, 2002).

High levels of personal self-evaluation are also associated with a willingness to engage in prosocial behaviours (Bénabou & Tirole, 2005). Such behaviour provides helpers with a self-rewarding sense of satisfaction, pride or joy (Rodriguez, 2005). These positive senses reinforce a benefactor's self-worth (Diener & Diener, 1995). However, mere imagination, while potentially elevating self-esteem and the satisfaction with the individual's own abilities and awareness, does not necessarily translate to an act to help (Szabla, 2012). An act to help may also be negative in outcome. Social exchange models suggest that those who receive help assume a lower social status in contrast to the higher status associated with being a giver of help (Flynn, Reagans, Amanatullah & Ames (2006). Helping behaviour is also an acquired response. People learn to be helpful. For example, previous success in reducing arousal and anticipating costs leads to enhanced helping in subsequent events (Dovidio, 1984).

A more traditional approach to understanding prosocial behaviour is through the principles of behaviourism. Skinner (1938) maintained that behaviour followed by reinforcement (positive or negative) has an increased probability of recurrence. By contrast, behaviour followed by extinction or punishment has a decreased probability of recurrence.. The consequences of human action generally fall on a continuum of pleasant to aversive. Behaviours associated with pleasurable consequences are reinforced, while behaviours associated with aversive or unpleasant consequences tend toward non-occurrence or extinction. The positive (Koestner, Franz & Weinberger, 1990) and negative (Baumeister, Stillwell & Heatherton, 1994) perceived and real consequences of prosocial behaviour, such as social approval, appraisal, assured feelings, guilt and looking foolish, directly relate to the probability of one behaviour occurring instead of another.

Teaching and learning strategies based on the principles of reinforcement within operant conditioning are a popular technique in reinforcing prosocial behaviour and traits,

particularly amongst children. The strategies are characterised by introducing reinforcement contingencies in factors such as social approval (Gelfand & Hartmann, 1982), tangible rewards (Rushton & Teachman, 1978), and self-rewards (Bar-Tal, Raviv & Goldberg, 1982). Tangible rewards, i.e., prizes, reward points, money, tend to be a relatively less effective reinforcer for prosocial behaviour. Tangible rewards tend toward maladaptation when engaging the internalisation of prosocial behaviour and may instead undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 2001). As a result, tangible rewards of one sort or another should not be used frequently or excessively in reinforcing behaviour(s) (Bierhoff, 2005). A more effective reinforcer of prosocial behaviour is positively associated with the socialisation process in which the act of helping is viewed as socially desirable (Kenrick, Baumann & Cialdini, 1979).

In contrast to behaviourism, social learning theorists (e.g. Bandura, 1977) posit that people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling. This approach or theory suggests that people learn not only by being rewarded or punished as suggested in the behaviourist approach, but also by observing somebody else being rewarded or punished. The seminal works within Social Learning Theory by Bandura and colleagues were referred as the Bobo Doll studies and involved an investigation of how children learn and acquire prosocial and aggressive behaviours on observing a model's reaction toward a doll. Among the seminal studies (including Bandura & Walters, 1963; Bandura, 1965), Bandura, Ross & Ross (1961) was perhaps the best known, and reported that boys and girls exposed to an aggressive model were more likely to act in a more physically aggressive way in comparison to boys and girls not exposed to an aggressive model. Boys' and girls' modelling behaviours were also differentiated when exposed to same-sex models. Boys exposed to an aggressive male model in comparison to boys exposed to an aggressive female model displayed greater aggression. The results for the girls were similar but less pronounced.

Consistent with Social Learning Theory, Williamson, Donohue and Tully (2013) reported that two-year-old children who saw a video of an adult aiding a person in distress were inclined toward imitating and implementing the prosocial behaviour in response to their parents' physical distress. Williamson et al. (2013) suggested that children in this age category will model adult behaviours and are capable of reproducing associated prosocial behaviours in social interactions and within appropriate circumstances. Somogyi and Esseily (2014) reported mimicking behaviour among 16- month- old infants following their exposure to an experimenter's play and demonstration on using a tool. In turn, Kolb and Weede (2001) reported an increase in prosocial skills among pre-kindergarteners following their participation in cooperating learning lessons delivered through teacher modelling. The modelling of prosocial behaviour may also be symbolic in the form of exposure to television and film (Liebert, Sprafkin &Poulos, 1975). For example, Watt Jr., Welch and Shea (1977) reported, with college students, a positive relationship between the prosocial content of television programs and prosocial behaviours.

Social learning suggests the capacity to cognitively engage the perspective of another. An observation and modelling of behaviour necessarily requires a level of cognitive processing, including the capacity to perceive, recall, interpret and evaluate (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). These processes provide a framework to understand others-perspective-taking (Froming et al., 1998), moral reasoning and the acceptance of (Conway &Peetz, 2012), decision-making related to the implementation of intervention in an event, and, memory and exposure to past experiences (Gino & Desai, 2012). Advanced and functional cognitions enable a capacity to accurately assess cues related to another's distress, bolster prosocial emotions such as sympathy and empathy and directly lead to the initiation of a prosocial act (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). The prediction of such acts is based upon the ability to

correctly access stored information which contains life scripts from previous related encounters consistent with the characteristics of the person and event.

Within the domain of cognitive determinants, Crick and Dodge (1994) posit a Social Information Processing model to better understand prosocial behaviour. They formulate a step-by-step guide incorporating an evaluation of cues to decision-making in terms of how to react toward a particular situation. A social dilemma is interpreted on the basis of past memories (schemata) interplaying with the characteristics of the current event. These memories, combined with favourable scripts gathered from direct experience and observation, inform an individual's behaviour in response to the current event. However, information processing is problematized when people overlook current social cues that might be different from previous cues. An application of this model to prosocial behaviour is found in numerous studies explaining the impacts of prosocial media on children (e.g., Calvert & Kotter, 2003; Wiegman, Kuttschreuter & Baarda, 1992).

Social Cognitive Theory is a useful framework to explain human behaviour within event schema. People comprehend behaviours and events based on their current knowledge. Organizing current knowledge as a framework for future understanding are functions of schema (Kumar, 2010). For example, children aged two years or more, on repeated exposure to social events, begin to formulate their own life scripts regarding social events (Damon, Lerner & Eisenberg, 2006). These observations, memories, exposures and life scripts then become their representation and mental framework of the events and in turn build expectations and understanding of how those events should occur in the future. With aging and an associated greater exposure to events and behaviours, life scripts become more complex. For example, parenting, memories of related behaviour, trauma exposure and past moral deeds help in forming event schema related to help-seeking events.

2.5 Cross-Cultural differences in helping behaviour

Culture and what it constitutes has been much discussed but not clarified. It is, as with other concepts such as socio-economic status, nebulous and therefore open to variability in interpretation. Aspects of culture impact powerfully on the form and frequency of helping behaviour. Accordingly, the following presents a clarification of the concept of culture relative to helping behaviour. Tylor (1958), a prominent scholar in cultural anthropology, defined 'culture' as shared meanings of norms, values, customs, beliefs and knowledge which are acquired as an entity of a larger group of people. Culture encompasses two prominent aspects positioned inside and/or outside the individual. Culture as defined from within the individual, *subjective culture* (Triandis, 1972), includes internalised values and norms acquired from the culture of a society. Culture as defined external to the individual includes cultural norms and values as represented and enacted within religious organisations, educational systems, the enactment of law, and aesthetic buildings (Singelis, Bond, Sharkey & Lai, 1999). Despite regional cultural differences, culture by and large is more and less transferable across countries and regions and expressed through an individual, a group or a class, and or whole society (Eliot, 1949).

Observed differences and similarities in social-psychological phenomena are significantly related to the environmental causes evident and enacted with culture. At the national level, however, there is a relatively clear distinction between two types of culture: collective and individualist. Hofstede (1980) investigated this distinction in his use of data from forty countries to derive value dimensions which vary according to culture. This investigation of cultural values is associated with four prominent cultural dimensions: first, power distance (the extent to which people accept the unequal distribution of power); second, individualism (the needs of each person and family are of more value than that of the collective); third, uncertainty avoidance (the extent to which people tolerate anxiety caused

by uncertainty); and, fourth, masculinity (the degree to which the society values achievement and success).

However, the relationship between Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions and basic psychological processes is not fully confirmed. In Hofstede's (1980) research on the dichotomy of individualism-collectivism, considerable attention focused on the crucial differences within each cultural dimension, such as independence vs interdependence (e.g., decision-making, life satisfaction). However, Hofstede's model also 'blurs the edges' when considering whether persons considered individualistic were necessarily free from the ideals of collectivism and or whether different persons from within a given culture share specific cultural traits (i.e., urban dweller vs country folks). There is still a great deal of ambiguity in the capacity of the Hofstede Model to generalize across cultural populations (Smith & Bond, 1998). The individualism-collectivism dimension presents broad cultural concepts which arouse more curiosity as to what constitutes a trait specific to one or other construct. Others, particularly within cultural psychology, have offered alternative models. For example, Triandis (1996) specifically examined cultural syndromes and how they were characterised within various cultures. These cultural syndromes include, cultural complexity (interdependent culture tends to be more complex as the individual is subjugated to the collective needs and this is especially complicated in the larger population which might consist of layers of sub-cultures compared to independent culture in which the individual has freedom in action and is aloof from collective responsibility) individualism, collectivism, tightness (the degree to which the individual feels responsible in following societal norms), active-passive (the extent to which the culture values elements that allow individuals to have great control of their independent elements (i.e., achievement, success, action) rather than dependent elements (e.g. cooperation and hierarchical-based decision), honour (perceived threat to one's own cultural values and norms should be firmly challenged) and

vertical/horizontal relationship (the social behaviour of vertical society tends to be submissive to the authorities, but horizontal society favours equality and freedom in actions). The dimensions which stand out amongst all others are individualism and collectivism.

Individualism is characterised by a great emphasis on personal freedom and achievement. Individualist cultures highlight distinct properties of the individual which makes them unique. This uniqueness is reflected in personal achievement and success. In contrast, collectivism highlights the individual as a social being embedded within an interrelated and interdependent group of people. Hofstede (2011) further conceptualised individualism as '…cultures in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family' (p. 11). Hofstede illustrated the difference in conceptualising collectivism as '…cultures in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) that continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty, and oppose other in-groups' (pp. 11).

Individualist cultures emphasise elements that make a person stand out from the other and are expressed as pride in personal accomplishment (Taylor, 1989), personal freedom (Veenhoven, 1999), and autonomy (Inglehart & Oyserman). In contrast, collectivist cultures emphasise group interests, shared responsibility and obedience (Triandis, 1994; Oyserman, Sakamoto & Lauffer, 1998; Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, 2001).

While there has been considerable research in individualism-collectivism on dispositional characteristics and their influence on the likelihood and motivation toward helping, the application of existence helping models and theories on these elements is typically overlooked. Individualists are more likely to help others when the personal reward in performing behaviour exceeds the cost. The collectivist in contrast is more likely to help as a result of broader group expectations and associated norms.

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A characteristic of collectivist cultures is that individuals when confronted by an event or circumstance are inclined to act in accordance with the norms and standards set by the cultural group. The presence of bystanders within the collectivist frame-of-reference may result in behaviour consistent with presumed expectations and a felt need to avoid feelings of shame and or guilt. In this instance collectivist individuals in contrast to the individualist may experience greater levels of anxiety in neglecting on in need. To rid oneself of this anxiety and assure the public's approval and liking, the collectivist may likely opt to reduce the suffering of another person, a motive of helping that is encapsulated within the negative-state relief model.

Collectivism and individualism are characterised differently when considering helping behaviour. Socialisation and parenting characteristics are consistent with the cultural and social characteristics of collectivism and individualism. Parental socialisation strategies and practices within a collectivist society teach and reinforce a child's dispositional characteristics consistent with altruistic tendencies (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). Whiting and Whiting (1975) and Stewart and McBride-Chang (2000) identified two potentially important factors related to the 'enculturation' of helping behaviour in children among individualistic and collectivistic societies. These include parenting techniques and conformity to cultural traditions. These techniques and traditions enable the transmission of prosocial values from the older generation to the younger with an emphasis on personal responsibility in consideration of others. Prosocial behaviours among children in collectivist cultures become more enculturated compared to children raised in individualist and industrialist societies. For example, children in an Israeli Kibbutz were exposed to a socialisation strategy which emphasised interdependence, obedience and responsibility to others (Nadler, 1986).

The dynamics of parenting techniques and socialisation in collectivist society has potentially improved collectivist's 'other-focus' emotions, leading to the feeling of empathy.

In addition to these collectivist parenting traditions, the cultural values which prioritise one's emotions and needs above their own could also heighten a collectivist's level of emotional engagement. Prosocial behaviour depends crucially on empathic concern, that is, the ability to take the victim's perspective (Sassenrath, Pfattheicher & Keller, 2017; Sibicky, Schroeder & Dovidio, 1995). Therefore, it is important to note that there is a relationship between the three constructs of empathy, collectivism and altruism. In light of the *empathy-altruism hypothesis,* helping behaviour among collectivists is partly due to the experience of strong empathetic emotions and concerns toward a needy which is rooted in their parenting values, socialisation and cultural traditions.

The relationship of culture and helping behaviour can be objectively determined in how frequently behaviours occur and which form of helping behaviour is enacted in different populations (Hill, 2001). These differences have been explained by diverse aspects of subjective and environmental culture and their specific characteristics which illustrate, albeit not exhaustively, differences and similarities in the rate of helping (Levine, Martinez, Brase & Sorenson, 1994), motives underlying helping (Levine, Norenzayan & Philbrick, 2001; Levine, 2003), perceived urgency of the need for help (Miller, Bersoff & Harwood, 1990) and levels of helpful traits (Realo & Luik, 2002). Generally, the findings from these studies suggest that cultural values and norms are associated with regional variability in helping behaviour.

Several cross-cultural studies have examined the impact of different societal values and norms on helping responses among adults (Levine, Norenzayan & Philbrick, 2001; Levine, 2003; Miller, Bersoff & Harwood, 1990). Others have identified emotional levels and differences that explain prosocial behaviours including trust (e.g., Irwin, 2009) and empathy (e.g., Miller, Kozu & Davis, 2001). In addition, researchers have tended to focus on understanding cultural norms and values such as compassionate love (Vaughan, Eisenberg,

French, Purwono, Suryanti & Pidada, 2009) and interpersonal responsibilities (Miller,

Bersoff & Harwood, 1990).

Religiosity also plays a significant role in explaining the act of helping, particularly

since related beliefs, attitude and emotions are directly associated with prosocial behaviour.

Helpfulness varies according to the degree of religiousness, particularly if believers have the

freedom to choose which religion they embrace (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014). For example,

religious pro-sociality dictates that the giving of aid should be equally allocated to the

stigmatised and 'normal' person (Wardhaugh, 2009).

Within individualist culture, the 'autonomous' and 'discrete' self (Sommers, 2012)

directly influences the decision to act. By contrast, the collectivist notion suggests that

individual boundaries permeate through others and that social context is an important

consideration in explaining the individual's behaviour and/or predicament (Lee, Hallahan &

Herzog, 1996).

The tendency to explain the behaviour of others as the outcome of their personalities

occurs across cultures. However, the intention to act to help varies according to the cultural

norm (Cardwell & Flanagan, 2005). For individualistic cultures, individuals viewed as more

personally responsible for an event or circumstance are less likely to help, compared to

persons in collectivistic cultures.

Duclos and Barasch (2014) focussed on independent and interdependent self-

construal on prosocial behaviour of American and Chinese people. They found that people

with stronger independent orientations are as likely to act benevolently toward a member of

the in-group as they would toward a member of the out-group. In contrast, the

interdependently orientated person is inclined to bolster prosocial attitudes and practices

toward a member of the in-group rather than toward a member of the out-group. Cultural

values prescribe who deserves help and hence independents consider help-giving to the others

in need regardless of group membership due to their 'lesser propensity to see themselves contextually (i.e., in relation to others)'. As people from embedded cultures are concerned about their responsibility toward extended members of the same social group, the same social norm is not extended to strangers and outsiders (Knafo, Schwartz & Levine, 2009).

In-group membership is of particular interest to a consideration of helping in a collectivist environment. Evaluations of who deserves assistance vary by cultural context. For example, Feldman (1968) suggested that rate of helping varies between a person categorised as individualist a person categorised as collectivist. Levine, Norenzayan and Philbrick (2001) reported data on helping strangers in non-serious situations from 23 urbanised cities around the world, including Rio de Janeiro, San Jose, New York and Kuala Lumpur. They found considerably lower levels of helping in the cities where there were high levels of economic productivity, pace of walking, and individualism.

Individualist and collectivist norms frame help-giving behaviour. People associate the act of asking for help with personal incompetency (Meyer, 1982) and inferiority (Sandoval & Lee, 2006). Seeking help has negative connotations in individualist cultures relative to collectivist cultures since the former emphasises self-sufficiency, competence and independence (Oyserman & Lee, 2008). While many have examined the relationship between collectivistic values and prosocial tendencies (i.e, Kogut, Slovic & Västfjäll, 2015; Lampridis & Papastylianou, 2014; Roberts, 2005), the general view is that the emphasis on interdependence and collective responsibility in a collective society suggests that seeking help is more common and normal (Sandoval & Lee, 2006).

Collectivist and Individualist societies vary in their characteristics of prosocial behaviour in terms of the psychological self (Kagitcibasi, 1997), self and group interdependence and connectedness (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), autonomy (Gagné, 2003) and moral reasoning (Miller, Kozu & Davis, 2001). These cultural variations affect the

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likelihood of and how persons behave in different contexts within different cultures in their response to an emergency. For example, persons from collectivist societies, while exhibiting lower degrees of trust toward strangers, still readily engage in prosocial behaviours (Yamagishi, Cook, & Watabe, 1998; Yamagishi, 1988a).

Individualism-Collectivism constitutes differences in self-orientation in which persons within an individualist society have clear boundaries and are separated from others (Kagitcibasi, 1997). Individualist values affect self-orientation, independence, self-reliance, autonomy and self-direction and these influence cognitive, emotional, behavioural and motivational aspects of behaviour (Schwartz, 1992). In contrast, collectivist society values self-conformity, tradition, benevolence, interdependence and connectedness (Schwartz, 1992). Persons in collectivist cultures emphasise the interests of the other. Consistent with their cultural values, individuals in individualist societies internally attribute feelings, thoughts and behaviours (Miller et al., 2001). Conversely, individuals in collectivist societies believe that help is given out of social rules and responsibilities which are external to the individual (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Robust values of connectedness and interdependence in collectivist societies are directly associated with higher levels of empathetic sensitivity (Miller et al., 2001). These values correlate positively with prosocial behaviour, and persons from collectivist culture may tend toward being more helpful. For instance, American Indians as members of a collectivist culture are more likely than White Americans to engage in more prosocial behaviour involving minor assistance with a close friend or stranger (Miller et al., 2001).

2.6 Understanding Self-Construal of Individualistic and Collectivistic Culture

2.6.1 Structural, conceptual and theoretical foundations of the SCS

A person's constructed sense of identity is predominately social-cultural. The inherent connection between culture and identity has been supported and reinforced by the significant

attention devoted to cross-cultural examinations of identity construction. This has been particularly highlighted in findings demonstrating the contrasting cultural influence on identity between and within collectivist and individualist societies (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Berry, 1979; Triandis, 1995; Matsumoto, 1999; Singelis, 1994; Levine, Bresnahan, Park, Lapinski, Wittenbaum, Shearman, 2003).

The generally accepted dimensions often used to understand and interpret conceptions of the cultural constructions of self are independent self-construal (IndSC) and interdependent self-construal (IntSC) (Markus &Kitayama, 1991). IndSC refers to an individualist sense of self emphasising an affective self-orientation, independence, self-reliance, autonomy and self-direction (Schwartz, 1992). This orientation is directly associated with self-related cognitive, emotional, behavioural and motivational aspects of behaviour (Schwartz, 1992). IntSC, by contrast, emphasises a collectivist self-orientation which values conformity, tradition, benevolence, interdependence and connectedness (Schwartz, 1992). Persons who are high in IntSC emphasise the interests of the other and are bound by societal norms.

IndSC defines the self as separate and unique, with high IndSC suggesting an internalization of thoughts, feelings, actions and abilities. For people high in IndSC self-esteem is achieved through a person's capacity to engage in direct communication and their ability to articulate openly what they think and how they feel, which in turn is consistent with their internal attributes and associated emotions (Singelis, 1994). In contrast, IntSC includes a degree of 'embeddedness' in which the sense of self, others and context are considered as one. IntSC is exhibited in a person's flexibility and capacity to fit in with others and associated contexts. The terms 'IndSC' and 'IntSC' were initially coined by Markus and Kitayama (1991) to conceptually attend to the variability in a person's conception of self between and within individualist cultures (i.e., American and Western European) and

collectivist cultures (i.e., Japanese, other Asian regions, African, Latin-American and Southern European). These concepts were further investigated in terms of their crucial implications on major psychological facets such as cognition, emotion and motivation (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Perhaps the most influential objective measure of IndSC and IntSC is Singelis' (1994) Self-Construal Scale (SCS). This self-report scale contains separate quantitative measures of individual differences related to IndSC and IntSC and has been cross-culturally validated through various factor analytic procedures including Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) (e.g., Fernández, Paez & Gonzáles, 2005; Harb & Smith, 2008). As a result, non-English versions of the SCS include Japanese (Ozawa, Crosby, & Crosby, 1996), Filipino (Miramontes, 2011), Spanish and German (Fernández, Paez, & Gonzáles, 2005), Portuguese (Fernández, Paez, & Gonzáles, 2005) and Arabic (Harb & Smith, 2008). Nonetheless, despite the wide number of translations and use of the SCS within various individualist and collectivist societies, the question of its validity and applicability, particularly within non-Western societies is still relevant. As many psychological phenomena across our world are culturally-acquired, it suggests that further study needs to be conducted to enhance our understanding of the characteristics of specific cultures. Consequently, the validation and further study of identity as it relates to self-construal is timely in countries such as Malaysia.

2.6.2 General Description: The SCS

The SCS originally consisted of 45 items. The scale utilizes a 7-point Likert-Type format (1=strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree) to capture the constellation of major psychological facets (thoughts, feelings, and behaviours) of each individual through measures of independent and interdependent self-construals (Singelis, 1994). Building on Markus and Kitayama's (1991) work, Singelis (1994) carried out a pilot validation test of the 45-item SCS obtained from 364 ethnically diverse undergraduate students enrolled at the University

of Hawaii. Measures of this early SCS reported repeated Cronbach Alpha reliabilities of .73 and .74 for IndSC and .69 and .70 for IntSC. This two-factor model was further supported by a CFA (GFI= .853, AGFI=.731, and RMR= .076). The validation process led to a reduction in the number of items from 45 to the final 24-item SCS scal,e with 12 items measuring each of IndSC and IntSC (Singelis, 1994). A subsequent test of validity with an ethnically diverse sample of 165 university students further supported the 24-item two-factor version of the scale, yielding strong confirmatory properties (GFI= .809, AGFI= .772, and RMR= .093 with chi-square (χ^2 to df ratio) = 2.75) and respective Alpha Coefficients of .70 for IndSC and .74 for IntSC (Singelis, 1994). The SCS also identified significant differences for IntSC and IndSC items between different ethnic groups defined as collectivist (i.e., Asian Americans) and individualist (i.e., Caucasian) (Singelis, 1994).

A replication study (Singelis & Sharkey, 1995) further supported the construct validity of the SCS and in turn reported differences in IndSC and IntSC between persons from collectivist and individualist cultures. Singelis and Sharkey (1995) reinforced previous findings in their investigation of the relationship between individualist and collectivist cultures in terms of embarrassability. In this study, members of an Asian American ethnic group considered collectivist scored higher in IntSC than their Euro-American individualist counterparts. Specifically, they reported a positive correlation between interdependence and embarrassability with the group from collectivist cultures, which was inverse to the findings with the group from individualist cultures. In short, individuals with higher scores on IntSC were more susceptible to embarrassability.

Singelis, Bond, Sharkey, and Lai (1999) carried out a larger study with a sample of participants from diverse ethno cultural backgrounds, comprising 814 undergraduate students from universities in Hong Kong, Hawaii, and the US Mainland. In this study, the first version of self-reported SCS (12-items for IntSC and 13-items for IndSC) was correlated with

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Modigliani's (1966) Embarrassability Scale and the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. Their findings supported their contention that the collectivist Hawaii Asian American and Hong Kong Chinese would be more inclined to score highly on IntSC and therefore be more susceptible to shyness and embarrassability.

More recently there is controversy surrounding the influence of situational priming on several items of the SCS (Levine et al., 2003). Through a meta-analysis study of ten existing studies, Levine et al. (2003) posited their concern over the inconsistencies of the self-construal scores in each of the two subscales. They report that the self-construal inventories are not particularly reliable and failed to support the claim that individuals in Asian countries were more interdependent than individuals in Western countries. The presence of situational priming and the existence of Western bias in these self-report measures were identified as among the necessary conditions that led to poor convergent validity. The influence of priming on interdependent self-construal was demonstrated in the nature of persons with high IntSC who are flexible and situational-bound. However, Gudykunst, and Lee (2003) suggested that the Levine et al. (2003) conclusions are contentious given that the samples used in the meta-analysis were small and the invariant characteristics of the respondents in most of the selected studies were not representative of individualistic-collectivistic populations. Most participants were also college students who were highly exposed to generational change and therefore might not be truly representative of a clearly identifiable culture. They also argued that situational priming does not directly influence the final score of SCS, but rather triggers either one of the individual self-construals in the given circumstances since both dimensions co-exist in every person across cultures.

It is not surprising that the age difference could be the confounding factor between the self and the culture. Although some of the answers for variations in self-conception pinpoint a cultural difference between two different sociocultural groups, attention on within-culture

factors that influence self-conception cannot be escaped. One of the within-culture factors

that determines the self-conception is the areas of residence. A particular study conducted to

measure the variations on self-conceptions between Australian and Japanese settling in

metropolitan areas (Melbourne and Tokyo) and regional areas (Wodonga and Kagoshima)

highlighted that Australians saw themselves as more individual than Japanese, and residents

in regional cities individuals saw themselves more as a part of the group than did residents in

metropolitan areas (Kashima, Kokubo, Kashima, Boxall, Yamaguchi & Macrae, 2004). The

study is clearly shedding important light on cross-cultural research in which the researcher

should be able to select the respondents from different residential areas and other

demographic variations of the samples to represent the subject culture as a whole; otherwise

the observed cultural difference might be confounded.

The measurement of individualistic-collectivistic and independence-interdependence

self-construal constructs has been constantly debated with the result that cross-cultural

researchers need to take great care when attempting to discuss psychological phenomenon

under a cultural umbrella. Taras et al., (2014) caution against the use of any Individualism-

Collectivism instrument without a clear indication of the theoretical stance of the research

and the dimensionality of Individualism-Collectivism. Other than screening the psychometric

properties and the theoretical basis of a test, researchers should play a more proactive role in

choosing which Individualism-Collectivism tests are compatible with the underlying structure

of the research. From their meta-analysis study of 295 sample-level observations obtained

from seven prominent Individualism-Collectivism tests (including the SCS) Taras et al.

(2014) concluded that when choosing an instrument to measure Individualism-Collectivism,

it is necessary to be clear on the judgment contrast of the test structure. When the

Individualism-Collectivism factor is treated as an opposite in a single continuum, the high

score on one factor suggests a low score on another factor, which means the Individualism-

Collectivism factor in this test is uni-dimensional. In contrast, an instrument recognising the bi-dimensional structure of Individualism-Collectivism treats the factors as independent (i.e., SCS) with the possibility of scoring high on both structures or on neither structure. In light of its more consistent psychometric properties and a better conceptualization of bi-dimensional structure across different sociocultural groups, SCS is a more desirable and satisfactory instrument for determining levels of Individualism-Collectivism. Nonetheless, this research provides a strong reminder to the researcher that ambiguity on the test structure, the characteristics of the test taker, the geographical boundary in which the test is being administered and the level of analysis may lead to false findings and in the end the result may well be no more than a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Despite concerns and associated controversy with the structure of the SCS, the conceptual and theoretical dimensions of self-construal have been further refined. The relatively simplistic interpretation of the independent-interdependent dimensions as measured in the original SCS are considered neither sufficient nor comprehensive enough to capture the full meaning of self-construal, particularly as it relates to an increasingly globalised world. For example, further investigations (e.g., Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995) suggest a four-factor model in the measurement of self-construal in contrast to the traditional two-factor model, and contend that there are four prominent cultural patterns in understanding self-construal. First, Horizontal-Collectivism (H-C) refers to the belief that one belongs to a larger group and that other people in that group are equal. This sense of egalitarianism suggests that an individual in this group shares a common goal with others. Second, Vertical-Collectivism (V-C) refers to considering oneself as a unit of a bigger group but recognizing the inherent hierarchy in that group. This characteristic suggests that there is an individual or group of people above others in terms of a collectivist belief, despite the prioritisation of group goals over personal goals. Third, Horizontal-Individualism (H-I)

suggests that people want to be unique and see others as the same, but have limited access to a higher status and/or recognition. Fourth, Vertical-Individualism (V-I) recognizes societal inequalities with the inevitable competition for higher status and recognition.

In order to be increasingly relevant, further development and evolution of the SCS has considered and engaged with the further theorizing and associated increasing complexity of IndSC and IntSC. As a result, Singelis et al., (1995) constructed a 32-item version of the SCS and tested the validity and reliability of this modified scale with 267 undergraduate students enrolled in large American Universities. Using CFA, the 32-item SCS supported the four-factor model (GFI= 0.79, AGFI= 0.75, RMR= 0.089, χ^2 to df ratio = 1.96) more than the two-factor model (GFI= 0.73, AGFI= 0.69, RMR= 0.097, χ^2 to df ratio = 2.30). In addition, and consistent with the CFA, the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimating for the four dimensions was also meaningful (H-C= .74, V-C= .68, H-I= .67, and V-I= .74). Overall, the four horizontal and vertical dimensions of individualism and collectivism converge within IndSC and IntSC. The modified SCS was further confirmed by test results gathered across various cultures and associated differing ethnic groups (e.g., Christopher, Norris, D'Souza & Tiernan, 2012; Hardin, Leong & Bhagwat, 2004).

Despite continuous refinement of its measurement properties, the Singelis' SCS has its limitations, particularly since it was developed for measurement within individualist cultures. For example, the item 'I feel comfortable using someone's first name soon after I meet them, even when they are much older than I am' in the original version of the SCS is not relevant nor appropriate for use within collectivist cultures. Criticism and challenges around the internal consistency of the test raises some concerns about the reliability of the measurement, particularly with an ever changing contemporary population (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk & Gelfand, 1995). In conjunction with the broad constructs of IND-COL, it is challenging to achieve a level of reliability consistent with increasing the bandwidth and

fidelity of the measurement (Cronbach, 1990). Singelis et al. (1995) attempted to address such limitations by adding six items [#s independent (5, 7, and 24) and #s interdependent (12, 14, and 30)] to improve the internal reliabilities of the measurement. Therefore, the 30-item questionnaire was chosen in this study as it satisfied Cronbach alpha internal reliabilities in ranging from the high .60's to the middle .70's. While certainly far from perfect, the 30-item SCS has been administered successfully to USA and Hong Kong Chinese participants. Because the SCS has been used infrequently in the Malaysian Collectivist context, the more expansive 30-item two-model version in the current study was subjected to an analysis of its psychometric properties among Malaysian participants.

Chapter III

Method

Phase One

3.1 Aims and hypotheses

The central purpose of this phase of the study was to translate and adapt the original English version of the SCS to the Malaysian context. Specifically, through Confirmatory Factor Analysis the study examines the psychometric properties of the scale in terms of the Malay population. The use of reliable and valid SCS for both the Australian and Malaysian contexts in this cross-cultural study should extend the understanding of dependent and interdependent self-construal's framework from the observed cultural differences. The scores from SCS provided individual estimates of independent and interdependent self-construal to more clearly identify Australians as individualist and Malaysians as collectivist.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants

Participants included Malaysian undergraduate students majoring in Psychology and Counselling from the Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (n= 137) and Islamic Science University of Malaysia (n= 98). The students ranged in age from 19 years to 27 years (M=21.79). The majority were female (n(F)= 169, 71.91%; n(M)= 66, 28.09%). The students were predominately Malay, with 6 non-Malay (Chinese =4, Indian=1, 2=unknown).

3.2.2 Measures

The 30-item bilingual SCS was used to measure IntSC and IndSC. Participants responded to the items on a 7-point Likert scale with the options 1= strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree.

3.2.3 Procedure

In the first instance, participants were asked to complete Singelis' (1994) SCS to assess independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal. The SCS version used for this study consists of 30 items. The scale utilizes a 7-point Likert-Scale format (1=strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree) to capture the constellation of major psychological facets (thoughts, feelings, and behaviours) of each individual through measures of independent and interdependent self-construal. Fifteen items assessed the tendency of the respondent to engage in independent thought and behaviour (e.g., 'Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me', and 'I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects'), while the other items assessed the likelihood of the respondent engaging in interdependent thought and behaviour (e.g., 'I respect people who are modest about themselves', and 'I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans'). Items and response scales were available in Malay and English for use with Malay and English speaking participants. The questionnaire also included a number of relevant demographic questions (i.e., age and gender).

The scores for each subscale were computed independently. The researcher conducted an analysis of the SCS for the purpose of identifying which self-construal was more prominent according to cultural context in shaping each respondent's concept of self, given that both at any point in time co-exist within an individual. For example, it was expected that participants from Australia would display predominately independent (individualist) self-construals while participants from Malaysia would display predominately interdependent (collectivist) self-construals (Triandis, 1989; Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

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3.2.4 Pursuing Cross-Cultural Equivalence through Trans-Adaptability

Translating a psychometric scale in order to have it semantically equivalent and accessible to a different culture and associated language requires linguistic equivalence considered in terms of objects, behaviours, concepts and situations (Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996). Amongst the concerns with a test developed in a specific culture is the need to contextualise the operationalization of measures of behaviours, concepts and situations relevant to an alternative or other culture (Berry, 1992). For example, measuring independence and autonomy in a Malay by asking the person to rate the item 'My whole self stands behind the important decisions that I make' is precarious because many Malays engage important and intimate others when answering the question. However, this does not suggest that they are not autonomous; instead, autonomy is expressed in considering the thoughts of important and intimate others in making a personal decision. Achieving linguistic equivalence is problematic and there needs to be a carefully considered approach in adapting and translating an instrument, particularly when there is some difficulty in the matching of psychological constructs across cultural groups.

The SCS was selected given its wide use in various cultures and following a brief face value interpretation by the first author of its relevance and utility within the Malaysian context and associated language. This step is often ignored when translating and adapting an instrument to a different population from that in which the test was originally developed (Gudmundsson, 2009). In applying an instrument developed in one language to a population who converse in a different language, it is necessary to consider the original version of the instrument in terms of its psychometric properties (Gudmundsson, 2009). The translation of an instrument which in its original form has poor psychometric properties does not empirically justify its use in a different cultural setting (Berry, 1992).

To achieve linguistic equivalence the translator needed to be proficient in English and Malay. In addition, the translator needed to be familiar with the cultural context of the target population and the test content in order for the semantic meaning of the construct to be understandable and have equivalent meaning to that of the original language. In short, it was necessary to recruit a native Malay speaker also proficient in the English language and knowledgeable in the subject matter. Fortunately, while the SCS was presented in both English and Malay, the participants were also highly proficient in speaking and reading in English. The first author translated the original version of the SCS into the Malay language. The author has a high level of proficiency in English and Malay. Her proficiency in reading and writing in English was enhanced by a four year residence in the USA and extended stay in Melbourne, Australia. She also spent four years studying undergraduate courses in an international university in Malaysia in which the primary language is English. The translation considered relevant, cognitively clear and understandable words to avoid miscommunications or misunderstandings (Brislin, 1986). For example, translating 'independent person' reads as 'orang yang bebas' in Malay. When back-translated, the words change in translation to 'free person'. The concern was with the possibility of words inaccurately representing the intended meaning according to the original version of the SCS. The English words and phrases within the SCS were preserved by assuming contextual relevance across cultures in considering the translation of words and phrases. Following the first author's translation of the SCS into Malay, two experienced Public University lecturers of Malay origin who had taught for over seven years in English literature, back-translated the Malay version of the SCS into English. The first author, in order to assess translation quality and accuracy, compared the two back-translated versions of the SCS with the original English language version. Most of the items in the back-translated versions were comparable to the original items, except for the items, 'Having a lively imagination is important to me' and 'My personal identity, independent of

others, is very important to me'. The intended meaning of the words 'lively imagination' was inconsistent with the back-translated item in which the word the Malay lecturers back-translated as 'daydream' and 'fantasy'. For the Malay, these words are negative in connotation. Individuals who daydream are labelled 'lazy' and 'unreal'. Furthermore, the back-translated word 'independent' did not have the equivalent semantic meaning and context or intended meaning of the original item. The original item centred on owning a sense of self independent from the self of others. To establish content equivalence of the original and translation scale over the inconsistent items, the first author conferred with two independent bilingual psychologists familiar with the subject matter. The two psychologists held doctoral degrees in psychology from universities in Australia and are highly proficient in English and Malay. After reaching agreement on the final wording, the Malay SCS was combined with the original scale to make up the 30-item bilingual SCS.

3.2 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22 was used to measure the descriptive statistics and the demographic details of the samples. A confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) through AMOS was performed to assess the factor structure of the SCS. CFA is used in this instance given that it is a test of relations between specific factor structures based on existing and a priori knowledge (Fernández-Ballesteros, 2003). CFA was appropriate since this study was looking at the trans-adaptability of the two-factor model of the SCS in Malaysia.

3.3 Results

The SCS model consisted of two orthogonal factors, Independent and Interdependent Self Construal, measured by adding each subject's scores on a series of 15 items per construct via a 7-point Likert scale with strongly agree and strongly disagree as endpoints. The scale

score is measured by the summation of subject responses to each of the items divided by 15 to give a mean score.

Means, standard deviations and standardized regression weights are presented in Table 1. The 30 item and latest version of the model of Self–Construal is presented in Figure 1. We evaluated the assumptions of multivariate normality and linearity through SPSS AMOS version 20. Using Mahalanobis distance we observed a number of outliers. Using .05 as the threshold value for designation as an outlier, 43 observations were subsequently deleted from the total pool of 235 observations. The final sample consisted of 192 participants and there was no missing data. Subsequent tests of skewness and kurtosis supported both the assumption of normality and the use of the maximum likelihood estimate in performing the CFA.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and Standardized regression weights for the SCS

Item content	Mean (SD)	Standardized Regression Weight
Independence:		
Q1 Unique	5.44(1.31)	.44
Q2 Talk to an older acquaintance openly	4.98(1.36)	.32
Q5 Do my own thing	4.16(1.84)	.21
Q7 Independent	6.37(.755)	.54
Q9 Saying ''no''	5.28(1.30)	.64
Q10 Lively imagination	5.89(1.05)	.61
Q13 Direct	4.71(1.50)	.38
Q15 Praised alone comfortably	5.11(1.19)	.30
Q18 Speak up	4.83(1.51)	.48
Q20 Consistent behaviors	5.26(1.39)	.40
Q22 Value good health	6.04(.934)	.58
Q24 Self-benefit	4.78(1.56)	.37
Q25 Taking care of oneself	6.12(.828)	.58
Q27 Personal identity	5.23(1.23)	.46
Q29 Consistent behaviors	5.08(1.44)	.40
Interdependence:		
Q3 Avoid arguments	5.96(.994)	.46
Q4 Respect authority figures	6.24(.791)	.47
Q6 Respect modest people	6.14(.882)	.47
Q8 Sacrifice for ingroup	5.32(1.11)	.46
Q11 Consider parents' advice	6.23(.926)	.48
Q12 Feeling intertwined	3.99(1.65)	.22
Q14 Feel good when cooperating	5.81(.949)	.59
Q16 Responsible for relatives	5.32(1.35)	.42
Q17 Importance of relationships	4.56(1.51)	.37
Q19 Offer my seat to my boss in a bus	5.66(1.07)	.47
Q21 Others' happiness	5.24(1.49)	.35
Q23 Remain in in-group	4.99(1.46)	.31
Q26 Respect groups' decision	5.98(.862)	.61
Q28 Group harmony	6.15(.833)	.50
Q30 Get along with what others want	4.59(1.60)	.22

The model of Self –Construal is presented in Figure 1.
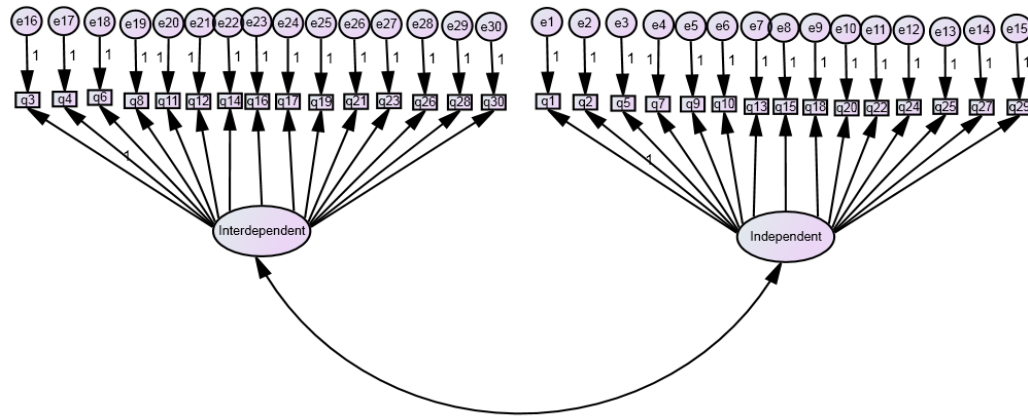
Figure 1. Original 30 item Self Construal Scale.

The interpretation of results associated with the test of the strength of the original model presented in Table 2 indicated a poor fit between the model and the observed data. The comparative fit index (CFI) at < .95, the GFI at < .90, the Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI) at < .95, and the RMSEA at > .05 were non-significant.

Table 2

Comparison of Fit Measures for the Initial and Revised Solutions for the SCS

Solution	Initial (original 30 item)	Revised (16 item)
n	192	192
χ^2 goodness of fit	938.356	181.531
df	404	99
p	.000	.000
RMSEA	.083 (.076 .090)	.066 (.051 .081)
RMR	.151	.082
Fit Indices		
NFI	.512	.749
CFI	.640	.863
TLI	.613	.834
Absolute Fit Indices		
GFI	.730	.902
AGFI	.690	.865
PGFI	.634	.656

Because of the poor fit of the model, post-hoc modifications were undertaken in order to revise and present a reasonably valid model for this population. Using the modification indices and a careful analysis of the standardized residual covariances and factor loadings resulted in the systematic deletion of 14 items. The result was a two-factor solution consisting of 16 items with seven correlated error terms (Figure 2). The revised model was superior to the initial model. The interpretation of results for the revised version presented in Table 2 indicated a moderate fit between the model and observed data. Both the CFI and TLI approached acceptable levels of significance as did the RMSEA with the GFI at > .90.
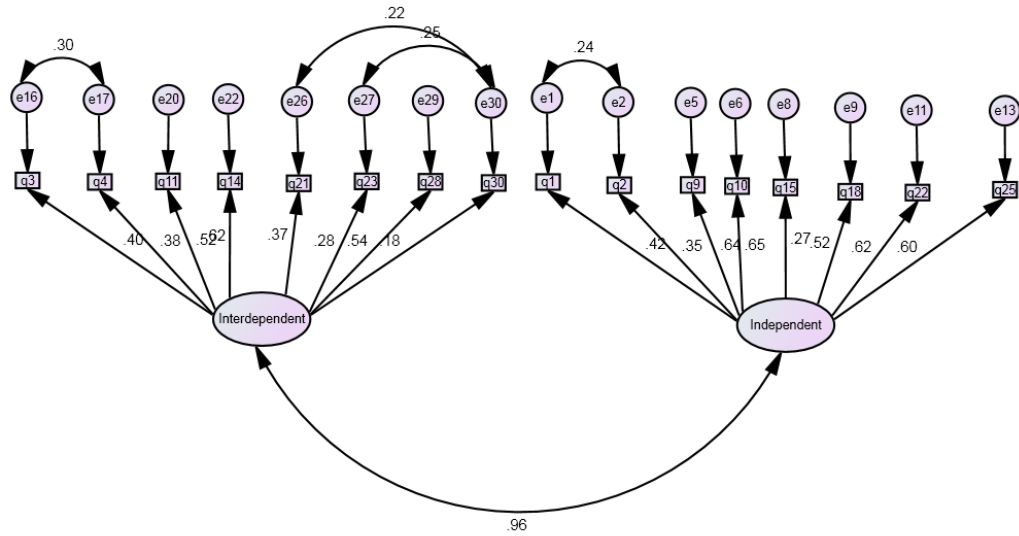
Figure 2. Revised 16 item Self Construal Scale.

3.4 Discussion

The results added to the evidence differentially supporting the use of the SCS within

the Asian context. The analysis generally suggested that the revised scale in contrast to the

original scale is a potentially effective measurement of independent and interdependent self-

construal. The iterative process of CFA indicated that the revised model was a better fit than

the first model and further confirmed the theoretical constructs within a non-western

collectivist cultural group. The reduced number of items from 30 to 16 also created a more

parsimonious set of items for each construct. However, and most importantly, the moderate

level of support suggested that the SCS needs to be further researched in collectivist cultures

such as Malaysia to further investigate the validity of the instrument in this context.

Future investigations intending to unravel the complexities and in turn clarifying self-

construal should focus, albeit not exclusively, on self-image, particularly with persons who

score high in one or other dimension (Kam, Zhou, Zhang, & Man, 2012). Different cultural contexts also tap into different forms of self-construal (Kanagawa, Cross & Markus, 2001). Most individuals in cultures within Japan (Singelis, 1994), Malaysia (Miramontes, 2011) and in Arab countries like Jordan and Syria (Harb & Smith, 2008) may be defined as interdependent. The way the self is understood together with the dominant values will shape the society as a collectivistic culture. On the other hand, American, Australian and Western European countries are considered individualistic. However, given the wider diversity of cultural groups within one and or other of these countries due to the more recent influx of migrants and refugees from a number of regions throughout the world, claiming interdependence or independence as a defining characteristic of a particular culture is increasingly problematic. It is becoming increasingly difficult to position a culture along a continuum of IndSC and IntSC.

Along with the problems associated with defining a culture as either collectivist or individualist are difficulties associated with the measurement of self-construal (Schimmack, Oishi & Diener, 2005). Under these circumstances, establishing construct validity is also problematic. A threat to the valid measurement of self-construal is acquiescence bias. Acquiescence bias is a response bias in which the test taker perceives them as agreeing with the test item question despite doubts they have when answering (Ford & Scandura, 2005).

Finally, serious consideration also needs to be given to the characteristics of the sample. While convenient, recruiting samples from university populations confounds cross-cultural inferences. For example, students in a collectivistic society such as Japan are exposed to generational changes, so it is most expected that they have more individualistic and less collectivistic values compared to older generations (Matsumoto, Kudoh & Takeuchi, 1996). A university student in Malaysia or any other collectivistic culture may accurately represent the characteristics of that particular culture as either individualist or collectivist; however, it

is advised that researchers should seek to access the student's degree of identification and or 'belongingness' with a culture (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003).

Phase Two

This section provides a description of the design of the qualitative components of this study. The chapter outlines the aims, participant selection processes, vignettes and associated interview schedules and data collection processes. In addition, a rationale for the use of qualitative research methods in attending to the research questions is also presented. The final section in this chapter provides a brief description of the researcher and research relationship and depicts how a researcher's worldview informs the research outcomes.

3.5 Aims and hypotheses

The qualitative method was used to investigate (i) how persons born and resident in Australia interpret the experience of a request for help; (ii) how persons born and resident in Malaysia interpret the experience of a request for help; (iii) what contributes in each cultural group to the their decision to help; and; (iv) an investigation of related past experiences of Australians and Malaysians in their interpretations of the help-seeking event.

3.6 Participants

The most common sampling technique for qualitative research is purposive. This technique involves actively selecting the most suitable group of participants according to the characteristics associated with the research question. The size of the sample is based on the level of contextual detail gathered from within the data and not on the number of participants. Nonetheless, an acceptable sample size is five to twenty-five (Creswell, 1998, p. 64) with a minimum number of six (Morse, 1994, p. 225).

The participants in this study[3] were carefully selected to ensure representative and comparable cultural groups across age, gender, marital status, and family structure. Of the twenty-four participants, 16 were born and resident Malaysians (8 females; 8 males) and 8 were born and resident Australians (4 females; 4 males). Participants born and raised in Australia were aged between twenty to fifty years and defined as Anglo-Australian. Participants born and raised in Malaysia were in a comparative age group and were defined as Malay.

Malay participants were recruited from university students attending various public and private universities and from staff-members working within diverse government bodies. Government agencies were a valuable recruiting resource given the availability of multi-ethnic government staff employed within a range of low-rank positions to top management offices.

Australian participants were recruited from students attending a university in Melbourne, Australia. Potential Australian participants were initially alerted to the study by an advertisement pinned on notice boards around the university campus and on-line via the university Web-site (refer to the appendix for advertising materials). In addition, the researcher sent a recruitment letter via email to all students for which contact lists were available and accessible. The advertisements were the first point-of-contact and included the researcher's mobile number and e-mail address. Also included for the prospective participant was a 'plain language' information sheet with general details on the project and on how it was to be conducted. Prospective participants indicated their willingness to participate through a 'return' e-mail. Subsequent interviews between the researcher and participant were conducted in a private room located on the university campus.

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[3] The research protocol was evaluated and approved by Victoria University's Human Research Ethics Committee as low-risk and non-disruptive.

The recruitment process for participants in Australia was repeated in recruiting participants from within Malaysia. In addition, consistent with the processes undertaken with the Australian participants, interviews were conducted in private rooms located on the university campus. In some cases with the participants from within Malaysia, interviews were also conducted in their homes.

In all cases, the researcher attempted to best accommodate the participant's needs and fully explained in plain language terms the objectives of the study, along with an explanation of risks and safeguards associated with the procedures. Participation in the study was voluntary with the freedom to withdraw at any time or stage of the process. As part of the consent process, participants were also informed that there involvement and subsequent interview data would remain confidential i.e., through the use of pseudonyms. The data, in line with university processes and in order to further ensure participant confidentiality, is retained in a secure environment under the care and control of the principal investigator and research supervisor. The audiotaped interviews, transcriptions and associated hardcopy documents are restricted in access to the Chief Investigator, Associate Investigator and the researcher.

3.7 Measures

Seven of interview vignettes, matched by gender, were created based on the existing body of literature. The vignettes are as follows:

1. On the way to an appointment with your doctor you see a middle-aged man wearing casual attire who seems restless and puzzled. When seeing you, he approaches you explaining that he has to make a phone call to his wife but he left his mobile at home. He requests the use of your mobile to ring his wife to inform her of his whereabouts.

2. On you crossing a busy road, you see a blind sixty year old man balancing on a walking stick waiting at the traffic light on the opposite side of the road. You notice that there is no bleeping noise to tell blind people to cross the road at the traffic light.

3. Driving on a quiet street on your way back home from work, you come across a young husband and wife stopped along the roadside attending to a problem with their car. You can see the hazard light has been turned on and the front hood has been lifted up. You also notice that the husband is trying to make a phone call while the wife restlessly standing beside him. Then, you're aware that you are the only one who is passing by the road at the moment.

4. You hear a man loudly crying and surrounded by a crowd of onlookers. As you approaching the crowd, you see a middle-aged man lying on the ground and unable to get up due to a deal of blood loss resulting from an injury to his legs. Most of the crowd turns their head towards the man, showing some curiosity as they hurried along, while some others appear to have conversation about the situation. One man bends down to calm him.

5. On a rush hour tram/train/bus, you see a casually attired passenger clench his fist and collapse onto the floor with his eyes squeezed shut as a result of drunkenness, but the train continues on.

6. A slovenly and dirty homeless ma n holding an empty can out approaches your vehicle begging for some money to buy his food.

7. While you are sunbathing on the beach, you see an eight year old boy struggling to stay above the water, splashing and unable to swim to safety. The boy while thrashing his arms is unable to call for help. His body position is vertical in the water; the body is very low in the water with the mouth just above the surface. The victim goes up and

down in the water as he pushes and tries to get air. The boy is drowning in the sea whereas you despite not being able to swim are incidentally caught up in the situation.

In the first vignette, considerable attention was devoted to eliciting a response defined as compliant helping. Compliant helping refers to a specific helping request from the recipient. In considering the association between prosocial behaviour and how help is recognized and requested, a request for help may situate the helper in a distress (Downey & Feldman, 1996; Bierhoff & Hans-Werner, 2005). Compliant helping refers to help when it is difficult to ignore a specific request since a refusal potentially compromises the helper-recipient relationship. Nevertheless an audience may not comply when the kind of help needed is beyond what he or she could offer or the risks to personal safety associated with helping are high (Piliavin & Piliavin, 1972). A person not only evaluates him or herself and the present situational cues when confronted with a plea for help, but the pleas for help itself may be considered a sign of weakness (Nadler & Fisher, 1986). Nevertheless, a plea for help may be a strong cue which serves to clarify a situation as prompting an urgent response from onlookers. In some cases where the cues are less than clear and or ambiguous, there is a lack of clear situational indicators to justify the giving of aid (Latanè & Darley, 1968)

The hypothetical presented in the vignette is relatively unambiguous with the aim of enabling a clear interpretation of the event in requiring help specifically tailored to the context and associated person. This first vignette also focuses on gender and aims to elicit a conversation which illustrates differences in response dependent upon the gendered relationship highlighted in a given circumstance i.e., same-sex and mixed. The mix of gender in any given circumstance plays a crucial role in the likelihood of receiving help. Nonetheless, there is lack of clear trends on latency and rates of intervention among men and women as the help giver. Gender differences in prosocial behaviour are not restricted to the perspectives of the help provider (Eagly, 1987) but are also examined from the perspective of

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the recipient. Women in contrast to men are more likely to be helped (Frieze & Man, 2008).

Men are more likely to help women while women tend to treat men and woman equally

(Steblay, 1987). Among the explanations for the cross-gender effect is 'protective

paternalism' (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Men tend to be protective towards women.

For the second, fifth, and sixth vignettes, the focus is on a stigmatised person. The

general view is that flaws in physical and moral characters associated with a victim are likely

to influence one's intent to help. The response is based upon the interpretation of the flaw.

One is less likely to help if the flaw is associated with a negative connotation. For example,

negative connotations tend to be associated with drunkenness (Piliavin & Piliavin, 1975);

illnesses such as AIDS (Neumann, Hulsenbeck & Seibt, 2004); obesity (Teachman, Gapinski,

Brownell, Rawlins, & Jeyaram, 2003), mental illness (Teachman, Wilson, & Komarovskaya,

2006) and homosexuals (Jellison, McConnell, & Gabriel, 2004). In contrast, the physically

stigmatized such as the handicapped may elicit empathetic concern (Slochower, Wein, White,

Firstenberg & DiGuilio, 1980). The second vignette focuses on the physical character of the

help recipient with less emphasis on the availability of the audience. In the fifth vignette, the

character has been depicted as an individual with a moral character flaw and the event is

illustrated in a public space. In the sixth vignette, the character is an individual with a moral

character flaw incorporated in the presence of the request to help.

A bystander effect was manipulated through the installation of an audience in the

third, fourth, fifth and final vignettes. Others presented as observers in any given

circumstance exert an enormous influence on an individual's engaging or not engaging in a

prosocial behaviour. In one instance the indirect and direct presence of the other serves as an

additional situational factor and is associated with a drive for social approval. For example,

Yoeli (2009), in a field experiment conducted at a residential electricity market, reported that

customers of a large electric utility were more likely to endorse and sign up for a blackout

intervention program if their decision was revealed to their neighbours. However, the presence of the other may also be associated with the decision to not participate in a prosocial behaviour. For example, Latané and Darley (1968) suggested that a diffusion of responsibility reduces helping because the greater the number of bystanders, the less a person will assume responsibility to help. Bystanders add to the context and provide an additional factor in relation to how one reacts to the help-seeking behaviour. The fourth and final vignettes are essentially different from the fifth vignette, even though they fall under the same dimension of a help-seeking event including bystanders. The public in these two vignettes has been detailed in terms of how they react to this situation. An individual's reaction to a helping event regularly depends on how they see others react (Darley, Teger & Lewis, 1973). A person who observes unresponsive bystanders might perceive that the event is less critical and in turn will inhibit the intention to intervene (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek & Frey, 2006). The fourth vignette illustrates a visibly injured woman. This type of hypothetical situation often provokes an emotional response coupled with the likelihood of an intervention. For example, Piliavin and Piliavin (1975) in their study within the context of the New York City subways, response rates in terms of an intervention were significantly higher when confronted with an emotionally-charged situation. Emergency cues are often sourced from a victim's plea for help (Goldman, Broll & Carrill, 1983), the seriousness of the situation (Iqbal, 2013) and other's recognition of and reaction to the emergency (Latanè & Darley, 1970). Strong cues are also often coupled with a rapid helping response (Piliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner & Clark, 1981).

The role of confidence in decision-making and in having the ability to intervene, especially during a high-cost emergency are emphasised in the fourth and final vignettes. Helping a person with an obvious visible injury requires first-aid skills and helping a drowning victim requires the ability to swim. However, under these circumstances there is

the odd occasion where some would feign incompetence rather than intervene to help (Montada, 2001). In contrast, others emphasized their training in first aid (Bierhoff et. al., 1990) in adding to their subjective sense of competence. Generally, knowledge in how to effectively deliver a behavioural response is one of the most significant predictors in responding positively to a plea of help (Wishart, McKenzie, Newman & McKenzie, 2013).

The vignettes represent a hypothetical incorporating a person not known to the respondent. Predictors or underlying motives of helping strangers are different to the predictors and underlying motives of helper when they know the person pleading for help. 'Kin altruism' family members and extended family members commonly help each other (Workman 2004). Often this form of reciprocal altruism stretches to neighbours and friends. The basis of the need to cooperate is often in the aim to achieve a goal that may be out-of-reach to an independent effort.

The vignette is in the form of a series of hypothetical scenarios constructed to serve as the principal source of attention in engaging with the research question which in turn counts to its internal validity (Gould, 1996). The hypothetical scenarios were designed to identify participant's pattern of interpretation to characters, contexts and conditions. The construction of the vignettes was in large part informed by research findings and associated literature (Carlson, 1996) and personal experience (Sprat, 2001). The process of designing a vignette drew on the existing body of cross cultural literature and associated research findings in helping behaviour.

Each vignette was presented verbally to the participant accompanied by a series of points of conversations, including broad questions. Questions were constructed to engage the participant in a broader conversation. As such, responses were allowed to flow and were not restricted strictly to the question at hand. Questions included the following:

(1) What comes to your mind in this situation?

(2) What do you feel in facing this event?

(3) What makes you respond to this event as such?

(4) What are the costs of your helping/non-helping action?

(5) What type of different situation or social circumstances in this event that you think would change your decision to help/not help?

(6) How do you think people in your society would react to this event?

(7) Do you have any other similar experience?

(8) What has you learned/experienced that allow you to see this particular event as such?

3.8. Procedure of data collection

The data collection process involved participation in face-to-face, unstructured, in-depth conversational interviews (Burgess-Limerick & Burgess-Limerick, 1998). Participants were asked to respond to a series of situational imageries of help-seeking events, in particular emergency situations, framed and presented as oral vignettes. The interview focused on exploring participant perceptions of prosocial behaviour in each help-seeking context. For each vignette, participant opinions on several follow-up questions were explored. The 24 participants (8 Australians and 16 Malaysians matched by age, gender and education.) provided in-depth data about the meanings and self-perceptions they held about personal and societal helping behaviour.

A great deal of attention was devoted to the use of everyday language as a critical approach in engaging in the conversational interview. Hence, a resident Australian was recruited as a research assistant to interview participants from within Australia. The research assistant was an honours student in psychology with extensive experience in the clinical setting. Among the research assistant's qualifications were invaluable personal experience in supporting personal recovery and well-being through the provision of personalised support

services for clients and their families and the skill in developing a trusting relationship. The qualifications and associated personal characteristics were an excellent match with the requirements of engaging in a conversational interview. The research assistant attended and completed a brief training session with the researcher which involved the development of experience with the topic and use of guided questions and or points of conversation The research assistant also engaged with the researcher in post interview meetings to review the conversation process and determine the extent to which the interview generated information consistent with the topic under investigation.

The conversational interviews centred on participant responses to a set of vignettes. Interview guides i.e., points of conversation, were developed with the assistance of the Chief Investigator and Associate Investigator. The Chief Investigator has over 20 years of experience as a methodologist (Qualitative and Quantitative) and researcher in Social Psychology. The vignettes were developed by the researcher, in partnership with the chief investigator and associate investigator, as '…stories about individuals and situations which makes reference to important points in the study of perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes' (Hughes, 1998, p. 381). Each vignette emphasised character and context in defining an event. The vignettes although detailed were left with 'holes' constructed as incomplete anecdotes in order to encourage participants to fill in blanks and spaces with their own pattern of description of characters and contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Participants were asked a series of questions by the researcher informing a broader conversation in response to a set of vignettes. Each vignette illustrated a person engaged in an event ranging from personally non-serious to a personally threatening high-cost emergency. The questions revolved around reactions to and perceptions of the event as illustrated in each of the vignettes. The questions and subsequent conversation are structured in order to elicit a person's reaction and perception of the event based on their culturally ascribed values and

morals. The responses to the events as illustrated in the vignettes are expected to be reasonably consistent within a cultural group i.e., Malaysian-Eastern, but differ across cultural groups i.e., Malaysian-Eastern in contrast to Australian-Western.

Participants' perception of characters, contexts and circumstances in relation to helping behaviour were examined. A further question focused on respondent's opinion of the third person (community) response to the scenario, *How do you think people in your society would react to this event?* The interview was completed with a series of questions accessing participant's thoughts on socialization agents such as parents, peers and the social/mass media and their relationship to the regulation of prosocial values.

The questions and subsequent conversation are structured in order to elicit the participants' perception of and reaction to the event, based on their culturally ascribed values and morals. The responses to the events were expected to be reasonably consistent within a cultural group. i.e., Malaysian-Eastern, but differ across cultural groups i.e., Malaysian-Eastern in contrast to Australian-Western. Participants' perceptions of each help-seeking scenario and response to the follow-up questions were recorded with their permission. The lesser number of Australian participants was based on the contextual detail gathered from each of the interviews which averaged three hours in length. The average length of interviews of the Malaysian participants was ninety-minutes. In both instances the number of participants, length of interviews, quality and quantity of data generally satisfied the basic conditions consistent with achieving data saturation (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006; Dibley, 2011). The other important factor associated with achieving data saturation is at the stage of data analysis in which there is no evidence to support additional coding and development of new themes (Guest et al., 2006).

In order to assess translation quality and accuracy, the Malay interviews were transcribed and translated into English and then back-translated into Malay. The final version of English translated written transcripts was used as raw data for further analysis.

3.9 The rationale for a qualitative design

The rationale for the use of the qualitative method is based on the nature of the research question. The qualitative method is in essence exploratory and interpretive. It calls for an in-depth understanding of thoughts, behaviours and emotions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) and in giving 'voice' to an event. The qualitative method also importantly engages context and acknowledges that thoughts, behaviours and emotions function within human interaction enacted according and consistent with the characteristics of the symbols evident in a given context and point-in-time. The focus of this type of research is on an investigation of the distinctive and essential characteristics of action within a lived experience. It is reflective, reflexive, descriptive and interpretive in endeavouring to *describe and understand* real instances of human action and experience from the perspective of the person living through a particular situation (Fischer, 2006, p. XVI) sited within community and culture. This method involves interpretive exercises that interactively engage critical cultural analysis in local community behavioural practices (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. xiii) within Malaysia and Australia.

3.10 Epistemology

This study investigates the effects of event schema on prosocial behaviour between persons socialised within an individualist culture and persons socialised within a collectivist culture. Social Constructionism is the most appropriate epistemological approach in investigating this phenomenon given variations in prosocial behaviour are mediated through an individual's culture, language and history (Willig, 2008). The ways in which persons born,

raised and resident in Australia and those born, raised, and resident in Malaysia perceive and interpret various forms of help-seeking events will vary according to their sociocultural context. According to Burr (1995), '…people construct common ways of understanding between them. It is through the daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated' (p. 3).

The social constructionist seeks to explore and interpret cultural descriptions, explanations and related interpretations of an event. The ways of understanding and associated meanings are continually and dynamically moving within a world of multiple realities. Socialization is an important agent in this process. For example, Berger and Luckmann (1966) suggest that '...the reality of everyday life maintains itself by being embodied in routines, which is the essence of institutionalization ... the reality of life is ongoingly reaffirmed in the individual's interaction with others' (p. 149). The constructionist focuses on a collective representation formed by interaction between persons as active agents who attach and 'construct' meaning to social reality (Weinberg, 2008). The essence of this approach is that knowledge and meaning is shared with others through social interaction.

The particular form of cognitive process referred to as a 'schema' is an artefact of culture. Depending on the event that an individual faces, each construct has a socially different meaning with unique life scripts associated with that event (Barone, Maddux & Snyder, 1997). The present research explores individual interpretations and meanings of a help-seeking event from two different sociocultural contexts. The focus on the cognitive rests on '…the evolving understanding of how people construct or negotiate their own symbolic version of reality and how it influences knowing, self-regulating and knowing' (Barone, et. al. 1997, p. 65). The task is to '…listen to the interpretations ... [as they] ... infer[s] their personal construct systems' (Barone, et al. 1997, 64).

3.11 Phenomenology as a research methodology

Phenomenology is a '...philosophical paradigm for conducting qualitative research that emphasizes the focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world' (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 218) .It engages a first-person 'lifeworld' embedded within an immense and evocative experience (Banister Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 2011). The phenomenologist examines the subjective experience of participants without adding or reducing variables to fit in the psychological essence of the phenomenon (Smith, 2008). The experience is preserved as close as it is in the original context as the approach extracts psychological meanings from intact individual interpretations of the world.

The interpretive interactionist within phenomenology (Denzin, 2001) seeks to explore the expression of human life experience and makes it available to the reader. Dependent upon the nature of the research question, phenomenology is widely used as it examines one's reflections of the events in their life. The events in and of themselves may on the one hand seem mundane and boring (i.e., the everyday events of an everyday life) while on the other hand will be major epiphanies (i.e., the life altering effect of the loss of a loved one). In any case one is in the continual process of interpreting and making sense of a sometimes complex series of social interactions as a part of their not always normal everyday lives.

Perhaps the most popular method used in organising, analysing and reporting on phenomenological psychology data is Smith and Osborn's (2003) Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA assumes an idiographic focus with an emphasis on how a person makes sense of their experience of a phenomenon within a specific context and point-of-time. In these circumstances it is best that the researcher avoid having a firm and solid view of the phenomena as this might blur the process of 'seeing' the reality of everyday life (Berger & Luckmann, 1996). The researcher instead needs to be aware of a fluid 'reality' and 'knowledge' and how these might influence the way they interpret a person's interaction

with an event. Over time, one is able to immerse themselves in an other's lived reality and determine 'classificatory systems of understanding that people develop as a consequence of their history of interaction' (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). The phenomenologist nonetheless uses bracketing to purposefully avoid prejudgments and preconceived ideas of what is real. The essence of the phenomenologists approach is to consider interpreting an event as a clean slate, not encumbered by theory and prior knowledge (Denzin, 2001).This interpretative phenomenological approach is concerned with the interpretation of a person's interpretation of an event and associated experience. It is a 'double-hermeneutic' which to be truly effective as a form of investigation requires a high degree of empathy between the researcher and researched. The researcher is most effective in practice when within an interaction with the researched there is the capacity to engage in shared meanings and expectations. This capacity to engage in shared practices does not deny the very real and inevitable probability the one in contrast to another will interpret an event differently even though similar in context. One of the keys to the effective use of the phenomenological approach is to identify similarities and differences in a shared interpretation of an event from the perspective of direct and indirect experience. The researcher's lived experience combined with an attempt to capture subjective phenomena from research subjects collectively underpins the characteristics of a research question.

The present study seeks to explore different meanings and personal experiences associated with helping behaviour. The research interprets the existential experience and taken-for-granted meanings embedded in day-to-day interactions of persons as they travel through their journey in life. It involves collecting and interpreting existential meaningful experience through the construction of self-story. Schemata within a particular culture are identified through language used to symbolize helping acts during a particular event. This research reflects upon and investigates the historical, structural, emotional, knowledge-base

and ideological roots of the culture. In analysing an interpretative repertoire, this study seeks to critically interpret through thick description the context, emotions and motives underlying the act to help or not help. The study investigates the extent to which one give meanings to their past help-seeking and help-giving experiences and how these views reflect upon their execution of such behaviour as it continuous over time and across situations.

3.12 The researcher's role

In contrast to the quantitative approach which requires the researcher to be objective and free of bias, the qualitative approach requires the researcher to engage actively in the research process as a form of living instrument (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). This qualitative study involved a researcher engaging with participants born, raised and resident in Malaysia with another researcher engaging with participants born, raised and resident in Australia. The task for the researcher was to engage the participant in a conversation related to the participant's response to a series of vignettes. The vignettes consisted of brief descriptions of various help-seeking events. The subsequent collection of interview data and transcription was undertaken by the researcher(s) for the purpose of determining relative themes and meanings associated with the narrative. The researcher's cultural background, beliefs, assumptions and associated personality was part-and-parcel of the research process (Tierney, 1992). The researcher under these circumstances and with this approach needed to be aware that '[t]he difficulty lies first in becoming aware of these assumptions and beliefs and second in deciding whether we will actively incorporate them into our qualitative studies' (Creswell, 2007, p. 15).

3.13 Narrative Analysis

The conversational interview (Burgess-Limerick & Burgess-Limerick, 1998) examines data derived from largely semi-structured conversational interviews based on a

two-way process which '...facilitates rapport/empathy, allows a greater flexibility of coverage and enables the interviewer to enter novel areas, and [it] tends to produce richer data' (Smith, 1995, p. 12). Consistent with the conversational technique, interview questions are largely unstructured and open-ended. The researcher presents detailed vignettes to the participants and draws the information out from the participant in an informal conversation, rather than adhering to a structured format of interview questions.

The conversational interview was used to explore interviewees' reaction to and interpretation of deciding to intervene or not intervene in another's experience of a life event. The interview fits well within this investigation by creating a space in which 'individual respondents define the world in unique ways' (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). This technique further enables 'the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent and to new ideas on the topic' (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). The reciprocal and reflexive nature of this approach also requires a context within which the interviewer is comfortable and secure. The technique is nonetheless challenging as a conversation requires significant listening skills, full engagement in every moment of conversation and depends on the interviewer's capacity to pick up unforeseen cues in order to inform subsequent conversation and questioning (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996).

Conversational interview questions are more engaging and allow for more accurate responses as the words chosen are tailored to the interviewees' understanding of the subject matter without leading them to a unidirectional answer (Conrad & Schober, 2000). Another advantage of the conversational interview is that it prompts interviewees to reflect upon the questions in a much more comfortable atmosphere (Widdowson, 2010). A relaxed atmosphere facilitates an interviewee to answer to the interviewer's queries in a coherent and consistent manner without being disturbed by structured and planned script questionnaire interviews (Holmes, 2001). Conversational interview techniques also potentially generate

rich and intricate data that enable new emerging themes and categories to surface, because the techniques allow 'flexibility, spontaneity, and responsiveness to individual differences and situational changes. Questions can be personalized to deepen communication with the person being interviewed and to make use of the immediate surroundings and situations to increase the concreteness and immediacy of the interview questions' (Patton, p. 343, 2002).

Consistent with the conversational technique, interview questions were largely unstructured and open-ended. The interviews were analysed using an interpretive interactionist approach. The approach focuses on making the lived experience of participants vivid for the reader. As a method it involves researchers' active engagement with participants and acknowledges that understanding is constructed and that multiple realities exist (Banister, et al., 1994). Personal accounts are valued and emergent issues within the accounts are explored. These accounts are analysed and themes are drawn out to develop patterns and relationships of meaning (Banister et al., 1994). Through this process the qualitative researcher discloses his or her own values, assumptions and experiences to avoid bias and also to allow readers to interpret the analysis and consider possible alternative interpretations (Willig, 2008).

The interpretive phenomenological approach inherently acknowledges itself as an interpretation of another's experience. Analysis of audio recorded interview transcripts was completed in accordance with a qualitative method of analysis as outlined by Willig (2008). Each participant's transcript is initially analysed individually using the following steps: (i) Read interview transcript several times and make notes regarding initial thoughts and observations, (ii) Identify and label conceptual themes, (iii) Introduce structure into the analysis by clustering concepts together and identifying hierarchical relationships, (iv) Produce a summary table of the clustered themes using participant quotations as illustrations

of the theme. Following this process, themes are integrated across all transcripts to identify shared themes and hierarchical relationships.

A strategy of reflexivity is employed which involves a process of continual self-reflection for the researcher to understand how his or her own assumptions and biases may influence his or her interactions with participants and interpretation of the data. Reflexivity is a widely acknowledged strategy within qualitative enquiry which helps to ensure that the research accurately portrays the meanings intended by participants rather than a meaning imposed by the researcher (Fischer, 2006; Willig, 2008).

3.14 The Researcher as a Critical Subject

3.14.1 Characteristics of reflexive study

Within contemporary qualitative research there has been and continues to be a growing awareness of the role of the researcher, the subject and their respective positioning associated with the research process, research practices and outcomes. There is general acknowledgement in the age of post-positivism of a mutual relationship between the researcher and the subject, reflected continually throughout the research process. Within this relationship a good qualitative researcher requires a significant degree of reflexivity. This in essence entails being sensitive to the effects on the research process, particularly in data collection and analysis, of the personal perspective or 'reading' of the subject within his or her context in combination with and in response to the perspective of the subject. Reflexivity involves the researcher engaging with and responding to the research experience from the perspective of the other as engaged and enacted within a shared context and necessarily incorporates the characteristics and thoughts of the self. It is more than mere reflection in that, beyond the mirror image, reflexivity engages thoughts about the experience and an interpretation and assessment of the research process. Reflexivity also involves a need to engage in the process of making claims and constructing meaning as indicative of 'truth' and

completing such processes within a consideration of the morals and ethics of proper and socially responsible practice.

Engaging in qualitative research requires that in the first instance and prior to the commencement of the study, the researcher embarks on a careful interpretation and consideration of the type of empirical data to be collected and explored. This initial step is accompanied by the active examination by the researcher of existing theoretical assumptions, associated quantitative and qualitative findings and the viewpoints and positions of fellow academics. The next step in this approach involves in a process of 'reflection'. Reflection involves an interpretation of an interpretation of the ways in activating knowledge and engaging the researcher as the main subject in the acquisition of knowledge (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 1999). Of central import to this process is the researcher being open and transparent about how he or she produces knowledge. The 'how' also involves the exposure of the researcher's experiences, assumptions, actions, biases and his/her personal qualities and how they intertwine and contribute to each phase of the research, including the findings. However, while reflection engages the researcher in an open awareness of the research process, it does not engage interactions with the 'other'. It is merely a means of looking in as one would in a mirror and reflecting on oneself within the research process. Reflexivity, in contrast to reflection, is bidirectional and contends that the researcher and the subject affect each other mutually and continually within the research process (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000). Within this process, the researcher is engaged in his or her embodiment within the context of the study and enhancing their awareness of the research through critical self-reflection. The researcher in reflexivity is a participant within a dynamic relationship with the research.

The reader is an integral consideration in the reflexive process. Potter (2013) suggests three ways of conveying self-reflexivity to the reader. These include: (1) a revelation of the

researcher's values in the data collection process including at the time of formulation of the research question; (2) present methodological uses and associated values and the researcher's role in interpreting the data, and, (3) acknowledgement of the researcher's biases. The researcher and the research are considered a single reality. This reality, structured within the researcher's personal cultural and moral values borne out of everyday experiences and interactions, drives their ideas and assumptions. Their identity in its expression contributes to the formulation of research ideas and outcomes. For example, the researcher is an active agent in channelling their search for specific information from a review of the literature. The review of literature subsequently informs the structuring of interview questions. The researcher continuously works within a framework which involves the processing and selection of information suited to the characteristics of the subject group.

Most important, particularly in terms of reflexivity, is the acknowledgment of the influence of values and biases associated with the context and the characteristics of the participants in combination with and expressed within the interactions with the interviewer. For example, the interviewer requires a level of social interpersonal interaction skills enabling the presentation and reading of appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues matched to the characteristics of the interviewee as encouraged and expressed within the conversation. However, the interviewer controls the agenda and is in a powerful positon to select or discard elements and parts of the conversation as they see fit. Under these circumstances, while being self-reflexive the researcher needs to be transparent and inclusive in their collection of and interpretation of interview data.

3.14.2 The researcher

This section is a brief description of the researcher's identity as constructed through their cultural values, personal experiences and associated personal cultural and moral belief

system. This identity directly affected the journey in exploring and discovering the what, how and why of cultural variation in the interpretation and defining of prosocial behaviour.

I am a passionate observer and student of social behaviour. My specific interest is in the observation and understanding of help-seeking, especially as it relates to the receiver, the giver and the context. The interest I have is in, but is not limited to, how both parties react to the event; what makes people help others; why certain people are more likely to help than others; the characteristics of what defines helplessness and the associated felt need to decide to help or not help, and the influence of place and time within the help-seeking event. Observers need objects that satiate their hunger of vision yet not all are immediately a focus of attention. My culture, as expressed and reinforced in my childhood by my parents and teachers, emphasised a light-handedness or delicate and deft approach in relationships with kin, friends and other living creatures. Helping others in need has been a central emphasis in my life, guided and reinforced especially through my elders and particularly through my parents. Much of my cultural upbringing rests in the sub-conscious self. I idolised my parents and have embedded memories of their selflessness in helping and prioritising the needs of others in front of their own needs. My father's and mother's expressions of generosity in spirit and kind particularly toward kin but also toward others were considered an obligation. Perhaps most influential was the advice and exemplary conduct of my parents incorporated within a set of fundamental beliefs emphasising helping those in need.

Early recollections of a cultural life in combination with the influence of parents serve in part in directly influencing one's development of self and identity. Another related influence in my life is religion and spirituality incorporating a set of rules and principles which guide my life. I am a Muslim, with which comes a responsibility sufficient in itself to constitute a way of living. Religion and spirituality may constitute the major influence in one's capacity and inclination to help another in need.

Consistent with the practices of my being a Muslim, the sacred revelation in Islam, *Qur'an* and *hadith* along with other ritual practices including *Salaat* (prayer), *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Makkah), *Zakaat* (support of the needy) and fasting during the month of *Ramadan*, inform the helping of others in need within worship. Within this belief system, good deeds are rewarded and in my case as in others the reward comes as a reservation for an existence in the next world. Allah, the ultimate judge on the Day of Judgment, assesses my contribution to my current lived world. The act of helping within this belief structure is considered a religious duty and is ultimately rewarded by Allah. The importance of helping others, especially the poor and distressed, is embedded within the actions of the Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Islam. The Prophet identifies to Muslims as noble with his help in supporting the destitute including orphans and the poor.

The notion of nobility related to the Prophet Muhammad is ritualized in the fable of the Bedouin who approached the Prophet requesting money and gold. While in the company of the Prophet and his companions, the Bedouin expressed a request from the prophet. The prophet in turn responded to the request but this offer was met with some disdain by the Bedouin. The Bedouin in turn requested more. This request was met with anger among the Prophet's companions. The prophet responded without anger and instead brought the Bedouin to the prophet's home and gave him more money and gold. However, on viewing the relative poor state of the prophet's home, the Bedouin left chastened yet satisfied with what he received. A second fable relates the story of the Prophet Muhammad on his way to the Mosque coming across a young boy in tears. In contrast to the tears of the young boy, the rest of the community was in celebratory frame and happily engaged in *Eid*. The prophet stopped and asked the boy 'why was he crying'? The boy lost his parents and was in a state of despair as he witnessed other children hand-in-hand with their parents. With good-will and mercy, the Prophet Muhammad enfolded the child's hand into his hand and led the child to

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the Mosque. My actions are inspired and measured in value against the expectations and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, one who is already promised by Allah the Heaven.

A Muslim who acts according to the *Qur'an* and *hadith* is obligated to help the oppressed, distressed or helpless. The prosocial altruistic act is viewed as indicative of a solid set of fundamental beliefs and strong faith to be ultimately rewarded by Allah. A Muslim aims to fulfil the two principles of Islam. The first principle rests on creating a strong relationship with Allah by being his good servant. The second principle seeks to establish a secure tie with fellow human beings by treating them with due respect and kindness. Within the Muslim culture a help-seeking event is influenced by and defined within the Islamic doctrine.

My upbringing and who I am as a Muslim has also been influenced by other life experiences. Having travelled and lived in urban and country areas throughout Malaysia, I witnessed and became familiar with the act of helping among city and country dwellers. Within Malaysia social behaviours and personal interactions generally and prosocial behaviour specifically have been constructed and enacted within collectivistic values and according to Islamic principles. However, not all Malaysians base their acts upon such values and principles. Despite similar spiritual foundations and cultural traditions, dependent upon circumstance, a person considered 'Malaysian' may choose to not engage in the act of helping another in need.

Over the years I have also been exposed to and lived within various cultures. My initial exposure to Western culture was living in Kalamazoo, a relatively small city located in the southwest of the USA. A more recent and current exposure to Western culture was in my living in the Central Business District, Melbourne, Australia. I originally stereotyped the lifestyle and behaviour within a Western culture as highly individualistic, selfish and careless. These perceptions were associated with my expectations of a society bereft of compassion

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and the self-belief that I needed to act independently and as the quiet inconspicuous observer. In time and directly related to a number of day-to-day interactions with 'westerners' this perception changed. Prosocial behaviour is expressed in many ways and across varying cultural contexts. Kalamazoo in the winter with a heavy fall of snow was my first enjoyable experience indulging with soft, white snow-flakes. While beautiful, snow conditions can also be problematic. Using the campus pathway as I rushed to meet my supervisor I failed to notice that the path was very icy. On a particularly hilly, treacherous part of the path, and slipping uncontrollably I lost my footing and landed heavily on the ground with a cumbersome backpack in tow. Full of shame and thinking that others would laugh at my carelessness, a young white male offered me his hand. His friends simultaneously asked if I was OK and talked off the very many students around the campus who had suffered the same fate. This 'chance' interaction immediately altered my pre-conceptions of the Western World and particularly the USA. The response of friends in Malaysia would have been far less supportive and their response tinged with amusement and cynicism. While individualistic, this group of Americans were mindful and sensitive in their reaction to distress. It seems that helpfulness in some ways transcends culture.

A similar experience in Melbourne, Australia, reinforced the earlier view of the culturally transcendent nature of helpfulness. Commuting daily through public transport over the last three years provided a number of opportunities to observe at first-hand Melbournian attitudes toward help-seeking behaviour. Australians are generally courteous and in order to help the less fortunate such as people with disabilities and/or the aged are willing to give up their seats on a tram, train or bus. My preconceptions of the belief structures and values of Western culture associated with prosocial behaviour altered as a consequence of my observation and experiences of helpful acts in Kalamazoo and in Melbourne.

Help-seeking events and their associated emotional intensity evoke different meanings to people in different cultures and are particularly different in type between individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In addition, males and females across cultures and context also differ in terms of their reactions and associated behaviours when confronted with a help-seeking event. For example, while research in gender differences associated with prosocial behaviour is relatively inconclusive, females generally tend to be more responsive, empathetic and prosocial than males, while males are expected to be more independent and achievement-oriented (Eisenberg, Fabes, & Spinrad, 2006, p. 696). Women nonetheless are less likely to help strangers, perhaps in part due to their perceived exposure to danger including sexual assaults (Eagly & Crowley, 1986).

3.14.3 Employing self-reflexivity in the research process

Self-reflexivity involves one's beliefs, experiences and associated worldview. Perhaps more than at any other stage of the research process, these characteristics of self-reflexivity commonly play out in (1) the data collection phase; and, (2) the data interpretation/analysis phase.

The research question was driven by my interest in further exploring prosocial behaviour using a cross-cultural lens. Central to understanding the study is the need to incorporate associated culturally structural, historical and theoretical foundations. Participants were initially persons targeted from culturally diverse backgrounds. However, sourcing such participants did not lend itself readily to random sampling and consequently this process was replaced by convenience and snowball sampling. As a result, the dynamic between me as the interviewer and the interviewee brought about a different form of rapport building, openness, verbal and non-verbal understanding and trust. Extra effort and time needed to be, and was, devoted to building rapport and having the participant feel comfortable and willing to express personal episodes and events which they seldom shared with others. The approach toward the

building of rapport was different when recruiting and interviewing acquaintances. Prior to the interview 'social talk' was necessary to accommodate unsettled nerves and alleviate anxiety. The interview was undertaken in the form of a normal everyday interpersonal communication with the delivery and exchange of explicit and implicit messages. However, not all messages were clearly and/or effectively communicated. There is a difference between interviewing a friend and interviewing an acquaintance or stranger. When interviewing acquaintances it was easier to interpret and react to an emotion, hesitance and a pause. This capacity to interpret a response and or interaction was not as readily available in dealing with a stranger's gestures, facial expressions, paralanguage, posture, eye contact and or vocal tone. The latter involved a greater sensitivity toward misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the response and behaviour of the interviewee

A good interviewer stimulates respondents to comfortably engage in appropriate and relevant self-disclosure. This engagement is also promoted through appropriate body language and emotional facial expressions. Reflexivity in this process involves judgements and strategies in terms of verbal responses and physical cues. Understanding the explicit and implicit aspects of the interaction guides responses expressed at times as a paraphrase, searching for explanation in response to the vague comment. The moments of doubt and confusion are seized upon as points of opportunity for further clarification and an avenue toward entering that core of understanding unique to the interviewee.

The path of the interview revolves around an understanding of the assumptions of the research and how these relate and become meaningful within my interpretations of the interviewee's responses to the conversation points. Social constructionism lends itself to this approach, particularly in open-ended questions and associated conversations which allow for and promote the expression of one's own understandings and meanings. There is the absence of a 'right' or 'wrong' answer and or opinion. The interest and curiosity is in their stories and

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perspectives and not based on a researcher's personal opinions, social influences, values and beliefs. The reflexivity within the process involves creating a neutral atmosphere in which the interviewee feels comfortable in relating their stories. The interviewer is merely the conduit through which the respondent is directed subtly through the path of the conversation.

While the researcher initiates the study and has associated assumptions constructed within a personal value system, it is not their task to approve or disapprove of the participants' expressed beliefs and values. Of course, it is likely if not inevitable that the participant will hold significantly different and varied values in relation to their response to an event. Rather than viewing heterogeneous ideas and thoughts as inconsistent with the core of the study, they may instead constitute potent new knowledge and contribute to the research literature. This study as such is not burdened by the shackles of theory and associated models of human behaviour. Rather, it is an exploratory study investigating first-person 'life-world' views embedded within personal experience. This life world experience is secured and intact and rests on a release of the restrictions represented within a predetermined theory and/or associated model of human behaviour. The interviewer therefore subtly directs the conversation in a way in which the interviewee is led to believe they are in control.

Phenomenologists are interested in exploring a person's subjective experience, and how one makes sense of their life. This life is embedded within the historical, structural, political, emotional, sociological and ideological roots of culture. It lends itself readily and necessarily to the notion of reflexivity. It is difficult if not impossible to interpret an interviewee's account of an event without reflecting almost subconsciously on one's personal ideology and the moral stance. This suggests that while one is able to reflect and interpret from the perspective of the other and embrace another's worldview, it is nonetheless reflected through a personal lens which is educationally informed and culturally ascribed. The collected data is revisited over time to ensure a sense of truthfulness and fairness in

interpretation. In short, the research process in this type of study is not value-free and the good researcher is able to manoeuvre their values and morals within the values and morals of the participant in order to obtain a truthful account of the participant's view of the world.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is twofold: (i) presenting substantial findings from the Malaysian and Australian cohorts of participants; and, (ii) exploring and illustrating the contrast in narratives between and within the Malaysian and Australians cohorts of participants. This chapter begins with a demographic description of the research participants. The first (i) and second (ii) sections incorporate the independent and contrasting interpretations of narrative from participants across and within the Malaysian and Australian cultural context. The findings of this study are organized into two main parts, Malaysian and Australian. Part one is further divided into three main sections: 1) Mental representation of the seven help-seeking events of Malaysian which describes person, affective/emotional, and behavioural schemas, 2) Reinforcement for helpfulness in emergency situation, which provides four important determinants of Malaysian helping behaviour such as religious obedience, moral value, empathy, and situational cues, and 3) Experience being an integral aspect of helping responses, which provides a narrative analysis on the role of previous encounter with the event. The second part provides Australian results and analysis of the three main sections similar to Malaysian part, 1) Mental representation of the seven help-seeking events which describes person, affective/emotional, and behavioural schemas, 2) Reinforcement for helpfulness in emergency situation, which includes moral value, empathy, explicit helping request and situational cues as factors affecting Australian to intervene, and 3) Experience being an integral aspect of helping responses, which provides a narrative analysis on the role of previous encounter with the event.

4.2 Study Participants

Participants were recruited from Australia and Malaysia, respective representing individualist and collectivist dimensions of culture.

Table 3

Country of Residence and Origin, Gender, Age, Level of Education and Self Construal of Participants

No	Country of Residence and Origin	Name	Gender	Age	Education	IND Score of Self-Construal	INT Score of Self-Construal
1.	Australia	Lloyd	Male	21	Undergraduate	5.75	4.38
2.	Australia	Gabby	Male	34	Postgraduate	5.13	5.5
3.	Australia	Isadora	Female	24	Undergraduate	5.38	4.5
4.	Australia	Amanda	Female	25	Undergraduate	4.63	5.5
5.	Australia	Ada	Male	36	Undergraduate	4.13	5.13
6.	Australia	Shea	Female	48	Postgraduate	5.88	4.63
7.	Australia	Docia	Female	52	Undergraduate	5.63	3.63
8.	Australia	Jace	Male	24	Undergraduate	5.25	1.13
Ave						**5.22**	**4.3**
1.	Malaysia	Siti	Female	23	Undergraduate	5.88	5.13
2.	Malaysia	Nor	Male	21	Undergraduate	6.25	5.63
3.	Malaysia	Sha	Female	21	Undergraduate	5.88	5.63
4.	Malaysia	Zack	Male	23	Undergraduate	5.25	5.63
5.	Malaysia	Amjad	Female	22	Undergraduate	5.38	5.88
6.	Malaysia	Zol	Male	34	Undergraduate	4.5	5.25
7.	Malaysia	Faz	Male	34	Undergraduate	5.25	5.5
8.	Malaysia	Zai	Female	34	Undergraduate	5.5	6.25
9.	Malaysia	Mamu	Male	36	Undergraduate	5.63	5.75
10.	Malaysia	Abdullah	Male	38	Undergraduate	5.13	4.38
11.	Malaysia	Jue	Female	46	Postgraduate	5.13	5.5
12.	Malaysia	Sue	Female	48	Postgraduate	4.25	5.63
13.	Malaysia	Harun	Male	51	Postgraduate	5.75	5.88
14.	Malaysia	Syib	Male	53	Postgraduate	5.5	5.5
15.	Malaysia	Fahada	Female	31	Postgraduate	5.38	5.63
16.	Malaysia	Anis	Female	32	Postgraduate	6.0	6.0
Ave						**5.42**	**5.57**

As noted in Table 3, 24 participants were recruited from Australia and Malaysia and were either resident Australians (n=8) or resident Malaysians (n=16) Participants were matched on gender, range of ages and level of educational achievement. The participants were undergraduate and post-graduate students currently completing studies in various courses including psychology, medicine, business and languages. They ranged in age between 20 years to 55 years, with the majority (37%) in the age range 21 years to 25 years. As expected, the mean rating of Independent Self Construal (m=5.22) for the Australian participants was higher than their mean rating of Interdependent Self Construal (m=4.3). In contrast and once again as expected, the mean rating of Independent Self Construal (m=5.42) for the Malaysian participants was lower than their mean rating of Interdependent Self Construal (m=5.57).

4.3 Mental Representation of the Seven Help-Seeking Events of Malaysian

Despite sharing similar if not the same cultural and societal norms and values, participants differed in their reaction to and interpretation of events or 'stimuli'. The reaction to various vignettes and related events was indicative of each participant's expectations, beliefs and behaviours. The analysis of participant reactions to the seven vignettes is presented in the form of prominent themes derived from within the data. The themes centred on the acknowledgement that experiences, memories, expectations, feelings and opinions influenced behavioural preference and served as the underlying basis for the motivation for intervening and or preventing them from acting and or reacting. The motivation to act, intervene or not act was multi-layered and consisted of three major schemas within themes, including (a) the person; (b) affective/emotion; and, (c) behaviour

4.3.1 Person Schema
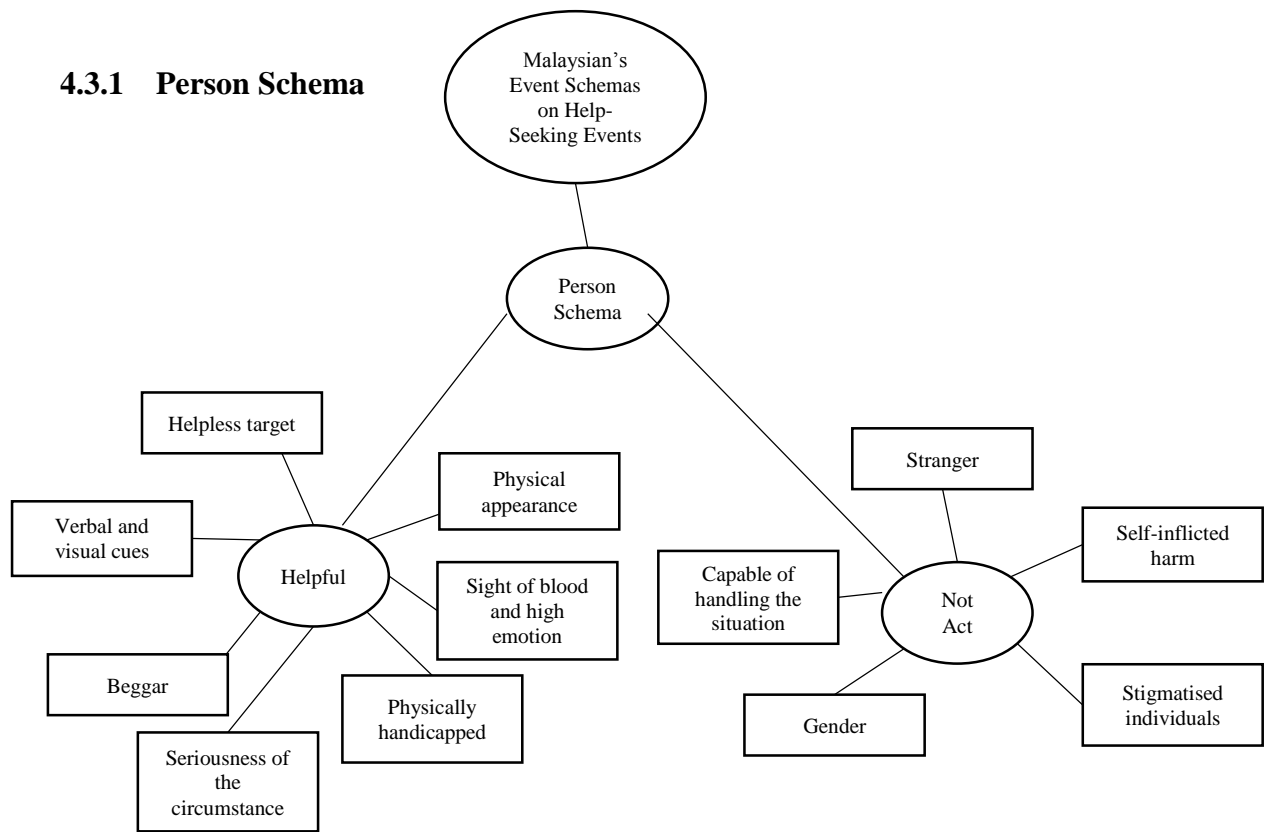
Figure 3. Malaysian's person schemas on help-seeking events.

4.3.1.1 Helpfulness

The responses to the vignette presented as 'low-cost' varied among the participants. Participant responses to the questions; 'What comes to your mind given this situation?' and 'How would you feel if you were in this situation?' exposed initial thoughts and expectations of the help-seeking event encompassing the target person, where the event took place and the sequence of events.

A person's response schema is a source of information used to validate and cross-check the perceived legitimacy of an event. In an event requiring a decision leaning toward an interpersonal intervention, the participants in general used their perception of the character

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of the helpless target as a strong source of information and cue to act. Participants generally carefully considered their perceptions of the motives of help-seeking strangers. However, other participants were more forthcoming and responded readily and emotionally '…he really needs help as he insists on giving his wife a call, informing her that something has happened to him. He doesn't know what else to do.'(Zai, Female). The reading of verbal and visual cues is particularly important when evaluating the legitimacy of an event:

His reason of calling his wife would seem reasonable. If he says he is going to make the call elsewhere, I would be cautious; assuming that he might took the phone away. … Things like this happen all the time. I would give him the phone because of his solid reason which is calling his wife. (Jue, Female)

Context continues to play its part in determining behaviour as reflected in the instance of a low-cost emergency in which an unknown man approaches another and asks for help:

He is in a situation where he really needs help … counting on us to make a call. It is just that … only a few numbers of public phones can be found. When there are less public phones there is a tendency of people asking to borrow hand phones ... another reason for him to borrow my hand phone is quite solid, which is to call his wife.(Sue, Female)

Helpless desperation is not only reflected in the perceived seriousness of the circumstance or in the heartfelt appeal of the victim. Inevitably and directly associated with the probability of getting help is the likeability of the helpless target. Circumstance and environment are nonetheless important. Although the majority of participants agreed that they would not help if the help-seeking event is situated within a secluded and private area, there is a system of prioritisation in interpreting the victim as desperate and having little chance of getting assistance, 'We would feel pity and there is a need to offer help. If we don't help them out, maybe there is no more car would be passing by.' (Abdullah, Male)

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The sight of blood coupled with high emotion is a cue calling for an appropriate quick response, 'With a bleeding leg, crying her eyes out … definitely it means that she is in pain.' (Mamu, Male). An emotionally-charged event, even if acknowledged as a situation in which the target person requires help, may be met with confusion and uncertainty. In contrast, a clear connection between the target's condition and expressed feelings provide explicit situational cues enabling the respondent to be confident in the validity of the target's predicament and to act accordingly 'She is in real pain. Plus she is lying on the road, bloodied…Sympathy and the need to help.' (Harun, Male)

Material factors such as physical appearance along with an emotional expression by the target in part and often together effect a respondent's reaction and intention to act to help. There is a degree of consideration in the interpretation of and decision to help, 'Look at his condition first. We can't simply be nice to people, we need to be smart.' (Zack, Male). Most male respondents suggested that the motive behind the event is emotionally and behaviourally accessible through their interpretation of the target's physical appearance and body language:

> From the whole situation he looks genuinely anxious. If he has bad intentions, he would have thought in advance. Normally a thief would be more confident. But this guy really looks in trouble... If we want to help, it would be helpful if we observe the situation first... Look at his condition first. If we could see a bulge in his pants that looks like a shape of a hand phone, that means he is cheating. (Zack, Male)

Prejudgments are not made solely on the basis of physical appearance. It does not necessarily constitute a solid cue suggesting a person in real pain:

> Someone's dressing is not a big issue, but if he or she is truly in trouble, we can tell from his or her expression and even the way he or she walks would give out the sign

that we have to offer our help. I would even help a 'reckless rider' if I could see from his body language of his depression in needing help. (Mamu, Male)

The decision to engage in pro-social helping behaviour is based on an interpretation of a critical situation, strong situational cues, intense emotional expression, a perception of truth and body language. This interpretation of situations, cues, emotions and body language lead to decisions based on levels of doubt or certainty concerning engaging in pro-social behaviour. In some cases the decision to help is easily made:

As a human, we know that if he's not in a dire need, he won't ask money from others. Because he's in financial distress, he needs help from us. Perhaps he wants to work but his body is too weak and maybe he doesn't have working experience that would help him to land a job. I feel pity and sympathy towards this kind of people, that's why I'd just give the money to him; consider the money as part of my donation. (Siti, Female)

The 'donation' to the beggar in this case is based on the participant's interpretation of a level of distress sufficient to elicit compassion. Others are not as compassionate and less sympathetic particularly in responding to the material aspects of dress and appearance, '…what has happened to him to be in that condition. If he just has ragged clothes on him but he still has the energy to walk around and therefore it means that he still can work, right.' (Faz, Male).

Unlike the 'beggar' scenario, in which the intention to act to help is compromised by the need to interpret a problematic in which one is not entirely sure of the need to help, concerns are consistently and completely validated when the respondent is confronted by the disabled, 'It is an obligation for us to help judging from his condition. It would be a different situation with an old man with eye sight who wants to cross the road because we'd feel that he would be alright.' (Jue, Female). This intention and or compulsion to help the elderly are

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consistent with the tenets of the Islamic faith: 'we help because of Allah, with sincerity...'
(Harun, Male).

4.3.1.2 The decision to not act

While most participants in reaction to the event outlined in a vignette were likely to help, others were less inclined to help or decided not to help at all. The latter group simply opted to avoid helping strangers in the belief that the decision to help would disadvantage themselves and or the target:

> First thing that comes to my mind is he's a stranger... Firstly, I would think about my safety. From that point, I won't stop to help him because (thinking) I think he might lie to me, or perhaps want to rob me .... Even though Malaysia has been categorized as a safe country, this situation happens a lot in Penang and Kuala Lumpur. (Siti, Female)

The interpretation of an event and a decision to engage in pro-social behaviour is dependent upon the characteristics, views and beliefs of the participant. Adding to the variability in interpreting an event is that visual cues may distort awareness and reasoning which inform the potential of an engaged prosocial behaviour. The strength of the tendency to support is lessened when the target is perceived as capable of dealing with their immediately surrounding circumstances and therefore not in need of help. For example, where a situation is perceived as non-serious and under the control of the target, the participant does not intend to act and or help:

> It is because I see that the man is on the phone, maybe he is asking for help from a towing truck or something. The woman is still safe because her husband is around and they are not in a desperate state. I do have the intention to pull over. (Nor, Male)

The participant reaction is also often compromised by one's gender:

I would just continue with my journey because I'm a girl alone in this car. If I had my brother or a friend with me, that would be better. Plus … she has a phone [and] a husband, so she should be in good hands. The road is a shortcut, even though it is secluded, there would be other motorists using the road... If both of them are women, I would have asked a question. In this case there is guy, so I think it's OK for them. For ladies, they might have lost their way or stumped and I could call my brother to ask for a mechanic's number. To me, having a guy in situations like this is very helpful because we, women, can rely on him for help. If this situation happens when I'm with a male forced, I would have stopped. But as I am alone, I will never ever stop because of my safety. (Sue, Female)

The presence of the man in this circumstance presented a less conflicted context than would have been the case if the circumstance involved two women. When confronted with technical problems of this type, women within Malaysian culture are considered relatively inexperienced and therefore helpless. Engaging in a decision to not act and or not help when confronted by a person engaged in self-inflicted harm and/or discomfort, e.g., drunkenness, is also influenced by context, including religious affiliation. A prosocial intervention is less likely to occur in a situation in which the target is stereotypical of a less than socially accepted act and or identity:

I would not help because he's drunk and he asks for it. It makes us think that the religion of Islam forbids us from drinking alcohol because of we could get drunk and we can see it in reality, therefore we could gauge that our religion's lessons are true. (Syib, Male)

In the Malaysian context and across the range of events, the decision to not help is informed by religious principles which view alcohol intoxication as abhorrent. This abhorrence is consistent with adhering to and following the principles of the Islamic faith:

Drunken men are not fine men. ... Muslims will not offer much help because for us, liquors are illicit in Islam … I have negative thinking about such man; I automatically reject him mentally so it is difficult for me to help. Serve him right because he is drunk and not because he is sick or anything. He asks for it. (Siti, Female)

Unlike other circumstances and events in the various vignettes, perceived drunkenness evokes a highly emotive response and is associated with inaction and reluctance to engage:

I'm quite frightened of drunken people so I would just ignore and be quiet. I'm scared of them because I don't have any experience of handling them. Furthermore, I have this negative mindset of drunken people where they are dangerous and they can do anything to you, unexpectedly … I would just feel scared and nothing else. He chooses to get drunk, so why bother? (Fahada, Female)

The perceptions and response to intentional acts such as drunkenness are generalizable, consistent and subject to religious beliefs and morals:

If he is drunk, then it's his own doing. … It's different matter if he is sick and having a massive headache. Even if he is Malay, I still won't help. Meaning he doesn't perform his prayers and thus shows he is ignorant about Islam. I worry that because he is in a drunken state, he might do stupid things … I only can think negatively about him. (Harun, Male)

The display of abhorrence and negativity toward perceived drunkenness is pronounced and vehement:

I just can't accept a person who is in a drunken state and because of that he deserves not to be helped. If somebody does help him, I would think that it would be a waste of energy. Drunken people are just looking for trouble. Why drink alcohol when you know it is bad for your health … Even if people help, you won't change your habit.

So it's best you stay where you are and sober up on your own … Drunken people are

an inconvenience to other people. (Sue, Female)

The drunkard is considered a public nuisance whose mere presence brings discomfort to others. The stigma attached to this state corresponds with the decision not to act and the target in this instance is generally ignored. When the help-seeking event is considered a moral flaw, there is a consequent lack of commitment and questioning of legitimacy, e.g., when confronted by a beggar despite their obvious physical disability:

I don't really tend to help beggars a lot because I've read an article about beggars'

group or gang that acts like a beggar but are actually rich. *Majalah 3*[4] once published

about it and it really gave quite an impact on me. If he really is a beggar, know that

the hardship wouldn't end by just begging. (Amjad, Female).

The symbolic representation of the 'beggar' is compromised and interpreted as illegitimate and suspicious. There are also other symbolic representations inconsistent with the identity of a 'real' beggar:

If he really is a beggar, he should smell horrible because of not being able to self-

govern. Not saying that all beggars don't know how to take care of their hygiene but

try looking at real beggars, carrying plastic bags, with tattered bags and sometimes

their clothes only cover their genitals and with their messy hair. Compared this with

syndicate's dressing neatly with only tattered clothes, we will think that something is

wrong … I won't help if these people unless they came with tissue, or things to sell.

(Amjad, Female).

Other interpretations impacting upon the decision nonetheless centre on aspects of the legitimate beggar, not the least of which revolves around them being unpredictable and dangerous:

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[4] Mujalah 3, otherwise referred to as Majalah Tiga, is a popular Malaysian documentary.

Real beggars, I would somehow feel a little scared to buy them food, because if these people suddenly come and hold us. Help is help but I won't stay until they finished eating, just paying for the food. Not because these people are dirty, just that some of them are mentally unstable and have a tendency to be rough with us and stronger too. (Amjad, Female).

4.3.2 Affective/Emotional Schema
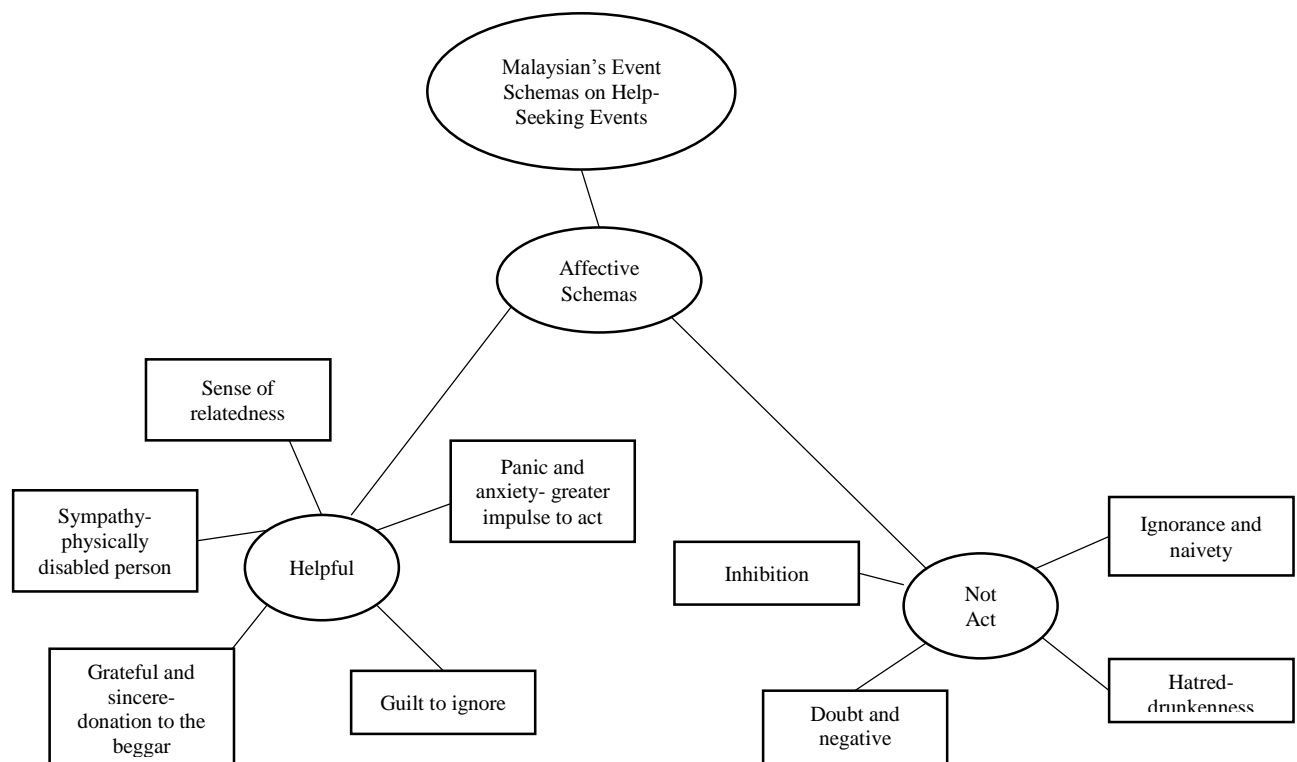
Figure 4 Malaysian's affective schemas on help-seeking events.

4.3.2.1 Helpfulness

Affect is a major factor within one's cognitive representation of a help-seeking event. Those inclined to help emphasized positive and compassionate feelings. However, women in contrast to men were more empathetic and charitable when confronted by a help-seeking event. Prosocial behaviour and associated emotion and level of affect are also directly related to the type and characteristics of an event.

Various emotions are displayed by observers as they respond to a help-seeking event. The emotions experienced by the observer in their response are often dependent upon the event and overtly displayed within intentions to act and associated behaviours. Within this emotional connect is the assumption and perhaps necessity to engage with the target: 'If we were in his shoes where it is dark to go anywhere and there is no one to help us, we would feel sad. Being a blind man, we could tell his difficulties of wanting to go anywhere.'(Zack, Male). Nonetheless, there is still the consideration in assessing the balance between risk and cost: '...even shoddier when there is no one around to help, right, how could he cross over, he would possibly be hit. It is an obligation for us to help judging from his condition. (Abdullah, Male)

The interpretation of risk and cost is particularly unveiled and enacted in the display of pity toward the people with disabilities. Sympathy in particular is a common emotion under these circumstances and consistent with religious and associated moral belief structures. Observing a person with a physical handicap grappling with the physical demands of their everyday lives elicits sympathy. Nonetheless, the extent or depth of feeling associated with the emotion is manifested according to the perceived type and extent of disability, 'I would feel sympathy and sad because looking at the crying old woman. I would step in if I see that the man did not manage to calm the old woman down and I would try to soothe her using my own approach.' (Nor, Male). For example, the extent or depth of feelings of sympathy influences the practice of enacting helpful values across many events with someone who is less fortunate e.g., the beggar.

Helpfulness is also the result of being grateful for one's own state of being relative to the helpless person. There is an accompanying sense of gratitude coupled with a compulsion on the part of the more privileged to share their fortune with the less privileged. The sharing is viewed as an obligation and responsibility aligned directly with religious doctrines that

enjoin giving in charity (*sadaqah*) to eradicate other's miserliness. The ways people situate themselves against others' miserliness influences their perceived need to help, 'Sad if we were to put ourselves in his shoes. I would feel blessed because we own a car, and with him being all dressed up in ragged and messy clothes like that. We should be thankful, and it is not wrong if we help this uncle who is in need of help.'(Nor, Male). Nevertheless, despite dwelling in excessive feelings of appreciation and sympathy, there are number of different reasons that make people rethink a course of helping action taken toward the target perceived as helpless:

> I would observe first whether he seems like a part of a syndicate, or if he is not, and I think that he is truly in need of help, I would just give him some money. It is just through my instinct that he is a scam or not and even if he is in a syndicate, I would still donate some money but what would make it different is the amount given to him. If it is a syndicate, the money would not belong to him but to the people who run it but if I always seem to see him around, I would give more. (Nor, Male)

Not all were dubious in response to helping the beggar; some participants were sincere in giving donations and were not overly interested in knowing more of the circumstances underlying the need to beg:

> I pity him and would not hesitate to give him money. Even if he is playing me for a fool, that would be between him and God. But as a human, I would give and the money would at least help him buy rice. At least Malaysian Ringgit (MYR) 5.00 and not a ringgit or two. (Sue, Female)

The engagement in prosocial behaviour is driven by religious doctrine which eliminates aspects of doubt related to the characteristics of the target and instead primarily focuses on helping the less fortunate. However, the decision to act may also be framed within elements of guilt and ignorance:

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Maybe God sent him for us to do some good things. .I don't know that much. But if I don't help, the event will haunt me because I would start questioning myself why didn't I help him? Has he eaten? Who else would help him? If nobody gives him money, would he have any food to last for the night? But actually even though I gave him money it didn't make me happier or relieve, I just did it to rid myself of thinking about him. (Sue, Female)

When behaviours and or circumstance are more clear-cut in terms of perceived levels of seriousness, e.g., the drowning, a drive to help is more consistent and less subject to question or doubt. Instead, negative emotional responses such as 'panic' and 'anxiety' are directly associated with a greater impulse to act.

The response to the vignette illustrating a high emergency elicits sudden alarm and in turn promotes a helping reaction. An initial sense of panic at a perceived crucial time associated with the saving of a life is often followed by the compulsion to help:

I would be anxious, that the boy would drown. It is because the boy is already panting for air and I am concerned that people may not have enough time to save him and then he would drown. Other than anxious, I am terrified that the boy drowns. Then I would be calling out for someone to help the boy because I cannot swim and I have no experience in saving people. (Jue, Female)

The perceived high emergency was consistently associated with a strong emotional response resulting in the intent of an immediate albeit at times panicked reaction:

It involves a life and it happens right before our eyes. If the boy drowns, we are also responsible, right because we are there but we cannot do anything. If I see a boy is drowning, I would scream for help and if there are people swimming nearby, I would scream, someone's drowning, someone's drowning!! Help, help!! (Zol, Male)

Panic is also an important precursor in activating a spontaneous prosocial reaction:

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I would panic because I don't know what to do. I would think about the boy. If he drowns and sinks, we would never know where to go in order to save him. I would think of how I could help, I'd be edgy, so my first action is to search for people, screaming to notify people that a boy is drowning. (Ana, Female)

The contextual characteristics of an emergency elicits a strong sentiment and is the basis of a pattern of helping behaviour different to the behavioural intentions elicited in response to vignettes illustrating less problematic events.

4.3.2.2 The decision to not act

There is a general inhibition among members of the Malaysian community to overtly display prosocial acts. This inhibition often results in a general reluctance to engage in an intention to act. In this instance, feelings of sympathy and concern are insufficient as motivations to act:

There would be a tendency to help, even sympathy towards the old, blind man. However, I think it would not happen even though I would be worried whether the man would it to the other side of the road... Maybe because I feel shy or because I can see some people are already near him and they would probably help him. I feel shy when I want to do something good compared to doing bad things. When we do something out of the norm and it's good, we would feel embarrassed with other people's view on us. (Abdullah, Male)

The existence of doubt and negative emotions involving trepidation and reactions to disfigurements and or negative characteristics i.e., the beggar, along with the context in which the event takes place, directly impacts the interpretations and intentions related to the event. The characteristics of the accompanying audience also impact upon a person's rationale and capacity to analyse and react to an event. There is a tendency toward stereotypical assumptions associated with similar events. The cost-reward model is often

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enacted as participants measure their acknowledgement of safety and precious resources in contrast to naive and unrealistic helpful action, 'Possible crimes or scam, I just pass by and let it go, the feeling of guilt might be there, what I would do?' (Zol, Male). Ignorance or naivety related to one's knowledge of or reaction to an event led to experiences of guilt within hazy cues of desperation, 'I would just pass by because I would be thinking whether the situation of him needing help is for real or not ... Moreover, I am terrified just in case it is a syndicate or a scam.' (Ana, Female). Personal and cultural beliefs also act to discourage one's intention to help, '...I think in situations like that people would normally take advantage of your kind heartedness. That's the Malaysian context.' (Abdullah, Male)

The response to the event illustrating a drunken target was clear-cut. Participants were less likely to help the inebriated man and instead were more likely to express a degree of hatred or scorn as drunkenness is considered one of the thirteen greater sins in Muslim religion. This level of scorn and hatred is further reinforced throughout the Malay culture given that the vast majority of Malays in Malaysia are Muslim. Even though individual understandings and practices of Islam vary, there is the strong societal emphasis on and respect of the tenets and practices of Islam given that it is also Malaysia's dominant religious practice. However, this does not categorically suggest that Malays use religion as the basis for a negative interpretation and judgement of the drinking of alcohol by other races in Malaysia:

> I would just look at him because he is drunk. It would not occur to me to have any sympathy for him. I would watch him with empty eyes. No feelings. I would look around and if no one is helping out, then I would not. I would be less helpful if he is Malay as he is asking for it, knowing that drinking alcohol is a sin. In fact, he is not even injured, he just passes out ... You ask for it, so you get on own two feet even if you pass out or anything. I would feel like rage boiling inside of me if I see a Malay

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acting like this, if he is Chinese then that is a different story...I wouldn't care if he is Chinese or Indian, no one cares if he is drunk. (Jue, Female)

There is a general reluctance to help if the questionable behaviour of the target is considered self-inflicted. Malays are also likely to ignore a person if the behaviour and or characteristics of the target are subject to scorn and anger:

I just can't accept a person who is in a drunken state and because of that he deserves not to be helped. If somebody does help him, it would be a waste of energy. Drunken people are just looking for trouble. Why drink alcohol when you know it is bad for your health and what more using public transport, very troublesome for the other passengers and expecting people to help you. Even if people help, you won't change your habit. So it's best you stay where you are and sober up on your own.' (Jue, Female)

4.3.3 Behavioural Schema

Most participants talked about the framework of their roles, particularly enacted within reactions and their thoughts about individuals involved in the incidents. Given different circumstances, participants were asked to visualise themselves having two different behavioural reactions consisting of (i) engaging in various forms and degrees of helping or (ii) deciding to not intervene. The following sections illustrate how behavioural reactions were enacted during the helping process in various help-seeking events and factors associated with concrete effects on these reactions. These sections specifically report on their intentions to help in perilous situation and vacillate between benefitting others in distress and saving themselves from risky interventions.

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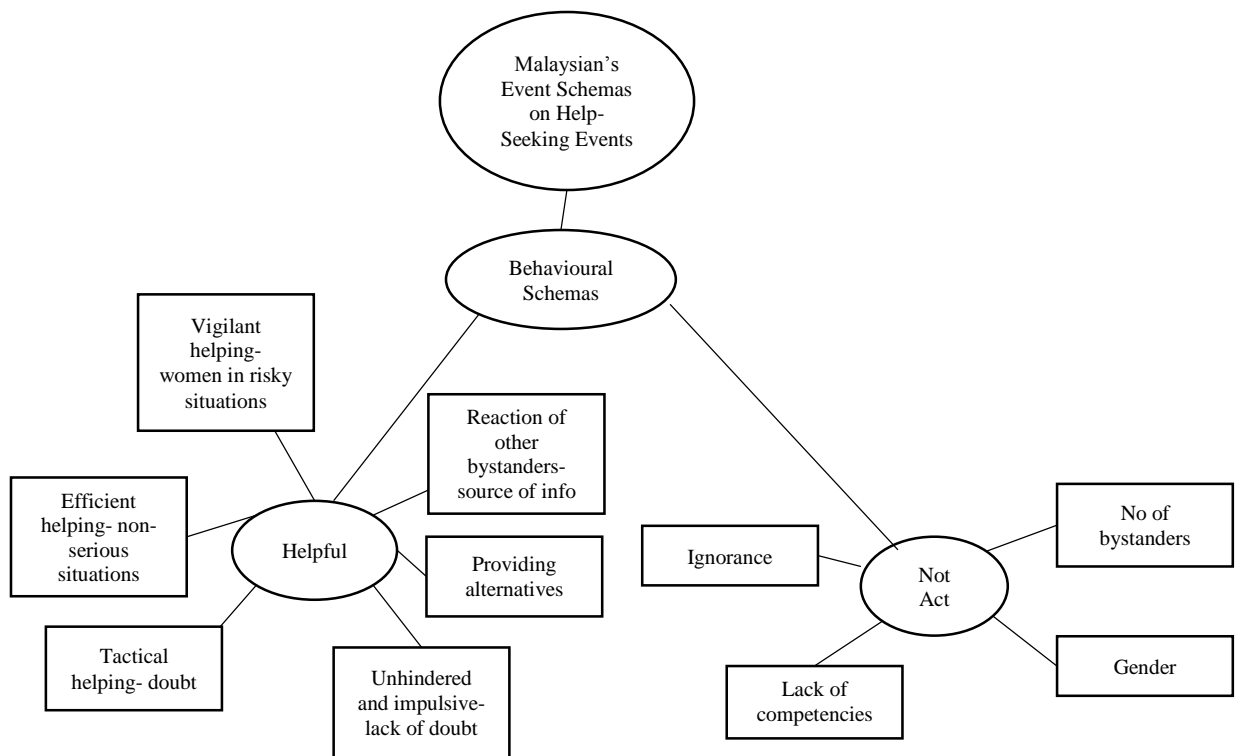
Figure 5. Malaysian's behavioural schema on help-seeking events.

4.3.3.1 Helpfulness

Male and female participants were anxious when assessing whether to assist in non-serious situations, particularly in circumstances which were interpreted as problematic and related to a victim's feeling of desperation. The balance of risks to costs predicted participants' motivation towards engaging in prosocial behaviour. In this sense, there were gender differences in the distribution of social power with female participants:

I would… ask his name, his wife's number, and I'll do the calling, make it into the loudspeaker mode and ask him to talk out loud without giving him the phone. It's me being careful since he's a complete stranger. I'll be the one who is controlling the situation. (Sue, Female)

In addition, Malaysian women in contrast to men are generally more sympathetic in their reactions toward a help-seeking event. This tendency toward sympathy can at times compromise a woman's safety:

I will be extra careful because there are similar scenarios like this these days that lead to robberies and scams, especially when it comes to women. When it comes to safety, most people these days tend to take things for granted because women especially, could be easily fooled out of sympathy. When we go through the news updated on TV and newspapers, there are so many cases where women were fooled because they were too sympathetic. (Sue, Female)

The awareness of the importance of being vigilant when offering help is directly associated with the need to carefully interpret social cues and thereby not compromise one's safety and/or the condition of the target person. Counterbalancing the importance of vigilance are the characteristics of Malay culture and the tenets of Islam which imbue a degree of status in engaging in prosocial behaviour as a matter of pride in being identified as a 'kind person', '…maybe I am the chosen one. The one that he sees first in order to ask for help.' (Amjad, Female)

Even in instances of non-threat or in any events in which the circumstances are clear-cut, the decision to engage in humane behaviour still needs to be considered diligently and with due care especially when dealing with unforeseen risks and difficulties. This approach is consistent across genders. Efficient enacting of prosocial behaviour is also important in non-serious situations where there is absence of the need of prompt and spontaneous prosocial actions:

I would have so much sympathy for him when I look at his condition, but I would look around just in case there is someone who is willing to help the old man. If there

is no one to help, only then I would cross over the road again, ask him where he is

heading to, and if he wants to cross the road, I would help him. (Abdullah, Male)

When an event and associated reaction is considered a 'win' for helper and target, an

intervention is provided readily and more comfortably. 'Tactical helping' or 'heedful helping'

best illustrates this way of helping and still supports the needs of those in distress. This action

allows the help-giver to exercise a degree of control over the situation. Tactical helping is

rooted in the doubt that resides in the situation rather than in misinterpreting or misjudging

the event. In this case, the enacting of a prosocial behaviour is still more likely than not:

I must help because they need help but still I need to be careful because there could be

danger on the road. I would be more encouraged to help if I see children on board, but

if it's only the couple I have some doubts. The couple may have some bad intentions

… When we go help them, we must make sure the car is secured first. Who knows

there might be accomplices hiding in the bushes? (Harun, Male)

If there is a lack of a sense of doubt associated with the situation, the intention to act

tends to be unhindered and impulsive, '…while the husband is making a call, the wife is

looking restless, then most probably they need help. The best I could do is maybe to stop and

ask.' (Zack, Male). However, generally the decision to help strangers is often difficult and

with a range of choice among various prosocial behaviours. Besides giving direct or

immediate help, the help-giver behaviour might centre on providing a series of alternatives to

the target person, 'They're in trouble! It's not like we don't want to help but we will show

them some alternatives on what to do and they will need to wait for it.' (Amjad, Female)

The intention to help or not help involves interpreting an event and based on the

interpretation, enacting behaviours that avoid deception or being hoodwinked:

Based on my experience, because of so many stories, whenever I see a beggar I would

feel sympathy for them but it is different now. Now I would first evaluate the beggar

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and situation. Sometimes, I would just give money to them despite of having a feeling that the beggar is a phony. (Zack, Male)

There are several alternatives among a range of behaviours available to the help-giver in response to an event of one sort or another. The help-giver across different circumstances has the capacity to independently define their intentions and associated behaviours:

I would invite the beggar to eat. That is better than giving him money and I'm afraid he would use it to buy drugs, so I would make sure he is well fed with food and perhaps we would ask the restaurant's owner to pack him some food as well. I would think of what has happened to him to be in that condition. If he just has ragged clothes on him but he still has the energy to walk around and therefore it means that he stills could work. (Zol, Male)

The reaction of an audience to an event also significantly influences a help-giver's decision making process when confronted with an event. For example, the decision to act is dependent upon the help-giver's view that a member or members of the audience might or should have responded to the needs of the target person:

I would look and see what the commotion is about and I expect that help would have already arrived because of so many people in the crowd. To me it's important to see the setting. If it's at the highway, stopping is not an option. Massive traffic jams happened because people slowed down their cars and start to rubberneck to see the accident. But in this situation if I don't see any help being given to the lady, I would volunteer to send her to a hospital. I think I am the type who only jumps in to help when there is no other option available. (Abdullah, Male)

Help-givers determine their behaviours dependent upon the more or less accurate interpretation of the behaviours of bystanders. A person intending to help others when within

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a group of bystanders might need time to make sense of the circumstance and use a

bystander's response as a further cue in reading an act or event:

People are talking and I have no clue what is happening. I would be asking the crowd,

requesting an explanation on what has happened. Only then I would check things out

and see what the man has done to help. If he has taken an action, then it is alright. If

not, I would be willing to call an ambulance, because it would be quite difficult to

take her there. (Jue, Female).

The bystanders in this case are used as multiple sources of information to aid the

construction of an informed decision to act in one way or another:

I have never dealt with a situation like this. I might take a while to respond. Perhaps I

would see how other people respond to it first. I do not know whether I should help or

not or perhaps I would just inform the bus conductor. (Faz, Male)

The interpretation of bystanders' behaviours or assumptions about their capacity to

help strongly influences the choice to act:

Because I have not met any drunken people before. If he is drunk, I think I would wait

for other people's action first because I would have not have the nerve to deal with

such people and do not know how to face them. If I see other people are not offering

their help, I would be agitated also thinking why they are not helping out. To start first

would be nerve-wrecking but if someone helps out then I would join in and help also.

If it takes forever for others to respond, I would just go and check, but I would not

really know what to do. (Nor, Male)

Other than using the bystanders as a source of informing action, a prosocial response

is also aided by other factors such as what is displayed and demonstrated in the mainstream

mass media:

If he was drunk when he fell on the floor, I would just prop him up if he was near me.

But in stories in TV showed that these people weren't helped by others and they

remain fine. So maybe I don't have to help.' (Zack, Male)

While ambivalent and uncertain on how best to manage a given situation, help-givers were generally inclined to act immediately to help someone in need i.e., the drunkard. This could be due to a sense of duty, accountability and empathy. The prominent obstacle in enacting behaviour is the lack of knowledge and restricted past exposure to a person with specific characteristics. In this case, a help-giver is inclined to rely on reading the cues presented by the reactions of a bystander, to seek and engage in less-obvious indirect behaviours or to choose to not engage at all:

I would notify the driver about the problem. I would have indirectly helped the

drunken man… I would worry about his condition but not be sympathetic. I would not

want to directly handle him because I don't even know what his problem is. Maybe he

is sick because of something. So even if I want to help, I don't know how to do it.

(Abdullah, Male)

Being confronted by the unfamiliar is associated with worry and fear, leading to the act of 'avoidance of risk'. Indirectly helping others also enables the help-giver to avoid having to touch or talk to the victim:

I would wait and see what other people would do. If nobody does anything, hence I

would start by asking the drunkard whether he's ok or not. But I won't hold him

because based on the stories I've seen on television, drunkards normally vomit when

they are in this state. (Anis, Female)

The choice to avoid helping the drunkard was due to the lack of experience in managing events of this type and also relates to the fear of creating a 'scene', 'if it's in the

bus, I'd notify the driver. But, I won't help that drunken person directly because I know nothing how to handle a drunken man.' (Siti, Female)

Despite the strong call for help, individuals would rather provide indirect assistance or depend on other bystanders to initiate help:

When someone has passed out like that when the vehicle continues to move, then if it is just a bus, perhaps I would inform the bus driver about him but if it is LRT (automated transport system) that has no driver, there is nothing much for me to do. There is little possibility for me to wake him up because I am not used to dealing with a drunken person. The one I saw before involved aggressive drunk man. (Faz, Male)

Generally, across the responses to the various vignettes, the emotional state and associated reaction augment and promote displays of prosocial behaviour. However, the likelihood of prosocial behaviour is compromised when help-givers are confronted with situations that they perceive compromise their safety:

I'd feel terrified that the boy would drown because it could happen so fast. Road accidents are occurrences that have happened but for drowning cases, we could still see that he is drowning and that is the exact time when we need to give our help. If he drowns, then it is between life and death; just like that. (Zol, Male)

The intention to help is also encouraged when actions are associated with improving the condition of another, particularly during the time in which one's life is threatened. It is considered a civil duty to help when a person appears to be struggling and helpless. However, as a result, the help-giver's life is also at risk:

There is a possibility that we would also be drowned… if I do know how to swim that thought would have come across my mind when I want to save the boy. But still I would help him because he needs it more than anyone else. But as I can't swim, I would still help in other ways no matter what. (Fahada, Female)

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Although negative states of emotion such as guilt, panic and the associated observation of perilous life-situations increase the likelihood of helping behaviour, the ultimate decision to help is still considered with due care and diligence. However, overriding these considerations is the enacting of behaviour in accordance with Islamic doctrine, 'In Islam we must help people. But if we don't have proper knowledge that would be considered suicidal and is prohibited as you may hurt yourself in the process.' (Zack, Male).

4.3.3.2 The decision to not act

While taking actions towards those in need lies within the framework of responsibility and accountability, some people choose to provide minimal support or little help. This latter group is not averse to displaying themselves as less considerate, less kind and less generous. They tend to passively react to events and justify the response on the bases of ignorance:

> Due to the fact that I don't have any experience dealing with this situation, I really hope that he will be helped by someone. If there is no one around to help him, I would just watch him cross the road. (Sha, Female)

Personal competencies, knowledge, as well as skills and abilities aid or compromise a person's capacity to act. Skills and abilities are useful in effectively tackling a particular task. For example, technical and vocational skills used to repair a vehicle. The capacity to help by way of a skill set constitutes a powerful force in enabling one to view one's self as helpful. Of course, conversely, not having an appropriate skill set restricts one's capacity to help:

> My reason is firstly if it's their car that is problematic, I wouldn't be much of a help because I don't know anything about car engines ... deep down inside I do sympathise with their plight, I mean what if it happens to me? But seriously, if I don't have anything that could help them, I wouldn't stop. (Fahada, Female)

The capacity to help in a given situation is also influenced by one's gender. Gendered notions in the capacity to help in Malay contemporary culture reflect varying normative and

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contrasting roles which position men and women differently, 'I don't know what kind of help that I could give because nothing much that I know about car. Things would be different if I were a man who knows about car'. (Siti, Female)

In contrast, circumstances in which the skills, knowledge, or lack thereof of the characteristics of the events influence one's intention to act, many would merely walk past and or ignore the fate of the person within an event, i.e., in the instance of the middle-aged woman lying on the ground. One of the factors driving the intention to not act centred upon the audiences or the number of onlookers perceived to be present at the incident. Under these circumstances there is a higher probability of a prosocial behaviour:

> The setting of an incident also plays an important part. For example, in shopping malls where there are many people, if a person's ankle hurts or injured there would definitely many people who want to help and would even send to the hospital.
>
> (Fahada, Female)

Nonetheless, the number of on-lookers is not necessarily correlated with the likelihood of a prosocial behaviour. For example, once again in the instance of the middle-aged woman lying on the ground, although considered serious with the woman in obvious need of help, the general sense was that most would choose not to act to intervene:

> The woman is injured and for me, it is the most crucial time to get help from the ambulance and she needs help or she's involved in an accident at the time. However in reality, I would say that more people would just watch than help out and it is rather common. I would be together with the crowd and see how it goes. As for me, I don't fancy looking at blood; I can't even look at blood. In cases where I see there are dead people in accidents, I would not pull over; I am like that because there are many people already who help out, right because I can't watch things like this. (Syib, Male)

Nonetheless, there are instances where the presence of others as onlookers heightens interdependency and increases the likelihood of assisting others. Hence, while a lack of onlookers is often associated with the lack of engagement in prosocial behaviour, the presence of others increases the probability of the occurrence of prosocial behaviour. The effect of the perceived lack of onlookers in lessening the probability of prosocial behaviour is further enhanced if the incident occurs in a remote, isolated area. The decision not to engage in a response might be interpreted as wise, leading to a person leaving the vicinity of the incident:

> I saw a broken car once, but there were two to three people in the car. I just looked around and continued my journey because I was alone at the Jerangau highway. I guess maybe he could make a call because there were a few of them and it is easier to get help when you have many people around. (Nor, Male)

Others seek a companion to reinforce their decisions into committing towards helping:

> I have experienced a situation like this dealing with a broken car. However, the victims were all girls wearing 'hijab', was a pity sight but it happened at a public place. When I went to ask, they said that they had contacted someone and help was on its way. Having friends around with us is quite significant. Sometimes, I don't even have the intention to help, but when my friends ask me to help along with them, I would willingly help too. (Zai, Female)

An analysis of the process of decision-making suggests structural and relational assumptions are developed and reinforced over years built on one's exposure to the same type and or similar event. At times the judgement based on the decision-making process may be inaccurate and flawed. The core of understanding in each case as presented in each vignette is a mental representation of prosocial behaviour.

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4.4 Reinforcement for Helpfulness in Emergency Situation
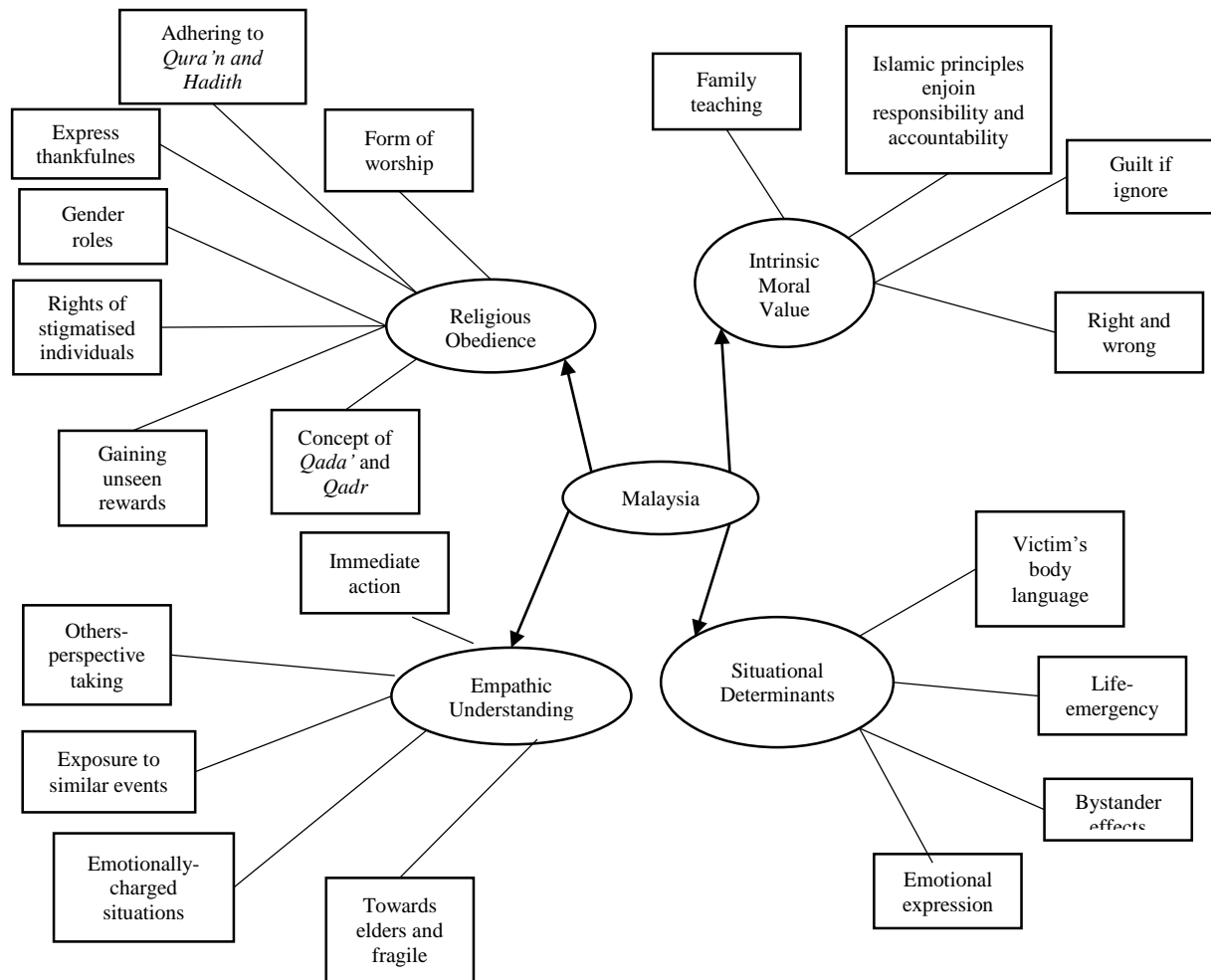
Figure 6. Reinforcement of helping behaviour in Malaysia.

4.4.1 The perceived unseen reward value of religious obedience

According to two primary resources in Islam, *Quran*, which is the sacred book containing words of Allah dictated to the Prophet Muhammad via the arch-angel Jibril, and *Hadith*, referring to the collection of Prophet Muhammad's sayings and actions, helping others in need is an integral element of a Muslim's code of behaviour. Helping behaviour has received a thorough emphasis in the life of a Muslim as all unselfish deeds are enjoined in Islam, for committing to helping means that they are good Believers. One of the important contents in *Quran* is the encouragement of prosocial behaviour, particularly towards the

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needy and the importance of developing good habits to be with the poor – examples set by the Prophet Muhammad – so that much understanding about their lives could be deepened. The main objective of Muslims is to evaluate how close they have come in terms of their prosocial behaviour and measures with respect to the primary resources of Islam:

> I am not that nice but when things like this happen, it reminds me of a verse in *Quran* (Al-Maun). The verse tells us that we need to help the poor people as much as we could, never to infuriate the orphans and also that our Prophet himself liked to be among the poor people. So as his followers, the least we could do is to follow him because we aim for his blessings. (Syib, Male)

> For some people, helping is interpreted as a created opportunity from Allah to demonstrate His reminder which has a significant connotation that might represent the obedience worship not just in the form of rituals, '...it doesn't matter because that is almsgiving. Maybe God sent him for us to do some good things, I guess, I don't know that much.' (Sue, Female)

Being or having 'more' could be a source of power to become helpful towards the disabled and helping is understood as one of the measures to express thankfulness to Allah:

> I would put myself in his shoes; what would happen to me. I could feel how difficult it is for him to go from one place to another. I am thankful to God that I have my eyesight and therefore I could help others. (Zai, Female)

> Meanwhile, beggars also have rights to be helped, just as people with disabilities do. People typically extend their gratitude to who they believe are having problems that they do not have by being a favour-giver:

> I would feel blessed because we own a car and with him being all dressed up in ragged and messy clothes like that. We should be thankful and it is not wrong if we help this uncle who is in need of help. (Nor, Male)

Helping is an opportunity for a Muslim to gain several rewards. First, giving help could be accumulated to personal rewards which would be accountable during the Day of Judgment. The chance to 'do good' is not always there. Therefore some individuals could not be more appreciative of the given fate, hoping that they could earn more 'rewards' for their 'endeavour'. The action to help such as giving charity to the beggar is not only rewarded in the life hereafter, but could also be seen in this world, 'I do want to help, to lessen his burden. Maybe that is what Allah had intended for my *rizq* (provision), to give a portion of it to other people. You know, to cleanse my wealth.' (Anis, Female)

Furthermore, Muslims chase multiple rewards in the holy month of Ramadhan that Allah has promised for every Believer. Hence, a greater number of expressions of kindness such as donations, volunteering, and other forms of prosocial behaviour are promoted throughout the month of *Ramadhan*, 'I think they are really in trouble and thus really need my help, with no one passing by. What more if it's in the *Ramadhan* month.' (Harun, Male)

In this month, the likelihood of Muslims helping others is increased because they perceive that with greater acts of kindness comes a greater reward, 'Our society is a bounteous and generous society, which always give and donate, especially Muslims, added when in the Holy month of Ramadhan. We consider them as alms and acts of kindness.' (Amjad, Female). The principle behind helping behaviour is not only limited to the essential part of good moral conduct by a Muslim, or to preserve any special contextual or non-contextual rewards, but also involves a strong faith in the concept of *Qada'* (Divine Will) and *Qadr* (Divine Decree): 'It's like… *Alhamdulillah* (All praise be to God). At least I've helped him because for me, personally, when we help those in need Allah will ease whatever happens to us in future.' (Amjad, Female)

Others implied implicitly that fidelity to the concept of *Qada'* and *Qadr* has brought Muslims to offer comfort for those in distress or in an emergency situation, 'What you give,

you'll get back. We never know what the future holds; maybe when we are also in trouble there would be people to help us.' (Zol, Male) A sincere helping or comforting act is influenced by a Muslim's level of faith and understanding of the concept *Qada'* and *Qadr*. Prosocial behaviours in a Muslim's life have been characterised by the modified version of '*karma'* in accordance with the Islamic perspective:

> Perhaps today is a day when someone asks for help from us and there will come a day when it is our turn to ask for help from other people. Allah has arranged it all, we do good deeds, and Allah will grant us all the good things in life. If we help someone it does not mean that we ask for something in return from that person, it is because we help him for the sake of sympathy. (Faz, Male)

Moreover, the participants believed that it would be absurd to hope for a rewarding action for the helping act or to expect those who are in distress to repay their kindness. Instead they believed and would constantly remind themselves to be at peace by knowing that the Almighty God is going to reward them accordingly, '…the return of doing the good deed would come from Allah only, not human beings.' (Faz, Male)

Belief in *Qada'* and *Qadr* entails that everything happens by the will and decree of Allah. It establishes a firm denial of the concept of predetermined destiny. Participants' general and mutual belief summarises that there is a strong reason behind their meeting with the distressed person. This falls under Allah's governance, the one who has chosen them to be in that particular place and time. If they choose to intervene, they believe that their present action would not be a definite chain or causal to their future smoothness in distress, because the ultimate cause and agent is only Allah.

Although only a few participants highlighted how principles in Islam somehow affected at least their thoughts on the degree or extent of helping measures, it is crucial not to skip or simplify this as plays an integral part in their interpretation and understanding of

prosocial acts in a given circumstance. For example, religious doctrine is entrenched in a situation where a female helper should hold an old blind man's hand to assist him crossing the road.

Cultural and associated religious orientations are essential components in decision-making processes when enacting a prosocial behaviour. Gender roles consistent with cultural and religious orientations also impact differentially upon evaluations of circumstances and related behaviours. Gender is played out in evaluations of the serious scenario. For example, males were hesitant in helping the female victim, 'I would be a bit reluctant to help because I have to consider my *awrah*[5] [gender] but as this is an emergency, I think I have to help.' (Abdullah, Male). Abdullah was at first hesitant in responding prosocially because of his concern of compromising his *awrah*.

4.4.2 Intrinsic Moral Value of Being a Relief Agency

While many factors underlie helping behaviour, especially prominent is in adhering to the personal ethical standard of enhancing an awareness of the suffering condition. A range of factors acted upon achieving acceptable levels of awareness in benefiting those in need. These included a degree of introspection in displaying standards of benevolence, the impact of family parenting, engagement in the religious faith and responding to the manifestation of distress. Participants who displayed high levels of introspection with associated strong moral values were more inclined to react positively toward a person in need, regardless of the

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[5] *Awrah* is Arabic and in Islam refers to the Muslim's part of the body which must be covered from the view of a stranger. Exposing and looking at another's *awrah* in Islam is considered sinful. The Muslim through the tenets of Islam must also avoid touching a person of the opposite gender (cross-gender non-mahram [mahram refers to the unmarriageable kin]) in everyday interactions. However, a Muslim is obligated to protect the victim against all threat on the occasion where another's life, religion, property, intellect and lineage are endangered. If there is no other avenue of protection for those at risk, the obligation to help voids the prohibition of skin contact with a cross gender non-mahram.

severity and threat of the situation. Others suggested that family teaching directly influenced a prosocial act toward those in need:

> My family taught me before, when we see other people are facing problems, we should try to help out as much as possible, as long as we are capable of doing so. Maybe I have been taught to act like that because from what I could see, my family is just the same. Whenever someone comes for help, they would give as much as possible. (Syib, Male)

After helping someone in need, there is the question of asking oneself about the motivation behind helping behaviour:

> After a while I would think that I am not that sincere when giving away a lot of money when in fact I always say that I want to be a good Muslim but I am still not capable of becoming one yet. I could think of the verse I've read where it says that help the poor people the best that you could. The *Quran* states that and if we still are not sincere in things we do, it makes me think because in the verse, its first sentence says, 'Do you know who makes light of religion? Firstly people who make money out of the orphans' properties and secondly people who donate money but are not sincere', so it makes us think. (Syib, Male)

Acting in accord with Islamic principles is, in the face of a help-seeking event, associated with a moral position advocating a sense of responsibility and accountability:

> If I notice that the crowd does not offer any help, I would think I am not different from the rest, no sense of responsibility. It would not be right not to help when there are many people around; all gathered up like this... if I am at the scene and I do nothing, I am an irresponsible person. I would give a negative look towards someone like that, someone who looks kind but offers no help to someone who is in trouble. (Zai, Female)

Altruism tends to be stronger in a situation where the person is considered helpless. To not act benevolently toward this person may be viewed as self-serving and is associated with a sense of guilt:

It is a responsibility for me to help. If I did not help, I'd feel really guilty, if I didn't help, he might be hit by the cars passing by. If I were there, why won't I help? It is just helping him crossing the road, not bringing him to anywhere. If I was on the opposite side of the road, it's not a big issue to cross the road back. If I didn't help, I'd feel guilty, especially if I were about to cross the road too, I was in that area and I saw this blind old man. I won't wait for others to help him because I was there. (Siti, Female)

The emphasis is on the moral imperative and what is considered a moral 'right':

People in trouble have the right to be helped and we ought to do just that even though we don't even know each other. I usually stress on the right. Every human being has certain rights. For example, the poor, unfortunate people have right on the rich people where it is the right for the riches to make donations to the poor. That is their right. (Mamu, Male)

Helping someone in distress is a responsibility, while ignoring one in distress is considered a moral wrong. The extra emphasis is on the extent to which one is prepared to help as determined by the degree to which an intention provides relief to the person in need, 'If we take him along with us to cross the road, but then if we let him on his own without other people to help, it would be mean too. The help given is not complete.' (Jue, Female). Helping in this instance rests on the moral premise associated with and satisfaction in contributing sufficient aid to avoid the possibility of further harm.

4.4.3 Emphatic Understanding, Being with a Person's Suffering

The participants generally displayed in each of the circumstances an empathic turn in relating to the predicaments and associated behaviours of the target. This capacity to act empathically centred on the connection of the cognitive and emotional states of the participant with the perceived cognitive and emotional states of the persons in need, '…try to put ourselves in that situation. Imagine if we are in desperate need to make a call but we don't have any money, then of course we would ask around. We would not just randomly ask anybody, right.' (Mamu, Male).

Empathic feelings are enhanced in situations interpreted as dire and calling for urgent and immediate action. Hence, the reaction to the severely injured old woman lying on the road was associated with an interpretation of the extent of pain experienced by the woman and the need to act immediately and appropriately:

Of course I feel sympathy towards that old woman and thinking about how hurt she was at that time. I would call the ambulance so that the emergency aid could be delivered quickly in order to stop the bleeding... I would think what happens if my mom or my mother-in-law or someone who's close to me in that woman's shoe, and there's no one offering help. What would happen to them? (Siti, Female)

Empathy, while displayed as an emotion, is essentially derived and learned from one's experience with and exposure to similar and or related events to the events outlined in each of the vignettes. With empathy there is also the tendency toward the related expression of sympathy, 'Watching him facing a problem like that. If we have a problem too, we would expect help from other people, so there is nothing wrong if I help him.' (Faiz, Male)

The extent of empathy and sympathy was relative to the circumstances experienced by each of the target persons in each vignette. An empathic and sympathetic response was more likely in some instances than others. Generally, a greater degree of empathy and

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sympathy was expressed when participants perceived greater distress in response to an emotionally charged situation or environment. For example, crying and wailing served as strong situational cues in engaging a degree of empathy and sympathy, 'Crying and wailing would incite sympathy among those who are looking. In doing so, the victim may get the help he or she wants.' (Abdullah, Male). Sympathy is also more likely if the person in distress is considered ageing and fragile, 'Sympathy and sad because looking at the crying old woman.' (Nor, Male). This response is further heightened in consideration of gender in the interplay between participant and target:

> When it comes to middle-aged woman, it would not take long for me to help. Women are less harmful as my empathy level towards them is higher. A man could try to walk to get to the place he needs to be as people would think twice to do harm to a man. However when a woman is in trouble, the risk is higher. (Zai, Female)

The characteristics of the target in inviting sympathy and support is enhanced with men as they interpret their attitudes toward older woman, 'I would sympathise even more when it comes to women because they remind us to our own mothers' (Zack, Male). People with disabilities and in poverty also elicit high levels of sympathy. Overall, the evocation of empathy and sympathy was associated with a number of factors which acted independently or in combination. These characteristics included age, gender and the perceived physical and psychological state of the target. Empathy is an emotional consequence of situational and personal characteristics. One is able to relate to the circumstance of another as a result of one's own life experiences, which provide a model of a sense of relatedness and connectedness to the situation at hand. For example, a person's level of empathy and helping may be influenced by the intention to not let others walk the same difficult life paths previously experienced by them:

Once my phone battery went out and I had to make an important call. I was in the train at the time and I promised my friend that I would call him on where to meet up. I was embarrassed to borrow people's phone, so I would certainly lend my phone if it happened to anybody else. Because I had experienced it before so I sympathize easily. (Zack, Male)

Altruism is ingrained in one's personal experiences in the history of time and is expressed in their capacity to walk in another's shoes:

I've met a number of people who are blind. My former supervisor back in postgraduate studies is blind. My late uncle was blind. When we put ourselves in their place, those who have eyesight impairment, they do not have 'something' for them to hang on to. They only depend on their senses particularly sound. (Amjad, Female)

Descriptions and expressions of sympathy are centred in the characteristics of the target which are illustrated in contrast to and or directly relate to the characteristics and or associated behaviours of others. These may include important others such as parents, grandparents and members of the extended family, 'As they would make me think of my grandma or my mum, what if they were in that situation? The same goes for children; I would imagine what if they were my nephews and nieces.' (Abdullah, Male). The strength of connection within family, in contrast to that of Western societies is especially strong under Islam (Dhami & Sheikh, 2000).

The capacity to empathise is not easily learnt from the classroom or everyday encounter with events of the day. Instead, it appears in part to be driven by one's innate compulsion to act:

I feel I'm responsible to help him. Plus, I imagine if my grandfather or my old father was trying to cross the street. Or maybe I, an old version of myself, trying feebly to cross the busy street. Even though I wasn't taught about helping people in need but

my instinct kept urging me to help people like the old man. Why can't a person with perfect sight help a person like the old man? (Anis, Female)

Gender is associated with the capacity to empathise to the extent that increased empathy is displayed toward the female victim, 'I would be more sympathetic with the old lady. Maybe I would start thinking about my mum, my grandmother. But if it's a man, one would expect him to be tougher.' (Harun, Male). The difference in displays of empathy is consistent regardless of the gender of the participant, although males tend to be more directly associated with how they relate to those close to them within a turn of moral reflexivity, 'I would sympathise … [with] … her even more when it comes to women because they remind us to our own mothers. Perhaps it has to do with having a mother figure.' (Zack, Male).

4.4.4 Picking-Up Emergency Conditions Surrounding the Helping Situation

Trust and an awareness and or perception of the helpless context as 'real' are integral elements in interpreting prosocial behaviour. Visual effects of situational cues affect the probability of helping, which increases with an increased awareness that the expression of helplessness is real. Visualized stress reactions cued from body language and gestures from the victim who is in trouble send a signal to others that the problem is real:

He is telling the truth and with his condition, pacing back and forth, it shows that he needs help from others ... If I were in that situation, when we see someone pacing back and forth, we would want to know his problem ... I have seen the way he acted in such condition so I would willingly help him. (Syib, Male)

Emotional expressions e.g. tears, also cue one's intention to help:

Their demeanour makes people more convinced of their predicament. It may attract people to help if he or she cries rather than keeping quiet. It's like a festival when people flock at the scene of accident, just being curious, on what had happened. I believe it's our culture to be like that, nosy. Our people like to help, it's just that we

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don't have a sense of emergency, too relax … our people like to depend on other people when making the first move like calling the ambulance. If there is only one person at the scene, he or she may act fast but if there are many people, the reaction is slower. (Harun, Male)

In a high-risk situation, the circumstances interpreted as a life-emergency are more easily legitimated. As a result, the decision to help is more readily justified and enacted. In such circumstances, gender is irrelevant:

When dealing with a situation like this, I would not think twice on either to help out or not, a quick action needs to be taken because it is an emergency. There is nothing pretentious about having broken parts of your body, as compared to the broken car, they might be pretending, but this one, it is confirmed not a part of a scam. It makes no difference in handling either a male or a female victim because it is a situation where help is truly needed urgently. (Nor, Male)

Minor traumatic bleeding, looking sombre, and restlessness are not the only situational cues that enable the bystander to gain a sense of awareness in interpreting an emergency. The greater the number of clear situational cues interpreted by the bystander, the more likely one will engage in prosocial behaviour. Of course, doubt and scepticism about the state of helplessness has the opposite effect:

I will be sceptical at the time. I am stuck in between of either to help or not. That is why I have to ask if this kind of situation happens. I will be sceptical due to my prior experience when there was someone asked to borrow some money from me; claiming that he wanted to buy a bus ticket. So I gave him the money and soon after that, I saw him walking away from the bus station. It is better to ask first because before that incident, I often just gave away money or help without asking. (Sha, Female)

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Whether a circumstance is considered 'legitimate' relies upon personal judgement of the circumstance and available cues. Subsequent decision-making is based on the circumstance and cues. For example, in the circumstance of the boy 'drowning':

> Maybe because it is a matter of life and death. Drowning is the highest degree of emergency. What if the victim cannot take it any longer or maybe he just sunk to the bottom, so fast action is needed. I mean, if I can't provide the help, at least I could tell people so that others may help the victim. (Harun, Male)

Dependent upon the circumstance and the characteristics of the observer, they may opt to act pro-socially with little regard for their own personal safety. Nonetheless, the capacity to help may be limited, e.g. inability to swim:

> Because it's clear that he needed help, imagine what he would have thought at that particular time, waiting for help…Well there is a possibility that we would also be drowned, so if I do know how to swim that thought would have come across my mind when I want to save the boy. But still I would help him because he needs it more than anyone else. (Fahada, Female)

4.5 Experience Being an Integral Aspect of Helping Responses

The capacity to help as a function of past experience and or available skills is integral to making the decision to engage in helping behaviour. This capacity to help may be engendered through a broad range of sources. The two sources of learning from the Malaysian participants revolved around: first, existing information about the object or situation informing current practices; second, adapting through generalized abilities to a new object and situation.

4.5.1 Fitting-In with the Pre-Existing Information: 'I've done with this!'

Direct and or indirect experiences make people more or less likely to help others:

Some people ignored not because they don't want to help, but maybe because they've been through it before, helping people but end up being conned or robbed. The experiences play an important role for someone. Not only experiences, the stories they heard, things they read on the news. They choose not to help because they're afraid of their own safety. (Amjad, Female)

Other sources of information tend to further inform behavioural practices when confronted with a help-seeking event. For example, the social media:

Stories that we often read and heard from social media that described certain situations like stranded cars and these terrifying stories normally would influence us to either be helpful or not when we are in the same situations. Negative things are easier to influence us. When we hear negative stories and we face same situation, these negative stories would influence our decision. So yes, social media has a big role to play and if it's a negative idea, it would be easier to be absorbed by the viewers. (Abdullah, Male)

A positive experience related to an event in the past is more likely to lead to a degree of altruism. Feeling good and reassured about responding to an event in turn engages a process of more positive and less compromised decision-making. This of course does not suggest that the decision will necessarily involve a physical act:

I will be sceptical due to my prior experience when there was someone asked to borrow some money from me; claiming that he wanted to buy a bus ticket. So I gave him the money and soon after that, I saw him walking away from the bus station. It is better to ask first because before that incident, I often just gave away money or help without asking ... Whenever someone asks for help, we need to ask and confirm the situation. If the answer given for the second time contradicts with the earlier request, I would not borrow him my phone. However, I will not say no! I would just say

something else, such as that the phone is out of battery. Prior experience helps me to become more cautious and sceptical when help is needed. (Sha, Female)

The effect of past experiences with similar and or the same types of events plays out in contemporary behaviour. Much is learned from the past, 'Due to the fact that I have similar experience, I know the kind of help that I could give to people who are in similar condition.' (Zai, Female)

I've learnt a lot from my experiences and other's reminders on how to react to this situation. If someone comes to me and says that he has left his phone at home, I would ignore because he's a stranger. In my past experiences, that's what I did and I would do the same thing, refuse to help if similar circumstances occur. (Siti, Female)

However, while a previous experience may inform current practice, mere observation is often considered sufficient in informing the decision-making process. In fact, observing another taking responsibility for a help-seeking event, particularly if the person was considered reputable and worthy of positive regard, significantly influences one's intention to help. The influences are particularly significant when the other is an immediate member of the family i.e., parents:

I learn from the examples set up by my parents. Occasionally as I am sitting with them, I see people who are in need, my parents would help out, and not necessarily their siblings, they even help others. When we stay in a culture like this, we are indeed trained to help others as well... When I was studying in UiTM, I did not know much about things around me and I had a friend whom I just knew who was willing to solve my problems from scratch. From that moment on, I learned that if I have other friends who seem to have lack of experience in handling certain things, I would then help them because I know I was like that too once. It is not a big deal to help because people used to help me and I also could help others as well. (Jue, Female)

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Information provided through the social and mass media, while not as influential as parents and significant others in informing behaviours, acts in part to promote and define prosocial behaviour:

Campaigns promoting helpfulness by radio DJs are good influence on the society and to me because these songs are usually being played and listened to and also the text messages that encourage people to give their seats to pregnant ladies in public transports. They teach us that being helpful should be a normal thing to do. In films, if they show cars stranded on the side of a road, that would be a bad guy's tactic to rob you. Instead of showing that, why not show it in a positive way and say that it is good to stop and help out. People would be influenced by what the film industry portrays. The same goes for news, they always say that a car stranded in the middle of nowhere is a clear indication of bad intentions. So we tend to be negative as well. (Sue, Female)

However, despite the influence of social share web sites and the mass media on promoting altruism amongst the Malay, personal experience is still the dominant factor in influencing the enacting of prosocial behaviour:

I have had a similar experience where my car broke down in the middle of the road, near a shop lot. I had to push my car because it won't start. I had to ask some men at the shop lot to help and they willingly helped when I told them my situation. If it happened to other people and I am not suspicious of them, I would definitely help them because I was like them before. (Harun, Male)

Nonetheless, while the general response tended toward altruism and the decision to act, others were less inclined to act and or to decide not to act at all. The decision to not act was often associated with negative emotions, feelings of discomfort and perhaps even degrees of shyness. This decision to not act occurring despite the public pressure to engage in

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an empathetic act,'I feel shy when I want to do something good compared to doing bad things. When we do something out of the norm and it's good, we would feel embarrassed with other people's view on us.' (Abdullah, Male)

Social inhibition, while specific in type and character to individuals, is relatively common within the population of Malay:

Maybe the public would consider it as odd … being drunk and all. It's a negative thing especially in Malaysia where Islam is the religion. But if it happens in America or Australia … that would be different as they are used to it. We have a negative connotation for drunkards and that's why Islam prohibits drinking alcoholic drinks. It makes us lose consciousness, harming one-self and others. Maybe people would look down on him and maybe they do want to help but because they feel that the guy has chosen to be drunk, it's pointless for them to help him. (Anis, Female)

Other negative states likely to influence one's intention to not help are a level of distrust and an aversion toward being hoodwinked or conned. This is particularly with beggars and the existence of robust beggar syndicates whose principal strategy is to exploit sympathy from unsuspecting members of the public in order for the beggar to obtain a monetary reward. The response to beggars by members of the public in this instance is emotional outrage given that the activity is considered illegal and, more importantly, immoral:

I watched a documentary program known as *Majalah 3* before with the title of 'Old People Sitting on a Wheelchair', it was actually a son used his disabled mother to beg money from the public. Getting $2,000 per day, and way above as wages for him was easy. My perception on these kinds of people is that they are sick and are heartless. Who'd get the benefit of that money? Not the mother on the wheelchair. I think we have to educate our society so that they understand that these people are taking

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advantage of them. It is not wrong to donate, we have other alternatives don't we? There's a lot more ways to donate. (Amjad, Female)

4.5.2 Modification of the Pre-Existing Information: 'I Need to Change!'

The previous section addressed instances in which a person's past experience was associated with the situational cues evident within a given circumstance. As a result, the behavioural intention tended to be consistent with intentions and or behaviours in response to very similar events experienced by the individual in the past. . This following section, in contrast, closely examines the partial if not full adaptation of a behavioural intention in response to a relatively novel stimulus or event.

More often than not, the experience and related information gained from exposure and or involvement in an event will inform one's processing of and behaviour in a related subsequent event. However, provided there is some basis for a response, one is also able to process a relatively novel event and alter their intention and or behaviour to suit. A person's response is often based on an interpretation of relative cost or benefit:

I used to pass by a broken down car. When he said that he has made the call, it was okay by me. I just stopped to ask anyway. Many cases had happened when a car made a sudden stop, when we go there, they mugged us. It happens so I think we have to consider the condition of the place as well. Regarding stranded cars, I would take a look at the situation and assess it first. In a place where many crimes occurred, it would make me more cautious to approach. I would analyse the situation, emergency signals doesn't really show that a person is in trouble unless the car itself broke down, smoke coming out or something like that, physical signs that show that they have problems. But if I think I'm safe, I would approach and ask them what help do they need. (Mamu, Male)

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In the instance of an event in which the associated characteristics do not necessarily fit with one's past experiences i.e., being approached by a man who requests the use of your mobile phone, the interpretation of the event and a decision to engage in prosocial behaviour is dependent upon the physical context and the characteristics of the person asking for help:

Whenever someone asks for help, we need to ask and confirm the situation. … Malaysians nowadays are more cautious dealing with situations where people come up to them asking for help. … [in the past] … people will offer help, but they will ask for confirmation or they themselves will be making the call. Prior experience helps me to become more cautious and sceptical when help is needed. (Sha, Female)

The guilt experienced by the bystander by virtue of Malay cultural beliefs and morals is sufficiently powerful to have a person forgo the perception of negativity and act to help:

If I am on my way home, alone and it is a dark area, there possibility of me to help out would be none. If I am alone, I would be scared of crimes, because I have been hearing stories of people got tricked and scammed. I would just leave the scene, but in a restive condition, even worse if there is news about dead people at the area in tomorrow's paper, I would feel guiltier. (Faiz, Male)

Much of the worry and experiences of fear revolves around the potential for crime and being interpreted as an aggressor rather than helper:

Car passengers would also think that I am a bad person with a bad intention. There was a case where I was riding my bike heading to school. Suddenly, I saw an old woman walking towards the grocery shop. So I decided to stop and volunteer to take her to shop. She was angry and upset and totally refused my offer. In your case, roads like that would normally have highway patrol, right. If we stop to help, I think the passengers would be very frightened of us. (Abdullah, Male)

Generally there is the need to accommodate existing information on (i) the present naturally occurring opportunity for assistance and (ii) in the instance of a direct request of aid. In contrast, when schematic information based on previous experience with situational cues is inconsistent with the interpretation of cues from within the current event, the reluctance to engage and related degree of negativity is suppressed in favour of engaging in the decision to help.

There is great variability in how individuals self-regulate their thoughts on helping. This variability is based on and expressed through differences in interpretations of the characteristics of the event based on variations in past experience and stored knowledge. Variable interpretations and consequent decisions to act may also vary in context and time, even if the event is ostensibly the same from one time to the next:

> There was a time when I was having my meal and someone showed up asking for money. I just gave him some money but when the same man asked for money again the following week at the same place, I did not give any. Perhaps people would just turn a blind eye. In my other experience, where I spend a night with my father at a hotel, someone came up to us selling packets of tissues while we were having dinner. My father gave her some money but when the same woman showed up again, nobody gave anything. (Jue, Female)

Context continues to be an important consideration in determining the probability of engaging in a prosocial behaviour. Residents of city regions are likely to less frequently engage in a prosocial act than a resident from outlying country regions:

> It depends on the community ... If the community is the helpful type, then that's OK. But in Kuala Lumpur for example, there too many crime cases happening so people are rather reluctant to help. In my hometown [country region], people are always helpful because we know one another. (Anis, Female)

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Particular contexts are associated with elements of insecurity and threats to safety which compromise one's capacity to interpret the nature of a specific event. Situational cues are pivotal in deciding to help or not help. For example, there is a contrast in one's engagement in a helping behaviour when the situational cues emanate from a publicly open environment against a closed environment:

I do have the intention to pull over, but I am scared. The fear that I have goes beyond my intention to help out and I just hope that help is on its way as soon as possible. If it is a public place, if we pull over and then we have to ask for help, there will be other people to help us. It is a quiet, secluded area and I am scared to expose myself to danger. (Nor, Male)

The prospect of a secluded and quiet road led to the construction of assumptions which in turn impaired judgments on the need to offer assistance. There was also the suggestion of a generational change in social behaviour with passers-by being more reluctant to respond helpfully in the case of an emergency, for instance in the context of attending a stranded couple with a broken-down car on the roadside:

I would think twice either to pull over or not if I am alone because it is a secluded and quiet road because nowadays there are many incidents where people are just pretending. If it is a freeway where there are many people passing by then maybe I would pull over, because we are scared of being scammed and robbed at quiet places. (Nor, Male)

A hesitancy to help is also often experienced in the situation where the gender of the victim is different to the gender of the observer. It is also important to be aware of the high-cost emergency. For instance, in a drowning boy scenario, an intervention may lead to the saving of a life, yet in certain conditions this might be quite limiting:

If I could swim, I would be a bit reluctant to help because I have to consider my *awrah* but as this is an emergency, I think I have to help. This situation may take some time because there was one time I went to the Perak water park with a few of my co-ed friends. One of the girls fell because it was quite slippery. Even though I was the nearest to her but I didn't help her because I know she could still stand up on her own plus I was worried about my *awrah*. (Abdullah, Male)

Women in particular might help a woman in need of help, but the inclination to help is likely to decrease in the case of a man:

Unless there's a woman waving frantically with a baby in her arms, only then I would be thinking about helping out. If for example a woman is waiting with her children for incoming help and they look as if they need help, maybe I would stop and ask. (Sha, Female)

Gender across variable circumstances continues to be an important factor in one's inclination to help.

4.6 Mental Representations of the Seven Help-Seeking Events of Australian

The following discusses themes emergent from the analysis on Australian participant's expectations, beliefs, and behaviours when confronted with and interpreting events described in each vignette. Themes centred on the information provided by experiences, memories, expectations, feelings, and opinions influence the tendency to engage in the decision to help or not help when confronted with someone in need. Participants' understanding of salient situational and dispositional elements impacting upon the decision to act is structured into three major thematic categories including (a) the person, (b) affect or emotion, and (c) behaviour. Selected quotes represent prominent themes identified within the participant response to each of the vignettes.

4.6.1 Person Schemas

This section focuses on the judgments and traits that people attribute to the self and recipient in the context of engaging in prosocial behaviour. The judgements and traits may be considered negative and or positive, depending on the thoughts held toward the self in combination with the interpreted characteristics of the recipient. These attributes inform one's interpretation of the characteristics of a help-seeking event. People are more or less likely to help dependent upon variable interpretations, but may be broadly categorised as a behavioural preference associated with (i) the desire to help or (ii) not to help.
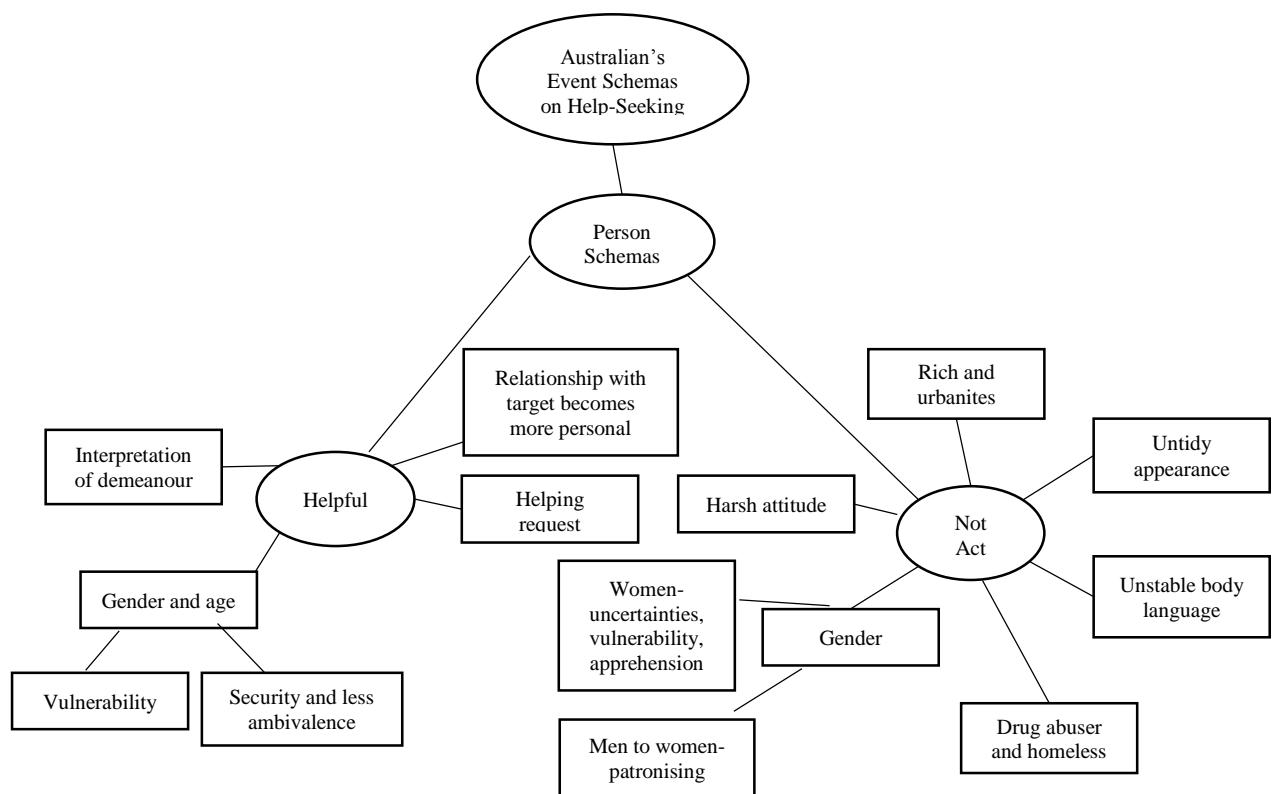
Figure 7. Australian's person schema on help-seeking events.

4.6.1.1 Helpfulness

The desire to help when faced by a non-serious event is associated with variable interpretations. Within this circumstance, when a stranger requests aid an intention to help is often guided by an interpretation of demeanour and outward appearance:

I want to help him because he's an old man. I'm also concerned that he's a bit

confused and maybe I should call the police for help, not so much for me but for him.

(Shae, Female)

Physical characteristics of a potential target clearly influence one's intention to help.

For example, these characteristics are matched to a helper's consideration of risk and reward:

A 'middle-aged' man! It wouldn't come to mind straight away that he was going to do

anything wrong with my phone like break or run away with it so I don't think I would

have any objections to letting him use my phone. (Jace, Male)

Gender and age often act together across cultural contexts in one's interpretation of an

event:

Depending on the neighbourhood, I guess a woman could be seen as being more

vulnerable depending on the time of day, the kind of clothes she was wearing … That

I would see it as more normal of the middle-aged woman to not quite know where

they are… Not so much needing assistance, but it's more typical be lost and

disoriented. (Ada, Male)

There is also a degree of security and less ambivalence when engaging in a helpful act

with a same gender target, 'There's a natural sense of comfort with a woman rather than a

man, but I'd still be assessing the situation in the same way as I think and would respond in

the same way.' (Isadora, Female)

In contrast, within a help-seeking event in which there is a compromise to one's

safety, an intention to help is also informed by the age of the target person, i.e., young and

elderly and an apparent level of associated vulnerability. For example, the elderly are more

likely to have a person consider helping them dependent upon circumstance as is also the

case with a youngster:

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To not help would have to be some sort of absolute fear and especially if it's a child or someone screaming in trouble, I just couldn't imagine it… I just couldn't imagine it and probably seeing a child or someone like that would make you probably more so want to help and take a risk. (Docia, Female)

For many when interpreting an intention to help, the target person's image or appearance is always considered and important. An intention to help may at times consider appearance as important as the extent of emergency. One is more likely to help if a target person's apparel, demeanour and overall appearance more readily justify a need to help:

What would make me think more about it and question whether I would do it is, again, what they look like and their attire. Not intentionally, but it would definitely offer a moment for me to pause and, yeah, I think that would influence people's decisions. (Jace, Male)

There is also the consideration of the capacity of the target person to self-help. There is also often the compulsion on the part of the observer to interpret and decide based on the consideration of the level of impairment and disability. In short, a decision to engage in an act based on whether they interpret the target person as sufficiently capable of performing a self-help behaviour:

It also comes down to his judgment as well, because he's blind – you're not completely unable. He could hear you when the cars have stopped moving. It's not terribly hard, but yes, I'd probably just gave a gesture to say, 'Yes. You could go.' And I'm not going to do anything other than that. I feel like he could do it himself. Plus a lot of people don't like to be helped when they don't need help. (Lloyd, Male)

In addition to age, gender, and physical ability, a decision to engage in prosocial behaviour also depends on the request of the person in distress. With the request, comes a conscious interpretation of need:

If he did come to me for help, I'd feel honoured that he chose me to help him and so, of course, I'd feel happy to help him. But in a sense I'd also be obligated, I guess, but that wouldn't be a problem since I was willing to do so. (Ada, Male)

The approach and request are considered legitimate unless the circumstance suggests a degree of incongruence:

If they're not wearing a wedding ring and then they're telling me about calling their wife. That's – well, you're lying straight to my face or that, or you don't wear a ring, which you're not a very good husband… but I'd still like to speak to him and I'd probably question them a little bit more about actually what they're going to do. And if it's coherent and makes sense, then sure. If it sounds sincere - that's probably a big thing that would influence if I would do it or not. (Lloyd, Male)

Much can and is read through the eyes:

It depends on how they look at my car that's passing, if they looked at me or not. If they're not interested in – if they looked at me with any look actually, kind of – I'd be like I think I want to – like I'll feel bad if I'm not stopping… because I think I'd go, well, they might have needed help and so they're looking at my direction, at the car, or at me. (Isadora, Female)In the absence of verbal cues, information is sourced by the observer through non-verbal and situational cues, 'If I saw a diabetic bag or an SOS bracelet, I would instantly want to find out, that would be part of my assessment.' (Shae, Female)

In the instance of little information in relation to a target, one relies on an interpretation of how to respond and in turn to interact. Much relies on one's history and past connection with related experiences:

I think it's actually the couple thing then because I'm acting just a couple I think. Because they're a couple, I would stop and say, yeah… I think it just makes it easier

that there're two of them for some reason and they're in a relationship … [and]…

appear to be harmless. (Isadora, Female)

The relationship between the help-recipient and the help-giver becomes more personal

when the level of distress is clearly interpreted and informed:

The more I speak to the person, … the more I would have some understanding of

what's happening, and if the person presents more and more confused, then I think my

concern for him would increase in time. (Gabby, Male)

4.6.1.2 The Decision to not Act

Factors related to the observer in terms of their determining an intention to act were

analysed. Consistent with previous interpretations of data, generally women a more reluctant

than men to respond to and engage in a prosocial behaviour toward a stranger. This

reluctance to act is occasionally associated with one's uncertainties and vulnerabilities, 'I

have seen occasions where people would sort of feel – perhaps a particular woman might feel

afraid or not sure what the motives were.'(Docia, Female)

The anxiety associated with encountering a stranger requesting aid increases to an

even greater extent when engaged with a cross-gender interaction. Women generally are

more apprehensive, apathetic and less likely to act to aid a male stranger. Women may

associate men with violence and aggression and therefore interpret them as a threat to their

personal safety:

I'm a bit socially paranoid, so I'd be anxious about a guy approaching me, I'd be a bit

apprehensive because he's a man… I'm really conscious of – I think because I've sort

of done – I do volunteering with community legal centres and stuff and know a lot

about assault rates and stuff. This might sound a bit weird, but especially if he was a

white guy, I'd be anxious. I wouldn't be as anxious if he wasn't white, just because I

know that it tend – crime like that sort of tends to go along racial like it's – you'll

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have more intra-racial than interracial crime, so in my head, I'm doing like a victim calculus of like, is this person likely to attack me? (Amanda, Female)

Women find it difficult to engage in behaviour to help a male. There is variation in the dynamics between men and women in how they interpret a target person. While women present a broad array of reasons for not engaging with a male stranger, there is an emphasis on safety and protection from harm. In contrast, males are hesitant to engage in help due in part to a desire to not appear as patronising. A decision to not help may also be considered a form of provision of empowerment:

> When you first come up to someone to offer help in this day and age, you kind of get the feeling that it's not something you should be doing. … Feminism, for example, you would offer a woman help, it seemed – she could be offended whether she needed actually help or not. … To be seen as needing help, she could be offended, in which case it's going to get through in my head briefly, so it might cause me to hesitate. (Ada, Male)

Socio-Economic status may also be considered a factor in defining an intention to act toward and in response to a person in need. There is the suggestion that the wealthier, more economically and socially advantaged are less likely to engage in displays of altruism:

> People in wealthier suburbs are less likely to help than people in lower class communities. People in lower class communities are more likely to give a hand… It's from things I've noticed and stories that I've heard from people from different communities… And also – and people who are from upper class communities are more likely to walk away and they just kind of go, 'Don't talk to me. I'm not interested'. And just quickly walk past. (Gabby, Male)

Displays of altruism are also less likely in urban areas than in rural areas. Urbanites carefully consider their time and associated activities:

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I think most people, especially who live in the city maybe, or someone who lives in the country and experiences, they might find a bit more short value and you feel like maybe they should – did assist because maybe there's a bit more of a community sort of feel there. But people here [urban areas] are out to please themselves and I don't think they care at all that a homeless person asking for money and that would be reinforced by just as I was mentioning it. (Jace, Male)

Social status and or location influences decision-making, particularly in relation to responding to someone in need:

I think there're people in the community that wouldn't help and I think there's a certain amount of people that probably wouldn't want to get involved. And there's a notion around not wanting to get involved for whatever reason. … it's a bit of a social norm, come and go, 'I don't want to get involved' and kind of somewhat accepted, but I don't think that's a positive thing. I think it's a negative thing. But were those values helping? I think some people maybe feel uncomfortable about helping.

(Isadora, Female)

The physical presentation of the target person clearly influences intention to help. An untidy, slovenly appearance undermines interpretations of integrity and individual worth:

If the person was neatly dressed … approaching people individually …they would more likely get a better response than someone who was a bit – looking a bit scruffy.

If they were scruffy, they're less likely to get a good response.' (Gabby, Male)

Displays of agitation, restlessness and interpretations of an unstable body language by the target person coincide with a negative interpretation. These cues simultaneously lessen the likelihood of arousing an intervention among observers:

Equally, if you're all looking puzzled and he's not looking alarmed, if there was a time he's looking aggressive or anything, I'd be kind of looking to see who's

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around… Restless could also be associated with a range of other things so I'd be kind of checking to see that he was – yeah… I mean like drug users could often look restless when they're trying to find or waiting for the next hit or something like that, or someone who is a little bit jumpy. I think that could be a bit interpreted restless. (Isadora, Female)

The significance of a person's appearance, clothing and movement is clearly related to the degree of helping behaviour amongst participants. For example, an interpretation of addiction evokes avoidance, 'If he slurred his words and yelled… I kind of go substance abuse and I would be less likely to help.' (Isadora, Female)

While there are different types of stigmatised group, responses toward related groups are relatively consistent. Drug abusers and homeless generally are less likely to receive a helpful response:

A lot of homelessness is caused from drugs, so they're actually quite strong. I believe they're strongly correlated. I feel they're just wasted. It's – they're just going to prefer to themselves into this routine, this life. They need something to change it, not continue it and money may not necessarily be the answer to that. (Lloyd, Male)

The intention to help is subjugated by the interpretation of the target person's attitude and the way they approach and request assistance. For example, an observer would feel intimidated and annoyed if the approach by the target was harsh:

His attitude, of course. If he walks straight up and does it really blatantly, obviously like – and does really quickly so he could get to the most people possible. It's like, you know, I wouldn't feel as good beyond that. He needs to put a bit of effort… if he is polite or not… It kind of feels like he's trying to rob me. So that would make me less likely to want to give it to him. Unless I felt like I was in danger, then I have to rethink. (Ada, Male)

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The attitude of the target may be interpreted as simply as through a tone of voice, 'It depends on their tone as well. So, if their tone is of an aggressive nature, then I would be concerned about my safety perhaps.' (Gabby, Male) The decision to not act is at times almost instinctual, 'Someone across the road, as I say, it was very late at night and they came knocking at the door and asked – they had a broken down car and I got a really bad vibe about them.' (Docia, Female)

Physical cues are often the most obvious and pronounced; however, these too may be met with some level of doubt and an associated reluctance to help:

> I know a lot of other people are scared of blood… I could understand people having
> that kind of fear. I don't really have it myself, but I could understand not wanting to
> sort of get up close and personal and there is always a danger of blood borne diseases,
> like especially HIV and stuff. (Amanda, Female)

4.6.2 Affective/Emotional Schema
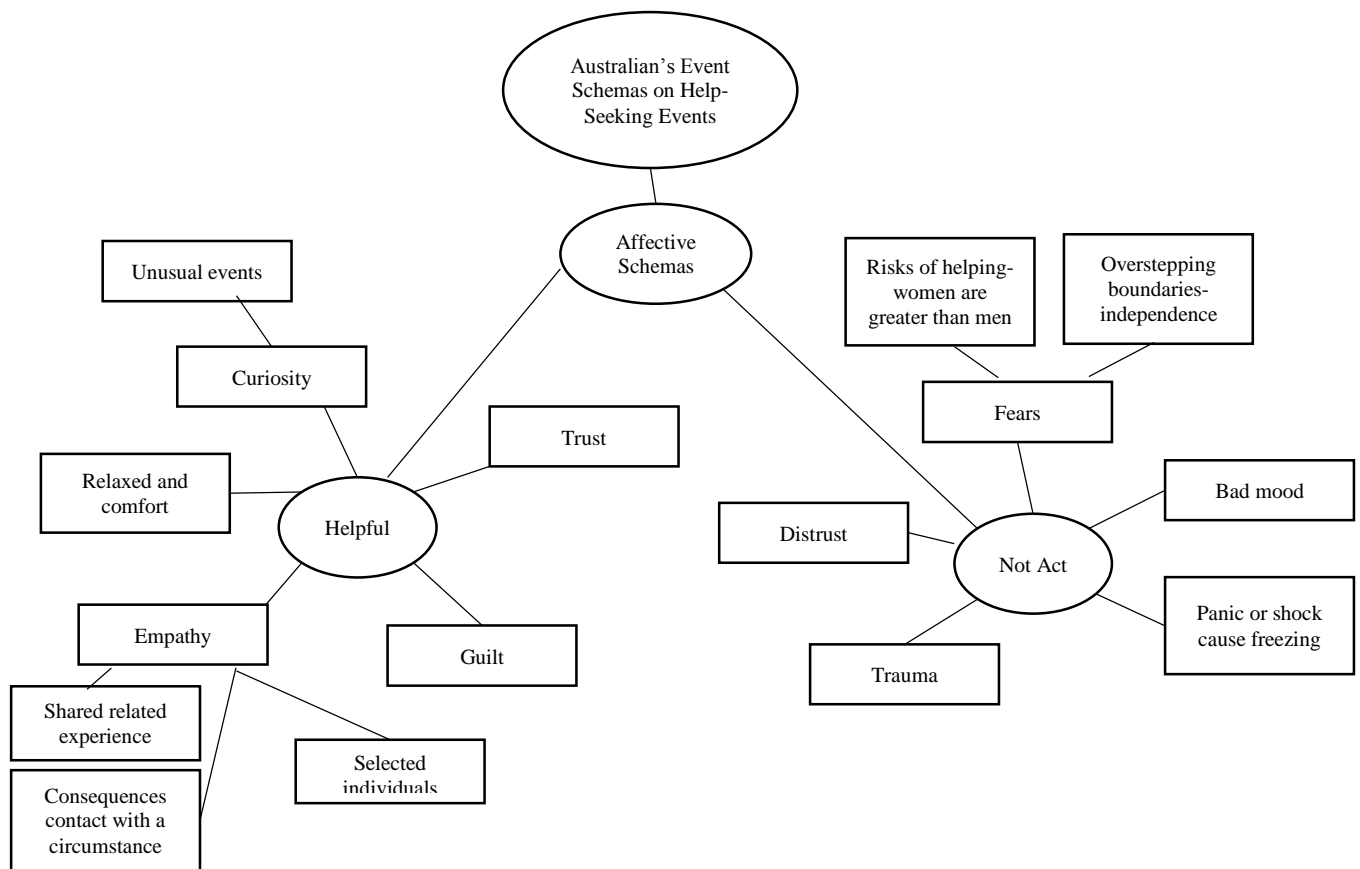
Figure 8. Australian's affective schemas on help-seeking events.

4.6.2.1 Helpfulness

Positive and negative emotions influence an engagement in helping behaviour through two processes. The first encourages one to attempt to benefit others consistent with the current state of the emotion. The second, prosocial motivation, is based on the need to relieve the negative states one is experiencing. Having encountered an unusual event in the day, the attention is increased in those with some level of curiosity associated with the event:

He's left his phone at home and had to call his wife to tell her about where he is. That's strange… It's actually – I'd been intrigued, so I'd go and ask him these questions myself, not in a 'are you crazy,' kind of way. Yeah, if it's just – Ask what's

going on… First I'd thought it'd be wow this is change from my uneventful day that I had planned. (Ada, Male)

In contrast to the curiosity associated with engaging in an unusual event, the apparent 'normality' of an event may also influence one's intention to engage in a prosocial behaviour, 'I just think it's a normal human sort of situation that not everybody has access to a phone. I've been stuck myself before, and it's not like we have lots of public phones that work anymore.' (Docia, Female)

Feelings of normality in prosocial motivation are consistent with the feeling of trust, particularly within the encounter with a random stranger. Therefore trust is crucial in helping behaviour in which the benefactor feels reassured with the legitimacy of the help-recipient and the non-emergency situation. The lower level of emergency is associated with higher level of trust and expressed within acts of benevolence. Trust in this instance may be considered cognitive in that it functions as a deliberate thoughtful action of the recipient to prove his or her trustworthiness:

I was like 'Oh', so I'm a bit like 'Oh! Cautious'. But then what struck me as kind of important to that circumstance was there were lots of people around. He had a phone but he claimed he had run out of credit, and he kind of put the phone on the seat next to him. It was kind of like a show that I could trust the situation. So I think there was a level of trust there that enabled me to give the phone. (Isadora, Female)

Nonetheless, there are costs and discomfort associated with helping, particularly among women. The costs in helping for a woman may be significantly increased when the intention is directly compromised as a result of the interpreted physical characteristics of the target. A level of trust may counterbalance some of the concerns and reduce the cost and associated resistance to act:

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With the drug addict mostly because – well, they are prone to stealing things. … I'd

still like to speak to him and I'd probably question them a little bit more about

actually what they're going to do. If it's coherent and makes sense, then sure. If it

sounds sincere. That's probably a big thing that would influence if I would do it or

not. (Lloyd, Male)

People, over a period of time, may display a wide array of helping behaviours and

tend to be helpful when they feel comfortable engaging in an act, even though there is an

associated risk of one sort or another. Much prosocial behaviour is directed at unknown

strangers with whom they feel more relaxed in establishing a helping relationship. As has

been illustrated in earlier accounts, the state of comfort in engaging with the target person is

inevitably based on that person's characteristics:

You might not really think that there would be a risk of giving your phone to some

random person because obviously, they're just in trouble, especially people who are in

the same middle-aged man in this situation would be most –would probably most

likely feel comfortable helping someone who's like them. (Amanda, Female)

Along with characteristics such as age, comfort also emanates from gender related

factors, particularly when it involves women, 'There's a natural sense of comfort with a

woman rather than a man.' (Isadora, Female). Furthermore, those at ease with an event often

respond favourably:

I'd be quite relaxed about it …. I'd probably just think that he's probably come from

the doctors. Maybe has some news, something important and it wouldn't be an issue

for me. I'd probably hand him the mobile. (Docia, Female)

Perhaps the most common dispositional explanation for why people feel responsible

in helping others is their need for empathy. People who feel concerned while observing the

needs of another are inclined to help. In these circumstances empathy arises from one's

ability to cognitively interpret and understand the perspective of another and to accompany this understanding with behavioural affect. Empathy is further enhanced when there is sharing of experiences between the target person and the observer, 'I'd be fine with him using my phone. I've been stranded in places a couple of times and needed to ask to use people's phones'. (Amanda, Female). Empathy, however, often arises as a consequence of contact with a circumstance and not necessarily the sharing of related experiences:

I work at a health centre doing counselling and we …and I hear different stories about people who are quite vulnerable in the community and about some situations where there've been incidents where it's been traumatic for them … that influences my – it affects my view of the world at times, sometimes in a positive way.' (Gabby, Male)

Helping behaviour also flows from feelings of empathy towards selected individuals or groups. For example, understanding the narrative in the lives of the homeless:

I have a lot of empathy for people in that situation. Sometimes you just feel like what difference could you make as an individual and what – where's this – what's this two or three dollars or 50 cents or 20 cents, how is this going to help? … Then you do – it does creep in your mind that maybe they're not deserving of the money, which is not true, because you don't know what they've been through – homelessness. (Jace, Male)

Nevertheless, empathy is not necessarily directed towards lessening suffering. In instances, helping others contains selfish purposes when it is aimed at reducing personal distress and discomfort due to witnessing victim's difficulty:

I'd probably get pretty worried. I'd start as soon as it occurred to me that there might be a problem there. I'd start thinking about it. I could imagine if I'd probably end up doing something like getting halfway across the road and doubling back, and be like, 'Oh. This is the situation!' and just feeling really silly. We'd probably miss the lights

back on. Once those kinds of things occur to me, I don't tend to let them go, so I'd probably obsess.' (Amanda, Female)

The presence or absence of the feeling of connectedness with the suffering of others is associated with prosocial behaviour. A sense of belonging or feeling emotionally connected with those in need motivates people to consider the welfare of others but does not necessarily absolve personal responsibility:

> You got yourself in a situation … if you could blame them for their predicament, 'you got yourself here without your phone' or if they were homeless something like that and this is your issue. I think it takes away – it disconnects us from them and takes away a responsibility to help because it's like you've already ended up in a situation. It's not my problem. (Jace, Male)

Generally and across various circumstances people will feel some level of empathy and will likely help a person in need. This positive frame of mind and or behaviour is more likely and more often associated with helping a target considered positively and interpreted as worthy of empathy and positive affect. This level of positive affect and behaviour is less likely in the case of a target person interpreted as negative and a circumstance imbued with the possibility of danger and risk. A level of wariness brings with it a level of inhibition:

> Ten years ago I would have handed over my phone. Now, I would ask him, 'Can you give me the number and I'll put on speaker phone and I'll hold it while you talk'' or something because that's my innate I would like to help but I do think in this current time, and because I have two children, I may think twice about helping. Ten years ago, I wouldn't have an issue but I've got two kids at home who need me and I would be on guard.' (Shae, Female)

Others are more egoistic and confronted by guilt, 'I'd feel a bit guilty, imagining that maybe he needs a lift or he's unwell, or lost.' (Docia, Female). However, generally the

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motivation to help is directed towards avoiding an unpleasant feeling and is associated with inaction:

> I think that if no one was helping, then I might be – it might tune it over in my head and feel – oh – I should have actually gone and done something. This is a bit distressing. What the hell am I'm thinking that this was an okay thing to do?' And maybe question myself – chastise myself a bit of why I didn't respond. (Gabby, Male)

An assessment of risk is central to engaging in a helpful behaviour. This assessment includes the extent to which one is able or unable to participate in the act. In some instances the easier option is to act, particularly when there is an associated degree of reward:

> It was a bit dangerous stuff that I thought about later. But I'd probably still do the same thing because you got to live it with yourself … It's like an oxymoron. If I turned away from that, I'd be more inclined to turn away from future opportunities to make a difference and my existence wouldn't make the world a better place. I never really want that. I'd like to make a difference. (Ada, Male)

4.6.2.2 The decision to not act

Many are fearful in risking harm to themselves particularly when there is less chance of reward. Fear inhibits the impulse to help. Different levels of fear are embedded within the variable context of a given situation or circumstance. Generally and across circumstances a woman in response will express greater fear than a man. Nonetheless, a woman, like a man will base her desire to engage in a helpful act on her emotional response to the cost of helping, 'A particular woman might feel afraid or not sure what the motives were.'(Docia, Female). A measure of risk is also dependent upon and interpreted from within the behaviour of the nearby bystander, 'You might be in certain circumstances wary of giving somebody your phone. Whether you're on your own, there are other people around, that sort of thing.' (Docia, Female)

The perception that the need for assistance is reduced or increased as a function of the target person's level of self-efficacy is a reflection of one's sense and/or interpretation of independence. The cost of helping is based upon an interpretation of a benevolent act as demeaning to the recipient. The observer's level of fear and or of overstepping the mark in terms of enabling a victim's autonomy is influenced by the target person's perceived level of physical disability and/or compromised personality:

I feel like he could do it himself. Plus a lot of people don't like to be helped when they don't need help. Especially – this is my interpretation of people with disability. A lot of the time, just because they have the disability, they feel they get sympathised way too much. They're over-sympathetic. It's like someone in a wheelchair. They go up a ramp. They're struggling. Someone comes up and helps off the ramp, and they'd be like, 'Why'd you do that? I could have done it by myself.' It could hinder who they are, their influences and – not influences. It could affect the way they think about themselves because having the ability to do it yourself would help them regain some of that confidence in themselves and I could still do this. I'm still functioning. I'm still good. So taking that away from someone when they don't ask for it … going over to help them fully would kind of negate that independence that they were trying to look for. (Lloyd, Male)

One's mood expressed as a subjective positive or negative emotional state at the time of the interaction may also influence behaviour. Mood influences motivation and in turn may increase or inhibit the person's intent to engage in helping. The subjective emotional state of feeling bad or good may drive an underlying motivation for helping:

It's also about the mood of the person. If the person helping has had a crappy day, I reckon they're less likely to help when compared with a person who has had a great

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day – they're more likely to help. … Around Christmas time people are more likely to help that person than when it's not Christmas. (Gabby, Male)

The observation of an event interpreted as an emergency and high in personal cost is also likely to be accompanied by an associated high level of stress. For some the experience of stress expressed as panic or shock may result in that person emotionally and behaviourally 'freezing', 'People get a shock and they freeze … I could totally understand them not going to help her because it's a really big deal.' (Ada, Male). In contrast, others feel aroused and disturbed based on past experience and previous encounters within similar circumstances. The repercussions associated with helping in the previous circumstance, particularly if unpleasant, are likely to influence one's intent to help in a similar circumstance, '... if something awful had happened and I'd been attacked by somebody, I think you'd be more reticent to stop and talk to a stranger at any time.' (Docia, Female).

Trust is the ultimate determinant in driving the decision to help a random stranger. More than any other factor, people are less likely to help when trust compromised by an uncertainty associated with the costs of helping, particularly when there is some question of the legitimacy of the random stranger and their needs, 'Some people wouldn't give their phones because they're like, "Oh, you got yourself into this scenario. I don't necessarily trust you. I don't know you." They wouldn't give you the phone.' (Jace, Male).

4.6.3 Behavioural Schema
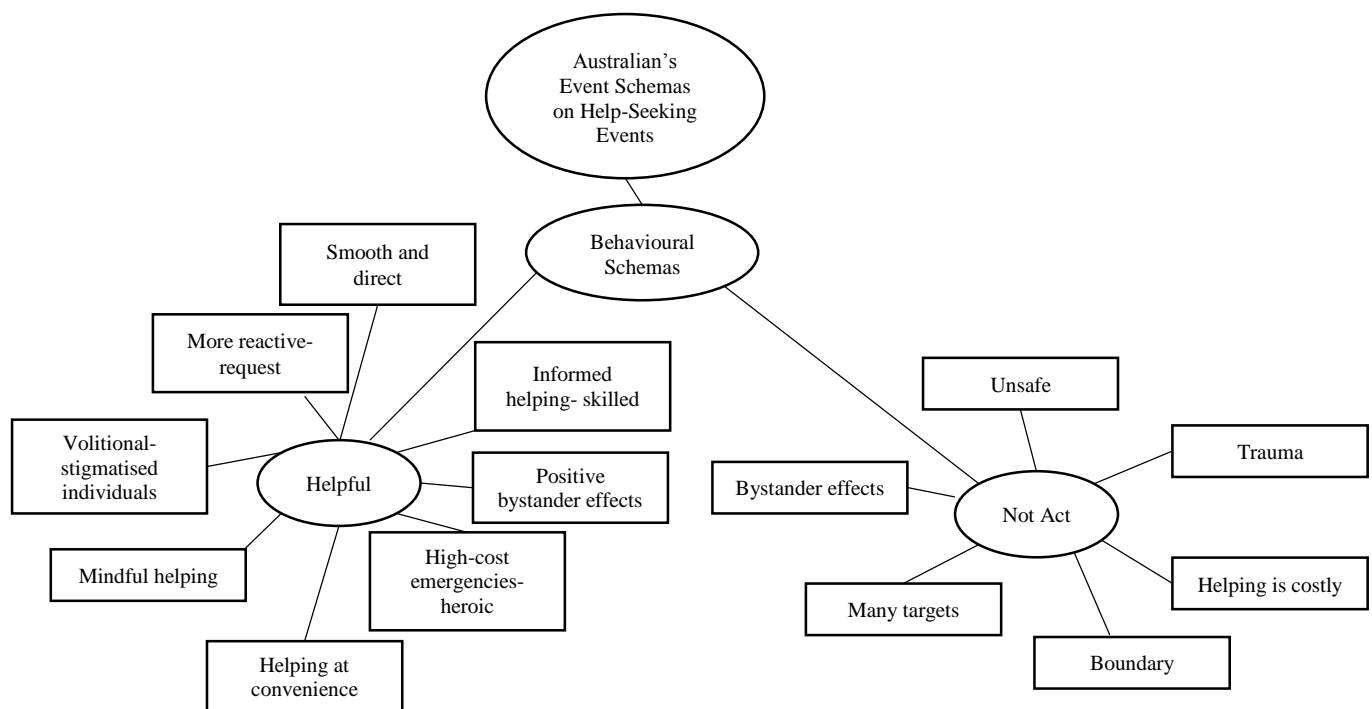
Figure 9. Australian's behavioural schemas on help-seeking events.

4.6.3.1 Helpfulness

Among the personality characteristics and associated motivational states which motivate people to help are empathy and the capacity to care. However, the intent to behave in a caring and emotionally positive way is significantly predicted by an interpretation of an event as legitimate and non-ambiguous. Pure and direct forms of altruism are less likely in ambiguous situations. The decision to not act under these circumstances may still lead to feelings of remorse and guilt. The careful interpretation of a circumstance vacillates between the need to protect oneself from harm and the desire to uphold his or her welfare. Help is often enacted in a vigilant way. People are generally unlikely to engage in risky behaviour, particularly in considering personal circumstance:

Ten years ago I would have handed over my phone. Now, I would ask him, 'Could you give me the number and I'll put on speaker phone and I'll hold it while you talk'

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or something because that's innate. I would like to help but I do think in this current time and because I have two children I may think twice about helping. Ten years ago, I wouldn't have an issue but I've got two kids at home who need me and I would be on guard. (Shae, Female)

The assessment of trustworthiness and the associated circumstance is embedded within the process of interpreting an intention to help. Helping may be perceived as high cost. By contrast, when the cost is considered low, for example, losing a relatively cheap mobile phone, there is little difference in the enacting of a type of help:

The worst thing that could happen is that I lose my phone and that would be bad, but I'd rather sort of take the relatively small risk of losing my phone than leave someone in a troubled situation. If he's going to take my phone, then he's – he could probably overpower me anyway, so I guess it's not going to make much of a difference if I'm holding it for him versus if he is holding it already. It's important to just sort of take the chance and help people even if the situation is a bit scary. (Amanda, Female)

In contrast, the enactment of a helping behaviour out of empathy and ritual acts with a perceived lower cost is relatively smooth and direct:

I would absolutely give him my phone. I've been in that situation myself, maybe not completely dishevelled or anything, but if there's no pay phones around – there's no payphones anymore – I would offer my assistance. I also work at a phone shop part-time and people come in all the time asking to use my phone. I have free calls, so, I mean – a middle-aged man – it wouldn't come to mind straight away that he was going to do anything wrong with my phone like break or run away with it. I don't think I would have any objections to letting him use my phone. (Jace, Male)

Others suggest that they might go further and become more reactive toward helping towards those actively seeking help and are clearly in trouble:

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That would probably make me more – even more responsive to want to help in some way. I might ask them could I help them beyond the phone call, where did they need to get to, is it – were they okay? Is it urgent? Perhaps offer them a lift. And just trying to help where you can. (Docia, Female)

The capacity to empathise enables one to interpret the relative condition of the target. This further enables the observer to tailor their behaviour to suit. Under these circumstances and cultural similarity, the observer is able to read in the target a level of stress. This cultural sharing allows one to resonate with the needs of the other. The need to instantly assess the plight of another is particularly important in helping a person in dire need of support, i.e., high cost emergency:

To stop the bleeding. If possible. If it's like an artery or the femoral artery, she's got like 30 seconds before she's dead. Just do the first aid in that and you got to tell people to call an ambulance if ambulance hasn't been called and do everything I could to stop the bleeding. (Ada, Male)

The volitional act of helping includes the weighing and balancing of the cost of helping against the cost of not helping. A decision to engage in a prosocial act is malleable. The effects of the proliferation of cases of seeking help when created a degree of fear and wariness in many people:

I'd be in two minds. There's a very large part of me that wants to help but there have been too many reported cases of where this is fake, where this is to pull you in. Again because she's looking distressed, I think I would call the police and say look this is just what happened and they'd probably say we're too busy but it clears my conscience that I've reported that she may need help. (Shae, Female)

Others are ambivalent in helping someone who is stigmatised in one way or another. For example, stigmatised groups such as the alcoholic, homeless, and the drug addict tend to

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be seen by broader society as having a physical or moral deficit which could potentially harm the well-being of others. Therefore, helping members of such groups is viewed as precarious:

Scary! Drug overdose would be my first. Trains still have a stop button somewhere. I will be pushing it. He needs help … I've had a lot of experience with that. But there is just too much out there at the moment and I have been on a train where I had to move my kids away. He could come back and start being violent. Someone needs help, but I'm calling in the professionals. If you could talk, you'll be getting the driver to stop at the next station and getting people like this that may be at stations. That there would be some – By the time you get to the next station, 'This is the carriage I'm in, you need to come. This guy is unconscious and I don't want to touch him for this, this, this reason' (Shae, Female).

The decision to helping in a number of public places is often difficult. The benefactor needs to be careful of and consider the perceptions of the nearby spectator and the target. Misinterpretations of an event arise from the way the aid is delivered and could bring discomfort to both the benefactor and recipient:

I guided this guy at the train station from the train to – along the platform and I was mindful of – firstly, what – how comfortable he was holding my hand, but also I was thinking, which sounds really weird – what are other people thinking? Here I am holding this guy's arm and we're kind of linked like we're a married couple. What [does] this mean? Because his cane was a bit – he wasn't really holding his cane because he didn't need to. I was kind of guiding him. With the woman, I think the help would be probably the same, but I would be more cautious about the touch and making sure it wasn't inappropriate or deemed inappropriate. That would be my concern. More so than the actual helping would be, how I'd be perceived by other people in relation to – how I'd be perceived by the woman, but also how I'd be

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perceived by other people as well, more so the woman. I don't want to be
misinterpreted as I'm going out with this person or that this is uncomfortable for this
person. (Gabby, Male)

Mindful helping is as important as a decision to intervene, without necessarily overly
and/or deliberately engaging a thinking process on how the aid should best be given.
Considering the recipient characteristics and their immediate surroundings, the intention to be
good and kind might instead deliver an emotional catastrophe:

I'd probably try and say something, depending on where I was. Especially if I was
with my daughter, it'd be a really easy excuse just to say, 'Okay, It's time to cross the
road!'. But if I got a couple of paces and it was obvious that he – I wouldn't want to
assume that he doesn't know because sometimes people will appear to be completely
blind, but have some level of vision and he might be able to tell from hearing that the
cars are – I wouldn't want to condescend him, basically, but if I got a couple of paces
and it was clear that he wasn't – he didn't realise, I'd probably try and say – just say
something like, 'It looks like the sounds for the crossing are broken, but the lights are
green'! Something like that! Just as a sort of friendly, by the way, and then sort of go
on my way. I wouldn't want to – again, I wouldn't want to sound like I was
condescending. (Amanda, Female)

Helping responses towards individuals in need are typically displayed in a pattern of
behaviour within one's capability. However, in some instances the decision to help stretches
the capacity to help beyond the helper's capabilities, especially in a context where the need is
not urgent:

I'd pull over and see what's going on. Not see what's going on – sort of see if I could
help or to just to see what's going on to see if I *could* help. If it's some sort of a
mechanical issue that I have no clue about, I'd probably going to be like, 'I can't

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really help you here. I'll be off. Have fun!' If it's something else like I need to a change a tyre, I don't have this tool and the jack's in the car. 'Sure. You could borrow the jack. I'll give you a hand. Do you know how to do it?' If it's something simple that I could help with … If it's something I can't fix though or I have no clue about, I'm like, 'Well? You've already called someone, so you could – you're pretty much set on your way. There's nothing I could do to help. So have fun.' (Lloyd, Male)

Time is another consideration. If time is not pressing, it creates the conditions for a more considered and sensitive response. The decision to help may be more direct in form and function:

I might – depends on how rushed I am. If I've got all the time in the world, I might say, 'How do you want to do this? I could help you cross the road? Do you want me to – do you want to hold my arm? Here's – my arm's on the left of you.' Give them descriptions and take it that way. If I was a bit rushed and there were stacks of people behind the person, then I might say, 'Hey, you could grab my arm? I'm going to touch your arm, so you know where it is, and I could just lead you.' As we're walking, I might talk to them about where they're going if they need a hand going to where they're going. (Gabby, Male)

Importantly, even though most benefactors have the capacity to donate money to the homeless beggar, however much or little they are prepared to donate does not equate to an observable lifting of fortune of the homeless beggar. However, despite the absence of any notion of bettering the life of another, one may still donate an amount which is immediately convenient and readily accessible:

If I had change, I'd probably give them change. I probably wouldn't give a note. I don't really ever give a note out. If I didn't have change, I'd say, 'No! Sorry!' Inconvenience? That would definitely be one. I think you become – especially living

in a big city, you become accustomed to being asked for change. Someone who's maybe never had a homeless person go up to them – they never had that experience before and someone came on, obviously in need and said, 'Could I have some change?' 'I had some in the back of my car or over there'. I'd probably be like, 'Oh! Of course!' But I think after you've been asked enough times, you start to – the black and white becomes less and there's – the grey area starts to get bigger, and bigger, and bigger, and bigger. If it's a massive inconvenience for me to go grab some change, I'll say 'No!'. It's not justified. Probably not! But I think that that's a reaction that I think a lot of people would have and I don't really know why. We don't want to put ourselves – again, we don't want to put – we love to help, but unless – if it puts us out too much, then we're not so responsive. (Jace, Male)

If a beggar leads the potential donator to be doubtful about the use of the donation, they would attempt to provide the means to the need which they think, would not give any potential negative effects, particularly on the help requester:

If you're homeless, the – you're going to want the basic things like food, water, shelter. Those types of things, they should be your priority. Not money… What you're asking for actually is money and what are you going to use that money on? Are you going to actually help yourself with it? Maybe? Maybe not? I feel money could be misused. If I have spare food with me, I'd probably give the homeless man that, but I'm probably not going to give him money. (Lloyd, Male)

On the other hand, extensive helping might be uncomfortable to individuals in need. Consequently the helping response is delivered in a way that has been requested rather than imposed:

Just not particularly stop. Just sort of pull up near them, because I've been travelling mine down and ask, 'are you okay?' If they are, if they say they're fine, I'm going to

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have leave. Respect their independence. Can't force your help on people. (Lloyd, Male)

A wide range of different types of events ranging from the non-emergency to the life-threatening elicit unique motivational explanations for enacting different helping behaviours. For example, there are differences in how the high-cost emergencies are perceived and the extent to which one experiences some level of suffering in order to benefit another person, particularly when the victim is regarded as powerless or helpless. This tendency to respond in one way or another to an event while unique in content is nonetheless consistent across genders:

If he's eight [years of age], chances are I could stand up in that water, so I'm going to run out there, but I'll be calling for help at the same time. If for whatever reason it does get too deep – I could swim better now but I would still so that I could direct the help. I'm still there say, 'This is where he is!' Because if I was to leave that spot, we've got no way of finding him. But I'm a mum. I'd just go to run in there whether you could swim or not, you're going to run in there and try and hold him above the water and hope that someone's going to help. You could scream [for] help and that's what it is. But do all that you can. The adrenaline would kick in and you'd be able to do stuff you can't normally do swim for the first time in my life. (Shae, Female)

A significant difference in helping behaviour in high-cost emergencies correlated with prior feelings of heroic or courageousness provided by how one perceives being helpful within the categories of behaviour, '…it depends how brave I was. Just steal a surfboard that just happens to be lying on the beach and paddle out and then fell off and drown.'(Ada, Male)

Typically, the chance of receiving help in a public place is disadvantaged by the bystander effects. In these circumstance people often wait for somebody to make the first move. The cue initiated in the first move instigates a domino effect with others actioning

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further behaviour, albeit not necessarily helpful. Helping in this situation is not only targeted towards an individual in need, but it also encompasses taking the initiator's role in having bystanders cooperate within the event:

Depending on where it was, I'll probably try and shepherd people away a little bit because I know that not overcrowding someone in that kind of situation is important. I'd ask, 'Is anyone here a doctor or a nurse or a paramedic or have training of how to help?' I've been in a couple of situations like that and I've sort of martialled people a bit – have been like, 'You go!' Once I was at Northland Shopping Centre and a lady collapsed and – an old lady, and I was just like, 'You go tell the centre staff. I'm calling an ambulance. You just stay with her and see if you could find out if anyone else is with her.' That kind of thing. Ordering people about. Someone's got to take control in that situation and I mean I've also been the one collapsed in that kind of situation, so I know how important it is that someone – that people – someone take control and someone take charge of the situation because it's – I think people really do mean well, but there is like a sort of tendency for everyone to assume that someone else has the situation under control and sort of just mill about. Someone's got to be the loud order giver and if no one else is going to do it, I'll do it. (Amanda, Female)

Others tend to play supportive roles in aiding the person in need in the presence of bystanders. Bystander are a prominent factor that might best account for indirect form of helping in which behaviours are aimed at easing other bystanders in providing care to the victims:

If I was going to offer help, I would probably be like, 'Is it something I could do?' I would probably direct out of the person helping her rather than her. Because I feel like he's already built a rapport with her. He's already sort of ascertained what has happened, and then maybe I could assist him in supporting her rather than supporting

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her directly. Because I know if there was – all these people being like, "Could I help? Could I help? Could I help?" in that situation, you probably wouldn't be much organised. (Jace, Male)

An inactive crowd is not necessarily a threat to helping. Helping nonetheless functions as an example to be followed by bystander observers:

This really irritates me as a person that in rush hour or just on trains in general, I think they set me off that no one actually does anything about anything like it and there'll be things happening and no one will talk to… I think anger really motivates me. I think the worry doesn't motivate me as much as the anger really. I think anger kinds of goes like a surge of adrenaline a little bit and that would probably push me to act more than to worry. I think I'd be hoping everyone saw that as well, kind of to help them shift their actions the next time. (Isadora, Female)

The extent to which one is skilled and experienced in helping is an additional important factor in determining one's willingness to help. Helping is largely informed by one's credentials and knowledge and boosts confidence in an intention to help in the thought that they know what to do in that particular circumstance:

These days because of a bit more experience in training, I'd probably be less anxious and feeling more confident about knowing what to do from a health side of things… You sort of do your first aid things. I mean obviously, you don't have a lot of equipment on you, but if the person was bleeding seriously, you grab your jumper or a shirt or whatever… I think probably prior to that, I still would have gone to help, but I now feel less – when I go to situations, less of that, 'Oh my God!' and more of a 'Okay!' Just go into that mode of 'what have I got to do first?' … To the degree that – and again, that's the training. Probably before, I would have just jumped in but the training now says to me, if there's something really – bit of riot or something

happening, a lot drunk people and things getting thrown, and it is part of a melee or something, you might go, 'I'll just step aside. I'll make a call.' Or I'll wander past and then make a call to the authorities sort of thing, rather than dive in. (Docia, Female)

Perceiving an individual as in need and valuing one's competency in providing aid would substantially regulate the need to intervene because helping in this instance is deemed as a duty or obligation:

I fell over at a train station and the train. Some train people helped me, but also there was this woman out of the blue helped me and she was saying to me, 'I've just learnt CPR and first aid. My son would expect me to respond to a situation like this and I don't think I could live with myself if I didn't respond'. (Gabby, Male).

The association between competency and feeling heroic is related to bystanders being more likely to step in or stand up during a violent emergency. Such dangerous events are high risk for those who get involved, imposing danger or threat to bystanders and victims alike. Nonetheless, helping is provided by bystanders with levels of self-efficacy in the perceived event of aggressiveness and exhibitions of injustice:

I'm not completely defenceless myself. I do long sword fencing here. So, if there're weapons, I actually feel more comfortable with things than stand-up fighting because I don't know that martial arts. I would be stepping in, standing up. If it's two people and they're both going at it and if it seemed completely sort of fair on the level, I'm probably not going to step it. If it's this guy has a weapon and this guy doesn't, and if it's an actual – someone's threatening someone type of thing, it's just not a two-way thing. They're both just arguing at each other for whatever reason and then it escalates into a fight, I'm probably most likely to step in because that's what those two have done. If it's some innocent person against someone who's not innocent and they've just lost it, then I would step in. (Lloyd, Male)

Gender differences influence the extent and form of helping, such that the helping response is enacted more urgently toward females than toward males. An underlying factor driving this difference is that women are believed to be more vulnerable than men. Men in contrast are more likely than women to be more in command of what they are doing:

> I may leave it like I might observe the man for longer than I would the woman; but other than that, I don't think I'd do it anything differently. I think it's just that natural – or not natural but the patriarchal side that we're kind of believing that women are more helpless and men have a sense of strength around them, so maybe this is about what's ingrained in me. (Isadora, Female)

4.6.3.2 The decision to not act

There are many factors underpinning the decision to not act to help or do nothing. A negative reaction toward helping may be rooted in selfish motives defined through situational and dispositional characteristics related to demand restrictions and complex responses in various help-seeking circumstances. The following examines specific stimulus events, personal and interpersonal conflicts, reticence and the ideas surrounding helping inhibition. Subsequent effort at threat reduction could be best justified by the extreme negative response where helping is perceived as unsafe:

> 'I'd be more wary if it was dark! If I was in an area that I didn't know so well! If I was a bit sort of lost anyway, then I'd probably be less likely to help. … Probably if it was dark and if I was in an unfamiliar place, I probably also be sort of thinking in the back of my head, 'If this did go bad, what would I do?' That sort of thing (Amanda, Female)

Fear tends to be amplified at times of the day and an unfamiliar location. Furthermore, fear may stem from an interaction in which the characteristics of the person seeking help are interpreted as violent and aggressive, 'Tone plays a big thing! If she was agitated and

aggressive … If she was similar in aggressiveness to a guy, then I probably would keep my distance from her.' (Gabby, Male)

The experience of fear is not restricted to the uncertain intuitive belief of the existence of a threat. Fear is also borne from personal experiences existing as psychological and/or physical scars. The lessons learned from previous encounters in similar events will likely trigger similar if not identical situational or dispositional cues. Being confronted within such an event may lead to withdrawal, 'If something awful had happened and I'd been attacked by somebody, I think you'd be more reticent to stop and talk to a stranger at any time, I suppose.' (Docia, Female)

Fear or caution is predominantly experienced when help-givers are apprehensive about the associated cost of their effort to help:

People don't – they don't want to risk hurting someone more. There's the thing of when – if someone might have a spinal injury, it's really dangerous to move them. You don't want to risk accidentally really hurting someone when they might've had a mild dizzy spell and you don't want to risk making them paraplegic or something. You definitely want to just be cautious and not sort of barrel in if you don't really know what you're doing. (Amanda, Female)

A physical handicap poses a different set of interpretations. Helping a person with a physical disability may be perceived as denigrating the resilience and ability of the handicapped to live on an equal footing with the non-disabled. It is then a question of recognising one's capacity to be independent with associated outcomes surrounding notions of confidence and efficacy:

I don't want to ask someone for help for them to genuinely not need my help at all and feel like I'm patronising them. … I learned from a young age … to be really careful about that, to think that you could rescue someone like people don't want their

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issues or things like that to be used as they don't want to be treated differently. They want to be treated like everyone else. Because of my background with individuals who have disabilities and such that to only give help when they obviously need it or when they ask for it, not to just offer it willy nilly. (Jace, Male)

There is also the assumption that the physically disabled are part of the normative characteristics in contemporary society and therefore there is the associated expectation of treating a person with a disability as one would treat a non-disabled person, 'If there're a lot of people around him then I will just assume that he would walk when they walk and I think most blind people would.' (Shae, Female)

A prospective helper may also interpret an intention and/or desire to help dependent upon the number of targets in a given situation. People are less inclined to help if there is more than one target, particularly if they feel that each of the targets is in a position or have the capacity to help each other:

People respond differently when more than one person is involved in a distress. It'll be very easy for people just to keep driving. They'll think because it's a couple and they've got two people, they could kind of talk to each other and sort it out together. (Isadora, Female)

Generally, the greater the number of targets together in a given situation is inversely related to the likelihood of a helpful response from an observer. Consistent with this observation is the 'bystander effect'. This effect suggests that in the instance of more than one bystander, any given bystander is more likely not to act and instead assume that responsibility onto the shoulders of the fellow bystander(s). A sense of empathic arousal stems from an awareness that there is an emergency. However, the presence of others decreases the likelihood of one's intention to help, '…if there's already someone else there, I wouldn't bother, because someone else is there.' (Lloyd, Male)

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A bystander's inhibition in intention to help is also based on their assessment of personal inconvenience and reactions to aversive environmental cues such as blood, smell, and/or the physical appearance of the victim. Satisfying a level of curiosity and not having to act is, to many, the preferred option:

> You'd get the person who's not comfortable, doesn't want to get involved and keep moving, or I don't know that it's more just because they want to see – to be voyeuristic, but people will stop and then think, '…what's actually happening? I don't know what to do'. (Docia, Female)

Helping is conceptualised as an expression of genuine care and concern. However, when confronted with a life-threatening emergency and the danger of somehow compromising one's own safety as a result of a well-meaning but perhaps misdirected behaviour, a passive response is considered more prudent:

> I probably wouldn't try and save him if I didn't know how to swim because I can't swim myself. Me trying to swim with him as well is not going to end well, then we're both in trouble. Then we'll just need extra help. For no extra gain. If it endangers my life, but I know I could help, then that's fine. If it endangers our lives with no extra help, that's just silly. (Lloyd, Male)

The main goals of this section were, first, to gauge the effect of prior knowledge and the expectation of a variety of help-seeking experiences and situations, second, to identify social and environmental variables that form the basis of the intention to help or not help, and third, to investigate whether any prior experience in similar circumstances predict one's intention to help. Bridging the existing knowledge that one has around inactions, actions, circumstances and assumptions in prosocial behaviour, it is possible to obtain the consequent degree of the occurrence of helping behaviours.
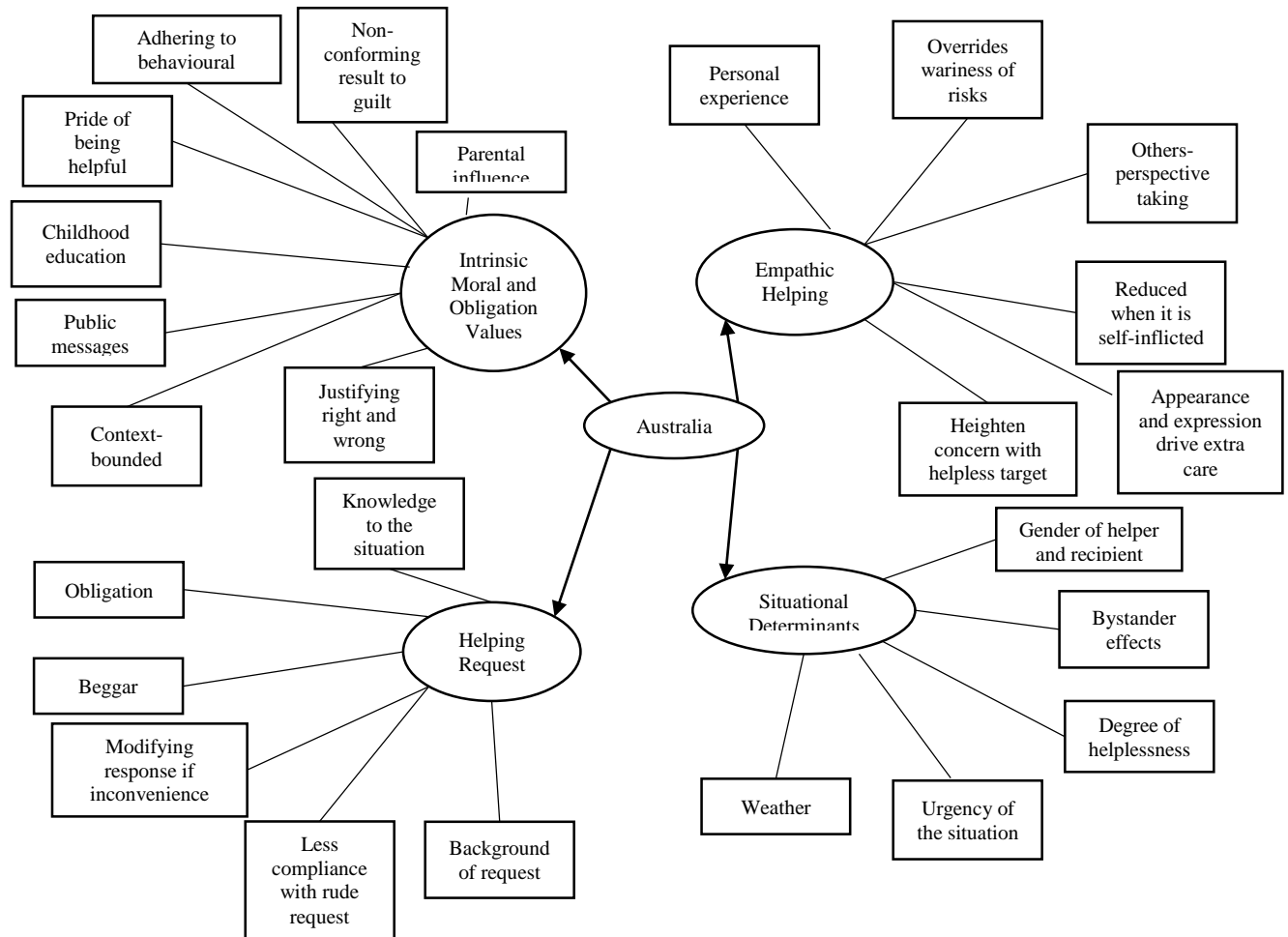
Figure 10. Reinforcement in helping behaviour of Australian.

4.7.1 Intrinsic moral and obligation values

One's moral conscience or compass is an important motivator in the intention and enacting of a prosocial behaviour. For example, people obey their internalised conscience through behavioural manifestation i.e., supporting others in need. For some, the power of moral conduct overrides the aversive consequences presented by situational cues. Hence, the decision to display prosocial behaviour is ultimately based on adhering to one's own behavioural standard, 'What's behind obligation is, well, if there's someone that needs help, even if I don't like them and don't want to help them, I'll still help them.' (Ada, Male)

The importance of one's moral compass is not only restricted in fostering moral behaviours, but also justifies what is considered right or wrong in categorising behaviours, under which label. A response to help another is considered consistent with good morals:

> I'd probably ask could I help him cross. To me, it's just the appropriate thing to do. It's just – yeah – just a courtesy. A normal courtesy that you would give to anybody. I guess I feel – would feel – it's just part of being a good citizen. To help somebody who may need help or to offer to help.' (Docia, Female)

The development of good and proper social morals and associated prosocial behaviours induces guilt if and when confronted with non-conforming moral standards. Thus, prosocial outcomes avoid the culpability of having committed one's conscience to a level of ignorance especially when considering self-awareness in having the opportunity and capacity to coordinate a helpful response:

> It's just nature for me going to be helpful and not wanting to hear on the 6 o'clock news that he got run over, because that's a big proof again my work, it's not my responsibility but to me it is. If I heard on the 6 o'clock news that he'd been run over that would be with me for life. He could say I don't need your help and well that's fine but I know that I've offered help. (Shae, Female)

Anticipating guilt in not conforming to one's own moral standards is one of the affective antecedents of a prosocial orientation. Pride also plays its part in this instance. Acting toward different events is associated with variable degrees of pride. Pride is particularly associated with one's capacity to act in helpful and caring ways:

> I would feel really good. I think for one or two the other times I'd feel proud that I've actually helped someone out and done my good deed for the day. And I'd feel really good that I've actually done something that's had a benefit to other people that's made a difference. (Gabby, Male)

These moral values in significant part come from the internalisation of parental influence. Parents demonstrating and considering the rights and welfare of others serves as a model to help children coordinate and develop altruistic personality and behaviour. This contributes to the grounding of moral reasoning, which in turn facilitates prosocial tendencies:

> This desire to help probably comes from my parents because they've – they're great parents because they're my parents. Although some people don't like their parents, I definitely think it's from them because if they could help people, if someone else need their help and they can, they will. If they – someone asked for their help and they have no way of helping, they might say something that – they try, they might try. … I feel that's where I get it from, because I know they'll definitely help if they could.'
> (Lloyd, Male)

Inculcating morals consistent with a child behaving pro-socially involves a primary focus on several principles including perspective taking, empathy, independence, sharing and cooperating. Understanding these elements as morally right during childhood contributes to stable tendencies toward prosocial functioning across the lifespan:

> If there's a conflict, like often the children hit or do whatever to each other. I often ask the person who's done – check on the person who's hurt firstly and then secondly, address the person who's done this thing and go, 'Have you checked if they're okay?' Like and pay more attention to that rather than punishment. I try to create an environment where children have a lot of expectations. So as people they will grow kind of a bit more independent and a bit stronger. A bit more able as well so that maybe they will be able to act as adults. Just helping like we do a little a share turn-taking. All of those things to promote helping. (Isadora, Female)

Powerful public messages are another source of moral education. Messages may reinforce and or instil new values and awareness and are at times relatively powerful in supporting prosocial behaviours:

There are a lot of public safety campaigns about that kind of stuff – both be a good commuter ones and like certain things could look like – what was it? … It was cerebral palsy or something, but campaigns of people – people who – even if they present a bit differently, everyone's the same. So I think people are pretty medically aware of that kind of thing. I mean in my own limited personal experience, people definitely helped despite the inconvenience to themselves. (Amanda, Female)

Nonetheless, moral reasoning can fall down in the urban context. Instead, the urban 'city' dweller focuses on 'here-and-now' situational cues in immediately considering a state of need in place of a measure and careful consideration of the nature of an event:

I've lived everywhere in Melbourne and I'm a lot more street smart now and I could put the city face on. I will never have a city heart. I could play the game up with the city face on and I'll do my stuff. I'd probably teach my children to do those sorts of things as well. I'd be very wary and we do have most discussions, so as much as you want to help someone, you need to be wary of what their motives are. Whether they really are in need or whether it's a case of there's a white van at the corner and you're about to hop in it. (Shae, Female)

The helping response has been understood as the manifestation of several moral principles in which any transgression arouses a state of dissidence.

4.7.2 Empathic Helping: Care and Concern for Other's Need.

Empathy evokes an altruistic drive to improve another's welfare. Empathetic understanding is displayed and reinforced through day to day observations of others' misfortunes and through personal experience, '…it's a normal human sort of situation that

not everybody has access to a phone. I've been stuck myself before and it's not like we have lots of public phones that work anymore.' (Docia, Female). Empathy fosters prosocial actions and is associated with compassion, care and concern in reducing others' sufferings. This intention to benefit others overrides the wariness of harm associated with the intervention, 'I didn't even think of danger. I was more about her. If that has been inflicted by someone else, it could happen to me; but I don't know anything about that.'(Isadora, Female)

The ability to build emotional and cognitive capacities to take the perspective of those in need of help and transfer this capacity to a child or other is a much stronger antecedent of helping actions. However, displays of care are construed as an empathic disposition towards a familiar person and not a common treatment given to any random stranger, 'I often put myself in the shoes of what it that was my grandmother. What if that was my dad? I don't want him standing there. I want someone to help. That's how I approach things.'(Shae, Female)

Empathy was more overt in instances in which a target looked considerably troubled with the circumstance. Individuals with the capacity to empathise help reduce the plight of the person in need. However, if the source of the troubled response is perceived as self-inflicted, the tendency to act kindly is decreased:

What I have learned is that people do generally genuinely want to help you and sometimes that means – even if it's something minor – putting yourself out to do that. I think there is a willingness to help, especially when someone seems maybe dishevelled or anxious like they need help. You could tell when someone needs help. … For the most part people would be willing to assist except in instances where someone may be homeless or someone may be seemed to get themselves in that situation and I think people would be less inclined to help them then. (Jace, Male)

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Persons whose appearance and expression clearly display that they are in an urgent need attract extra concern and care, i.e., the disadvantaged and handicapped, '…most people would be concerned about the blind man and that they would do. They would probably – most people will be going to check that everything's okay and that he's not in significant danger.' (Ada, Male)

Unambiguous and visible environmental cues, i.e., blood, signify a threatening situation. The concern for another person in distress is heightened with an obvious awareness that the person is in a dire need of help:

The main circumstance in which people might not be as concerned would be if it wasn't as obvious what was happening, if it wasn't – that if there wasn't a physical wound – hard creating compound words. If there wasn't a physical wound, then maybe they might be worried. The person's having like a drug fit or something. They might not necessarily be as attentive as they would if it was someone who was obviously wounded and not dangerous. (Amanda, Female)

While the bases of an empathetic act are multifaceted, a single substantive reason and/or sign is enough to remove any level of sympathy. For example, the initial reaction to a scruffy appearance and condition initially may engender a degree of empathy, such as what people normally experience when seeing a beggar. However, the emotion tends to fade away as one becomes less supportive of the beggar's plight:

A part of me is thinking – I'd feel sorry for him. But a part of me would be also thinking, 'Is this just a way of getting money for a drink or drugs or what have you?' You can't help but well, I'm probably making that little judgement in my mind, which may not be fair and even if it is for that, it's like – well, if I give this person money, am I helping him or not? I'd probably feel a little bad because it doesn't really matter whether it's for drugs or whether it's something to eat. Obviously their situation is not

great. It might be genuine? Well, it's genuine either way if they're that desperate for money. Regardless of what's brought them to their position. They could be mentally ill, a veteran with PTSD, anything like that. There's also that little thing in there saying, 'is this a scam or is this just –?' I have heard – I don't know whether it's actually true, I think they're just – that it was a way of getting some money, but – anybody who has to do that is probably in some sort of situation. If I've got some loose change, I'll probably give him a bit.' (Docia, Female)

Socialisation and the exposure to gender stereotyping increases prosocial sentiments. These sentiments include compassion, care, and concern. The female target elicits a more compassionate response from bot males and females. The compassionate response generally centres on an interpretation of inequality in the target's circumstance. Assuming that her situation is beyond her capacity to manage, empathy is integral to the way people perceive and respond to her circumstance:

I'd probably feel pretty sorry for her. I think there's more or a wider array of reasons why she'd be homeless than the man. I guess mental disorders, being in abusive relationships, or there's a family in the past not having the support she needs. It's not very specific. Being beaten by her husband would be more specific or a partner, language barriers possibly, lack of education. Same thing, I would actually feel sad for her. I'd still give her money. Probably the same amount. I'd probably be sadder. (Ada, Male)

4.7.3 Explicit preliminary helping request

Helping behaviour is influenced by an array of factors among which is the clarity in the request for help. Offering help randomly and without a clear verbal need of assistance may be viewed as presumptuous. Prior to engaging in a helpful act with someone who appears disadvantaged, most will seek knowledge as to the true extent of need:

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Unsure and still concerned but I probably would forget about it and less likely to … – It's a funny situation. … It is about that the first scenario where some actually came to you and reached out. Whereas, the second one is that it's my observation rather than them actually taking, actively taking help. (Isadora, Female)

A direct request generally influences a reaction from others and perhaps is the most accurate way of interpreting the type of help that is being sought. Help-giving in this instance is considered a sense of obligation albeit inconvenient. The helping request is just a matter of adhering to the social norm, something that people do almost every day:

Sometimes things happen and you have to take time out of your day. If you're walking on the street and someone else asks you directions and you might lose ten minutes and try to show them where to go or walk them to a crossroad or something like that. It's just the encounters that could happen when you go out in the world. (Amanda, Female)

When being requested for a favour, people find themselves getting an opportunity to perform a good deed. Therefore, helping is more than an obligation:

If you could do something good, you probably should. If you're in a position to help someone, then you should probably help them, especially if they're actually asking you for help and you know what you could do to help them. (Amanda, Female)

There are a number of social norms which inform the need to address a cry for help willingly and generally supportively. Nonetheless, the provision of help is conditional on the type of help seeking event: For example, help-givers are more likely to help others, even though the cry for help may be significant and inconvenient, 'If someone asked for their help and they have no way of helping, they might say something that – they try, they might try. They'll definitely help if they could.' (Lloyd, Male)

People who value helping others in need are still motivated to comply with a request for help even if inconvenient and time consuming. Time is a principal concern in deciding to act. When the specified helping behaviour takes more time and effort, those who intend to help may modify their response to suit the target:

Many years ago down in Prahran I had someone ask for money to get on the train and I was actually looking for work, someone had given me a train voucher, 'Here, have my ticket!' I've walked away and I've gone, 'Oh, my goodness, they never wanted that ticket.' But I thought I was being helpful at the time because I was rushing to an interview, you know like, 'here have my ticket'. A second later. I've got into the interview and, 'Oh! They wanted money'. But that was the question they asked for. They wanted money for a train ticket. (Shea, Female)

Above all else, attitude drives a help-seeker's decision-making and is the principal reason for not engaging in helping behaviour. People are also less willing to comply with the request if it is being made in a rude and annoying way:

If he walks straight up and does it really blatantly, obviously like – and does really quickly so he could get to the most people possible. It's like, you know, I wouldn't feel as good beyond that. He needs to put a bit of effort. If he is polite or not. If he comes across with a kind of sense of entitlement, it kind of feels like he's trying to rob me. So that would make me less likely to want to give it to him. (Ada, Male)

Beggars are likely to use an occasionally effective compliance-gaining tactic. However, when overwhelmed with the request, the helper is likely to not comply and suggest that the request was inconvenient:

Inconvenience – that would definitely be one. You become – especially living in a big city, you become accustomed to being asked for change. Someone's whose maybe never had a homeless person go up to them – they never had that experience before

and someone came on, so like obviously in need, and said, 'Could I have some change?' I had some in the back of my car or over there.' I'd probably be like, 'Oh! Of course!' But after you've been asked enough times, you start to – the black and white becomes less and there's – the grey area starts to get bigger, and bigger, and bigger, and bigger, so if it's a massive inconvenience for me to go grab some change, I'll say 'No!'. We don't want to put ourselves – again, we don't want to put – we love to help, but unless – if it puts us out too much, then we're not so responsive. (Jace, Male)

A helping request is associated with an awareness which in turn leads to the process of deciding whether to offer help. The background of the helping request is important in the decision-making process. Specifically, despite blindly following the explicit helping request made by the help-seeker, the helping decision involves weighing their appearance, the setting, and the time of the day:

Someone across the road, it was very late at night and they came knocking at the door and asked – they had a broken down car and I got a really bad vibe about them. The car had a broken window and I thought, 'Is this a stolen car?' It was a bit of a beat up old car and that – then they sort of explained it. It sounded rational, but whereas normally, I'd – the guy said he'd run out of fuel. Normally I'd probably have said, 'I want to help you and I'll take you down the garage.' But I knew I had a jar – a can full of fuel in my garage, so I gave him the can. I didn't let them in the house, but wandered out – gave them the can of fuel and said, 'Just pop it over the fence when you're finished. (Docia, Female)

Assistance is most likely offered corresponding to a request after assessing the situational cues that give them a clue about the legitimacy of the event. The helping request is a powerful mechanism to increase the chance that the potential helper will comply. But if the

request is unclear, they are more likely to say 'No!' Regardless of which kind of request is being used, either verbal and or physical, it is enough to have a passer-by attend to the emergency situations. With the absence of a request, passers-by assume that help-giving is unnecessary. The response to the situation might be that nothing is wrong. However, it could sway to an active engagement on the part of the helper as a result of an effective direct request:

They're on the phone. I probably wouldn't stop because I would assume that they're actually okay. If they were – if it was in a country area, then I probably would stop and go – well – no – if they pulled – no – I think they would need to actually – to be totally honest, they would need to actually stop me if I was to stop. Wave me down to tell me that they needed that. Otherwise, I would keep driving. If they would be clear with what help they wanted. If they were really unclear in what help they wanted, if I ask them questions about, 'Hey, is there anything I could do?' and they're kind of mumbling or a bit all over the place, or not really clear, or going, 'I really don't know', then I would go, 'Okay! See you later.' Having some clarity about what I could do. (Gabby, Male)

The random offer of help is less likely without some form of request. Beyond the direct request, helping may be characterised as condescending, particularly toward the stigmatised and disadvantaged:

I don't want to ask someone for help for them to genuinely not need my help at all and feel like I'm patronising them. One thing I learned from a young age was to be really careful about that. To think that you could rescue someone like – people don't want their issues or things like that to be used as – they don't want to be treated differently. I'd be frightened about patronising him and it would also be – I would assume that he knows that there's no sound. I'm sure someone who is blind gets that

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all the time in situations where they just don't need help and I'd be jaded by people asking me all the time, 'Do you need me to hold your hand while you cross the road?' I wouldn't really appreciate that. … I would make that assumption about them as well that they may not appreciate it. (Jace, Male)

Without verbalising or gesturing a request, most assume that one's decision to help is neither welcome nor desired:

Unless they were trying to wave me down to get some help or something, I'd assume that there's really nothing I could do that would really be of benefit to them. I probably wouldn't really respond and that would be because it's what I would want if I was them. Most of my previous experience is to be that they don't want help unless they're asking for it. My scenario of breaking down and people stopping to help me increases my fear of breaking down, I guess. It's just something else to be anxious about when your car breaks down or just the car itself, but having people come and try to offer you help when you're really pretty pissed off, and then having to be nice to them, it's pretty taxing. And anticipating that happening again and again each time someone drives past is, yeah, makes me really anxious on top of your car problems. (Ada, Male)

Women who make explicit helping requests are more often than men to be successful with their requests, particularly when the helper is male. The relative success of women may be in part explained by the nature of their request. Women in contrast to men tend to be more expressive and more effective in terms of their interpersonal communication skills:

I'd be more likely to give it to her, but – it feels like I would do the same, but I kind of feel that she might be – and this is total stereotypes – I feel that she might be verbally more articulate and have more of a capacity to state her case to me. If she was doing that, then I would probably more likely say 'Yes' to it. If she followed me

and went, 'Come on, I really need this. You got to do this!' then I probably would

eventually give her the phone. 'Here you are. Go ahead. Do it.' She's more articulate

and therefore able to explain her situation more. It would make more sense to me.

(Gabby, Male)

4.7.4 Situational determinants of helping provision

The interaction between dispositional and situational conditions explains why people

are more or less likely to engage in helping a person. The following examines situational

characteristics of the help-seeking, involving the recipient, context and environmental factors.

Individualist culture such as Australia, in contrast to collectivist cultures such as

Malaysia, are more likely to critically judge each single element of physical context as part of

the process of making the decision to help. Altruism is variably expressed according to

situation, especially when comparing the extent or likelihood of an altruistic act between

events considered non-serious and a high cost emergency. However, these situational effects

do not necessarily account for the inhibition of a helping act in an emergency. Such effects

are prominent in the approach undertaken to elicit the behaviour considering direct and

indirect requests for help and the length of time between the intention to act and the

performance of the act in itself. In an unambiguous and highly urgent situation, illustrated in

vignette four, vignette five and the final vignette, helpers spend less time in cognitively

assessing legitimacy and severity. The helping response is more immediate, particularly in

the absence of other bystanders.

However, across the circumstances presented within each vignette, the female target

in contrast to the male target is more likely to receive help from male and female helpers.

Across circumstances, women are perceived as less threatening:

I feel a little bit more comfortable helping a woman because there's not sort of that

gendered element of violence. Obviously women could do stuff like that, but there's

also probably – I would feel if it did turn violent, I'd be a bit more likely to be able to win a fight with a woman. People will be more likely to help a woman. There wouldn't be that sort of – as much of that sort of fear at the back of your mind especially if you're a woman yourself. I think most people would – again, if anything, more people would help the woman because it would be perceived as being a bit safer. (Amanda, Female)

The intention of a female to help a male is more likely when there are other observers in the near vicinity. The additional observers act as a buffer in reducing the cost associated with the intervention. For example, women are more likely to engage in helping in a public setting:

I was on the train. I'm not going to the doctors, but travelling. Someone asked if they could use my phone. I was like 'Oh? I'm a bit 'cautious!' But then what struck me as kind of important to that circumstance was there were lots of people around. I think, equally, if you're all looking puzzled and, you know, he's not looking alarmed, if there was a time he's looking aggressive or anything, I'd be kind of looking to see who's around, but I would give it. (Isadora, Female)

In most circumstance a person is assumed to have a level of self-efficacy in operating within their lives. The exception is when situational factors compromise one's capacity to act. For example, an event perceived as compromising is a sufficient obstacle in performing or not performing an act. Other factors act to compromise an intention to act and included the vagaries of the environment, '…if it was unpleasant weather or whatever, that'd probably make me more inclined to offer to help.' (Docia, Female).

Important in determining an intention to help is a consideration of the interaction between the urgency of the situation and the target's degree of helplessness. Generally, an individual person is less inclined to help if there is more than one person in distress. Inaction

in this instance is often rationalised on the assumption that the second or subsequent person, dependent on the characteristics of the event, have the capacity to help, e.g., the male is viewed as competent in attending to a broken-down car:

> Because it's a couple, one's on a phone. Maybe they're calling RACV [automotive services]. Maybe they're getting it sorted. I mean but I'm sure that if there's a couple there, one of two of them would know how to change a tyre. Maybe I wouldn't even stop if I saw them on the phone. You make an assumption that a man would be more likely to be able to resolve a problem with a broken car than a female. I would assume the guy in the car knows what's happening. But then also I would think that they probably don't need my help. Partly to do with the whole boys like cars and he'd probably fix it and this sort of thing. (Jace, Male)

Helping is also interpreted as appropriate on the basis of a situation considered to be especially urgent. The significance of this event may be immediately determined by a visible cue:

> Stop the bleeding! If it's like an artery or the femoral artery or something, she's got like 30 seconds before she's dead. Just do the first aid in that and you got to tell people to call an ambulance. If ambulance hasn't been called and do everything I could to stop the bleeding. Get her friend to keep her calm if she was conscious. Hearing her crying first, obviously, would've evoked some kind of feeling to get me over there. … "crying"- it's a signal for help which is often suppressed if they wouldn't get the help they need. (Ada, Male)

However, the observation of drunkenness evokes a different response. Observing a drunken person collapse onto the floor might indicate to those familiar with the situation that it is a normal symptom of excessive intoxication. The same symptom may also lead to a more sympathetic reaction:

Could be just drunk. Had one too many! But either way, it's not good. Whether he's just collapsed because he's had too much to drink or whether he's – there's something else going on. Again, I don't know if that's my training but I'd be looking to see. We look for that sort of thing sometimes. Basically, it's the training, but I'd look just to see what his conscious level is. Could he still move his hands? – Squeeze your hands! All that sort of thing, because – how unconscious is this person? Even if it's caused by alcohol, it doesn't really matter. Unconscious is unconscious, so it's still dangerous. (Docia, Female).

The scenario of an untidy and dirty person who comes across and panhandles for money is relatively common in public spaces. These spaces are openly accessible and include but are not limited to train/tram/bus stations, shopping pavements and markets. How a person presents themselves has a direct impact on how that he or she is read and this in turn and of course will either inhibit or promote an interaction of one sort or another. Unkempt dress, unpleasant smell and the act of begging are often associated with systemic homelessness:

Maybe how those people look. … A lot of homelessness is caused from drugs, so they're actually quite strong. I believe they're strongly correlated. Might not always be the case. So don't give money. Give food and drink. If I have spare food with me, I'd probably give the homeless man that. But I'm probably not going to give him money. I feel they're just wasted. It's they're just going to prefer to themselves into this routine, this life. They need something to change it, not continue it and money may not necessarily be the answer to that. (Lloyd, Male)

The intention to help in the public space is complicated by the bystander effect. Nonetheless, cues of information from bystanders may be used to examine and better understand the emergency and more effectively inform the intervention:

I'd probably go to the guy who's kneeling next to her … I'd probably in that moment assume that he was with her or that he knew her because he was attending to her and just be like, 'Is there anything I could do? Could I call an ambulance?' I'd ask, 'Is anyone here a doctor or a nurse or a paramedic or have training of how to help?' I've been in a couple of situations like that and I've sort of martialled people a bit. (Amanda, Female)

A high level of ambiguity is an important factor in decreasing the probability that people would intervene. Communication with and reading cues from bystanders may serve to better inform the helper. Positive bystander effects occur when the bystanders cooperate in engaging in a helpful act. A group based intervention is more effective and efficient when individual intervention seems lacking.

The bystander effect may also contribute to lesser engagement in a helpful act in circumstances considered non-serious. In this circumstance, the helper may misinterpret the severity of the circumstance:

My first reaction would be, 'Is anyone rushing to his aid?' If I'd seen him before, like, grimacing his hands and his face, I'd probably think he's just some drunk guy. If no one helps at all, I would still run over and see if he was okay. But my first reaction wouldn't be to do that. It would be to see if someone else is doing it first because it's less complicated for me. If no one was helping, maybe if it was my next stop, like the next stop was my stop that could be a variable. (Jace, Male)

4.8 Experience Being an Integral Aspect of Helping Response

Previous experience and/or engagement with helping behaviour predict the likelihood of current helping behaviour. Life experiences are a major basis for learning, and prior direct or indirect encounters with the help-seeking events not only predict the perceptions of the subject, situation, and its interaction variables but also influences the frequency and type of

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helping behaviour. The relationship between experience of altruistic traits and helping response may be achieved through vicarious learning. Pivotal in understanding this relationship is gauging the cognitive adaptation process:

4.8.1 Fitting-in with pre-existing information: 'I've done with this!'

The helper experience of a similar if not same event predicts reactions to such events experienced by others. The past experience of being helped activates thoughts and feeling about giving and receiving:

I've needed to use someone else's phone because I haven't had money for a payphone. There've been other times when someone's given me their phone and said, 'Here, you could make the phone call.' I've tried to give them some money for it and they've said, 'No! No! No!' It's a really nice feeling that people have done that. It's amazing because I've often thought about if I was to do that. I would be more anxious about – 'God, are they going to run away with the phone?' 'What's going to happen with the phone? 'Who are they calling?' It actually gives me faith in the community and in other people and also makes me think – 'I could do that quite easily!' It's not a big issue. It's heading more towards giving people the benefit of the doubt. (Gabby, Male)

Being in the target's place evokes a deeper understanding of the unpleasant feeling of having to approach and request help from the unknown stranger. As a result, helping in the community is not viewed as suspicious and or self-demeaning:

A sense of shared experience to this other human in this situation because there were times where I have been in an unknown place and I have my phone ran out of battery or for some reason. I've been in stuck and felt so awkward about asking anyone. Maybe based on my experience, I would want to help more. In my thinking, people might do it more often and it may be less and less awkward for people. I would want

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more people to help if that was the simple case of just needing the phone and there was nothing else attached. (Isadora, Female)

Witnessing the helping reaction of others to the needs and misfortunes of someone in need of help may motivate a modelling of a positive social attitude. Helping behaviour in this sense is a cultivation of solidarity with the community:

I've seen situations like that of an older person tripping on the road and people sort of rallying around to help them up and make sure the cars could see what's going on and that, especially like children and old people, everyone's got to look out for them. People who have an obvious disability definitely you'd look out for them. Try not to over step, but I mean I guess at the end of the day, it's better to over step slightly than to risk someone actually being seriously injured. (Amanda, Female)

Perhaps the most effective source of modelling comes from a person's parental upbringing. The concept and practice of prosocial behaviour is best modelled by the parents for the child:

When I was younger, mum and dad pulled over, helped a – because we're travelling from here to Canberra and there was someone pulled over and they just needed a jumpstart. Dad got out and helped them jump start the car. It's just a nice thing to do. Mum sat in the car with me, just talking to me and said, 'We're just stopping and helping this people and we'll be on a way.' I said, 'Alright.' I took that helping people that you can. If you could help, help! It's not difficult. It's probably where I get it from - most of it. (Lloyd, Male)

Prosocial actions may also result from informed training. For example, being trained and competent in first aid boosts confidence in the bystanders' abilities to intervene during emergencies:

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I'd done some volunteering at the ambulance. I know first aid anyway, so I would always be inclined to approach somebody if I'd seen someone that appears to be in some sort of trouble. These days because of a bit more experience in training, I'd probably be less anxious and feeling more confident about knowing what to do from a health side of things. Probably prior to that, I still would have gone to help, but I now feel less – when I go to situations, less of that, 'Oh my God!' and more of a, 'Okay!' Just go into that mode of 'What have I got to do first?' (Docia, Female)

Prior experience and training in building a 'helping model' is not only useful in the broad sense. The knowledge and experience provides a methodical approach to help-giving and the capacity to instantly and without hesitation enter into a compromised circumstance. Among the advantages of this approach is an informed and more rational assessment of the costs and rewards of help-giving in any given circumstance:

I have no hesitation in those circumstances. If there's a lot of blood, I've had enough training to know that there's very little danger to me getting a blood-borne disease because I don't have any cuts on hands. My first thought is to stop that bleeding, reassure her, call the paramedics, and try to get someone to get some water to her. (Shae, Female)

In contrast to the objective basis of knowledge and experience, the gathering of and subsequent interpretation of less objective data needs to be carefully considered. A person's inclination toward helping someone in need may at times be based on the experiences and views of another with their experience with a similar event. If the views of the other are negative, then one is less inclined to help:

The stories that you hear about people doing these fake scenes where their car has broken down, they pull you in, you try and help them. They hop in your car and then drive off. It's funny. It's from the social media. I don't know whether they're – how

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true they are? They're probably extremely rare circumstances? But that's something that kind of pops in my mind when I think about this – there is this risk to helping people particularly in like-car situations. (Gabby, Male)

In this day and age of an extremely diverse and infiltrative social media, there is much to inform decision-making in general, including help-giving. Nonetheless, the information gleaned from the social media tends to be consistent with one's own values and attitudes:

There is a sickness inside the media that comes from the way it's set up. It's an empire that's passed on generationally. It has become the number one media, especially the number one way of processing information. But it's not even what information gets put out there. It is how it's put out there. … The media on one hand does have cute little tales of social justice, do reflect a human desire to help people. But then, on the other hand they instil fear into everyone: '…don't put yourself out if you help someone, one of this happens, you could get right, you could get killed. These people maybe undeserving of your help. They've caught themselves into this situation! Things like that! … When you've grow up with that in a small age and you see a lack of small deeds and the media is telling you it's okay to call people 'Boat People!' It is okay to think yourself as better! It is okay not to offer assistance because you don't need to. … That's a massive, massive, massive reason why people would or wouldn't assist someone who needs help. (Jace, Male)

The social media, particularly via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter engage in self-presentation with a focus on perceived social desirability. The information may be persuasive dependent upon a consideration of its legitimacy. For example, there has been much information in the social media in recent times on the asylum seeker. The act of helping in certain situations might affect people's attitude towards the victim's characteristics of the target and associated event and in turn inform the decision to assist:

There is a lot of fear in the community and that that makes people hesitant about responding to situations. Just even in us talking about it, I have given numerous examples of what I've heard in the media and I don't even know if it's true? Some of the stuff is true, but it's stuck in my head and it's an interesting thing about thinking about where these stories generate and how much power they have, even though we don't even know if they're true or not. They still stick in your head and I even think sometimes when we know they're not to be true, they still resonate in some strange way. (Gabby, Male)

Perhaps the most influential form of information and knowledge related to decision-making is in everyday communication, particularly with those close to you such as and influential family member and or friend. This information is organised into a pattern of thinking used to guide subsequent behaviour. This source of information is largely based on trust and is a more efficient means of making a decision:

Something someone said once, it stuck with me! They travelled overseas to Bali … and they said, 'If you're ever going to give to the homeless there, give food and drink. That way you'll know what it's going through. Do not give money, give food and drink'. I remember this, so I'm like, 'cool!!' There's a homeless woman came on the train … asking everyone for money for food, so I gave her food. (Lloyd, Male)

A warm, grateful and appreciative reaction as a result of a help-giving behaviour is an emotional reward to the help-giver. This reward serves to inform future behaviour:

They don't have to be excited or anything, it's just generally kind of positive experience that would encourage me to continue to offer that kind of help in the future. If they reacted sort of like a bit standoffish or a bit sort of defensive or not so openly towards my offer of help, I'd feel really sad and I'd probably be less likely to help in the future to somebody else. (Ada, Male)

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There is a sense and/ or degree of empowerment in help-giving, enacted through improving their life as well the life of the target. In contrast, the failure to adequately appreciate those who have helped ultimately compromises the extent to which one considers the help-giving worthwhile. Fortunately, the positive reinforcement from within the individual's personal sense of self is based largely on their history of social learning and will continue to inform behaviour:

I'd probably still do the same thing because you got to live with yourself. It's like an oxymoron. If I turned away from that, I'd be more inclined to turn away from future opportunities to make a difference and my existence wouldn't make the world a better place. I never really want that. I'd like to make a difference. (Ada, Male)

Nevertheless, the continual exposure to essentially the same help-seeking event, e.g., panhandling or begging, may deaden one's response. The interpretation of the event is considered at the lower-end of importance and therefore leads to the relatively easy decision to not act, 'It wouldn't be one of those things that I've made reassurance about because I think the scenario is much more common place maybe than the others.' (Isadora, Female)

4.8.2 Modification of the pre-existing information: 'I Need to Change!'

There is a degree of psychological power related to the direct and indirect experiences associated in changing people's minds and their actions. Such power generally presupposes the influence on the decision to help or not to help. Those accustomed to help others in the past might decide to not help in the present. It is not because helping is no longer considered necessary; instead, it is based on the negative perception built over the years and experience in response to particular circumstances. In contemporary Western society and dependent upon specific cultural characteristics, help-seeking in some instances may be interpreted as manipulative, based on a selfish and ill-informed desire. The more ambiguous the help-seeking context, the more likely an associated response of indifference and caution:

Life experience and sadly like I touched on before, things have changed in the last 10 years … my town is not what it used to be. I've lived everywhere in Melbourne and I'm a lot more street smart now and I could put the 'city-face' on. I could play the game up with the city-face on and I'll do my stuff. I'd be very wary and we do have most discussions. As much as you want to help someone, you need to be wary of their motives, whether they really are in need or whether it's a case of there's a white van at the corner and you're about to hop in it. (Shae, Female)

A lack of familiarity related to the characteristics of the event adds to the ambiguity and further contributes to discomfort and uncertainty:

I've seen helping behaviour around the crossing. They're usually very obviously - blind with the walking cane, with a guard dog often and then off. … I'm kind of reassured because they got all day before they sort it out, or if I kind of see lots of people around and maybe in a similar situation with someone that I kind of want to help but not sure how to do it, then I come and leave it to someone else. I think it's a little bit of the unknown, like I don't have too much experience with blind people. (Isadora, Female)

Nonetheless, discomfort and caution is at times tempered when observing in isolation the struggle of another. A help-giver is likely to act under these circumstances despite the discomfort and caution. Of course, even under the circumstance, ultimately vital in engaging in the act of helping is one's level of competence and skill related to the circumstance:

I remember like freezing up the first couple of times, I felt really bad about it. … I even called for help the first time because I was like shocked. Also, at that time – I don't know, I don't think I have really good self-esteem. It takes a lot of confidence to shout, making noise, and it would have been out of character for me also. It kind of

caused me to hesitate. … It started to help me to develop a bit of empathy. (Ada, Male)

Initially one might recognise that help is needed, but without a level of competency and knowledge one is likely to not engage in the act of helping. The act in fact may be more harmful than helpful. Competency is a key factor and may drive a person to make that decision to act. The problem is when the one's assumed level of competence is not met in reality:

That's the training. Probably before, I would have just jumped in, but the training now says to me, if there's something really – bit of riot or something happening, a lot drunk people and things getting thrown and it's part of a melee or something, you might go, 'I'll just step aside. I'll make a call.' Or I'll wander past and then make a call to the authorities' sort of thing, rather than dive in. And that's kind of hard to do because your instinct is still there to help that person. (Docia, Female)

Competently evaluating the risks of helping and or not helping informed through proper and effective training leads to a more efficient and effective help-giving behaviour. Nonetheless, not being competent does not necessarily buffer a person from feeling some sense of loss in self-worth when deciding to not engage in an intervention:

I'd feel really bad for not doing anything. When you sort of mess up something, whether deliberately or accidentally – or like by deliberately doing something wrong, or just by not – by omission, you generally – you try and do better next time. (Amanda, Female)

The motivation to act pro-socially is not only evoked by the sense of regret. Directly and personally observing a fellow human improving the welfare of a person in need can inspire one to act. The decision to not act, however, may also elicit levels of discomfort,

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shame and guilt. This emotional reaction may in future, and when exposed to a similar event, spur one's motivation to act:

> I feel like a series of small deeds have a big impact on the people around you and just everything. Like, if you're on a train, you wouldn't help that person and you see someone do that. … You'd feel guilty that you're not doing it and some people would … isolate themselves more from helping. A lot of people would be more kind to help maybe the next time, not necessarily again, lots of factors, lots of personalities, but you have to set an example that other people could follow. If you don't, then I just feel like there's less purpose, there's less hope. (Jace, Male)

The act to help may also be associated with a degree of trauma. Trauma survivors, defined as those who experienced a degree of trauma as a result of engaging in the act of helping, are often less likely to help when confronted by a behaviour they perceive as personally and psychologically problematic:

> I work at a health centre doing counselling. I hear different stories about people who are quite vulnerable in the community and about some situations where there have been incidents where it's been traumatic for them. … That influences my – it affects my view of the world at times, sometimes in a positive way, and sometimes in a negative way. Because some of the positive experiences that you hear of times when people have helped them out in traumatic circumstances and it's been a really fantastic outcome and other times where there's been traumatic – people traumatise them, so to speak. (Gabby, Male)

A degree of apprehensiveness in acting is directly related to the negative characteristics associated with a person. However, on occasion, empathy, sympathy and a rational approach will outweigh the negative:

I'm really conscious of – because I've sort of done – I do volunteering with community legal centres and stuff and sort of I know a lot about assault rates and stuff. This might sound a bit weird, but especially if he was a white guy, I'd be anxious. I wouldn't be as anxious if he wasn't white, just because I know that it tend – crime like that sort of tends to go along racial lines – you'll have more intra-racial than interracial crime, so in my head, I'm doing like a victim calculus of like, is this person likely to attack me? I'm kind of a paranoid person, but I try not to pre-judge that people have malicious intent or that people are trying to do bad things. I've left my phone at home before. So that was actually probably a pretty formative thing for me. (Amanda, Female)

The presence of the stereotypical victim does not reduce the probability that one would intervene in a non-serious and low-cost situation. In contrast, one will likely respond negatively toward the help-seeker who presents as rude and aggressive:

The people that wait at the stop light is fairly common stuff and then they shake their things, I find them pretty offensive because if I actually believed in their cause, I'd already be supporting them in some way or another and because they have to act and do that, it's like people just give to them and because they're making them uncomfortable; otherwise, they would already be giving it to them. It's demanding! When young people ask me for money, that does bug me. They're not generally as dirty and malnourished looking as the other population and they're also not usually as polite. It's like they do seem more entitled like they have a sense of entitlement. I'd give them a hard time about it next time.' (Ada, Male)

Observing stigmatised people, like the homeless, automatically activates related affective schema such as sympathy and compassion. These feelings may motivate one to instantly benefit the homeless person, but not without checks and balances in place which

consider outcome. Encountering the same individual time and again changes people's judgment and this sentiment propagates inaction:

> If I've got some loose change, I'll probably give him a bit and I'll confess to having done that, in the city anyway, where I'm going, 'No, No, I've got no change!'. When you start seeing the same ones every day in the same place, I guess it's the only probably one of the scenarios when I'm less likely to jump straight in and want to help. Maybe it's a judgement thing or maybe it's just I'm not sure that money is what helps in that situation. But going to some of those places in the city, those rooming houses and those awful places and you kind of look at the circumstances and – well – it's not a case that a couple of dollars is what's needed. There is a whole lot of other issues there. (Docia, Female)

The negative stigma attributed to certain groups of people affects one's willingness to help. However, the homeless target is not always the bystander's focus in assessing the negative consequences of an intervention. The decision to act is related to a variety of events of the past which are more or less related to help-giving. The decision is more broadly based on ambiguity which encompasses the ranges of acts which may or may not include an interpretation of homelessness:

> Those ones I'm more wary of. Twenty years ago I would stop, these days probably not. Too many stories about people being attacked in those situations. Again, you don't know why she's agitated. But to me, I couldn't be putting myself in danger in that one. I grew up in the '70s where there were lot of hitchhikers that were kidnapped. Although I was very young that was very instilled in us that – and you don't see any hitchhikers now that you used to but that would be a scenario that we were brought up at school. Okay, there was no mobile phone back then but be very, very wary! There's a very large part of me that wants to help but there's been too

many reported cases of where this is fake, where this is to pull you in! There are a lot when I was growing up and in any of these kinds of scenario pretending that the tyre was flat, pretending that the water dried, no one even know how to change water in a radiator now, 'But I've run out of water, the battery is flat'. Battery is not flat in there because you got the hazard lights on. It's prior knowledge. Prior knowledge has put the walls up in this on. (Shae, Female).

Chapter V

Discussion, Conclusions, Strengths, and Limitations

5.1 Introduction

Chapter V discusses and interprets the findings that emanated from this study. The conclusions, implications, and recommendations are the focus of the final sections. The final research question, 'What are the differences in event schemas of persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence when perceiving and interpreting a help-seeking event?', was integrated in each research question or section to elucidate the aspects of culture that give variance to Australians' and Malaysians' perception of giving assistance to others in need in various help-seeking contexts.

5.2 Discussions

5.2.1 Research Question One and Two

The participants answered the first and second research questions, 'How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret the experience of a help-seeking event?' and 'How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence perceive helping and not helping?' under three major themes, which are discovered through the analysis of responses from 16-person Malaysian cohort and 8-person Australian cohort. The interview questions were designed in a variety of ways following seven different vignettes to capture participants' core opinion underlying their decision process in two competing response tendencies – to help or not to help. These answers emerged as themes building the whole framework of this study and are supported by prior research findings, thus adding to the empirical relevance of research findings. The discussion of these findings is as follows:

5.2.1.1 Person Schema

5.2.1.1.1 Helpfulness

The participants in this study, Australian and Malaysian, overwhelmingly supported the view that individual motives in help-seeking behaviour in the degree to which people behave and appear were pivotal in assessing their level of need and the legitimacy of the event. Both groups asserted that the assessment for a legitimate event is possible through their impression of the recipient of help, including their clothing, body language, helping request and other clear emergency indicators such as the sight of blood. Piliavin, Piliavin and Rodin (1975) also argued that there are relative differences in prosocial tendencies due to the victim's appearance. Furthermore, the clear and visible signs of an emergency are consistently seen to have an impact on people's tendencies to engage in prosocial behaviour (Harari, Harari, & White, 1985). Emotional expression and body language are other factors that contribute to the care-related concerns (Small & Verrochi, 2009). As such, a sad face has been viewed as an important cue in the helping context, evoking sympathy and prosocial behaviour, particularly when charity is concerned. The participants in this study view a clear helping request as a solid reason to not ignore someone who is in the distress. The certainty of the help-seeking situation, the clarity of victim's need and the presence of a request to help instigates action. Similarly, Rogers, Miller, Mayer and Duval (1982) report that a clear helping request leads to an increased awareness of the victim's need, which in turn motivates helping behaviour. Although both Australians and Malaysians bring up the importance of helping request as one of the major mechanisms in interpreting the need of the victim as real and genuine, Australians are more likely to explicitly state that the presence of clear request can facilitate acts of assisting across circumstances. The Australian cohort is more likely, through critical and non-critical situations, to account for the effect of the helping request in increasing the likelihood that individuals will intervene. Furthermore, the Australian

participants suggested that in the absence of a clear request, random intervention can be construed as a presumptuous act particularly toward the disadvantaged. This coincides with Rogers et al. (1982) and Eisenberg, Cameron, and Tyron (1984), who reported the importance of request in predicting the likelihood of bystanders' intervention. Cultural differences in embraced norms, values, and perceptions create variations in how a helping request is perceived. Australians might have stronger attitudes about attending to the explicit helping request. Self-reliance and independence seems to be highly regarded amongst persons in an individualist culture such as in Australia (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), with the expectation that each person is able to self-govern.

It takes considerable courage for a person from an individualist culture to admit that he/she cannot cope with the situation. Whenever a helping request is made, it signifies that the help requester has critical need for assistance, which can be satisfied only with another's intervention. Past research has demonstrated that the increment in perceived urgent need of help would increase the likelihood of giving help (Berkowitz & Daniels, 1963; Fischer et al., 2006). Moreover, person within an individualist culture value the right to privacy (Hofstede, 1980); therefore, crossing another individual's boundary violates the societal norm. Offering help when it is actually not needed could annoy others, particularly if the aid is perceived as potentially threatening to their self-esteem (Fisher et al., 1982). Collectivistic societies, as characterised by Malaysia, emphasise dependency, connectedness and flexibility (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The need to observe an individual's boundary is not as complex as in Australian culture. Consequently helping occurs without the concern of invading another's privacy. In addition, it is not uncommon for a person in a collectivistic society to rely on others (Hofstede, 1980); thus, helping can easily be construed as the person behaving in accordance with the societal norms.

Both cohorts were split in responding to the beggar or homeless person wandering around asking people for money. The responses of the participants who were generous to the beggar were similar, as aligned with the emerging themes. There are, however, different degrees of factors that related to helping behaviour, ranging from such emotional experience to variations in the overt response. Malaysians were more generous and gave a larger amount of money to the beggar, especially towards elderly female and unkempt people. Higher levels of pity and empathy often led them to respond altruistically to this group of people; their form of helping was quite extensive, and not restricted to the amount of money being donated. It is evidenced in the themes which emerged in the interview with Malaysians that religious doctrines constitute a solid foundation for them to increase altruistic feelings because such behaviour is desirable and enjoined in their religion. In a collectivistic culture like Malaysia, interdependence and connectedness define self-construal; therefore, it is assumed that Malaysians will be more likely to develop other-focused emotions such as responsibility, shame, guilt (Markus & Kitayama, 1994) and this will include empathic sensitivity toward others in need.

Australian participants' helping behaviour toward beggars appeared to be motivated by empathy, but hampered by the stigma attached to homelessness. Individualist cultures such as Australia, which value self-reliance and autonomy, are less likely to help if the need for assistance is interpreted as self-inflicted (Cardwell & Flanagan, 2012). By contrast, Malaysians consider beggars to be deserving of help consistent with the recognition of and entitlement to a proportion of others' fortunes; their view of beggars is more guided by their pity for the beggars' perceived unfortunate condition and by religious tenets. Hence, helping and supporting beggars has been easy to accomplish due to the acknowledgement of beggars' dependency on another's wealth. These findings may also be relevant to the notion that there is a link between ethical/religious traditions and people's perception of beggars, in which care

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interaction is the outcome of religiously guided behavioural congruence (Dromi, 2007). The extent to which sympathy, compassion and care are invoked by the disadvantaged corresponds to part of the literature in compliance with the request made by the stigmatised (Doob & Ecker, 1970).

There are differences in the way the Australians and the Malaysians perceive people with disabilities. The effect of this perception on the helping decision was maintained across the majority of participants. The disabled had the effect of drawing more assistance from the Malaysians, but the response was totally different with the Australians. Given that the disabled people are considered as having control and efficacy in their day-to-day life, Australians were more unlikely to be helpful toward them, especially with the absence of a request to help. The cultural emphasis on individualism and independence and due to this socialisation practice, it is imperative for every individual in the culture, including the disabled, be given maximum freedom and control over their functioning (Iwakuma & Nussbaum, 2000). On the other hand, it emerged as a prominent theme that in Malaysia disabled people are considered vulnerable individuals to whom the duty of care has been part of the social norm. In collectivistic cultures, it is expected that the community be 'overprotective' and caring toward the disabled (Iwakuma & Nussbaum, 2000). As Malaysia emphasises interdependency, it is a much more comforting environment in which the disabled are able to rely on others without feeling shame. The preference to help the disabled in the Malaysian context is in light of causal attribution (Weiner, 1986), in which helping behaviour is increased when people perceive that the cause of behaviour is not under the person's control. In turn, this perception of a person's extent of controllability over their disabled condition influences the emotional response, heightening the sympathy level, which influences the willingness to display helping behaviour toward them. On the other hand, the findings from the Australians supports the normalisation principle, which gives the disabled

more choice and control to operate their life consistent with people without disabilities and acknowledging their capacity to function independently in society, particularly in the educational system (Wehman & McLaughlin, 1981).

5.2.1.1.2 The Decision to not Act

Both Australians and Malaysians believe that women help strangers less than men. Erring on the side of caution is one of the underlying causal factors brought up by both cohorts; women are believed to do risk-assessments more than men; and, women are more likely than men to perceive that they have much to lose if the intervention goes wrong with a stranger. Some of the literature explains that women, in comparison to men, are less likely to offer help to others (Eagly, 1987), which assumes that interacting with a stranger in the short-term encounter, especially when there are some risks associated with the intervention, may instil fear and anxiety.

For some, the probability of declining to offer help is better explained by the increased feeling of self-sufficiency and competence (Halabi, Nadler & Dovidio, 2011; Nadler & Fisher, 1986); assumptive help can be easily interpreted as undermining the recipient's independence to function normally without the aid of others. Australians and Malaysians have the tendency to avoid helping when the perceived need of assistance is low. However, this was more prevalent amongst Australians as they indicated how contextual features, such as the control that the recipient has on the situation and the personal characteristics (i.e. disabled and female), can affect their responses to the help-seeking event. Most Australians indicated that understanding how feminism and the rights of people with disabilities to function equally within the society has shaped a different reaction to helping behaviour, whereas assumptive helping can be detrimental to the recipient's sense of worth. While most Australians were careful not to ask the disabled and women for help for them to genuinely not need the help at all, there is no such feminism or empowering disabled

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mentioned by Malaysians. Less responsiveness may be practised toward others perceived as capable of handling the situation independently to respect their capacity to function within individualist culture, which upholds independence and personal achievement (Verderber, Verderber & Sellnow, 2012).

Amato (1983) indicated that urban dwellers are prone to be unhelpful and reluctant to engage in help-giving behaviour. Additionally, Amato (1983) indicated that urban dwellers would help more in non-critical situation and in the presence of a helping request, where they could uncover the true needs of the recipient. Amato (1983) also postulated that helping in a non-serious situation is much more favourable due to less engagement required with perceived less risk involved. Similar to the findings of Amato (1983), the Australian and Malaysian cohorts identified stereotypes of urbanites as being less helpful than rural dwellers.

The homeless are also less likely to receive help from a passer-by. The belief that the stigmatised homeless will continue begging if people keep giving away money or goods has made passers-by unresponsive and aloof to their request. Prior literature in this area of research addressed people's adoption of an unresponsive orientation toward stigmatised victims as a way of reacting to beggars' perceived low moral character (Piliavin & Piliavin, 1975). Specifically, non-involvement with the homeless is argued to help society stop the sporadic begging activities (Desyani, 2013). In addition, the stigma attached to the homeless – for example, they have been alleged to be social threat in the street (Kelling & Coles, 1996) – is responsible for the unhelpful forms of behaviour toward them. Other social scientists have expressed views that in order to avoid a feeling of discomfort interacting with the stigmatised victim, people are more attentive to the consequences of intervention (Ungar, 1979). The avoidance option is much more favourable when the perceived cost of helping is high.

Interviews with Australians and Malaysians identified similar forces supporting their indifference toward homeless/beggars. The findings indicated that inhibition of prosocial behaviour towards beggars is due to the assumption that street-begging is uncivil, illegitimate and suspicious. Participants suggested that there is a link between substance abuse and homelessness, which forms another potential inhibitor to provide support to the poor (Westminster City Council, 2004). The tendency to be helpful is decreased when the victim is held personally responsible for his/her condition and he/she is perceived to have the means to control the causes of the need (Weiner, 1986).

The findings of thematic analyses indicated that both cultures suggested identical reasons for the decrease in helping behaviour toward beggars. However, Malaysians attributed their inhibition to help intoxicated and other stigmatised individuals mostly to their disapproval of socially unacceptable behaviours and their commitment to the Islamic principles. Malaysians spoke of a strong emotive response with a high degree of negativity held toward the intoxicated and sought to explain the influence of such sentiment upon their reaction. To test whether any decrease in the propensity for aiding in the subsequent dependency was the effect of disliking, 60 female subjects were originally recruited from a university to sit for an experiment requesting them to repeat the sequence of numbers. Liking and help giving were significantly correlated, in which the extent of help and the seconds spared on helping were measured with significant effect sizes, ($F(1,56) = 4.03$, $p < .05$ and ($F(1,56) = 6.08$, $p < .02$) respectively. Thus, there is some suggestion that the subjects who like one another would increase helping behaviour and vice versa. Lesser preference of helping intoxicated people among Malaysian participants also resulted from the fact that they have had little exposure to drunken behaviour, whereby uncertainty avoidance is activated due to the lack of understandings on how the event should be handled. The degree to which an individual perceives that he/she is capable and confident in delivering effective aid to the

target can significantly increase or decrease prosocial behaviours (Wishart, McKenzie, Newman, & McKenzie, 2013; Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006).

5.2.1.2 Affective/Emotional Schemas

5.2.1.2.1 Helpfulness

Both cultures experience unique feelings when caring for others; however, commonalties and differences did exist. Australians were more likely to respond in curiosity when observing another person in need and this acted as a driver for them to offer help. They had the tendency to understand the predicament and help others if the situation is not too complicated for them to comprehend. Participants' disposition to notice and care about others is related to prosocial behaviour and has been recorded in numerous studies (e.g., Latane & Darley, 1970; Wuthnow, 1995; Bekkers & Wilhelm, 2006). Latane and Darley (1970) formulated that individuals need to go through five stages of decision making prior to helping and the first step is to notice the cues indicating distress. Interested in knowing another's need is not enough to generate an intention to help if it does not come with the moral principle of caring about others. Curiosity can influence people's intention to help; however, those who feel that they should react upon witnessing others in need of help are more likely to be driven to engage in the actual helping behaviour (Bekkers & Wilhelm, 2006). The relationship between curiosity and care has been demonstrated in the literature (i.e., Phillips, 2015); however, this research does not appear to attend to the link between curiosity and prosocial tendencies. In terms of cultural influence, the results of this study support Kim and Drolet (2003), who confirmed the relationship between freedom and uniqueness (IND cultural values) and variety-seeking in the act of choices. Thus, individuals in an individualistic culture are keener to explore the variety of choices of decision.

Interestingly, both cohorts indicated that the perceived degree of connectedness could encourage prosocial behaviour; the more similar to the participants the person in need is

perceived to be, the more likely the participants would be to grant help. In comparing the findings of this study to that Rabinowitz et al., (1997), participants in both studies acted in a more and extensive socially responsible manner toward someone like themselves. In addition, the participants in this study identified interpersonal engagement between them and another person in need as antecedent to increasing helpfulness as the more they communicate to each other, the more they are exposed to the shared features.

The third affective schema, 'trust', surfaced as the participants answered, 'What do you feel in facing this event?' A focus on helping a total stranger caused participants from both cultures to acknowledge the role of trust in eliciting some degree of prosocial reaction. Trust serves two significant roles in a helping relationship. First, it reassures the participants/benefactor that the suffering of the other is legitimate and results in helping behaviour toward this individual. The literature is clear on the trust-induced helping behaviour, particularly in the context of leadership in the workplace (Yue Zhu & Syed Akhtar, 2014). Specifically, trusting people in need is a result of risk assessment of potential exploitation, which in turn produces an altruistic movement. Second, the research provides evidence of how trust level and helping is usually bound by social norms (Kit Tong, Hung, Man Yuen, 2011). Indeed, Kit Tong and associates (2011) showed that trustful people are more likely to connect to and are less likely to be doubtful about developing a relationship with others. Trusting in others provides a wider social network to a person and inculcates a sense of respect towards the social interaction, and these factors facilitate helping behaviour. In the present research, Australians were more enthusiastic about engendering a trusting community, where helping behaviour can be seen as normative functioning; hence, asking, giving, and receiving help is much more comfortable and common in the society. While trust is context-bound (Abdul-Rahman & Hailes, 2000), perhaps the idea of 'evolutioning' helping behaviour in Australia stems from the challenge of making trust more relevant among

separate and autonomous individuals. The need to engender a trusting community in a collectivistic culture is believed to be less intense, presumably due to its communal nature that is already in place, such as belongingness and sharing (Hofstede, 1991). Thus, individuals who uphold collectivistic views are more likely to follow these societal values and assume that everyone in the society will act in the same way.

The fourth affective schema, and perhaps the most prominent theme emerging from the findings of such schema, was centred on 'empathy' reflected in the ability to understand the neediness of others. The general consensus of these findings from Australians and Malaysians was that empathy allows them to perceive an individual in need from an affective and cognitive perspective, which can lead them to respond altruistically. However, the significant findings from the conversation with participants were that individuals in one culture tend to use one element of empathy (i.e. affective or cognitive) more than the other when perceiving an individual in need. On the one hand, empathy-induced helping behaviour among Malaysians, dependent upon context, was a function of affect-based activation. Malaysians used and emphasised many 'sympathy', 'pity', and 'sad' terms to describe their emotional reactions to those less fortunate than them. These findings are consistent with Realo and Luik (2002) in their attempt to explain the relationship of the affective element of empathy and collectivism. Family and society aspects of collectivism are moderately related with the affective-based empathy yielding new findings that suggest individuals with family and societal orientation of collectivism are more likely to feel compassionate, caring and concern about other people, especially to in-group members (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Another explanation of the nature of the relationship between affective-based empathy and collectivism values could be attributed to the way the emotion is perceived and expressed. Emotions that enhance connectedness and interdependence, such as empathy, responsibility, sensitivity and other-focused affective factors are a very important element in forming a

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harmonious and cohesive society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis, 1994). It is therefore not uncommon for people in collectivistic culture such as Malaysia to affectively empathise with another's difficulty. In addition, empathy among Malaysian participants is necessarily the effect of observing the emotionally-charged situation where the target channels their tension through crying, wailing, heavy breathing, sighing, etc. Moreover, Malaysian participants were prone to show empathy toward certain sets of targets such as elders, females, beggars, and handicapped and more explanation about this can be found in the section of person schemas-helpfulness.

In contrast, the effect of empathy on helping among Australian participants was more the result of cognitive processing, rather than an affective outcome. There were often times when Australians could expect that others are in need due to their ability to comprehend another's feeling being in the difficult situation. Terms and sentences such as 'think', 'imagine', 'put myself in someone shoes' have been used across the interview. There is a difference between imagining what another person is feeling and experiencing the feeling oneself, as the latter describes a more passive and reflexive psychological phenomenon compared to the former (Hoffman, 2000). Caring and concern toward the elderly and females among Australians is associated with understanding the target's vulnerable characteristics and how it feels to face the uncontrollable predicament with the capacity that the target has. Based on the responses of the Australians, the concept of analytic cognitive thinking styles which is predominantly associated with individualistic culture (Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough & Karp, 1962) is a plausible explanation for the prevalent stimulation of cognitive aspect of empathy. Surprisingly, lack of the affective aspect of empathy has been connected to analytic thinking (DeVore, Beck, Clark & Goorey, 1989). Whether it was cognitive thinking styles or emotional expression, there was a clear mention of the distinct pattern of empathy between members of the comparison group. Scarcely found in the

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literature, yet a topic that surfaced across the interview, Australians experience and develop empathy differently from Malaysians. Research on cognitive empathy is typically restricted to the empathy accuracy (Levenson & Ruef, 1992; Kraus, Côtè, Keltner, 2010), which is defined as the exact inferences of another's emotions and thoughts. In order to better understand the effects of the cultural dimension (i.e. IND-COL) on the distinct element of empathy (i.e. affective-cognitive), it would be beneficial to know which aspect of empathy is most activated in which culture. Moreover, in contrast to their Malaysian counterparts, Australians expressed less empathy and sympathy toward the beggar and the disabled, as described in the previous section, person schemas/unhelpfulness.

The fifth significant finding emanating from the interviews is the role of doubt in regulating helping behaviour toward the unknown stranger. For a few, a low degree of doubt helps them to develop an adaptive kind of helping behaviour, but not totally to dismiss the intention to provide assistance. Doubt starts when the benefactor feels that something is not right with the situation or with the target's trustworthiness. The literature has provided research on the conceptions of doubt in facing a stranger (Berg, Dickhaut & McCabe, 1995) and the suggestion that scepticism towards strangers can be desensitised (Uslaner, 2004). The likelihood of trusting strangers in business transactions can be traced to the generalised trust of the society, if believing is not too costly (Courtois & Tazdaït, 2012). While the research on the doubt-prosociality link is still scarce, such constructs link with other social behaviour such as consumerism (Tormala & Rucker, 2015), conflict (Gordon & Riboni, 2015) and the latest trend and well documented online social network (Mir, 2015).

The final emotional schema that has been elucidated by the research literature and the findings of this study is guilt. The negative emotional schemas have a distinct direction in Australian and Malaysian helping enactments, where commitment to such behaviour is intended to lessen any tension of ignoring. This is in accordance with Kugler and Jones

(1992), who postulated that helping behaviour is undertaken to reduce guilt which is rooted in the ability to empathise with another's distress (Baumesiter, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994) and the personal assumption that one should be responsible to intervene (Hoffman, 1982).

5.2.1.2.2 The decision to not act

There is also evidence across the interviews that fear is among the central features of avoidance in offering help. There is extensive research on sources of fear and the likelihood of offering help. Karakashian, Walter, Christopher and Lucas (2006) and Malouff (1998) both highlight the role of shyness (fear of negative evaluation) within the context of young adults and young children respectively in social situations including helping interaction. For Karakashian et al. (2006), shyness leads to behavioural inhibition in both social and non-social settings, suggesting that the reaction is consistent across situations. For a shy individual, the inhibition starts with the predisposed belief that others would evaluate their helping offer negatively. The effect of fear of negative evaluation on helping behaviour was more prevalent among Malaysians, but it is not significantly pervasive among their Australian counterparts. In collectivistic culture, like Malaysia, individuals develop other-focused emotions such as fear of negative evaluation/shyness to allow them to synchronise with the community and culture (Burger, 2015).

Both Australians and Malaysians had negative feelings about helping when it could seriously jeopardise physical and social well-being. For those who feared losing, most seem to feel that their helping responses to severe or non-severe situations could compromise their safety and precious resources. This is consistent with the cost-reward model, which approaches helping decisions from a cognitive assessment standpoint in which a very costly helping behaviour would increase the bystander's apathy (Ito, Miller & Bekhuis, 2014; Piliavin & Piliavin, 1972). This study suggested that the arousal of intense fear and terror due to perceived high costs of providing help inhibited contributions to the target. The

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interrelation of cognitive assessment, fear, and helping decision is rarely made in the literature. Therefore new information concerning the observer's emotional reaction to the cognitive processing, which in turn influences helping responses could be further developed in future research. Females from both cultures are more prone to erring on the side of caution which causes lesser prosocial tendencies, particularly in an ambiguous help-seeking context. This can be understood in a light of the inherent social norms of women and vulnerability, as reported by Butler and Gambetti (2013); the power differential between men and women has made the latter more susceptible to harm.

5.2.1.3 Behavioural Schemas

5.2.1.3.1 Helpfulness

Australian and Malaysian participants concluded that to lend a helping hand in an ambiguous non-serious situation, a thorough investigation on the situational cues prior to helping should be undertaken. While helping behaviours are not necessarily spontaneous, these behaviours would most often be performed with high self-awareness, in which the participants become attentive to a possible scam. This finding supports the cognitive processes theory postulated by Calvo and Eysenck (2000), arguing that an ambiguous situation or stimulus is the basis for interpreting the incident as a threat, which then leads to a vigilant reaction. However, instead of avoiding the situation, as suggested by Calvo and Eysenck (2000), both cultures consider the presumed threat as crucial information to more cautiously guide their helping behaviour. A frequent mention of vigilant ways of helping across the interview was found more in the female excerpts, suggesting their embraced vulnerability to the dangerous and unsafe condition. While feminist activism is widespread in today's society, it is reasonable for women to justify their action (or inaction) due to inherit societal norms of vulnerability and powerless that put them in a greater exposure to the risk (Butler & Gambetti, 2013).

Variation in how people taking care of others in need is predictable by variation of the cost and benefit of performing such behaviour. In many help-seeking events, Australians and Malaysians preferred tactical and efficient helping, particularly in an ambiguous situation. Both cultures opted to provide tactical helping after judging the costs and benefits associated with the intervention. According to Barclay and Reeve (2012), high-quality individuals tend to resort to efficient prosocial behaviours to lessen the costs and risks that accompany helping.

Within the discussion of the findings of this study, it is noteworthy to mention that most participants from Australia and Malaysia linked a significant level of sympathy and compassion to the formation of smooth, direct, and spontaneous helping. Malaysians may have a higher level of empathy, as mentioned in the affective schemas section. This is theoretically and practically the primary antecedent to direct helping (Eisenberg, Eggum, & Di Giunta, 2010), yet the findings pinpoint that Malaysian's behavioural consequences, specifically in the event where the need is interpreted as less pronounced, were quite ambivalent. Considering the presence of doubt in ambiguous situations, it has implicitly affected the way Malaysian participants deliver assistance, even when they experience high empathic concern while realising the need of another person.

Extensive forms of helping are associated with the presence of the request for help, and this point mostly came from the Australians. This finding should not be interpreted, as it is doubly hard to get help in Australia without asking for it. In contrast, the request for help is construed as the desperation of need – the victim is really in need to the extent that he/she could put aside the shyness and fear of others' evaluation of his/her efficacy to self-govern. Asking for help is challenging, especially within an individualist culture, where being independent and self-reliant are highly regarded (Chew, 2001). Thus, Australians are more likely than Malaysians to associate a helping request with the matter of urgency as it is not

easy for them to expose their vulnerability and admit that they cannot cope with the situation. An explicit request also simplifies the help giver's efforts to think about and execute how the help could be best addressed in response to the recipient's need (Eagly & Koenig, 2009). From the cultural standpoint, direct and explicit styles of communication are favoured in individualistic cultures (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). It seems that the helping request serves as the guideline for the help-giver on how to perceive and have confidence in interpreting the recipient's needs.

Helping behaviour can be enacted in many ways, such as giving alternatives to the recipient's need instead of providing for exactly what he/she asks. From the findings, Malaysians were more likely to educate the recipient about the other choices of forms of helping. From personal accounts, this distribution potentially reflects the possible perceived imbalance of risks and benefit with respect to intervention. This interpretation was grounded in the understanding that the cost of both helping (cost to the donor) and non-helping (cost to the recipient) is high (Piliavin & Piliavin 1972; Bode, Miller, O'Gorman & Codling, 2015). As the participants explained, there is some tension when deciding whether or not to help, to balance out all the possible costs of helping such as personal harm, being fooled, inconvenience, with the costs of not helping including profound guilt, regret, others' attribution on inaction. Malaysians most often defined efficient helping as a win-win solution for both the donor and recipient. Another understanding that is possible for the interpretation of findings from this culture is that the prevalence of forms of illegal aggression and criminal behaviours has heightened sensations of danger and fear (Füredi, 2002). In contrast to the Australians, feelings of insecurity were especially prevalent among the Malaysian and contributed to the ideas about direct helping.

The literature on 'bystander effects' clearly illustrates the dynamic, factors and effects of this social psychological phenomenon. This literature is important since it allows for the

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comprehension and understanding of questions related to the facilitation and or inhibition of helping behaviour in the presence of a group of people. Generally, the number of bystanders potentially decreases various types of helping behaviour for three main reasons: diffusion of responsibility, pluralistic ignorance and evaluation apprehension (Latanè & Darley, 1970; Latanè & Dabbs, 1975). This body of research also focuses on the positive factors as determinants of bystander-oriented help-giving behaviour. Whether the dilemma is either trivial (i.e. picking up a dropped pen) or severe (i.e. rescuing a drowning victim), the helping reaction from someone to these help-seeking situations would catch another's attention and enhances the benefactor's social image (Chekroun & Brauer, 2002). Studies on the positive impact of crowd presence have also shown that the accomplished help-seeking behaviour depends most crucially on the level of emergency, that is, the higher the danger associated with an emergency, the more responsive the crowd (Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek & Frey, 2006). As such, it is more difficult for a victim who is in high potential danger to seek help from an individual rather than a group of people. This could be explained by the *arousal: cost-reward* framework, which postulates that a dangerous and clear emergency is easier to recognise and thus will increase the arousal that can be best addressed only with helping reaction to the victim (Fischer et al., 2006). In addition, the presence of others may attenuate helping in a dangerous emergency as an individual can seek support from the other bystanders who are more competent in handling the emergency-related needs (van den Bos, Müller & van Bussel, 2009). However, the role of knowledge on the bystander effect has generated contradictory findings: the individual's knowledge on the negative effects of bystanders is insufficient to control his/her inhibitory reaction in subsequent help-seeking events (Katzev & Averill, 1984). Many Australian participants who have an awareness of the bystander effect tend to care very strongly for the victim, whereas Malaysians helping

tendencies were more inhibited and restricted in a public place as explicitly outlined by the literature in this field.

In the sub-theme of indirect helping, Australians and Malaysians responded similarly to the stigmatised individual, particularly toward the drunkard and other substance abuser. The public in Malaysia holds many misperceptions of drunkenness due to their religious views, which abominate the consumption of alcohol. The public in Malaysia, referring to the Malays especially, underestimates (or overestimates) some common drunkenness symptoms due to their unfamiliarity with being drunk or meeting a drunkard. For Australians, the tendency to focus on the nature of uninformed risks associated with stigmatised individuals has led them to balance out between the perception and reality; consequently, indirect forms of helping are preferred. Füredi's (2002) approach through his *Culture of Fear* may also play a part in explaining this finding. He suggested that the tendency to generalise the fears and doubt about the uninformed risks may be rooted in the distrust of others. However, despite fear, worry and doubt, participants still want to help, but in a safer and more cautious way. The study of *arousal: cost-reward analysis* (Piliavin, et al., 1972) offers a rich theoretical explanation for this finding, as participants demonstrated that there is a tendency to intervene, although in an indirect way, if the perceived cost of not helping due to the uninformed fear of risks is intolerable, for example, self-blame (to the benefactor), or high danger to the victim.

Australian participants were more sensitive and mindful in offering help, especially toward the disadvantaged. Because inadequacy has been directly linked to assumptive helping (Butzel & Ryan, 1997), it is important to consider how Australians are being respectful to how social support is being offered and to what extent help is considered limitless. Australians see the irony in observing the interpersonal boundary so that the recipient's self-esteem and dignity are intact while furthering a sense of empathy with the intent to help. As a result, the greatest concern for Australians when confronting a non-

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serious help-seeking event, especially with the disadvantaged, is the existence of an explicit helping request.

As described in the previous paragraphs, Piliavin et al. (1981) believed that an economic approach, *cost-reward analysis,* serves as the basis in understanding an individual's helping behaviour in various circumstances. This study states that one of the Australian behavioural schemas is to assist others in a non-serious circumstance within one's own range of capabilities. An extensive form of helping which requires an immense amount of time, effort and money would accumulate to high costs and therefore decrease the probability of help from a passer-by. However, to react passively to other's need is not straightforward; one still needs to evaluate the costs of not helping (for instance, the costs incurred to both passer-by and victim). Ultimately, the best personal decision is to contribute to the help-seeking event within one's preferred means of power, knowing that any stretch of it will result in a higher cost of helping to the benefactor.

Competency is a key factor in influencing the giving of help in a competency-related task. The finding, mainly from the Australians, supports the view that competency (for instance, repairing and maintaining machinery, training in first-aid and swimming) is a factor in facilitating intervention by boosting the confidence to intervene of the observer. It further confirms that competency adds extra responsibility and pressure to a bystander engaging in helping because not all other bystanders possess the same training and skills to intervene appropriately and efficiently; therefore, non-intervention would result to a more stringent condition. The literature is clear on the importance of competence and its interaction with the decision to intervene (Midlarsky, 1968). Although it is unclear how competence augments aiding, the research has focused on the positive relationship of competency and helping behaviour, suggesting high competence leads to the propensity to intervene in competency-related situations. This gap between competence, responsibility and providing help has

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attracted Bierhoff, Klein and Kramp (1990), who wanted to understand the relationship between these two subjects, what makes a high-competence person more responsible to decide to be a prosocial bystander. Initial attempts to understand this relationship have taken a survey approach, by which the participants were given several types of help-seeking scenarios, including a car accident. Bierhoff et al. (1990) developed a more extensive model to include decision confidence as an explanation for the competency-helpfulness connection. Their findings further confirmed that decision confidence mediates the significant relationship between competence and feelings of responsibility, an important key step to helpfulness.

5.2.1.3.2 The decision to not act

In terms of the most prominent reason for the inhibition in helping by Australians, it appears that a variety of fears can influence the way they process the threat accompanied with intervention. Some of this threat reduction attempt includes withdrawal from the help-seeking event. According to Cialdini and Kendrick (1976), people provide aid for egoistic purposes i.e., one's own welfare. Other researchers argue that helping is also done with the hope that aiding responses can terminate other's suffering, hence putting the victim in a better situation and improve well-being (Dovidio, Schroeder & Allen, 1990). Here, a model of *cost-benefit analysis* (Piliavin et al., 1981) is used to resolve conflicts in predicting a response. The payoff of helping will be not valued in the help-seeking circumstances where the perceived threat of helping (either to the benefactor or recipient) is high. The interjection of fear into this model can be applied in a few ways: first, fear can influence the benefactor's cognitive evaluation of the situation regardless of the clarity of the situational stimulus; second, fear can take place after evaluating certain cues. The cost of performing a helping behaviour for both conditions arouses apprehension, which in turns leads to inhibition.

An examination of the behavioural schemas for Malaysian participants who act less prosocially showed that bystander effects are among the primary factors contributing to inhibition. According to Darley and Latanè (1968), an apathetic bystander can assume that the number of other bystanders present at the help-seeking event makes it impossible for the target to be ignored, a social psychological phenomenon termed as diffusion of responsibility and social loafing. This assumption is consistent with most Malaysian's reasons for not helping.

In terms of the detrimental effect of assumptive helping, Nadler, Fischer and Ben-Itzhak (1983) reported that the inherent power disparities of the benefactor-recipient relationship can cause the reception of helping to be seen as dependent and lacking self-insufficiency. This appears to be relevant to the notion revolving around helping resistance among Australians in this study who reported that unrequested helping can denigrate the help-recipient's resilience and capabilities to be independent, and therefore, giving some space for them to function like any others is favoured. However, while a few Australians hesitated to offer direct assumptive helping toward another whom they think is in need, others appeared to be more apprehensive of expressing their empathy toward the disadvantaged. The majority of Australian participants did not easily convey their generosity to the blind man who was about to cross the road, while previous research found the alternative reaction, indicating that the helping response toward the physical handicapped person was much more automated (Slochower, Wein, White, Firstenberg & DiGuillo, 1980). Prior research was conducted over the last 35 years which signified enormous societal change including the order of the day where everyone has the right to be treated equally and live independently.

The Malaysian participants were more focused than their Australian counterparts on not delivering helping in an appropriate way which could potentially aggravate the situation.

Lack of experience and subjective skills restricted their helping tendency in competency-related help-seeking events. The importance of competency in this study was consistent with prior research (Midlarsky, 1968; Bierhoff, Klein & Kramp, 1990).

5.2.2 Research Question Three

Research question three is as follows: How persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret preference when confronted by a help-seeking event? Australian and Malaysian participants shared insights in response to the interview questions that mainly developed to cover the motivation underlying helping behaviour. The analysis of these answers was split into several themes. Both groups of participants share common key variables driving them to intervene in emergency and non-emergency situations. However, each group has its own unique brand or form of motivation that does not exemplify the other's experience of the help-seeking event. The themes that emerged from support the existing literature and add extra theoretical and practical understanding related to various aspects of the reinforcement of the helping decision. A more detailed explanation of the themes follows.

5.2.2.1 Moral and Obligation Reasoning

The study supports the existing literature and gives fresh narrative examples to prove the influence of instilled meaning of responsibility to the helpful responsiveness within Australian and Malaysian culture. The study showed the difference that morality brings to the helping decision, where the driving factor to help mostly comes from an internal observed standard regardless of the situational cues' characteristics. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), subjectively personal values play a more important role in moral behaviour commitment than other forces. Both cultures also agreed that the most prominent role of moral reasoning is to justify what is right and what is wrong, and regulate the helping

expression and behaviour accordingly. The Australian and Malaysian participants emphasised the influence of the socialisation process such as family teaching, public campaigns and culture in moral principles development, which is then translated into actions that benefit others.

Research on moral reasoning and socialisation (Kohlberg, 1984) provide strong support for the proposition that the internalisation of societal and parental norms through reinforcement and modelling processes lays a strong foundation for moral development. Furthermore, Kohlberg (1984) did not undermine the cognitive element in the formation of moral reasoning, as humans are constantly and actively judging what is right and what is wrong; hence, each individual has a different degree and interpretation of moral knowledge. However, Malaysian participants presented religion as a factor to also account for the development of moral reasoning, even constituting the biggest influence on one's standard norms and values; this finding is in parallel to previous studies in religion and morality (i.e., Spilka, Hood, Hunsberger & Gorsuch, 2009). Religious influence implies that right and wrong have already been prescribed by religious tenets and leaves a stringent space for the individual's own evaluation and justification of internalised values. The individual's internalised principles therefore are largely identical, but what makes a difference is in the respective degree of religiosity evident in varied and or similar beliefs, values and behaviours of each person. Both cultures addressed the role played by emotions such as guilt, shame, pride and sincerity in reinforcing moral behaviour.

5.2.2.2 Empathy-Altruism Motivation

Many helping attempts from both cultures aimed at improving another person's condition to a better state, regardless of the types and degrees of adversity. Batson's (1991) *empathy-altruism hypothesis* postulates that empathy leads to the genuine intention to release another's suffering through perspective taking. Batson (1991) suggested that perspective

taking can be enhanced through personal experience with a similar predicament, which helps in understanding the distressed person's thoughts and feelings. This explains in part what facilitated Australian and Malaysian participants' empathy. Furthermore, the degree with which the participants connect and relate the distress with themselves or with someone they love, such as family member and spouse, can facilitate the capacity for compassion and empathy.

Australian participants' empathy was easily elicited with the presence of clear situational cues, such as the presence of blood, indicating that the situation is beyond the person's control. However, Malaysians tended to be more compassionate with certain characteristics or identity of the distress, such as elders, women, the physically handicapped and homeless people and the feeling could be easily evoked without comprehending the controllability of the situation. However, both cultures were largely consistent in their views of decreased feelings of empathy with the target whose trouble is perceived to be self-inflicted. The knowledge that the victim's loss is self-inflicted can alter the degree of empathy as he/she is personally responsible for his/her choice leading to the adversity (Heider, 1958). Understanding the causal factors of predicament can inhibit helping when benefactors believe what caused those help-seeking events is the victim's own carelessness or, as termed by Weiner's (1985) attribution theory, *internal locus of causality.* Overall, among the participants, Australians' experience of empathy was much more cognitively orientated, while Malaysians' facilitation of empathy was relatively automated, suggesting the dominant use of the affective component the emotion, as mentioned in the last section, affective/emotional schemas of helpfulness.

5.2.2.3 Situational Determinants

Australian and Malaysian participants recognised the relationship between gender and helping behaviour, where women in contrast to men get assistance more easily and with less

judgment imposed on the help-seeking behaviour. Participants from both cultures believed that the norms and stereotypes of society speak clearly about women as vulnerable, while men assuming the alpha role; therefore, both genders fit the roles that have been consistently constructed by societal expectations. Participants from both cultures spoke of women and the likelihood to intervene, where women seemed to err on the side of caution when being requested for an aid, particularly in a high-risk situation. Thus, women tend to inhibit aid for another in need if the cost of helping is too risky and increases the probability if vulnerability. Women are believed to be nurturing, caring and compassionate in nature, and these traits could be linked to the enactment of helping behaviour, however, in a risky and dangerous situation, men are more likely to help due to their chivalrous nature (Eagly & Wood, 1999). The notion of women and vulnerability operates within two contexts, Australia and Malaysia, with women believed to be more exposed to suffering and therefore primary attention should be given to them (Brownridge, 2009). This in part explains why women in both cultures have access to a greater likelihood of getting help.

For Australian and Malaysian participants, body language and gestures from the victim receive much attention as they could be an important indicator of an urgent need of help. The observed behaviour such as body language, gestures and tone of voice are accessed to understand the truthfulness of the message conveyed (Stalter, 2011) even though these are subject to cultural and social interpretation (Levers, 2012). Both cultures reported a higher level of attention drawn to the target who displays helpless and urgent behaviour, although Malaysians were generally quicker to decide to engage prosocially based solely on non-verbal cues, possibly due to the higher sense of empathy as discussed in the affective/emotional schemas for helpfulness in the previous section. However, both concurred with the importance of the presence of a match between verbal and non-verbal messages, so that they could be fully assured of the target's need of assistance. This is especially true with

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the Australians who concluded that an explicit helping request is any urgent call for intervention.

Participants from both cultures regarded the recipient's high degree of helplessness as making them more interpersonally responsive and helpful to the help-seeking behaviour. The social psychology theorist supports the link of the recipient's helplessness and helping reaction, where the help offered for a manageable task can be perceived as disturbing, annoying and unwelcome, and this negative reaction can be seen in childhood (Bierhoff et al., 1990). It makes sense that the participants would refrain from imposing helping as it could elicit adverse reactions from the recipient. Likewise, it makes sense that the perceived increased dependency of the target develops helpful acts (Harris & Meyer, 1973). The degree to which the participants perceived the recipient's need is due to uncontrollable causes which effects the differences in altruism, and is consistent with the *causal attribution model* (Weiner, 1985; Betancourt, 1990). This model addresses an essential underlying mechanism of helping behaviour, which contends that help-seeking behaviour due to uncontrollable and external causes is easily empathised with and this positive emotion in turn causes the actual helping, in contrast to the perceived volitional acts of the recipient that leads to decreased empathy and less likelihood of helping.

Clark III and Wood (1974) suggested that the non-ambiguous nature of an emergency is crucial in hypothesising the tendency to help. They state that the clarity of emergency cues increases the propensity to helping, in which subjects helped 96% of time in non-ambiguous emergencies while only 29% in cases of getting help in vague situations. Many emergency symptoms (e.g. physical impairment, accident, drowning, etc.) are so powerful that the observer needs less time to recognise them as problematic. Since the participants dealt with seven vignettes ranging from non-serious situations to high cost emergencies, considerable variation existed in their interpretation of the severity of the help-seeking event, in which the

higher the cost of emergency, the more the assistance becomes an obligation. Both cultural groups agreed unanimously that the last vignette, which depicts a child who is drowning, is the most serious emergency above all other vignettes, and therefore requires a spontaneous helping reaction. Also, both Australians and Malaysians interpreted the fourth vignette, which describes a woman lying on the road with a bleeding leg, as an emergency with a different degree of acknowledgment of the stimuli. The presence of blood was easily recognised as a severe physical symptom, but for most Malaysians crying and wailing were among conditions that were considered problematic too, and warranted a sufficient tendency to intervene. Likewise, a few Malaysians hold a prejudice against the drunken and this interferes with their judgment and rationality as to the illustrated physical state and condition that could possibly signify that the target is in danger, in contrast with most Australians who regard the fifth vignette as an emergency that requires immediate intervention, although a few of them also associate drunkenness with other substance abuse.

Physical appearance is an influential factor in the likelihood of receiving help. Aspects of dress are one of the crucial components of one's moral identity and these form the benefactor's first impression of the help requester (Damhorst, 1990). However, facial attractiveness was not even considered or mentioned by either culture as the precursor to helping behaviour. This is, inconsistent with the findings of previous studies, which found its effect on prosocial tendencies (Piliavin, Piliavin & Rodin, 1975; Smith, 1985). While the relationship between physical appearance and prosocial behavioural responses may seem trivial, it actually encompasses more salient ideas of judgment and evaluations which generate prosocial behaviour. Potentially, helping could be inhibited or facilitated when the observer associates stereotypes to the way the recipient dresses (Juhnke, Barmann, Vickery, Cunningham, Hohl, Smith & Quinones, 1987). A few Australians and Malaysians in the present study associated dishevelment and bad odour with the homeless and were

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consequently less inclined to offer assistance to the people who possess similar characteristics. The actual behavioural outcomes vary depending on the degree of blame that the benefactor puts on the recipient for their predicament; in accordance with the *causal attribution model* (Weiner, 1985), the more the benefactor perceives the problem as self-inflicted, the less they experience and display empathy and the less they assume responsibility to help.

5.2.2.4 Implication of the Request for the Assistance

The findings from Australian participants provide support for the importance of asking for help in leading the benefactor to engage in helping behaviour. These participants demonstrated that the presence of an explicit helping request leads to the propensity for helping, in which the benefactor is assured that the requester formally needs others' aid due to the uncontrollability of the situation. Contrary to the Australians, Malaysians did not frequently note the significance of asking for a favour; only one participant out of sixteen interviews relied heavily on the existence of an explicit helping request in the decision to help. Understanding the role of request in the help-seeking context in Australia shed light on the fact that it is crucial for the people in the culture not to offer assumptive helping which could be detrimental to an individual's self-sufficiency and independence (Fisher et al., 1982; Halabi et al., 2011). In addition to this aspect, a helping request is critical in conveying clearly to the bystander that the victim requires a particular form of assistance urgently (i.e., Latanè and Darley, 1970); perceiving the urgency of need is the important initial step in helping decision. Clearly, Malaysian responses contradicted Australian responses in this study. It is sufficient for Malaysians to evaluate others' urgency of need predominantly based on the information obtained through the senses. Observing a target with a critical need for assistance and deserving of help creates a sense of obligation which is hard to discard. The sense of responsibility is higher for those who think that they have the means or are capable

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of giving help (Schwartz, 1975); indifference will only elicit self-blame and guilt (Schwartz & David, 1976). Other factors, such as religiosity, also contribute to the higher sense of responsibility to intervene while witnessing a person in need. The details of this will be discussed in the next section.

5.2.2.5 Integration with Religiosity

Every single Malaysian participant mentioned that religiosity leads to an increase in helping behaviour in their everyday living, and it is the most prevailing reinforcement of their moral behaviour. Since all Malaysian participants were Muslims, it is meaningful to discuss helping from Islamic perspectives. *Qur'an* indicates that helpfulness is enjoined by Allah and each single obedience to Him will be rewarded in the Hereafter: '…Help each other to goodness and heedfulness. Do not help each other to wrongdoing and enmity. Heed Allah. Allah is severe in retribution… (5:2).' Submission to this principle that has been commanded by Allah is another manifestation of the true believer of Islam. Previous studies have shown that prosocial behaviour involves a degree of religiosity, which postulates that religious individuals are more committed to helpfulness and other welfare courses of action (Saroglou, 2010; Ruiter & De Graaf, 2006). However, there should not be misidentification between intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations because the studies on these two constructs have yielded contrasting findings. Intrinsic religiosity (embrace of the religion because of its nature) brings an additional force to altruistic behaviour, but this is not so for extrinsic religiosity (Paciotti et al., 2011). Individuals may embrace religion to bring meaning to their life and as a means to self-actualisation and this defines intrinsic religious orientation, while some others become religious to gain gratification in certain aspects of life such as social approval and this is referred to as extrinsic religious orientation (Allport & Ross, 1967).

5.2.3 Research Question Four

Research question four was as follows: How do memories of past experience interact with how persons of Australian and Malaysian birth and place of residence interpret a help-seeking event? Themes extracted from the analysis of the findings have been devoted to answer the fourth research question, which aimed at examining the similarities and differences between the two cultures, Australia and Malaysia. A cursory look at the prominent themes revolving around the roles of previous helping experience in regulating the present behaviour shows identical findings between Australian and Malaysian participants. Both groups have mostly shared the similar effects of past experiences on regulating today's helping behaviour and generating compelling outcomes: either reinforcing a similar response from the past or changing such behaviour. Both also expressed the belief that direct and indirect experiences have equivalent effects on helping behaviour.

The two groups reported that people's understanding of the challenges of others can take many forms. One is with personal experience of needing assistance. An individual can take the distressed person's perspectives easily as he/she knows exactly what it feels being in similar predicament and asking for help. The ability to understand and share the feeling of the distress is termed as others' perspective-taking, and it is viewed as one of the crucial components of empathy that correlates positively with helping behaviour (Eisenberg, Eigum & Di Giunta, 2010). Past experience of being in a similar difficulty enhanced the participants' ability to take another's perspective and hence the empathy degree is heightened, which in turn affects a prosocial response to the current help-seeking event. The decision to help others is also conceptualised in the gratitude and reciprocity paradigm, as the feeling of indebtedness with another's assistance fosters helping behaviour towards another person who is in distress as a means of thankfulness and trust in the community as a whole (Carroll & Flood, 2010).

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Australian and Malaysian participants believed that past experiences with help-seeking behaviour informed them with particular cost and reward associated with either helping or ignoring. In many cases, both groups had previous exposure to the help-seeking event, the cost, and the reward coming with intervention and non-intervention and this has reinforced their action in subsequent events. Applying the basic concept of classical and operant conditioning that were introduced by Pavlov and Thorndike to the learning process of helping behaviour, the participants learned to repeat the same response to a similar help-seeking event due to the positive reinforcement acquired from previous encounters with the event; this is termed *generalisation* (Mackay, 2011). On the other hand, if participants experience discomfort and displeasure in the previous encounter, they are less likely to repeat the same behaviour in the latter crisis. This suggests that the participants learned that helpfulness/unhelpfulness would be associated with certain costs. To avoid these costs, they have to modify their subsequent response (Dovidio, 1984). A person who had a traumatic experience while helping would not be expected to invest interest in serving others in future, particularly if there were similar cues present in the event. These would trigger memories of the immense damage that he/she had been through, therefore, as a means of coping with the severely distressed event, an act of aversive adaptation is demonstrated (Pierce & Cheney, 2008). The type of reinforcement can vary. It can be either positive or negative and it can be in the form of emotions or behaviours, for example, confidence, anxiety, gratitude, self-satisfaction, reassurance, regret, guilt and shame. Much research has addressed the link between these reinforcements and helping behaviour (e.g., Midlarsky, 1971; Dromi, 2007; Mason, 2016; Schwartz, 1977).

Helping behaviour can be highly developed in humans through modelling. As suggested by *social learning theory,* individuals may engage in costly actions to help after observing other's helping behaviour (Bandura, 1972). However, according to Bandura

(1972), factors that promote modelling essentially depend on the observation of the consequence of helping; the likelihood of helping in a subsequent help-seeking event is higher if observing that others' helping behaviour generates a positive result. The theory postulates that the observer tends to model others' helping behaviour due to the heightened perception that the behaviour is deemed appropriate in that given circumstance. Witnessing another's helping behaviour increases self-efficacy, where the witness feels reassured that he/she could react similarly. This concept is supported by Rushton and Campbell (1977), who identified that modelling increases blood donation among female trainee occupational therapists. Both Australians and Malaysians overwhelmingly mention that the decision to help is affected by their previous experience witnessing other helpful bystanders. For both groups, especially the Malaysians, the modelling of helping behaviour is even more effective by watching close figures, such as parents performing the behaviour. This view is similar to what was proposed by Miller, Bernzweig, Eisenberg and Fabes (1991) proposed. They asserted that an investigation on the antecedent of an individual's occurrence of helping behaviour is dependent on the characteristics of a family member; parents who are involved in the humanitarian courses would have children who are more motivated to help. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of modelling takes account of the way the children are being nurtured; if prosocial behaviour is reinforced with instrumental reward, it could be detrimental to their intrinsic motivation to commit altruistic acts (Warneken, Hare, Melis, Hanus & Tomasello, 2007).

The importance of the relationship between social/mass media and helping behaviour is a common and remarkable coherent theme across the study's findings, and was frequently noted by both the Australians and Malaysians. Members of each group strongly considered that out-of-control influential dishonesty proliferates with the increasing dependence on the social/mass media. With respect to the beneficial effect of social/mass media, it appears that

many minds are aware that these media have the power to influence and promote positive change in social behaviour, but it heavily relies on people's choice of the kind of information they tune into. However, the interpretation from the findings of this study suggests that people are more likely to be affected by the malaise within social/mass media, which passes fears generationally and motivates people to take excessive precautionary measures when meeting a stranger. As Füredi (2002) explains in his *Culture of Fear,* today's pervasive anxiety is different from that of the past, being generated by people's bombardment by sporadic information from the technology. More notably, people who frequently watch the television believe that aggression is much more rampant than it actually is (Morgan, 2004). From the findings, it seems that social/mass media has a real opportunity to be able to drive the users to be extrinsically motivated in virtual helping behaviour, where the prosocial act is aimed at gaining social approval and desirability. Indeed, the effect of social/mass media is bidirectional: it could either cause fears of the unknown in embarking upon a new interpersonal relationship or promote public good values. Drawing from the findings from both cultures, anxieties in people's minds affect repetitive non-intervention or change individuals who used to help to persons to respond indifferently. As a result of perceived greater costs of intervention, excessive fears may drive helpful individuals to switch to a risk-avoidance mode of action.

It seems that informed training mentioned within the Australian discussion contributes to the findings of the role of past experience in regulating today's helping behaviour. Being trained and competent in delivering aid to the victim increases the probability of giving help in future help-seeking events. An experiment conducted by Montada (2001a), subjects who scored high in a responsibility denial survey display intervention more slowly than others. The high responsibility denial participants attributed some common factor for taking longer latency to intervene, which is subjective competence. This finding leads to an understanding

that individuals may use incompetency to justify their escape from the responsibility of helping others. Participants who are competent in help giving, (e.g. first aid) demonstrate a consistent mode of action in the competency-related tasks. Also, participants who did not intervene in the past reacted differently after they believed that they were qualified enough to efficiently help the victim with minimal expectation of harm. A more comprehensive description on the competence-helping relationship has been discussed in the previous section, within the behavioural schemas for helpfulness.

The analysis of the findings from both cultures also identifies the importance of moral values in stabilising helping responses across various circumstances. In fact, moral codes of responsibility permeate the individual's helping behaviour across the lifespan. For participants who exhibit strong prosocial moral judgment, adherence to the self-standard is a supreme force in facilitating their helpful behaviours. Individuals with high moral reasoning are likely to help despite the discomfort and the anxiety that they experience in an ambiguous help-seeking situation. Schwartz and Fleishman (1978) garnered some empirical findings to prove the importance of prosocial personal norms in the helping response. They reported that volunteering to be involved in elderly welfare was associated with moral obligation. For example, women who reported responsibility to help the elderly volunteered consistently with no concern about the legitimacy of the need.

Almost all participants from Australia and Malaysia reflected on whether their acts of benevolence were effective in improving the victim's condition and felt rewarded in knowing that such acts bring positive differences to others. In the event where one-off assistance is insufficient to relieve the victim's total distress, the participants begin questioning themselves if the act of benevolence has actually never been helpful or judicious. Hence, today's behavioural response stems not from the desire to provide a quick remedy to others' sufferings as in the past, but from the learned awareness that such response would generate

another cycle of help-seeking behaviour. This was interpreted as reflecting the worries of members of each comparison group of the appropriate benevolence particularly in the issue of homelessness/street-begging. This reflection supported the views of prominent practitioners that the helping may result in fostering dependency, as opposed to autonomy, which in turn chronically undermines self-efficacy and self-reliance (Ellerman, 2001).

5.3 Conclusion

In concluding the thesis, the researcher shares the study's key findings regarding how persons in Australia and Malaysia interpret helping behaviour in various circumstances, the strengths and limitations of the research.

Findings point to the involvement of cultural values of individualism and collectivism at individual interpretations of helping behaviour, which could be seen in the differences of how Australian and Malaysian perceive the recipient, the help-seeking and help-giving behaviour and the experience of emotions encountering the event. The findings of the present study also lead to various factors that contribute to the implementation of behaviour. Most of the factors leading to the helping behaviour between two cultures are identical, with the exemption on the importance Australians place on the presence of helping request and the integration of religious pro-sociality among Malaysians. Although such factors which appear in one culture also appear in another, it cannot be oversimplified. For some, these findings appeared to lead to the evidence that among Australians and Malaysians, there are several factors and reasons that have led to increased helping behaviour on one hand and to what extent these relationships have affected helping on the other. The findings also underscore the potential relationship between experiences in help-seeking events and subsequent helping. More to the point the study has illustrated how those relationships function to acquire helping or display ignorance in subsequent events.

The results of the thematic analysis indicated that both Australians and Malaysians suggest that strangers who portray looking-trustworthy-person's image, genuine body language of in need of help, neat and tidy clothing, helping request, and clear emergency cues such as the sight of blood, are more likely to receive help than the others. These findings also revealed that helping request is a crucial aspect in determining prosocial acts among Australians, due to their emphasis and recognition on other's independence. In addition, assumptive helping could potentially denigrate social values. Meanwhile, Malaysian individual's boundary are less pronounced, hence, it is common to see people in the society asking and giving help.

Individualist and collectivist cultures in Australia and Malaysia respectively are often different in terms of their perception toward the stigmatised people, such as the beggar and physically disabled. Although both cultures differ in their treatment of the stigmatised person, the act reflects the influence of religious beliefs and prejudice against this group of people. Obedience to Islamic tenets is an important factor in the Malay's experience of helping behaviour toward the beggar, while for Australians who preferred to be not so generous to them considered by-and-large that homelessness was self-inflicted. Australians prefer not to continuously be concerned in the perception of taking responsibility to help people with disabilities because presumptuous helping could lead to denigration. Most Malaysian initiate helping people with disabilities. Malays extend the help rather than assume that these people could operate their live independently, partly, due to the socially acceptable belief, 'We must concern toward people with disabilities'.

In both the Australian context and Malaysian context, women and urban dwellers are reluctant to help. Women often seemed to be more vulnerable, which extended to their ignorance towards high-cost emergencies guided by their fear, but not necessarily by selfishness. Malaysians are consistently less responsive toward intoxicated people because

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they discern such behaviour as social taboo and against Islamic principles. In contrast, Australians consider the decision not to help toward certain group of people such as homeless, people with disabilities and women is due to their appreciation of other's capability to function adequately and independently.

Encountering a help-seeking event could arouse the curiosity, hence, the individual would aware of other's distress, the first important step in deciding whether to help. Australians in general are more curious in the help-seeking occurrences, perhaps, due to their embraced Independent cultural values. However, curiosity without a care could not guarantee prosocial tendencies. In addition, Australians associate level of trust with helping. Thus, Australians perceive that in order to engage in social helping, there must be action taken to restore generalised trust. Australians and Malaysians agree that the degree of connectedness could potentially activate the 'feeling of alike'; a critical element of a decision to help.

Australians and Malaysians strongly agree that empathy is one of the most prominent affective schemas that the individual must feel before deciding to help. However, both cultures differ in regard to which component of empathy was mostly activated when witnessing others in need. Fundamentally, in a collectivist culture such as Malaysia, helping behaviour tends to be guided by affective-based empathy, characterised by feeling of compassion, care and pity. In contrast, an individualist culture such as Australia exhibits analytic cognitive thinking in terms of their emphasis on cognitive-based empathy in order to act in the interest of other's well-being. Guilt is another aspect in affective schemas that both Australians and Malaysians engage as a precursor in deciding whether to intervene; feeling of blame and not taking responsibility when observing another in need is alleviated in the act of helpfulness.

Australians and Malaysians are guarded in their response to a help-seeking behaviour, particularly when it involves one's well-being and survival. Fear in itself results in an

inhibition to help. Malaysians are also on occasion reluctant to help when confronted by other-focused emotion and evaluation and the fear of a negative evaluation. Australians and Malaysians are particularly reluctant to help when confronted by a high-cost emergency in which the helper's life and well-being is in jeopardy. An individual in either the Australian or Malaysian context is not likely to intervene if the costs outweigh the rewards and this is consideration is heightened in a situation perceived to be potentially dangerous or harmful.

Many of the Australian and Malaysian participants were aware of the importance of being considerate and tactical in determining their intention to help particularly in the ambiguous help-seeking event where a rushed decision to help could result in unfavourable costs and risks. Australian and Malaysian women were particularly vigilant, because they perceive themselves s more vulnerable and exposed to the threat. For Malaysians whose sympathy level is higher, the proclivity to provide direct and smooth helping is conditional and is associated cues indicating that the help request is legitimate. The presence of an explicit helping request has been construed as 'real', particularly among Australians who highly value self-governing. Nonetheless, investigating the influence of the degree of seriousness of the help-seeking event on the helping behaviour, when the situation is not urgent, Australians balance the cost of the intervention with the reward prior to helping.

A variety of reasons underlie Malaysians' preference for offering to meet identified needs, instead of giving exactly what the victim in need of help requests. Malaysians' initial perception of giving alternative forms of helping includes fear of being scammed, resorting to a win-win solution and reconciling between the costs of helping and non-helping. The general view is that the response of an individual when he or she is witnessing someone in need of help is dependent of the perceptions he or she has of other bystanders. The individual's initial perception of other bystanders' reaction would affect his or her subsequent response and determine action accordingly. Bystander effects can generate two compelling reactions: they

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can facilitate or inhibit helping. Negative bystander effects were more pronounced among Malaysian participants, where they believed that other witnesses of the help-seeking event would take care of the victim's need, a social phenomenon known as *diffusion of responsibility.* In contrast, Australian participants reported that helping could be increased by making an individual feel autonomously responsible in prosocial helping in the public setting.

For some Australians and Malaysians, prejudice against a stigmatised individual would not create a barrier to extend help, even though it could impact on *how* individuals help. Indirect helping can be a choice of help if the characteristics of the requester appear morally flawed, leading to distrust and doubt over the helping request. Examining prosocial behaviour among Australians toward people with disabilities, the help is offered in a very mindful way, not to undermine others' potential to operate independent living. This study also identifies that Australians believe that efficient helping can be delivered most effectively when an individual possesses competent skills in competence-related help-seeking events. Competency is recognised as one of the factors that could affect the degree of response to a request for help as it boosts the helper's confidence in deciding whether it is safe and efficient to intervene.

The majority of the Australian participants reported that fear inhibits helpful responses, and fear is greater if the costs of helping are high, no matter how valuable the reward. In addition, Australians were inclined to avoid assumptive helping, particularly toward marginalised groups in the society, as this could denigrate the marginalised individual's self-esteem. In the case of Malaysians, their inactive response to help is due to assuming that others will take action while they observe, a social psychology phenomenon called *bystander effect*. Apart from that, Malaysian participants commonly preferred to not intervene directly in competency-related help-seeking events such as rescuing a drowning

victim or attending to a bleeding woman, as these tasks require a competent helper, and injudicious helping would only aggravate the situation.

On the basis of the result of the study, it appears that moral and obligation reasoning has been the primary drive for both cultures, Australian and Malaysian, in helping behaviour; people help when they perceive such act is right and becomes an obligation under certain circumstances. Disparity in the moral obligation sub theme is distinguished only by additional resources of the Malaysian community, who regard Islamic principles as the main foundation to their moral foundation. It is believed that other emotional states such as shame, guilt and pride are attributable to the obedience to or deviation from these moral principles and this explains why people will help in an emergency.

In essence, Australian and Malaysian experience of helping is the manifestation of their empathy. Previous personal knowledge and experience about helping or being helped will resonate in the current help-seeking event, making the giving of help much more possible due to the deeper understanding of the victim's feeling and condition. Australians are more empathic when there are clear situational cues, and this could represent their cognitive-orientation of empathy. By contrast, Malaysians experience empathy more in terms of certain characteristics of the help recipient, and this represents the affective-dominant orientation of their empathy. Both cultures revealed less interest in giving help in a situation where the predicament is self-inflicted.

The situational cues indicating that the victim is in distress and urgently in need of help are among the strongest determinants affecting the helping behaviour of both Australians and Malaysians. In the area of women and helping, both cultures concur that the gender of the helper and of the help recipient significantly affects helping behaviour, with women seeming

to receive more help than men due to their perceived vulnerability. When the emergency is too risky, significantly fewer women help than men.

The participants from both groups identified body language and gestures as strong cues signifying apparent help-seeking behaviour; however, Malaysians were more sympathetic and responsive to this non-verbal language. Australians might have attributed the match between an explicit request and non-verbal language as a genuine call for help, and thus this would trigger people's decision to help. An additional cue that increases the probability of the victim being judged as deserving of help is the clarity of his or her helplessness, in which the predicament is perceived as being out of his or her control. Offering assistance to a victim who can handle the problem within his or her own capacity will invite only annoyance.

A non-ambiguous and high-cost emergency would tend to elicit unanimous behavioural intervention. Observing a drowning victim and watching a crying woman with a bleeding leg evoked spontaneous helpful reaction from both cultures, while attending to an unconscious intoxicated person was not an easy condition for Malaysians to handle, due to the stigma they associate with drunkenness. Finally, physical appearance, particularly unkempt clothing style and body odour, might serve to be linked to other societal issues such as homelessness, which generates conflicting reactions from both cultures. Those who believe that homelessness is a self-inflicted condition empathised less with the victim's condition, explaining the low rates of helping reaction.

While Malaysian participants were not affected by the presence of a helping request, Australians posited that helping behaviour is determined partly in response to the clarity of such a request. Particularly in a culture which values independence, helping is considered to be a denigration of others' capacity to operate independently when they may be able to

handle the situation without another's intervention. The willingness of Malaysians to help, and their choice of how to implement helping behaviour, is influenced by their level of religiosity. Islamic principles emphasise the importance of helping another who is in distress; therefore, helpfulness is a manifestation of being a true believer.

Australian participants were not significantly different from their Malaysian counterparts, in terms of how past experience influences current helping responses. Their prosocial behaviour can be either repeated or adjusted, depending on how they perceive their past experiences in help-giving and help-receiving events. Gratitude is predicted to influence helping responses. Particularly if the helper has had a positive experience of being helped, this will encourage him or her to replicate the action. Helping is also considered to be more likely if the helper has higher level of understanding, especially after a similar experience of being in the victim's position. However, from the helper's perspective, if the help given fosters dependency and could be detrimental to the recipient's self-worth in the long run, the act of benevolence needs to be avoided stopped or adjusted accordingly.

The role of past experiences has also been examined in relation to the learned costs and rewards associated with helping/non-helping. The predictions of classical and operant conditioning theories are confirmed: the propensity of participants to offer help is subjected to the learned costs and rewards. Furthermore, modelling predicts helping through the lens of *social learning theory,* but the observation depends on who performs the behaviour and the outcomes of such behaviour. The bystander concept is related to modelling, where a bystander's reaction toa request for help would easily influence other bystanders' subsequent action.

Regarding the influence of mass and social media on altruism and prosocial behaviour, attention is given to how these could facilitate and restrain helping behaviour. The

media has the power to inspire the public to commit to prosocial behaviour. However, it also has the power to disseminate dishonest information that could potentially instil pervasive anxiety among the public that inhibits helping behaviour and influence helpful people to become indifferent to the needs of others. However, even if the person with a high sense of responsibility does not have enough training, has been bombarded with variety of information from the media, has observed some passive and inactive passers-by and has learned the risks associated with helpful action, he or she would still opt to help. This choice is based on his or her personal commitment to achieve self-actualisation.

Strengths

An important element of this exploratory qualitative research study is the exploration of different views from an Individualist culture (Australia) and a Collectivist culture (Malaysia) on how experience in a help-seeking event should be defined, and, accordingly, how helping (or non-helping) is perceived. It also differentiates Australian and Malaysian interpretations of preference given in seven vignettes comprising various situational determinants and motivational variables. From very early on, similar and different views have been formulated about the helping norms and other socialisation and cultural factors influencing prosocial behaviour in each culture. This provides the researcher the opportunity to ascertain the uniqueness of cultural meanings on people's interpretation of helping behaviour from direct interaction with participants representing individualist and collectivist cultures.

This research supports the existing literature and adds some fresh findings to the understanding of social and cultural effects on the interpretation of helping behaviour. The findings of the study are led by five research questions and reveal that there are connections and disparities in Australian and Malaysian interpretation of helping or non-helping that

justify further research. The study demonstrates that the interpretation and motivation to display helping behaviour in Australians' learning of helping behaviour are partly influenced by cultural meanings illustrating the societal values of independence, freedom, and achievement. For Malaysians, the cultural conceptions of belongingness, responsibility, and dependence are found prevalence through the findings of the interview.

Numerous discussions have focused on the situational and dispositional determinants of helping behaviour. This qualitative exploration of the acquisition of altruistic response has brought together cultural meanings from persons in an individualist population and persons in a collectivist population. The Australian participants reveal the role of cultural implications in their perception of help-seeking behaviours, help recipients, situational as well as personal determinants of altruism and helping behaviour. The significance of explicit helping requests reflects and implies individualist values which emphasise independence, self-government and privacy. These concerns are of great importance to both helper and recipient; the help is not presumptively offered and the help is not easily asked. By contrast, the act of giving and requesting help in Malaysia is much more linear, without too much perception and expectation involved.

Additionally, Australians' expression of individuality can be found through their perception of and response to stigmatised individuals, for example, beggars and people with disabilities. Australians who consider homelessness to be self-inflicted are less inclined to help. By contrast, Malaysians, who accept beggars as deserving of a proportion of others' wealth as well as their sympathy exhibit more positive their reactions to helping such people. The findings of this study also pinpoint the differences in terms of how Australians and Malaysians emotionally and behaviourally react to the people with disabilities who appear to be experiencing difficulties while operating their daily living.

Another important theoretical implication obtained from the findings of the study, and deeming further research, is the different activation of empathy components between the two cultural groups. Australians demonstrate a distinctive blend of feelings and thoughts through the dominant activation of the cognitive component of empathy, while Malaysians are found to activate more of the affective component of empathy. Thus, this differences lend support to the idea that different component of empathy predicts how people perceive help-seeking behaviours, which in turn influences people's tendencies whether to be helpful or to be indifferent.

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5.5 Limitations

Limitations of this study include restricted demographic characteristics of the participants from both cultures. First of all, the participants' level of education in this study (the lowest is undergraduate or equivalent) might lead to a bias of response on one particular question or vignette. Different responses of these questions and vignettes from different background of study would be necessary if the study were to be replicated. Second, the exclusion of other ethnicities in Malaysia, such as Chinese and Indian, may have made it difficult to generalise the effects of 'Malaysian cultural stereotypes', not restricted to 'Malay cultural membership'. The inclusion of other ethnicities, both in Australia and Malaysia, would be required to properly interpret the effects of a bigger cultural membership (nation) on perception of and reaction to the help-seeking events.

Although the present study suggests that qualitative research is the best design to answer the research concerns, the content of the findings are limited to what the nature of the research design can offer. One implication is that the content of the identified findings may have been overgeneralised. An exploration and explanation of the complexity of prosocial emotions such as empathy, for example, would have offered some insights, but the degree and

measurement of empathy levels of each cultural group is unknown. The use of quantitative research design is more likely to contribute to the measure of to what extent Australians are different from Malaysians in terms of their level of empathy, and a resort to statistical analysis may be necessary for reliability and validity purposes.

The use of SCS was also a limitation of this study. Although the use of SCS may have been widely relevant to measure the dimensions of individualism and interdependence, its psychometric properties are still being revised to increase the test's items and construct validity. This raises the important point that the response styles of the participants from each culture may not consistently and truthfully reflect the measures of individualistic and interdependence. Additionally, it would have been beneficial to know how participants assimilate with the community and cultural contexts as a whole, especially when globalisation nowadays has made the boundaries and differences less pronounced. Incorporating another measurement to access the level of cultural identification would be a possible means addressing this issue.

Lastly, it is possible that the interviewers' following questions to the answers given by the research participants were not effectively directed to the sequel of the narratives because of fatigue, lack of attention or competency-related factors. In this qualitative research, the background of both interviewers in counselling was a valuable aspect of the interview process. Nevertheless, there is always a room for improvement. With a greater focus on wording used by the participants, deeper and richer meanings of an understanding could be achieved. In addition, participants within the interview may have responded consistent with their view of what the interviewer wanted to know. In short, there may have been a level of acting toward social desirability in interviewee's responses.

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Appendices

Appendix A Self-Construal Scale

This is a questionnaire that measures a variety of feelings and behaviours in various situations. Listed below are a number of statements. Read each one as if it referred to you. Write the number that best matches your agreement or disagreement. Please respond to every statement. Thank you.

1=STRONGLY DISAGREE	4=DON'T AGREE OR	5=AGREE SOMEWHAT
2=DISAGREE	DISAGREE	6=AGREE
3=SOMEWHAT DISAGREE		7=STRONGLY AGREE

_____1. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects.

_____2. I can talk openly with a person who I meet for the first time, even when this person is much older than I am.

_____3. Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument.

_____4. I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact.

_____5. I do my own thing, regardless of what others think.

_____6. I respect people who are modest about themselves.

_____7. I feel it is important for me to act as an independent person.

_____8. I will sacrifice my self interest for the benefit of the group I am in.

_____9. I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood.

_____10. Having a lively imagination is important to me.

_____11. I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans.

_____12. I feel my fate is intertwined with the fate of those around me.

_____13. I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met.

_____14. I feel good when I cooperate with others.

_____15. I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards.

_____16. If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible.

_____17. I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments.

____18. Speaking up during a class (or a meeting) is not a problem for me.

____19. I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor (or my boss).

____20. I act the same way no matter who I am with.

____21. My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me.

____22. I value being in good health above everything.

____23. I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I am not happy with the group.

____24. I try to do what is best for me, regardless of how that might affect others.

____25. Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me.

____26. It is important to me to respect decisions made by the group.

____27. My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.

____28. It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group.

____29. I act the same way at home that I do at school (or work).

____30. I usually go along with what others want to do, even when I would rather do something different.

INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS

INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

You are invited to participate

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: **The Effects of Event Schema on Prosocial Behavior in Australia and Malaysia: A Cross-Cultural Interpretation of Helping Behavior**

This project is being conducted by a student researcher Ms. Fazliyaton Ramley as part of a PhD at Victoria University under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Wally Karnilowicz and Dr. Warwick Hosking from School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Victoria University

Project explanation

This study explores the relations between event schema and prosocial behavior in two different sociocultural contexts, Australian and Malaysia. This research focuses on event schema defines as a mental preconception formed from previous experience of help-seeking event; an event where spontaneous helping is needed when one's well-being, life, health and safety are at stake. This study focuses on variations between individualist and collectivist notions of event schema on prosocial behavior. Specifically, this study will explore how individuals within the collectivist culture of Malaysia and the individualist culture of Australia experience help-seeking events, what helping means to them, the cognitive processes associated with choice when confronted by a help-seeking situation, and how experience with such events impacts upon behaviour.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be requested to fill in a demographic questionnaire asking your age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and level of education. You will then ask to rate the extent to which you have identified with your culture using a Likert-scale, Ethnic Identification Scale (Fan & Karnilowicz, 1997). You will then respond to Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994), designed to assess independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal as individual differences variable. Finally, you will be individually interviewed using unstructured in-depth conversational interview techniques. Situational imageries of help-seeking events, in particular emergency situations, will be framed and presented as oral vignettes to engage the participant in exploring their perceptions of prosocial behaviour in each context. For each vignettes, your opinion on several follow-up questions will be explored.

How will the information I give be used?

Information collected on this study will be analysed to write a thesis based on the cross-cultural interpretation of helping behavior that roots from different mental representation of help-seeking events between Australian and Malaysian. The data may be published in peer reviewed journals and presented to a group of people in local as well as international conference. Your identity will not be identified or correctly identified and all personal information will be keep confidential.

What are the potential risks of participating in this project?

Minimal risks associated with being interviewed include any physical or condition that will make you under pressure when asked the questions, discomfort in expressing your own understanding on spiritual, cultural and social matter as you may doubt over the short relationship and feel awkward with certain type of questions. In the event that there discomfort caused by participation which results in emotional or psychological stress or discomfort, a free-of-charge counselling service is available via Associate Professor Gerard Kennedy, College of Arts, Victoria University (Ph.9919 2481 or Gerard.Kennedy@vu.edu.au)

How will this project be conducted?

If you agree to participate, you will be given a packet of questionnaire includes a demographic questionnaire, Ethnic Identification Scale (Fan, Karnilowicz, 1997) and Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994). In addition to completing the measures, you will be individually interviewed using unstructured in-depth conversational interview techniques. Situational imageries of help-seeking events, in particular emergency situations, will be framed and presented as oral vignettes to engage you in exploring their perceptions of prosocial behaviour in each context. For each vignettes, your opinion on several follow-up questions will be explored.

Who is conducting the study?

The study is conducted by College of Arts, Victoria University

Main investigators are:

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Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chief Investigator listed above.

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Research Ethics and Biosafety Manager, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 or phone (03) 9919 4148.

Interviewer: Well, that's most important thing.

Interviewee: Yes. It's <inaudible> *0:00:07 sun down here.

Interviewer: So did it take you a while to get here or –?

Interviewee: It's just on an hour's run, but I had a few errands, like sort of to – <inaudible> *0:00:16 I have to come down to civilisation every few <laughs> – every so often, would have to do a few things.

Interviewer: And you found it okay?

Interviewee: Yeah. No problems. But it's just getting into the parking. It's been a while since I've been out to this campus, and I'm like <inaudible> *0:00:31 digging up there and – or just working out where to get in.

Interviewer: Now, Docia, would you like to move your chair a bit closer?

Interviewee: Sure.

Interviewer: I'm just mindful of these recording devices, and sometimes it's being a bit fuzzy. Are you comfortable in that chair or would you prefer <over talk> *0:00:47. Now, Docia, I have a few little forms for you to read over and sign. So one is a consent form which lets you know a little bit about what the research involves, and it lets you know that your information will remain confidential. And also that if at any time during the process of interview, if you feel that you need to stop for any reason, you're more than welcome to do that. So I'll give you a few moments to read that. And I was just speaking to [Lea] *0:01:36. So, she would like – I, Docia, of, address, and then agree that <laughs> –

Interviewee: Address probably won't quite fit <inaudible> *0:01:46. I'll just put the town. That's probably the suburb. Or does she want the whole thing?

Interviewer: Oh. Look, just – yeah – just squeeze it in. That's fine. Also, Docia, this is your water.

Interviewee: Thank you. Certify that I am blank?

Interviewer: That I agree.

Interviewee: Ah. Agree.

Interviewer: Thanks. It's a bit – it's not so clear.

Interviewee: What are we doing here? Second term.

Interviewer: So that is for you to keep. That's for me to keep. And that's just informing you a little bit more about what's involved, but particularly, I'd like you to pay attention just to this paragraph down here. And that just alerts you to the fact that we have a counselling service if you need it for any reason. If you experience psychological distress, etcetera, because sometimes some of the topics can trigger emotional issues or –

Interviewee: Sure.

Interviewer: Yeah. So just to let you know that you're welcome to get in touch with that – yeah – individual. Thanks. And that's a free service. You can take that. So basically, Docia, what – what's – what I've got planned for today. We've got around about – are you in a rush?

Interviewee: No. Not at all.

Interviewer: Have you got any time –

Interviewee: Not at all.

Interviewer: No time constraints. So, look, sometimes it's gone for an hour. Sometimes, it's gone for three with different participants.

Interviewee: [Goodness] <mark>*0:03:44</mark>.

Interviewer: So, there's no sort of constraints around that. I have a few vignettes, around about 12 vignettes, and we'll have a discussion about those vignettes. And then I have a little questionnaire for you at the end for you to complete. So that's basically how it's going to run. So, let's jump on in. So, Donna, I'd like you to imagine that you're on your way to a doctor's appointment.

And on the way, you see a middle-aged man and he's dressed in casual attire, and he seems restless and puzzled. And he sees you and approaches. He explains to you that he needs to phone his wife, but has left his phone at home. He asks to call his wife on your mobile so he can tell his wife of his whereabouts. So what comes to mind?

Interviewee: I guess – well, I'd probably just think that he's probably come from the doctors, maybe has some news, something important and it wouldn't be an issue for me. Yeah. I'd probably hand him the mobile.

Interviewer: So what feelings do you have about encountering this situation, this man?

Interviewee: I'd be quite relaxed about it, really. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you feel comfortable?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what kind of help specifically do you think you'd offer?

Interviewee: He'd offer? He might just say where he's calling, that it wasn't gonna be an overseas call or something like that.

Interviewer: So you'd hand him the phone and you'd say, "You're more than welcome to call."

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you wouldn't hold the phone for him? You're quite happy to give him the phone?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what would you imagine you might feel if you didn't hand him the phone, if you didn't help?

Interviewee: I'd probably worry. I'd probably get pretty worried. I'd probably start as soon as it occurred to me that there might be a problem there, I'd probably start thinking about it. I can imagine if I'd probably end up doing something like getting

halfway across the road and doubling back, and be like, "Oh.   This is the situation," and just feeling really silly, and we'd probably miss the lights back on <laughs>. Once those kinds of things occur to me, I don't tend to let them go, so <laughs> I'd probably obsess.

Interviewer: And what about having helped? How do you think you would feel?

Interviewee: I'd probably feel a little sense of – feel good about it – yeah – that you've helped, assuming I got my phone back <laughs>.

Interviewer: That's a good point to make. What behaviours do you categorise in this situation as helping?

Interviewee: From him or my behaviours?

Interviewer: From you.

Interviewee: Yeah.   My behaviour – oh – I guess just a willingness to listen to whatever his need was that he'd asked me. I'd stopped and was able to help.

Interviewer: So openness?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Preparedness. And what about non-helping actions? What do you think would categorise non-helping actions?

Interviewee: That it'd probably be walking away, trying to ignore him, or saying no, basically. Saying no, walking on. Yeah.

Interviewer: And tell me what made you respond to this event as such?

Interviewee: Oh. I just think it's a normal human sort of situation that not everybody has access to a phone. I've been stuck myself before, and it's not like we have lots of public phones that work anymore.

Interviewer: So you've had an experience of being in a similar situation needing to –

Interviewee: Yeah. In the past, and – or being out of range of phones and things like that. Yeah.

Interviewer: And how do you think people in our society would respond to this man?

Interviewee: I guess it probably varies on where you're from, on where you live. Living in the country, I think most people would be happy to help, but – yeah. I have seen occasions where people would sort of feel – perhaps a particular woman might feel afraid or not sure what the motives were.

Interviewer: And you mentioned something about a difference between the country and the city?

Interviewee: Yeah. Well, I – having lived in both environments and I – well, I don't work anymore. I used to work in the city. I used to get stopped a lot by people for money and that sort of thing. So I guess you might be, in certain circumstances, wary of giving somebody your phone. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it's sort of dependent upon the location?

Interviewee: Yeah. Whether you're on your own, there are other people around, that sort of thing.

Interviewer: And you mentioned that you've had similar experiences. How have you reacted as somebody was – being able to help?

Interviewee: Most times – yeah – I'm not a particularly fearful person. So I've always – even when it's been in town or that, I would like to think that somebody else would do the same for a friend, for me, or for my family if they were caught in circumstance. I don't see it as any big sacrifice to make. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you're hoping that – well, you're treating people the way you would like to be treated?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: And did you learn anything from the experience, I suppose, of needing help in the past and – or offering help in the past?

Interviewee: [Probably not] *0:10:07 learned anything, but I know what – I guess you can always relate more personally to a situation where you've been stuck or something

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like that where it's been – for me, I'd – would be more situations where I've probably had a car break down and that sort of thing.

Interviewer: And we're coming to that.

Interviewee: <laughs> In the days, when I didn't have – well, we didn't all have mobile phones and things like that. Yeah.

Interviewer: That makes it different.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Stakes are higher.

Interviewee: Yeah. I'm old enough to remember not having mobile phones <laughs>.

Interviewer: So, thank you for that. So moving on to the second vignette, Docia, you're on your way to a doctor's appointment again and this time on your way, you see a middle-aged woman dressed in casual attire who seems restless and puzzled. And she sees you and approaches and she explains to you that she needs to find her husband, but has left her phone at home. And she asks if she can call her husband on your phone to tell him of her whereabouts. What comes to mind?

Interviewee: Again, same thing, I would probably – happy to help out. And again, if we sort of approach it – I guess it depends from a proximity to the doctor's surgery. But if we were inside of that, I might be assuming that perhaps she's come from an appointment, needs to get a lift, or maybe not well, who knows? Yeah.

Interviewer: So there's no difference between either scenarios? The gender doesn't – gender of the individual doesn't make a difference?

Interviewee: Not really. I guess depending on the appearance of the man and my surroundings whether I was isolated. I might be a little more alert if it was a male who approached me, but – yeah. Probably I would still be just a – treat them the same in that respect. Yeah.

Interviewer: So depending upon his appearance. Can you say more about that and what that would – how that would affect things?

Interviewee: I guess it would be more like if he was clearly, say – 'cause we were talking a middle-aged man before. I guess you could – well, look, to be honest, I would still probably help him, but I guess I'd be more alert if, say, he was scruffy, maybe appear dishevelled, perhaps appeared to be somebody that was living on the streets, had been drinking a lot or drug-affected or something like that. Yeah. I'd still be probably more than – more inclined to help. But if I was, you know, dark alley on my own, I might be a little bit more alert about my surroundings sort of thing.

Interviewer: So is there anything else that you'd like to add about this scenario being different?

Interviewee: I guess you'd probably – I'd have to be truthful and say I'd probably feel more relaxed, a middle-aged woman approaching me than a man, but overall, it probably wouldn't make a great deal of a difference. Yeah.

Interviewer: But in the back of your mind, with the man, you've got – maybe your radar is a bit more tuned or something.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: And with the woman, you feel more confident that there's not – maybe what you think with the man, there might be an ulterior motive or something?

Interviewee: Ah. Just if – again, if you're on the street, whether it was an attempt to steal something, steal your purse, or something like that –

Interviewer: So, tell me, what's your opinion of people, either male or female, who seek help like this and they state clearly that they need help and the type of help that they need, that they mentioned that they're in trouble? What are you – What's your opinion of that?

Interviewee: Well, that would probably make me more – even more responsive to want to help in some way. I might ask them could I help them beyond the phone call, where did they need to get to, is it – were they okay? Is it urgent? Perhaps offer them a lift.

Interviewer: So that's going to help you get an indication of where they're at and –

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. And just trying to help where you can. I mean I've had those – not to me, but I've had those experiences and I've come across people that had been sort of stuck and needed some help. Yeah.

Interviewer: And so, you've gauged the situation. You had a bit of a chat to them about what kind of help is relevant and –

Interviewee: Yeah. Because – yeah – if they're in that much of a need that they need to quickly use a phone that they don't have access to, perhaps they're stuck, they've got no money, maybe they need – are they gonna be sitting waiting for two hours or is it ten minutes down the road. Can I make it easier for them if it's – if I give them a lift to where they're going or the train station or something whatever it might be.

Interviewer: And you've encountered that before?

Interviewee: Yeah. Quite a few times <laughs> –

Interviewer: And people were willing to go with you and get a lift?

Interviewee: Yup. I mean, there's been a range of different situations, but –

Interviewer: And do you think people are more trusting in the country?

Interviewee: Possibly. Yeah. I've come across – well, I think sometimes they don't have a chance. When you live out where I am, people break down, get stranded, that sort of thing. I happen to live on the main road, so I do get that knock at the door quite often of, "We're lost," or, "Our car has broken down."

Interviewer: So it's quite remote? Is it –

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean, there are houses around me, but they're sort of on acreage and that sort of thing, and I'm on the main road and right at the top of the mountain. So, there's a bit of a pull-off there, so I tend to be – Believe me, I've had knocks in the door at three and four in the morning when people have hit a tree, a kangaroo, whatever that sort of thing. That's happened quite regularly. But even in the city, I've found I've done the same thing. I saw a young woman one day going to

university over at <inaudible> <mark>*0:17:09</mark> Campus and she was clearly in a bit of a fight with someone and a gentleman and a lot of screaming at the people – domestic, and – that I've pulled up straightaway. Put the phone up and said, "Got the police on speed dial <laughs>. What's going on?" And got her to get into the car and told him to <inaudible> <mark>*0:17:29</mark> asked if I could take her somewhere, the police or – did she have somewhere to go, but – no. Yeah. So I dropped her to a friend's place. Yeah.

Interviewer: And you felt safe doing that? With this male, sort of –

Interviewee: Well, it was daylight and – yeah. Look, I was alert to the fact that he was angry and he was being abusive to her and made a few remarks. And I kept a safe distance between him and me and the car, so that I could jump back in the car if needed. But I don't know, I just sort of – I figured he wasn't out to get me. It was obviously some sort of argument.

Interviewer: And how did he respond to that, when you intervened?

Interviewee: He called me few so and sos and then said, "It wasn't my business to – keep moving." And I said, "I don't care. It's not right." Whatever – 'Cause he was trying to tell me that she'd done some dreadful thing and I said, "Don't care, not interested." He was trying to hit her, so – yeah.

Interviewer: That sounds really full on. Yeah. So, on to the next vignette, you're crossing a busy road and you see a blind man who looks in his 60s and he's using a walking stick. And he's waiting at traffic lights on the opposite side of the road and you noticed that there's no crossing beep signal to indicate to blind people when it's safe to cross the road. What comes to mind?

Interviewee: Well – yeah – it'd be – how is that person gonna get across if there's no crossing? They might be a local and might have some means. I don't know <laughs>. I know that a lot of people could – I'd probably wander over and ask, "Could I be of help?" Yeah. Without sort of forcing my way into that situation and I – some people <inaudible> <mark>*0:19:32</mark> have their own strategies for these things, might live in the area, that sort of thing.

Interviewer: So you'd be mindful that you weren't –

Interviewee: I didn't – wouldn't wanna offend the person.

Interviewer: Offend him. Yeah.

Interviewee: But I'd probably ask could I help him cross. Yeah.

Interviewer: And how do you think you'd react to these thoughts that there's a man who's needing assistance and you're the person who's gonna offer it?

Interviewee: I'd – to me, it's just the appropriate thing to do. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it's just to sort of – it's an innate thing. You don't really think about it much. It's just –

Interviewee: Yeah. It's just – yeah – just a courtesy. Yeah. A normal courtesy that you would give to anybody. Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you think there's – do you feel any obligation to help him?

Interviewee: I wouldn't call it an obligation, but – yeah. I just – I guess I feel – would feel – it's just part of being a good citizen, to help somebody who may need help, or to offer to help.

Interviewer: So you would cross the other side of the road and you'd inquire in a tactful way?

Interviewee: Yeah <laughs>. Yeah. "Could I help you across?" Yeah.

Interviewer: And then if he needed it, you'd assist him across.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: So how do you imagine you would feel having done that, having helped?

Interviewee: I guess, again, you'd probably feel a little bit – I've – yeah – you'd probably have that warm feeling. Yup. I did the right thing.

Interviewer: Warm and fuzzy.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what about if you chose to walk on by and not assist?

Interviewee: Yeah. I think I'd probably be – feel a bit – well, I'd hate to think that I would do something like that. But I guess I would feel a little ashamed really. Yeah. And I'd be concerned that something might happen. Yeah. I'd be probably looking back to make sure it hasn't happened.

Interviewer: And then you might be feeling a little bit –

Interviewee: Anxious.

Interviewer: Towards the – as the day went –

Interviewee: Situation.

Interviewer: And you were thinking about it perhaps. Yeah.

Interviewee: There'd be that guilt, you know? "Oh. I hope nothing happened." That sort of thing. Yeah.

Interviewer: So was there anything in particular that made you respond to this blind man in this way? You mentioned something about being a good citizen.

Interviewee: Yeah. I guess I'd – it'd be just more a case of – is it – could I help? Could I avoid a really awful situation for this person, or a guy being stuck, or whatever, you know?

Interviewer: So you're thinking potentially about the risk. So you're minimising the risk.

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean if he were to have an accident, that'd be awful, and it'd be awful for anybody else involved. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, tell me, is there anything in this situation, or social circumstances for that matter, that would prevent you from helping, that you would – would change your decision to help?

Interviewee: Can't think of anything.

Interviewer: I don't know. The weather? You're in a rush?

Interviewee: Not really. No. No. The fact if it was unpleasant weather or whatever, that'd probably make me more inclined to offer to help. Yeah.

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Interviewer: Have you had a similar experience before where you've encountered someone needing assistance to cross the road?

Interviewee: Yeah. At different times, I've offered to help someone whether they be disabled or elderly, probably more the latter. Yeah. And I've had a few sight-impaired acquaintances at work and things like that. If you're going to meetings and things, even though they get around where I used to work – get around fine, but if you're going somewhere slightly different, "Would you wanna take my arm or whatever?"

Interviewer: And what did you learn from those events? Anything that you take with you – you can take away?

Interviewee: I'm just – sometimes a little simple courtesy can mean a lot to somebody else, and as long as you do it in a way that you're sort of demeaning them <laughs>.

Interviewer: Have you ever had an experience where people have reacted in a negative way?

Interviewee: No. I mean usually, if somebody says they're fine, they've got it, then that's okay. Well, most people I've come across have always been – when that's happened, have been grateful and that sort of thing. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, Docia, you're crossing a busy road and you see a blind woman this time, who looks in her 60s. She's using a walking stick. She's waiting at the traffic lights on the opposite side of the road. You noticed there's no crossing beep signal to indicate to blind people when it's safe to cross the road.

Interviewee: Well, same, same.

Interviewer: Same, same?

Interviewee: Yeah. I'd treat the situation exactly the same. Yeah.

Interviewer: Anything different, anything you want to add to that scenario, around gender?

Interviewee: Well – no – no – I don't think in that situation.

Interviewer: So, in this instance, I'd like you to imagine, Docia, that you're driving on a quiet street on your way home from work and you see a car along

the roadside with its hazard lights on and the bonnet lifted. And you notice a young couple stopped attending to a problem with their car. You also noticed the man is trying to make a phone call while the woman stands beside him looking restless. And you become aware that you're the only one passing by on the road at that moment. What comes to mind?

Interviewee: I'd probably buzz the window down and say, "You guys all right?" Did they need a lift or just to make sure that they got through, or what have you. Or was it something I could give them for the car, have they run out of fuel, that type of thing. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you're just instantly in helping mode?

Interviewee: Again, I've had the misfortune to be stuck on more than one occasion. Probably, to be fair, possibly depend on where – where I live, I do it as a matter of course. I guess if you're in town here and somebody's just in a busy street or what have you, but it was a quiet area and no cars passing up, again, I might still say, "Are you guys all right?"

Interviewer: So – and how do you think you'd react to this instant thought that you would just offer help? Do you have any thoughts around that, how you react?

Interviewee: Again, I just think it's polite thing to do and I've been on the other – had the shoe on the foot on a few occasions, so I know what it's like to be stuck <laughs>.

Interviewer: Pretty rotten. Yeah. And what about any feelings facing this scenario?

Interviewee: I guess I'd – again – look, I'd like to think I'd show a bit of – the time of day or whatever. If it was night time, it was a lonely area, I try just – obviously, I have that little bit of self-awareness. I'm not naive that <laughs> there are people that aren't always of good intent, but – yeah. If I got a bad vibe from them, I might say, "Look, I'll offer to ring for you," or something like that if I thought there was something fishy there, but – rather than give a lift to somebody that –

Interviewer: So that's an interesting point that you raised. You're gauging that this is a comfortable situation. This is – I feel safe. If you get a sense that something's a bit off, you're gonna vamoose <laughs> out of there.

Interviewee: Yeah. And I mean it's probably not the best way to judge it, but – yeah. Look, I mean I had a situation not that long ago. Someone across the road, as I say, it was very late at night and they came knocking at the door and asked – they had a broken down car and I got a really bad vibe about them. The car had a broken window. And I thought, "Is this a stolen car?" It was a bit of a beat up old car and that – then they sort of explained it. It sounded rational, but whereas normally, I'd – the guy said he'd run out of fuel. Normally I'd probably have said, "I wanna help you and I'll take you down the garage." But I knew I had a jar – a can full of fuel in my garage, so I gave him the can. I didn't let them in the house, but wandered out – gave them the can of fuel and said, "Oh. Just pop it over the fence when you're finished." Yeah. It was just – whereas perhaps a woman on her own or something like that, I might have said, "Oh. Look, do you wanna hop in? I'll give you a lift down the garage."

Interviewer: And so, that all went smoothly and he popped the can over the fence and –?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: But there was something internal going on?

Interviewee: Well, it was three or four in the morning. And I got the impression they'd been drinking. So I wasn't sort of gonna say, "Oh. Come on in."

Interviewer: Have a cup of tea.

Interviewee: "Have a cup of tea," which I've done before with other people and say, "Come in. Have a cup of tea. Wait for the RACV to get here," or whatever it might be. Yeah. I sort of said – gave them the can and didn't sort of invite them in. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, specifically, you would gauge in the situation and obviously, continuing to gauge the situation, you'd wind down your window, you'd inquire into how they were doing, if they needed any help. And then you'd be prepared to give them a lift somewhere or – I don't know.

Interviewee: Yeah. Well, again, if you're out on the highway or something like that, I'd say, well, if they've run out of petrol, one of them needs to get to the garage to get something or other for the car. Well, I wouldn't be any use in terms of mechanical help, I'm afraid, but – yeah. I could probably – I would probably offer to give one of them a lift to – yeah. That would usually be the –

Interviewer: And if you got a bad vibe, you just – how would you kind of end that?

Interviewee: Well, I'd – yeah – I guess if – are they able to get through on the phone?

Interviewer: And if they're able to get through, then say, "Okay."

Interviewee: Yeah. No worries.

Interviewer: "Just checking that you're cool." Keep going. Yeah. So, was there – I mean you've spoken about, I suppose, a couple of many occasions that you've had similar situations. And that's influenced how you would offer help?

Interviewee: Well, I don't – I can't say I've ever really had a bad situation, so – yeah. It makes me more inclined to help. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, if you have positive experiences, you're more inclined to help more regularly.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. I guess so. I mean if something awful had happened and I'd been attacked by somebody, I think you'd be more reticent to stop and talk to a stranger at any time, I suppose. Yeah.

Interviewer: So a negative experience is gonna colour <inaudible> *0:33:02?

Interviewee: Well, I imagine so.

Interviewer: So what else do you think would influence your decision to not help, besides a negative experience?

Interviewee: Probably time of – if it's late at night and my physical location, how isolated I am, and man or woman, maybe even the age of the person, young or old, sort of –

Interviewer: What about two guys?

Interviewee: Yeah. I'd probably – again, I'd still do the "You guys okay?" sort of thing, but – yeah. I'd be, I guess, more guarded. Yeah.

Interviewer: And how do you think other people in our community or this society would react to a similar situation?

Interviewee: I guess again, it probably varies as those that wouldn't think twice to stop maybe out of fear, maybe out of don't-care. Yeah. And there's plenty of people who would. Certainly, where – around where I live – a lot of people seem to be pretty happy to take a chance <laughs>. Yeah.

Interviewer: So is it a pretty tight-knit community where you're living?

Interviewee: I wouldn't say that so much, but I mean I've been there for quite a few years, so I've gotten to know quite a few people. I guess probably sort of there's a lot of farmers and truckies, and those sorts of guys that are pretty resilient and get around and seem to know how to fix everything <laughs> and know their way around. Well, one of the main reasons you stop when you see a car stuck or anything is a lot of people just seem to get lost or had no idea where they are when they're out on those roads. Yeah. So –

Interviewer: Been – encountered being in the country before and jack-knifing trailers and needing to get tractors to pull me out, and people have always been very accommodating. So –

Interviewee: I guess we've all been there at some respect ourselves. So it's sort of – it makes you more inclined to give somebody else a hand.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you'd like to say about this vignette before we move on?

Interviewee: No. Yeah. That's –

Interviewer: So, Docia, you hear a woman crying loudly. A crowd of onlookers surrounds her, and as you approach the crowd, you see a middle-aged woman lying on the ground and you see a lot of blood from an injury to her legs. Most of the passersby look at the woman, showing some curiosity as they continue

on. Others seem to be having a conversation about what they see. One man bends down to calm her. What comes to mind?

Interviewee: Well, I would – I don't know whether she's been attacked or whether she was ill in some fashion, or had fallen over, had an accident.

Interviewer: So the cause?

Interviewee: Yeah. So I'd probably be looking around to see if there was any evidence of what's happened, like a fight or something like that, but I guess I would probably still approach and say, "Can I help? What's wrong?"

Interviewer: So how do you react to – yeah – this situation? How do you react to these thoughts?

Interviewee: Yeah. I'd be – I'd try and be a bit alert to what my surroundings are. I guess are we talking in town on a Saturday night with lots of intoxicated people around? But I guess my instinct would still be, "Tell me what's happened. Can I help?" And that's possibly – I mean that would be my natural instincts anyway, but more so now because that's the sort of thing I'm doing at uni. I'm doing – starting to be paramedic, so – yeah.

Interviewer: So you have experience.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: [You had experienced] *0:37:45. So how far are you along?

Interviewee: One semester to go. Nearly done <laughs>.

Interviewer: So how long is the course?

Interviewee: Three years.

Interviewer: Three years. Yeah. That's intense. Wow! Yeah.

Interviewee: So, just about there. But even – other than – even prior to that sort of – I'd done some volunteering at the ambulance. I knew – I know first aid anyway, so I would always be inclined to approach somebody if I'd seen someone that appears to be in some sort of trouble.

Interviewer: So you feel quite confident about your skills?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what about feelings? I mean do you just sort of – can you just sort of switch off feelings or you're just in autopilot mode?

Interviewee: Well, I guess I'm – these days because of bit more experience in training, I'd probably be less anxious and feeling more confident about knowing what to do from a health side of things, but irrespective, you play a role, so to speak, but you still got all that adrenalin and anxiety and, "Oh my God! What's going –?" That's all still going on in here, and especially if you've just come upon it on the street, like <inaudible> *0:39:06. You're looking out for your – kind of conscious around safety as well. What's happening? Is this a fight – have been attacked? Is the person still here?

Interviewer: So you'd be assessing the situation before you perhaps go in?

Interviewee: Well, you do – I'd do probably a little preliminary look. I mean if I didn't see somebody standing there with an axe or a knife or something, in which case, I'd back up and call the authorities, but if it just seemed like a crowd milling around and this woman distressed, I'd be more likely to approach her.

Interviewer: So what specifically would you do?

Interviewee: Well, essentially that – "Can you tell me what's happened?" And I'd try and get a quick assessment of whatever her injury is and call – I'd probably – if it looked serious, even remotely serious, I'd be calling the ambulance. Yeah.

Interviewer: And with your training and your knowledge of arteries and things like that, you would be aware, I guess, of that you've gotta act pretty instantaneously, I imagine, when certain arteries are severed or it's pretty –

Interviewee: I mean it's kind of obvious, but – yeah. You sort of do your first aid things. Yeah. I mean obviously, you don't have a lot of equipment on you, but if the person was bleeding seriously, obviously, you grab your jumper or a shirt or whatever you –

Interviewer: So you'd whip up something to stop the bleeding.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. And obviously, you try and calm the person and see what else is wrong with them. Yeah. 'Cause it's not always the obvious that's the serious thing. And what's happened. Yeah. Is it something that I should be calling the police for regardless of how –

Interviewer: That's a good point.

Interviewee: Regardless of how serious or otherwise. The injuries could be purely superficial, but has somebody slashed her with a bottle or a knife or something like that.

Interviewer: That's a really good point.

Interviewee: Or is it sort of strictly a medical thing? She's fallen over. She's having a miscarriage, who knows, whatever it might be. Yeah.

Interviewer: So what about the crowd kind of milling around. Would you sort of go into facilitation mode and –

Interviewee: I'd probably try and get people to back away, ask them to back away, or "Nothing – Move on. Nothing to see here." Try and give the person some privacy if I could. I mean if she was capable of standing up or moving, try to move her somewhere a little more comfortable whether it be – into the shop, into a nearby shop or a park seat or whatever that was nearby. Just – if it's in a shopping centre or something, just try and get them away from the passing spectators 'cause regardless of what it is, nobody wants to be that person sitting on the ground, being watched by –

Interviewer: So how do you imagine you would feel having done all that?

Interviewee: Well, hopefully you'd feel like you've helped and maybe got things under a bit more control – yeah – and helped the person.

Interviewer: Did you feel – Do you think it would boost your confidence in your abilities and you'd think, "Yeah. I can do this."

Interviewee: Yeah. I'd probably – having sort of done these sorts of things for – you go into a sort of an assessment mode. "What could I have done better?" And, "Geez, that was really silly," or <laughs> –

Interviewer: So critiquing?

Interviewee: Yeah. Or I have completely missed something and thought, "I shouldn't have done that." Yeah. So – yeah – I tend to critique.

Interviewer: And is that because of your training as a paramedic or something else?

Interviewee: Yeah. Partly. I mean that's part of what you do anyway, but I just find that that sort of – the reaction after something like that as well because you'd think – oh – I didn't even think about this or –

Interviewer: Or what would have I done better differently or something?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: It's hard, isn't it? Because you gotta act so quickly and you don't even sort of have time to be <over talk> <mark>*0:43:36</mark>

Interviewee: Yeah. You're constantly – yeah – you're thinking – oh – I should have – no – I should've thought about this. Or did I say the right thing? I mean it obviously depends on what the outcome of the situation is, too.

Interviewer: And I think like you mentioned before, the adrenalin can have a lot to play – a big part – it's almost like sometimes – I know I've had the experience where something has happened really serious and I've just been in shock, but I've continued on. And I have this disassociation of the – what's going on.

Interviewee: You just do what you gotta do.

Interviewer: You just do it. And then it's like, "What just happened? What happened?" When you have a moment to reflect, it's almost like – oh – this – hang on – it's very discombobulating <laughs>. So –

Interviewee: Well, I think we all do that sometimes as a way of functioning. I mean if we've got a stressful event or something that's out of the ordinary, you either succumb to it and become a gibbering wreck <inaudible> <mark>*0:44:34</mark>

Interviewer: So you feel that your training would really play –

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. I think probably prior to that, I still would have gone to help, but I now feel less – when I go to situations, less of that, "Oh my God," and more of a, "Okay." Just go into that mode of, "What have I got to do first?"

Interviewer: Process.

Interviewee: Yeah. Process. Yeah. And that's just part of the repetitive training, I guess. Yeah.

Interviewer: I guess it's drilled into you. It has to be. You have to be bomb-proof.

Interviewee: Yeah. And also the idea that like this person sitting there, they're talking, they're not about to die in the next ten seconds, you kind of learn to –

Interviewer: Thank goodness they're conscious. They're talking.

Interviewee: Yeah. Take a breath. Slow down <laughs>. Yeah.

Interviewer: So tell me, I mean this is unlikely, but if you could imagine into this, what would you think you would feel having not assisted?

Interviewee: Oh. Yeah. I'd feel real guilt on that one in light of my training, but even prior to that – yeah. I couldn't see – unless I could see that that person was being taken care of or somebody – I would feel –

Interviewer: And that's a good point you raised. So perhaps there's somebody who has more seniority, or who's more skilled or maybe they're a doctor or maybe, you know?

Interviewee: Or if it looks – sometimes, when you come upon things and your instinct is to stop, see if you can help, but you get – you come on over an accident or something on the highway and you can see the ambulance, you see the police is there, you're just gonna add to the mess. But if somebody is injured on the side of the road and they seem to be doing – I've had that situation and I said, "Is there anything I can do? Is the police or the ambulance or whatever on the way?" Okay then. If it doesn't look like it's immediately life-threatening – yeah.

Interviewer: So what do you think would change your decision to help? Any social circumstances? You mentioned that you'd look out for threats. I don't know. Does that play into your decision to help or not help?

Interviewee: Yeah. To the degree that – and again, that's the training. Probably before, I would have just jumped in, but the training now says to me, if there's something really – bit of riot or something happening, a lot drunk people and things getting thrown, and it's part of a melee or something, you might go, "Well, I'll just step aside. I'll make a call." Or I'll wander past and then make a call to the authorities sort of thing, rather than dive in. And that's kind of hard to do 'cause your instinct is still there to help that person. Yeah.

Interviewer: I had an interesting experience the other day where I – two boys were fighting. And I, despite my training, stood in the middle of the fight to separate them.

Interviewee: <laughs> I know I've done –and I've done that too and I –

Interviewer: And I thought – that was really stupid.

Interviewee: And I have done that too and it's only because of my training now that – 'cause you're with other people, they go, "Right. Right. This is – we'll just wait here. We'll give it a minute. And I've done a few things like that too where I go, "You know what? I'm not as young or as fast or as fit or as strong as I used to be." And that was probably <inaudible> *0:48:31 <laughs>. Yeah.

Interviewer: So sometimes we can underestimate our own abilities and put ourselves in –

Interviewee: Or overestimate.

Interviewer: Overestimate. Totally. Totally. Absolutely. So how do you think other people without your training would react if they came across this scenario?

Interviewee: Oh. Again, I think you'd get a range. You'd get the person who's not comfortable, doesn't want to get involved and keep moving, or doesn't really know how to help, so don't – they can see a crowd there. There's a gentleman with a –

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there's those that will stop and look, but again – well, I don't know that it's more just because they want to see – to be voyeuristic, but people will stop and then think – oh – what's actually happening? I don't know what to do, but – that sort of thing. And I think you'll get people who'll just instinctively see if they can help. Yeah. You'll get the full spectrum.

Interviewer: You do, don't you?

Interviewee: I think the majority of people are inclined to wanna help, but you might get people who are just not sure what to do.

Interviewer: And/or maybe they're wanting to wait –

Interviewee: Waiting for somebody else to –

Interviewer: – to see who steps in. Okay. Who's the alpha? Who's the confident person in this scenario?

Interviewee: Or who actually knows what they're doing or what have you, or –

Interviewer: And it's not necessarily – I mean it's not that they don't have good intentions, but I think perhaps the lack of –

Interviewee: Or they're waiting for someone to tell them what to do.

Interviewer: That's it.

Interviewee: So – yeah – if the alpha jumps up and says, "'Right. We need to get – can somebody go and call an ambulance?" Oh. Yup. <inaudible> *0:50:19 that <laughs>.

Interviewer: So –

Interviewee: Or go and find a cup – a glass of water or something.

Interviewer: So you mentioned that you've had experience. Can you talk to some specific example?

Interviewee: Oh. Well, a few. I'm not thinking so much of in the ambulance situation in the last couple of years, but over the years, I've come across people who've been in <inaudible> *0:50:55 or car accidents, things like that, or bushwalkers <laughs>. I

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get a few them around our place, or kids – more often guys falling off motorbikes – it seems to be the popular one <inaudible> *0:51:13 'cause I'm on one of those of roads where they do their weekend run, so –

Interviewer: Like dirt bikes or –

Interviewee: Well, both. You've got the dirt bikes in the forest, 'cause I'm in the Wombat Forest and then you've got the weekend bikies, the dentist and doctors on the Harleys and they come down that bend and I'd scrape more than one or two of them up off the road that have <inaudible> *0:51:36.

Interviewer: So you've literally had to step in. Were you the only one that was able to help or –

Interviewee: Sometimes, I just happen to be the person passing or other times, I've been with people and we've stopped and try to help when we can. Yeah. I'm just trying to think. Gosh, over the years, there's been a few things.

Interviewer: Sounds like you've got a few – yeah – memories.

Interviewee: Just part of getting around. I did have one fairly dramatic one and that was a couple of years back and <inaudible> *0:52:15 passed away, but he – riding a bush bike just the opposite direction. I'm coming up the hill and got to the top of the hill and we just wobbled for a minute and went down and I thought – uh-oh – and I was with a friend and we stopped and realised straightaway and I said that this guy is about to stop breathing. He did pass away eventually, but we called an ambulance. We gave him mouth to mouth and did all that sort of thing until they got there. The hardest thing was getting him off the bike 'cause he had all those clips and <laughs> <inaudible> *0:52:47 but – yeah. He had a massive stroke and just – yeah – they brought him back and he did live a few more hours, so his wife eventually did come and sent us a little thank you note because they got to say goodbye to him sort of thing. Yeah. Then he had a massive stroke and that – yeah.

Interviewer: There's nothing you could've done.

Interviewee: No. Other than what we did, but – yeah – I remember at the time thinking – oh – 'cause we were in the middle of the road and the next guy came along who's a truckie. He was great. He got the things out, flashing things to put on the road and

everything and – yeah. We were lucky it was daylight, so – yeah. The ambulance got there pretty quick, so –

Interviewer: And was this prior to your training?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: And so, was this very formative in wanting you to pursue that career or –

Interviewee: I had thought about it before, but actually, it was the prompt to – I started volunteering after that and did some training with the ambulance and 'cause we had like an on-call thing out where we are. 'Cause the ambulance can't get there within a certain time. They've got a – they'd give us a vehicle and some equipment and training, things like that and you do an on-call thing, so I got involved in that and it was kind of through that then I went the next step. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, it sounds pretty rewarding.

Interviewee: Yeah. Well, see, I retired a few years ago <laughs> but then I got bored <laughs>. There's only so many renovations you can do.

Interviewer: So, you can imagine the next scenario. You hear a man crying loudly. A crowd of onlookers surrounds him. As you approach the crowd, you see a middle-aged man lying on the ground. You see a lot of blood from an injury to his legs. Most of the passersby look at the man, showing some curiosity as they hurry on. Other onlookers seem to be having a conversation about what they see. One man bends down to calm him. Anything different?

Interviewee: No. No. Not at all.

Interviewer: One question I have for you, which we haven't touched on is do you think that people – I mean 'cause in my own experience as I've encountered people who – there's been a similar scenario and people haven't wanted to go near the person because of – they're afraid of blood-borne diseases and – yeah –and just not wanting to touch blood. I don't know that they were uncomfortable with the sight of blood, but I think it was more a case of this is a risk to their own health. Do you think that that's a pretty common response?

Interviewee: No. Not really. I think – sure, there are people who are probably more afraid of it in terms of just – like I have a sister who just freaks ever since she was a kid. She's the sort that runs for help <laughs>, runs to the neighbours, or someone else, was away from the – I'll go get help, and she's still a bit like that, but – yeah. I haven't come across too many people who are sort of, "Oh. I don't wanna touch them." But then I haven't – I guess there might be people in certain situations, they look at somebody depending on how they're dressed, their appearance. They might judge them if they're a drug addict or something like that. I mean, I'm aware of the risks, but – no. That's not – no – I know enough to know that it's not going to – it's not a real threat to me if I do things safely. Yeah.

Interviewer: And just on this one, the last question, what's your opinion of individuals who express their emotions openly such as crying out in pain?

Interviewee: To each their own. Yeah. I mean I guess the way I always look at it and you'll get people who react to things much – well, my experience to the ambulance work is guys will be much more demonstrative in their pain than most women.

Interviewer: Is that right?

Interviewee: Yeah. Young guys, especially, you know, <inaudible> *0:57:25 they're dying if they've got a broken finger or something, but that said, everybody's pain is different. I'm not – it's not for me to judge what's right or wrong. I might try and get them to calm down a bit, if it's not as bad as it looks or they think it is. "No. It's all right. You're not dying," 'cause – I do understand. Sometimes it's the fear of things, so if you can reassure them, "You're not about to die because you've cut your finger open," or something <laughs>.

Interviewer: I think you're right though. You've touched on something that's true. I think sometimes the fear is – it can be very triggering. Yeah. Or the sight of blood or –

Interviewee: Yeah. Well, I mean particularly say, with kids, they do not – if they – so, they can have some awful injuries and sit here and not whinge about it, but they see a little cut finger and they'd go like, "Oh." Yeah. So, there's that fear of the unknown and that, but – yeah. Everybody's different. Yeah. Who's to say what you're gonna be like in the same situation?

Interviewer: And it's hard to – pain is so subjective, isn't it?

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean, I guess you do sometimes judge a little on your own mind if you think someone's really overreacting to the situation, but I also understand that there's sort of cultural differences and things too. People –

Interviewer: That's a good the point.

Interviewee: And I've seen them. They're dramatic and all of that, but that's the way that –

Interviewer: That they handle it.

Interviewee: That they handle it. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it helps them kind of process it or it helps them –

Interviewee: As long as it's not interfering with anything that I'm trying to do to help.

Interviewer: So if you need to do that, then go right ahead. If you need to holler and scream and wail, do that. Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah. But usually it's a case of trying to then reassure them and calm them down with family members or what have you, particularly with kids involved. You see a cut – there cannot be anything worse for a parent, I'm sure, when they see their kid hurt or getting into an ambulance or something like that can be frightening.

Interviewer: And I guess, too, like you say, that expression can turn into – can be sort of heighten your arousal where you sort of – you can start hyperventilating and then that would be potentially –

Interviewee: <inaudible> <mark>*1:00:08</mark>. Probably not so much that, although – yeah – you get the odd – I've even had that – not 'cause they're overreacting to a pain, all of that, but – yeah. I had a few of the teenage girls that get themselves into a state.

Interviewer: Into a state. Yeah. And then that gets in the way of perhaps treating them or –

Interviewee: Yeah. I mean, again, all you can do is – I mean it's – whatever is scaring them, whether it's a panic attack or whatever, you just gotta help them deal with it and

get through it sort of thing, reassure them they're not about to die because they're feeling a bit palpitations or what have you. Yeah.

Interviewer: And I think sometimes too, it's being able to explain what's going on for people because sometimes you think – oh – I'm just having a heart attack. I don't know what the difference between a panic attack is or heart palpitations, versus I can't breathe.

Interviewee: Yeah. And it's just as scary for the person at the time, so you gotta treat it as such and <inaudible> *1:01:15

Interviewer: That's it. So you gotta attend to it and believe it – believe what you see.

Interviewee: 'Cause that's the way – I wouldn't react to that or – everybody has their own way of doing things and who's to say what you'd be like yourself in certain situations. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, moving on to the next vignette.

Interviewee: <inaudible> *1:01:54

Interviewer: Go for it. Do you need to have a break?

Interviewee: No. No.

Interviewer: To go to the toilet or anything? So, Donna, you're on a rush hour train and you see a casually attired passenger who appears to be drunk and he clenches his face and then collapses onto the floor and his eyes are shut. What comes to mind in this situation?

Interviewee: Could be just drunken <laughs>, had one too many but either way – yeah – it's not good, so – yeah. Whether he's just collapsed 'cause he's had too much to drink or whether he's – there's something else going on, again, I don't know if that's my training, but I'd be looking to see – well, <inaudible> *1:02:44, check that he's breathing, that sort of thing and try and get him some help.

Interviewer: So, what comes to mind? So other things perhaps come to mind like the cause comes to mind? He might not be drunk.

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Interviewee: Yup. Might be diabetic.

Interviewer: And in which case he'd be wearing maybe, some kind of bracelet, maybe?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yup. Yeah. We look for that sort of thing sometimes, but – yeah. Basically, I mean again, it's the training, but I'd look just to see what his conscious level is, so again, <inaudible> <mark>*1:03:20</mark>, can he still move his hands – squeeze your hands, all that sort of thing, because – how unconscious is this person? And even if it's caused by alcohol, it doesn't really matter. Unconscious is unconscious, so it's still a dangerous thing.

Interviewer: And do you have any feelings facing this scenario? And if so, how do you respond to them?

Interviewee: Yeah. I guess, there's a level – again, a level of anxiety approaching anything like that, regardless of what the situation is, so – especially if you're not in somewhere where you can control what's going on around you and that sort of thing. You could try – what do you do? How do you get help in that situation? So – yeah – but again, to me, probably my training would kick in. It's assessing what's actually going on with this person regardless of what caused it. I mean if it was alcohol and you're thinking yourself, "You're stupid," so and so, but again you still have to deal with it and you'd look in to see – once you checked that person was okay or breathing, whatever, is there someone here who knows him, somebody travelling with him, and then how do we get the attention of – it's been a while since I've been on trains, but how do you get the guards or whatever they are to come so they can get him off at the next station.

Interviewer: So how do you think you would feel having assisted?

Interviewee: Oh. I guess again, there's probably a sense of having done the right thing. I wouldn't say warm and fuzzy. To me, it's just what you do, I think and also – more so now because I've had some training, but even prior to that that's – yeah – just – yeah – you'd probably be a little bit anxious and agitated that your little journey has been interrupted, but as long as you've handled it appropriately.

Interviewer: And what about having not assisted this gentleman?

Interviewee: I'd feel guilty. Yeah. I couldn't do it. Yeah.

Interviewer: You'd feel guilty.

Interviewee: Yeah. Unless there was clearly somebody else there with him who was able to quite ably look after him, knew him or something, knew what was going on, so – yeah. I'd still have to check and ask them and make sure that they were doing the right thing.

Interviewer: So, if he was unconscious, what would you do? What would your next step be if he was unconscious?

Interviewee: I will put him in a recovery position, so he's not compromising his airway, take his vitals, and I'd be obviously trying to work out how to – being on a moving – presumably on a moving train, working out how to contact the – whoever they are that <inaudible> *1:06:37 – the guys that are running the train these days, so that we can get him some medical attention.

Interviewer: And was there anything in particular that makes you respond to this event the way you do?

Interviewee: Part of its training. Yeah. Part of it's a bit of experience in life. I've even had to deal with that one before <laughs> <inaudible> *1:07:04 at the local hotel. I had more than one occasion where somebody's wandered outside and <inaudible> *1:07:10 party over the years. Not too much of it these days <laughs>. I've got nieces and nephews <inaudible> *1:07:23 been there, done that <inaudible> *1:07:27.

Interviewer: So you can speak from a good amount of experience by the sounds of it. And is there anything around the situation, social circumstances that would change your decision to act, to help?

Interviewee: Only if there was – well – no – even then, I think I'd still try and help, but if he had mates or something that were being aggressive in some way, who are also drunk, I mean, you'd still try to – and again, I've had that situation, "No. He's all right." But you'd sort of try and explain to them that he needs some help and try and calm them down. It would only be if they became sort of physical, threatening in some way that you'd sort of back off, still call for help, back off.

Interviewer: And what about other people in our society, how do you think they'd react to a guy who appear drunk and collapsed?

Interviewee: Again, I think a majority of people would want to help, but I do think that if they knew or believe the person was just drunk – I think a lot of people don't realise that it can be a serious situation with this sort of thing, step over, and not see it as any sort of medical situation, but – yeah. And a lot of people might just go, "Well, what do you do?" A lot of people wouldn't think there's anything they can do, but the person just needs to sleep it off and wake up, but I think most people know enough these days that they would sort of at least if not directly help, would sort of alert someone on the station platform or that sort of thing. There's a guy <inaudible> *1:09:30 on the ground.

Interviewer: So, on the whole, you think they're pretty aware and – yeah – sensitive to what's going on for other people. So, you've spoken about many similar experiences that you've had. Did you wanna add anything before we move on, Donna, or –?

Interviewee: No. No.

Interviewer: So, almost there. So, Docia, you're in your car this time and an untidy, dirty homeless man approaches your vehicle and he holds out an empty can and begs for some money to buy food. What comes to mind?

Interviewee: I guess a part of me is thinking – I'd feel sorry for him, but a part of me would be also thinking, "Is this just a way of getting money for a drink or drugs or what have you?" So, you do – you can't help but <inaudible> *1:10:38. Well, I'm probably making that little judgement in my mind, which may not be fair, and even if it is for that, it's like – well, if I give this person money, am I helping him or not? Yeah.

Interviewer: So, are you, by giving the money, enabling them to sort of continue this plight for – yeah – like whether it be drugs or alcohol that they might be really wanting to get? So that's something that's going through your thoughts, whether it's right or wrong. And tell me, how do you – what do you feel about these thoughts or feel about the situation, the fact that that bit of judgement's there or –?

Interviewee: Partly would be feeling – I'd probably feel a little bad because it doesn't really matter whether it's for drugs or whether it's something to eat. Obviously their situation is not great. It might be genuine. Well, it's genuine either way if they're that desperate for money. Yeah. Regardless of what's brought them to their position. They could be mentally ill, a veteran with PTSD, anything like that, but – yeah. There's also that little thing in there saying, "Is this a scam or is this just –?" I have heard – I don't know whether it's actually true, but I have – when I used to work in the city, up near St. Kilda road in that – coming down to the station, there was a group of young people that were always begging every afternoon and I don't know that they were actually homeless, and then I think they're just – that it was a way of getting some money, but – yeah. Anybody who has to do that, I think, is probably in some sort of situation, so – yeah. If I've got some loose change, I'll probably give him a bit.

Interviewer: So you'd give him some loose change if you had it. Would you go beyond that? Would you inquire into – I don't know – anything?

Interviewee: Probably not. Yeah. Probably not.

Interviewer: And how do you think you would feel having given him some loose change?

Interviewee: A mix of guilt and – yeah – okay – I've helped him, and a mix of guilt – yeah – that that's probably not resolving whatever his issues are, but – yeah. Maybe I could've or should've done more.

Interviewer: So like more money or what –

Interviewee: Well, not so much that. Well, a) more money, but b) that the person probably needs more than a couple of bucks. Am I equipped to handle that or will be able to really help the person? I don't know. Yeah.

Interviewer: So a mixture of guilt and – positive feelings in there at all?

Interviewee: Probably a little if – usually, sometimes they'd say, "I need the money for a train fare or to buy a meal," or whatever.

Interviewer: Does the guilt also – is there something around being privileged yourself? Is there anything around that?

Interviewee: Yeah. A little of that that – and that whatever you've given them is, in comparison, it's a bit of a joke, really – it's – yes, if you really wanted to help the person, you could give a lot more but is that helping them? And – yeah – and knowing that you're probably making judgments about that in your own mind, you're assessing, "Are you a drug addict? Are you mentally ill or someone who's just fallen under a difficult circumstance? Or are you out to just scam what you can?" And – yeah –

Interviewer: So, it's sort of in your assessment, your interpretation and your – it's perfectly reasonable to be judicious about these scenarios, but – yeah. There's still guilt of having to go through all that.

Interviewee: Yeah. For me, it's guilt about even judging why. It shouldn't matter. It shouldn't matter how they've come to be in the way they are. And it's probably a combination of all those things in reality, but – yeah.

Interviewer: And so, tell me if you didn't assist this man, how would you imagine you would feel?

Interviewee: A little bit of guilt. Yeah. And I'll confess to having done that, in the city anyway, where I'm going, "No. No. I've got no change," when you start seeing the same ones every day in the same place. And sometimes I've given it to people and just think sometimes just whether you've got time, whether you've engaged with this person in some way. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, do you imagine that there'd be other situations or circumstances that would change your decision to help or not help?

Interviewee: I think sometimes their approach to you. So I've had people that seem a bit aggressive, you know, "Give me some money," kind of thing as opposed to – it's funny, some of them have a good banter and they're just sort of – you think – yeah.

Interviewer: What about if they have a sign or the sign says something specific? I don't know. Or a dog next to them or – is there anything that –?

Interviewee: Probably the dog gets me. Yeah <laughs>. Yeah. Maybe something like a veteran, a homeless veteran, or something like that. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, the sign or what they say, could be how they present themselves, how they're selling themselves, could be influential?

Interviewee: Well, I guess it's –

Interviewer: How about their stories?

Interviewee: The story to a little degree or just whether they seem pleasant in a way. Yeah. I mean, I was recently up visiting where my mother lives and <inaudible> *1:17:23 and she's on the coast and there's a guy who comes around every afternoon to [collect some eggs] *1:17:29, and he's got this little dog. I've met him a few times now, and got chatting to him, and – yeah. He's never actually asked for money, but – yeah. You get – I've got chatting to him to sort of get his story and how he ended up in his situation and that sort of thing. Yeah. And there's others who – yeah – they'll tell you a joke or something. Tell you a joke for ten – for a buck or whatever. I don't know. I just find sometimes if somebody's approachable in that way, and don't come across as aggressive or nasty or – what's the word? Entitled. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: So, is there anything that has made you respond to this man in this way, to give him change?

Interviewee: Yeah. Just getting to – chatting to them, getting to know and realise that there's a person behind the scruffy appearance and the little swag and goodies and his little dog on the string. Yeah. Just someone trying to get by and – yeah – maybe they – you realise most of the time that they're just not terribly functional human beings. They're not bad. They're not – they just perhaps don't know how to navigate life and then it makes you think about how fortunate you are that even if you were in some sort of trouble, I've got family, people that would never let you get into that situation.

Interviewer: So, it makes you reflect on your own situation.

Interviewee: Yeah. Oh. Yeah.

Interviewer: How lucky, I suppose, you are.

Interviewee: Yeah. And how fortunate or –

Interviewer: So how do you think other people in our community would react to this man?

Interviewee: Oh. You'd have a variety there. I know people who adamantly would have nothing to do with it, that believes that they get what they deserve, or they're only like that because they're bludgers or what have you and make that kind of judgment. And I'm sure there are people that are happy to lend a hand and what have you and give them some money. And I know people are quite happy to give to charities, but not to say, an individual on the street. They're happy to give to an organisation that – 'cause they're not sure of people's motives and that sort of thing.

Interviewer: So you know where your money's going and –

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: There's checks and balances in place for that or outcomes.

Interviewee: Yeah. If you're giving them to something like that that where you can see it's gonna help out as opposed to feeding a drug habit or the drink or whatever. Yeah. I know people who said, "Yeah. Come. I'll buy you a hamburger," or whatever. I remember my dad doing that once when I was a kid. Yeah. "I'll buy you a hamburger, mate. Come on."

Interviewer: And how did that [land] *1:21:04? How did you –?

Interviewee: I was – well, I remember just sort of – oh – what's going on? I was a child and looking at it. And I was – oh – that's a good idea. If they need it, then they'll take it. Yeah. And – but I guess that's probably something I've been brought up, with the helping with the car or whether it's the car <inaudible> *1:21:26 and that's just something that I saw in my parents. So, I guess, that's probably part of how I was raised. Yeah. Something I would do <inaudible> *1:21:34

Interviewer: So they inculcated those values.

Interviewee: Yeah. Definitely. Definitely.

Interviewer: So, same scenario, just this time, you're in your car, an untidy, dirty, homeless woman approaches your vehicle. She holds an empty can and begs for some money to buy food. Anything different?

Interviewee: Probably not. No. No. Yeah. Again, I'm making those assessments and judges, but more than likely, I'll – if I've got some loose change there, I'm not

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rushing to an appointment or something terribly important, I'll probably give them a few dollars.

Interviewer: Would you – do you think you'd go out of your way to have loose change if you knew that you were gonna encounter lots of homeless people?

Interviewee: <inaudible> *1:22:34

Interviewer: Just in your pockets, so they're ready, just <inaudible> *1:22:47 you'd go in the city and you know that in this corner, and then at this –

Interviewee: Yeah Possibly. I do. I used to do that with the buskers <laughs>.

Interviewer: Oh. You have?

Interviewee: Yes. Yeah. But – yeah – I'm not sure about that. Yeah.

Interviewer: Just thought I'd throw that in there. So is there anything else that's different that you can identify that you'd like to add, Docia, about this scenario?

Interviewee: I guess it's the only probably one of the scenarios when I'm less likely to jump straight in and wanna help. And maybe it's a judgement thing or maybe it's just I'm not sure that money is what helps in that situation. Again, I mean I've done the odd volunteer day at a soup kitchen and things like that so – and – yeah. But going to some of those places in the city, those rooming houses and those awful places and you kind of look at the circumstances and – well – yeah – it's not a case that a couple of dollars is what's needed. There's a whole lot of other issues there.

Interviewer: I used to work at a mission and emergency relief actually and you'd give people who came in Coles cards or vouchers. And then on my way home at the end of the shift, the same person would approach me and say, "Do you wanna buy this Coles card?" Not having any memory of me or not recognising –

Interviewee: So you know they want the money for something else.

Interviewer: And – yeah – yeah – yeah – so – but –

Interviewee: And – yeah – I haven't had too much exposure to that, but – yeah. I mean a friend of mine <inaudible> *1:24:46 he used to work at that <inaudible>

house. Yeah. A few times, picked her up after work and that <inaudible> *1:24:56 we'd have a good laugh and a chat with them. Oh. Some of the horror stories she used to come home and tell me, and sort of think – Oh my God – I've led a sheltered life <laughs>.

Interviewer: I guess on that, it gets you to reflect perhaps on all sorts of things, isn't it?

Interviewee: Oh. But – yeah – what has happened in a person's life to get them to that situation and what can really help them get beyond that. I mean I've seen – you hear of people in poverty and that and I come from Sydney – my family or <inaudible> *1:25:47 and I'm like how can anyone afford to live, let alone someone who's on welfare or something, and so, you look at it from that side, but – yeah. It's pretty scary.

Interviewer: A lot of people are only one pay check away from homelessness. Yeah. Particularly, at the moment, with the current climate. Yeah.

Interviewee: Again, I thank my lucky stars that my life has not been in that, but even relatives and that, I've got uncles and aunts who just survive on the pension and that sort of thing. My uncle recently came to stay with my mother and he's an alcoholic. He's still functional and that sort of thing, but I look at him and think there was a man who had a good job and marriage and kids and that, and now, he's sort of depending on – he's just hanging on. Not homeless, but he's just hanging on by a thread, and so, if he didn't have a family and that, that could sort of give him that bit of a hand when he needed it, it's –

Interviewer: So you sort of think – well, I think a lot of people think that they're very – that this would never happen to them or that they can't and not actually that unrealistic to –

Interviewee: No. You lose your job and if you got a mortgage to pay or rent to pay, I just don't know how anyone can do it, to be honest. I thank my lucky stars I've got a house and I own it now, but I thought – well, you've got the rent and that – and even in cheap areas. I had a rental house, but I sold it last year out at Melton, so you don't get much cheaper than that and I used to think – how can we afford it? And I – but once I did have a homeless guy applying to – I was renting a room and that was to share at the time, and he was homeless 'cause he said – he was living rough out in

the bush, and I think, you know, another one of those cases of the marriage has broken down and there's no money or they had a bit of a mental breakdown and what have you and then – yeah. 'Cause I get a little bit annoyed when I'm having that yarn with someone at the local or a family member who says, "Scumbags," or this and that. Anyway, there's not a whole lot of a difference between us and them if somebody pulls a rug out from under your feet. Yeah.

Interviewer: There's not much separating that divide. Yeah. So, all right, a change of pace. You're sunbathing on a beach and you see a young boy in the water. He looks about eight and you notice him splashing and he's having difficulty, struggling to stay afloat, and his arms are thrashing and he looks like he's unable to call for help and his body is fairly low in the water and his mouth is just above the surface. And his bobbing up and down and trying to gasp for air and appears to be drowning and you're unable to swim.

Interviewee: Oh. Okay <laughs> <inaudible> <mark>*1:29:31</mark>

Interviewer: Spanner in the works.

Interviewee: Well, I'd be screaming to get attention of somebody then on the beach, somebody who could swim, or lifeguards or whatever. Yeah. Presumably there are other people who are out there.

Interviewer: And how do you react to these thoughts that you're having at this event?

Interviewee: Well, that would be awful to think that you couldn't get in there to directly give him a hand, I think. Yeah. That will make me a bit sick actually <laughs> that – yeah – the anxiety. I mean obviously if you could get attention, you're trying to help, but – yeah – it would be – feel very helpless. Yeah.

Interviewer: And that perhaps might make you more anxious and panic more and – so, how do you think you would feel facing this?

Interviewee: Oh. Definitely, anxiety, a sense of urgency, and I'd be pretty – I think I'd be pretty adamant in trying to get somebody else's attention, get them to help. Yeah.

Interviewer: So besides getting someone else's attention, is there anything else that you'd do to offer help?

Interviewee: Well, I think it – well, depends on – I guess if I couldn't swim, but if he wasn't that far out <inaudible> *1:31:07 go so far, but of course, I'm speaking as someone who swims and <laughs> is confident in the water or at the beach, so I can understand people might be really afraid if they can't swim and they're totally afraid of water. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you might wade out just as long as you can touch the bottom.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: A little ways depending on how far he is?

Interviewee: Well, I'm saying that knowing that I'm not afraid of water, but somebody who can't swim might be more afraid or –

Interviewer: So, you'd be afraid?

Interviewee: Well, I think – yeah – as a non-swimmer. Yeah.

Interviewer: And what do you think you would feel having assisted in this way?

Interviewee: I think I'd still feel pretty anxious and pent up and – yeah. And I guess there would be – if you hadn't been able to help too much, of course, you can't swim, there'd be a sense of guilt, if you couldn't help them <inaudible> *1:32:23 or couldn't get to them in time or something like that.

Interviewer: And what circumstances or situations do you think would influence you to act otherwise?

Interviewee: What do you mean, to actually what –?

Interviewer: To help or to not help?

Interviewee: To not help would have to be some sort of absolute fear and especially if it's a child or someone screaming in trouble, I just couldn't imagine it. Couldn't imagine not helping in some way, even if you're afraid, like it was a fire or something, it's still trying to get help even if you couldn't directly help yourself. I just couldn't

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imagine it and probably seeing a child or someone like that would make you probably more so want to help and take a risk

Interviewer: So you're prepared to take a risk? That's interesting.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: And potentially endanger your own life and go into the water and – ?

Interviewee: I think – yeah – I couldn't stand by.

Interviewer: So how do you think other people in our society would react to this situation?

Interviewee: Oh. I think most people would try to do what they could, whether that's get help or try to help directly themselves, and to me, it's an instinctive thing, see someone drowning or something like that. Yeah. I can't imagine anyone just turning their back on it. I can't imagine people who are just afraid and would – but wouldn't walk away necessarily. They'd try and get help. Somebody might panic or run, scream for other people to help, sort of thing if they didn't feel that was something they could physically do. So it's –

Interviewer: Have you had a similar experience around water?

Interviewee: Oh. Yeah. When I was about eight or nine, I was at a local swimming pool. It was a hot day, so it was packed, and I heard a little girl screaming, and I got up <inaudible> *1:35:19 the edge and there was a baby in the water, just the eyes looking up at me, and I'm yelling and trying to get someone's attention. There's teenagers here <laughs>, but it was so packed and <inaudible> *1:35:29 so I jumped in and got the kid <inaudible> *1:35:32 but I could swim, but I struggled to get him up. Yeah. Mum had fallen asleep and he wandered off down to the big pool as we call it. Yeah. <inaudible> *1:35:46 <laughs> I nearly drown trying to get him up to the edge 'cause you had to get him up and over. Well, I've gone in – my parents lived – my mother lives at the beach, and my sister loves the beach, so – yeah – have occasions to have to help the other person. I'm not as strong a swimmer as I used to, but I generally confident in water.

Interviewer: And is it a bay beach or an ocean beach or big waves, or –?

Interviewee: Yeah. Ocean beach, where I'd go to swim. Yeah. Mum's lot – actually on the lake, but the ocean's few minutes away, so then I go for a surf or something. Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: And you've had to bring people in?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. Usually it's just – you can see some kid who has gone out a little bit too far and gets a little struggle, or my sister getting stung when she was a kid, getting stung by bluebottles and <laughs> she passed out in the – she got in a panic, managed to get the things all over her <inaudible> *1:36:52 grabbed her. That's the sister who always runs to the neighbour <laughs>.

Interviewer: And did you get stung by the jellyfish as well?

Interviewee: I got one little sting, but – yeah. I didn't feel it at the time.

Interviewer: Because it paralyses you, doesn't it?

Interviewee: No. No. The bluebottles – they're not deadly. No. They're the ones you get all – down the south, not the ones up – right up north. Yeah. They sting, but usually, you get it on your foot or something like that, but of course she was about seven or eight and she's in the water about this high, got in a panic and the things wrapped – she had stings all over her, the poor thing. I remember that <inaudible> *1:37:31 <laughs>.

Interviewer: So did you learn anything from these experiences?

Interviewee: I just remember getting her out of the water and my parents were there then, I was a teenager by then. Yeah. You just do it. Yeah. It's my little sister, so it was like – I remember feeling the sting later, but I didn't actually feel it at the time.

Interviewer: So, do any of these experiences make you think – oh – I have a role to play, I can make a difference as somebody who is a rescuer, as somebody who plays that role?

Interviewee: Yeah. I guess – well, I guess at the time too, I just saw it as I was the oldest, more so than probably kids those days, but we used to get up to some

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adventurous activities from time to time and away from the home and that, and I guess I took on a bit of a protector role with my two younger – oh – I've got three younger sisters, but two that were – there's a gap between us and they were a lot younger – tag along <inaudible> *1:38:49. You'd have to pull them out of scrapes anyway.

Interviewer: So, it's just – you didn't think about it. It's just what you did.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: As the older sibling.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. I got a bit annoyed with one sister though. She kept doing these things when the parents weren't home, breaking and she got a fishhook in her mouth. It was always these things and that's in the day when we didn't have a phone and we'd have to run across the [neighbour] *1:39:24 drag her down the hospital <laughs> and she's a nurse now <laughs>, but – no. You just – yeah – again, I think that's something – and then my – I saw my father a lot help people to – he wasn't <inaudible> *1:39:46 or anything like that, but he was just the sort of guy who would step in if something was going on or somebody needed a hand, and perhaps that's just how I was raised.

Interviewer: So, how did your parents or your father in particular teach you helping values?

Interviewee: I think it was probably just by example. I mean they were always conscious of the swimming classes when we were young and did first aid and things like that, but – yeah. I just saw, growing up sort of when I was very young, like seeing my dad step in if there was an accident, sort of got that way – I remember in our street, he was the first one people ran to in those days. There was one telephone in the street. One neighbour had the telephone, things like that. Not a panicker, I guess, that was the thing. He was a sort of guy that would think it through and get it sorted when something happened, try to –I suppose, I never thought of it until now, but I suppose I had observed <inaudible> *1:41:04 or that part of his nature.

Interviewer: He sounds unflappable.

Interviewee: Yeah. In a crisis – yeah – yeah – yeah – and I can remember a neighbour – well, we're still family friends now. He had a steep driveway and he had

the car door open and he was cleaning the car or something and the car rolled, and he's half in, half out the garage door and when the screaming came, dad was out there in the front lawn. I was doing something and he's straight up here, even before the ambulance and that got there and – 'cause he rang the ambulance. So, he was calm, got the car, managed to move the car out enough and that sort of thing and seeing that a couple of times when things have happened and practical as well, I suppose, that sort of thing but not a panicker.

Interviewer: So you've picked that up

Interviewee: I mean – yeah – well, probably in some situations. Yeah. I never thought of that until now, and probably not the done thing these days, but I remember a few times as a kid, seeing dad step in. We were out somewhere, and somebody was being a bit rough with his girlfriend or something like <inaudible> *1:42:31 – he wasn't a big man or anything, but he would step in and like, "That's enough, mate."

Interviewer: And be prepared to take the consequences if things turn ugly?

Interviewee: Yes. Yup.

Interviewer: So he was a man of principle?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. In his way– yeah – I remember, we were in – when we were kids – my father's from Ireland, but I was born here and mother's Australian. We'd gone over to live there for a few years, then came back, and on our way back, we stopped in South Africa, in Cape Town, and this is the late '60s and I just have these memories in my mind. I was only six or seven. There's an accident or something. I can't remember what it caused it, but anyway, the ambulance came and of course, it was black man. They wouldn't pick him up and they went on. They said, "No. You've got to call somebody <inaudible> *1:43:34."

Interviewer: They wouldn't pick him up – the ambulance, wouldn't pick him up?

Interviewee: Was white ambulance or whatever <inaudible> *1:43:42 got the guy in the car and – yeah. And that sticks in my mind. Yeah. Sticks in my mind and just – yeah – the sort of person who would step in and wouldn't stand it for mistreatment.

Interviewer: Or inequality or –

Interviewee: <inaudible> *1:44:11

Interviewer: What wonderful role modelling.

Interviewee: Yeah. Wasn't a perfect man, that's for sure <laughs>, but even an Irish temper <inaudible> *1:44:20, but – yeah. Yeah. He certainly had his principles and wouldn't just stand up for them. I guess probably influenced me more than I would care to admit and <laughs> –

Interviewer: So, <inaudible> *1:44:49 got – oh – this is the last one before we wrap up. Again, you're sunbathing on a beach and you see a girl this time in the water. She looks about eight. You notice her splashing. She's having difficulty and struggling to stay above water. She's essentially unable to call for help. Her body is low. She's bobbing up and down, gasping for air, appearing to be drowning by your summation. You're unable to swim to swim, anything different?

Interviewee: No.

Interviewer: We're not gonna dwell on that one. So, just a final question and this is around social media, mass media, Instagram, Facebook, etcetera, movies, your peers, how do you think all of these things influence helping values?

Interviewee: Well, I guess, that's probably one of the good things with the social media is – oh – relatively, in the last year, I've got into it, the Facebooking, not so much of the other ones, but – yeah. I guess I've seen some interesting things on there. Yeah. People are promoting causes and the signing petitions and things like that, so I think – and particularly for younger people, it's a way of sort of spreading a message of what's going on in the world and things like that so it's one of the probably, the positives about those – the social media. Yeah.

Interviewer: So it gets people aware, thinking, able to be – make a difference in some way?

Interviewee: Yeah. Well, I've seen a lot more people sort of sign up to – they're sponsoring somebody to – what's the latest one? The Dry July.

Interviewer: Oh. I didn't know that. What's that?

Interviewee: You give up alcohol, whatever, for the month and my sister's doing it and you sponsor her, and the money goes to – she's nominated her charity. It's the Cancer Centre and the place where she works and, what was it? Last time, it was the – when people <inaudible> *1:47:16

Interviewer: The ice bucket challenge. Yeah.

Interviewee: Yeah. My other sister did that one and she works at a university in an admin role and so, she did it out on the front lawn and <inaudible> *1:47:26 everyone in the faculty got to sponsor her <laughs>. Yeah. Yeah. So, there's – so, you get use for some of those things, and <inaudible> *1:47:36 pretty ridiculous things on there too <laughs>.

Interviewer: So this is a nice balance of –

Interviewee: Yeah. You know like when kids lost, dogs lost, you can see those things sort of circulate fairly quickly, so you can see some positives there.

Interviewer: And I just saw on the news yesterday, a woman who is experiencing amnesia.

Interviewee: I saw that one too – yeah – come up on the Facebook <over talk> *1:48:04 and so they've got the photo getting around and do you recognise this woman? I get a bit sick of the not discerning ones or the things that come out that are ridiculous or rubbish 'cause I've seen it – used to <inaudible> *1:48:18 some pretty unpleasant points of view as well, people who are anti immigration or Muslims or whatever it might be and they use it to advertise some of the <inaudible> *1:48:37 every now and again, you see these ones and say, "<inaudible> *1:48:43 against it," and so and so, and <inaudible> *1:48:45 the refugee gets all this money. I'd like to get on there and go, "Well, where did you get this from? 'Cause it's absolute rubbish," <laughs> and things like that, but –

Interviewer: So, some of it gets you back up and you have this <laughs> <over talk> *1:48:58 debates? Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewee: Look, I've got a – my niece is married to a young chap and he's all – how do I put – they're hippies <laughs> god love em, and he's still into the, "Oh. Government – everything is a conspiracy and this," and I'm going, "I worked in government for 25 years and they're not that well organised." I think I like to challenge some of his things every now and again, not that I'm not against a bit of free thinking<inaudible> *1:49:31 if we could all live in <inaudible> *1:49:38 bliss <laughs>.

Interviewer: So, it's a – I don't know – a very colourful gamut of everyone's political leanings and it's –

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Gets you kind of infuriated and then all of a sudden, you see a lovely, good news story. It's –

Interviewee: Yeah

Interviewer: – makes up for all the rubbish and the [drivel] *1:50:00

Interviewee: Well, most of the rubbish, I ignore, but if it's from somebody that I know who's put it on there and I go, "I'm not so sure about that." I like to – well, I don't accept what's put necessarily on there. Yeah. Accept certain views on certain things. That's another thing I got from my father <laughs>.

Interviewer: You speak your mind.

Interviewee: Yeah. I don't sort of just, "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah." Well – no – <inaudible> *1:50:31 <laughs>

Interviewer: Can't let that one go <laughs>.

Interviewee: No. Yeah. And that can be fun.

Interviewer: It can be and then sometimes there are fights that you just – it's best to just pick and choose because sometimes they're not gonna – you're not gonna win them <laughs>.

Interviewee: And that's really – and not the anonymity so much, but the remoteness of social media, I think, makes some people freer to say things that they wouldn't say to your face.

Interviewer: That's a really good point

Interviewee: But it also gives you the freedom to challenge that a little bit more, no worries. If you're in personal company, you might go, "Oh. Okay. I'll let that one go."

Interviewer: I'll just bite my tongue <laughs>.

Interviewee: Don't wanna be the bad dinner guest <laughs>. Movies – I haven't been – I don't find that many lately that are even worth watching <laughs>. Yeah. I do watch – I actually do watch a lot of film and television on the computer and stuff like that. Yeah. But actual films these days are – the odd one every now and again that I go – I like <inaudible> *1:51:47 of some of the television dramas a little more interesting. Yeah. And <inaudible> *1:51:56 can't stand most of the mainstream. There's only so many superhero <laughs> <inaudible> *1:52:04. Yeah.

Interviewer: It's pretty pro forma – can be pretty predictable.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I do – I've always been a bit of a film buff and as I say, a lot of <inaudible> *1:52:18 drama in television and that, so –

Interviewer: What about news? How do you think that encourages helping values?

Interviewee: Yeah. The right sort of news <laughs>. Yeah. Well, there's some good things <inaudible> *1:52:39 again, about people getting involved and <inaudible> *1:52:45 raising money for charity or what have you. I do admit that a lot of the mainstream news these days, your current affair type shows that it's all scary, scary, scary world, fear, fear <laughs>. It's like <over talk> *1:53:07

Interviewer: Play that card just one more time.

Interviewee: Yeah <laughs>. And I think that plays a negative role now that I look at my own mother 'cause she's getting a bit older and she's got early stage dementia now and she's sort of – she's fearful of people now – that where she wouldn't have been before and watches and listens to some of these <inaudible> *1:53:30 the way they'd make it out is like every person's a scammer and a cheater or a terrorist –

Interviewer: Or a paedophile or –

Interviewee: Paedophiles or – and it's like, "Oh, please." So, I guess it's always been <inaudible> *1:53:50, but I just think it seems to be that thing – because of the level of media and social media that that sort of stuff just seems to be pumped at of people so much – yeah – which I think – well, it's unfortunate, but I think that does produce an element of anxiety and fear in society and people aren't just maybe as in some places <inaudible> *1:54:19 is willing to help a neighbour or to be judgemental about <inaudible> *1:54:24 whatever the case might be. Yeah.

Interviewer: Especially if that's the only input they're getting.

Interviewee: Exactly. Yeah.

Interviewer: If they're not –

Interviewee: They're not discerning enough or they don't get the opportunity.

Interviewer: To engage in other –

Interviewee: Yeah

Interviewer: I suppose your political leanings will influence what channels you watch and what radio you listen to and what newspaper you buy and all that sort of stuff, so – yeah. Obviously – so, you just get in your little bubble and –

Interviewee: Yeah. And I think there's a bit more of that happening. I don't know.

Interviewer: Well, it seems like there's lots of more – there's more independent news journalists and sites coming up that are challenging the status quo when it comes to journalism, which I found, like Crikey and Matilda and just a whole gamut.

Interviewee: Well, that's good because it sort of [narrates] *1:55:19 so much on the <inaudible> *1:55:21 print media. I'm a bit of a radio listener myself, but – yeah. And I get Crikey and that's once. I don't buy it or subscribe to them. I get them – the feed's coming through – that's why the social media is good and getting a little bit of the Guardian, or the Washington Post or whatever coming through on the – to get a variety, but I think that's – yeah – where it can be a good thing, 'cause it gives people other avenues than the mainstream. Yeah. <inaudible> *1:55:57 sometimes if I hear

about terrorism or death. Death is <inaudible> *1:56:05 <laughs>. That's like, "Oh. Get it in perspective, guys."

Interviewer: I suppose there are certain topics that sell newspapers <laughs> and just certain headlines that are going to be more successful than others.

Interviewee: Yes. Unfortunately <laughs> –

Interviewer: They know that. They –

Interviewee: They know that all too well. And they recycle the same stories like <inaudible> *1:56:41. This is the same story that hit six months ago and six months prior to that.

Interviewer: I don't have television for that reason <laughs>

Interviewee: <laughs> Yeah. That's when I flick – turn off. Yeah. I watch all the – well, just online stuff these days, and cut out the ads and – yeah <inaudible> *1:57:08. If I could only get a decent internet service <laughs> <inaudible> *1:57:13.

Interviewer: Are you on like ADSL2 or are you –?

Interviewee: Oh. I can't even get ADSL.

Interviewer: Oh. No. Gosh.

Interviewee: I'm on wireless, mobile broadband. So it costs me a fortune <laughs>. But that's it. Yup. That we don't even have copper wire. Well, they talk about getting rid of the old copper wire in the phone lines. I don't even have copper wire <laughs>, just this one little <inaudible> *1:57:35 down the road, five K down the road, but – yeah – one day.

Interviewer: One day. If the government changes perhaps <laughs> –

Interviewee: Oh. Probably not. We were always only if we ever get the – yeah – I mean it's like a smaller state, so five K's either side of me, they've got the <inaudible> *1:57:56. They upgrade the fixed <inaudible> *1:58:03 or something. I'm not holding my breath.

Interviewer: I have to go into town to the public library, I imagine.

Interviewee: Oh. I use my wireless internet. It just means it'd cost me a fortune – yeah – with Telstra. Yeah.

Interviewer: I'm the same and I just have to grin and bear it. You just have to have these things these days. You can't – pretty difficult to function without them.

Interviewee: Well, I mean apart from doing study and that, but even when I'm not, it's like, "Oh. Yeah. I have gotten hooked on being able to watch certain things <laughs>." I got on – to get on to the PBS and that and that in the states and watch some of their documentaries and things like that. Yeah. Ah. Well, I don't drink much and I don't smoke and I don't go out to many restaurants these days. I could spend my money on something.

Interviewer: Something productive – that is for you to fill out.

Interviewee: Oh. This is the little survey.

Interviewer: Yeah.

[Pause] *1:59:08 – 2:00:47

Interviewee: Parents advice <laughs> – not anymore <laughs>

[Pause] *2:00:53 – 2:03:33

Interviewer: Great. Thank you very much. <inaudible> *2:03:40 that. Thank you. So thank you very much for contributing –

Interviewee: Thank you.

Interviewer: – to this research.

Interviewee: That's not a problem.

Interviewer: If you've got any questions, you can give [Lea] a call, or an email about the – how it's progressing, and if you're interested in reading it and also, you've got that number for your counsellor.

Interviewee: I do.

Interviewer: Good. Good.

Interviewee: No problem. Okay. Hope you got some – hope I've contributed something <laughs>

Interviewer: Yes.

Interviewee: Interesting –

END OF TRANSCRIPT

Appendix D Coded Transcript

<u>Vignette 1 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure</u>

On the way to an appointment with your doctor for a regular check-up you come across a casually dressed middle-aged man who seems restless and puzzled. He approaches you

explaining that he has to make a phone call to his wife but has left his mobile at home. He requests the use of your mobile to ring his wife to inform her of his whereabouts.

1. Low personal cost to the helper
2. Appearance of the help recipient
   - Young vs old
   - Dressing
3. Disturbed emotional and facial expression
4. Request of help (Compliant helping)
5. Role of gender in help recipient/giver

Data Extract	Coded for
If this happened to you, what would you think? Look at his attire, if it's casual then maybe he can be trusted. However, I have to look around just in case he has associates on standby. There are cases where once we give our hand phone, he would run away with the phone, and we'd never know that another associate of him is waiting with a motorcycle. We can never tell living in today's world, right. Maybe we would entertain his request but we would be cautious.	1. Analyse the attire, if it's casual, he could be trusted 2. Help is offered in a cautious way, afraid it's a tactic to steal the mobile 3. Today's living is not like the old one, never let the guard down as people might take advantage on his kindness
How would you feel if you were in this situation? I want to help but at the same time I to need to be careful.	1. The intention to help is there, but of all, he needs to be careful of being conned

What kind of help would you offer? If he asks for the hand phone, we would just give it to him for to make the call. However, stay close to him and monitor his movement. Talking to his wife on the phone should not be too long. Most importantly, be cautious.	1. Observe the man's body language and action if they are fishy, and be caution on his movement
What made you do that in this particular situation? Maybe because he is truly in need of help, he had to make a call. He may not even have any money, maybe people who are in trouble have to tell us that he needs help and what kind of help that he needs.	1. He is in a desperate situation, otherwise it's not easy for someone to request help from others
What is the effect on yourself if you had helped the old man? If he can solve the problem, only then we can feel the effect. It feels like we have done good deeds to people. Feel satisfied that we would offer some help. When we give the hand phone, maybe we are cautious, we have not yet felt satisfied, and maybe when he successfully calls his wife, only then we feel content.	1. Feel satisfied with the good deeds that he's done to the man, given he could solve the problem 2. Before lending the phone, he had this suspicious feeling, but after that, he would feel content with his help
What would be the appropriate action/s that you would consider as prosocial/helpful in this situation? Maybe people can ask him where he is heading to, if coincidently the same route we	1. Whatever kind of aid that people want to offer, first thing to do is to examine and analyse his suspicious outlook and behaviour, if any

can bring him along. But most importantly, we have to check him out first.	
What about the actions that you deem as antisocial/not helpful? Those who are no pro social in this situation may have prior experience of being cheated once. Maybe they would give an excuse that they have other things to work on and therefore they cannot help.	1. People who have had bad experience with a similar situation might escape from the situation by giving excuse, afraid if the same event happens twice
In what situation and social condition would change your decision to help him? Perhaps it would happen by looking at his appearance. His attire portrays him as 'mat rempit', so maybe it starts from there. Another reason would be our own condition, we do not have enough time, if I were there, I would not just walk away, I would at least say sorry because I could not help, but in a haste condition.	1. If the attire resembles a 'reckless rider'/'mat rempit', the help won't be given 2. His condition did not permit him to help others, rushing to somewhere, still turned down other request decently.
How would the society react to the same condition? Maybe people still want to help. Out of 10, maybe 7 of them would help out. In the cities, perhaps people tend to be cautious because there are so many criminal cases. Out of 10, maybe only 5 of them would offer assistance. Sometimes there are people who	1. In a country/countryside, people might still want to help, given a proportion 7/10 would offer their help 2. In a city, where crimes are rampant, people pay extra caution to any instance that could trap them, given that only 5/10 perhaps helping the man

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trap us using this means, and afterwards they rob us.	
  I have experienced that. At the time, I helped a man and I did not have any suspicion. I really thought that he needed help; I borrowed him my hand phone, he made the call, and it was done, he was thankful and then we I went home.	1. Had the same experience, but he trusted the man without any suspicion, thinking the man really in a desperate state
What have you learnt from past experience that has influenced you to act that way in that particular situation? In the beginning, we need to be non judgemental towards others but at the same time we need to be careful.	1. To help s stranger, discard all the negative judgments, but still need to be careful of any incoming harm or risk
Would you act and think differently if the situation involves an elderly woman? I would say the way I evaluate her is the same, from her clothing. Normally when we're dealing with a beautiful lady, the response is faster but we have to be cautious because they may have a hidden intention. But whoever it is, I'll attend to them the same.	1. There's no difference in terms of how he evaluate the outer appearance and the way he treated her 2. Would act/help faster if attracted by a female beauty

What do you think if an identified person comes to you for help instead of keeping quiet? If he comes up to us and asks for help, most probably he is desperate or he is rather bold when it comes to asking for help.	1. The man is really in a desperate situation 2. Requesting help is a brave act too

Vignette 2 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

On you crossing a busy road, you see a blind sixty year old man balancing on a walking stick waiting at the traffic light on the opposite side of the road. You notice that there is no beeping noise to tell blind people to cross the road at the traffic light.

1. Stigmatized person, physical character of the help recipient
2. Role of gender in requesting/giving help

Data Extract	Coded for
If this situation happens, how would you react? I would feel the urge to help because not only is he old but he is also blind and plus the traffic is quite heavy; and we help because of Allah, with sincerity. Basically I have a higher tendency to help because he is blind.	1. Has the higher tendency to help and feel the urgency to aid him, as he is an old handicapped and the situation is quite risky for him 2. Sincere in helping, not because of any rewards, but because of Allah
How would you feel if you were in this situation? I sympathise with her disability. Another thing I am afraid for her when she crosses the road, what if she meets with an accident.	1. Sympathy look at his disabled condition 2. Afraid of the condition of road might pose a risk to him

What kind of help would you offer him? I would walk with her and if I dont have anything else to do, I'd take her to her destination. But if I have work, then I can only escort her to cross the road.	1. Help would be extended if he has extra time and not rushing, not only helping to his immediate need
What made you do that in this particular situation? What you give, you'll get back. We never know what the future holds; maybe when we are also in trouble there would be people to help us.	1. Karma
What is the effect on yourself if you had helped the blind old man? We would feel happy because he is not just an old man, he is also blind. I will feel good about myself.	1. Happy and feel good about himself as he had helped an old blind man who is so unfortunate
In what situation and social condition would change your decision to help him? Sometimes, people like this are egoistical. Maybe when they requested for help or when they respond to us they sound a bit snobbish so we would feel dishearten to help.	1. Loss mood and dishearten to help if the way the man requested for help sound snobbish or he is quite reluctant to receive help
How would the society react to the same condition? Normally people would help. Maybe it's because of our education or the awareness	1. People would be helpful to disabled, perhaps due to the successful campaigns from TV, a kind of learning to create an awareness to help this less fortunate

that TV promotes, where they show advertisements on helping other people. Even there is a policy about the disabled people where they have their own parking spaces so all these help make people more helpful to the less fortunate.	2. Government creates policies and rules to help disabled, providing them certain privileges so that they would feel belong to the society
Have you had similar experience before? No, I don't have any experience but I would help because I've seen it on TV, it encourages to that.	1. Has no similar experience, but learns to help from the encouragement/campaigns helping a disabled promoted by TV
Would you act and think differently if the situation involves an elderly woman? I would have higher tendency to her an old woman because she is rather fragile, right.	1. Higher tendency to help old women as they are weaker and more fragile

Vignette 3 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

Driving on a quiet street on your way back home from work, you come across a young husband and wife stopped along the roadside attending to a problem with their car. You can see the hazard light has been turned on and the front hood has been lifted up. You also notice that the very tall and well-built husband is trying to make a phone call while the wife restlessly standing beside him. Then, you're aware that you are the only one who is passing by the road at the moment.

1. Risky context- secluded areas
2. Availability of a company in a distress
3. Disturbed emotional and facial expression
4. No other audience presence

Data Extract	Coded for

I must help because they need help but still I need to be careful because there could be danger on the road. I would be more encouraged to help if I see children on board, but if it's only the couple I have some doubts. The couple may have some bad intentions. But with children, they would seem harmless. When we go help them we must make sure the car is secured first. Who knows there might be accomplices hiding in the bushes.	1. Must help because it seems they need aid, but still he needs to be cautious as it might be a scam 2. Has some doubts toward the couple unless there are children with them 3. Helping in a smart way to avoid losing your belongings and at the same time safeguard himself from any harm
We would feel pity and there is a need to offer help. If we don't help them out, maybe there is no more car would be passing by.	1. Pity with their condition and worry if he was the only chance for them to get a help
I think they are really in trouble and thus really need my help, with no one passing by. What more if it's in the Ramadhan month.	1. They were in a real trouble, with little chance of getting help
I don't think I would feel anything when I am helping them but once the problem is solved only then I would feel good that I have helped them. Plus before helping I am filled	1. He feels good that I've helped them with their distress time 2. He feels grateful too as it was not a trick to rob him

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with doubt over their sincerity so I would also be grateful that it is not a trick.	
What would be the appropriate action/s that you would consider as prosocial/helpful in this situation? Maybe we could give them some drinks or food taken from the car. Pity them because it is blazingly hot outside.	1. Pity their condition, due to that he would extend his help to other kind of needs that they might not request
What about the actions that you deem as antisocial/not helpful? We would first examine the person in trouble, whether they can be trusted. If they look untrustworthy, then I would not stop because I am worried it's a crime about to happen. And if the people in question are men, I wouldn't stop either. But in this case, I think it's a genuine case that they are in trouble. If they men, I worry it's a banditry.	1. He won't stop if he found the couple are untrustworthy, worrying if it's a scam 2. Won't stop either if both are men as they are quite suspicious 3. Consider this vignette illustrates the genuine case
How would the society react to the same condition? For Malaysians, I think generally people would help a distressed husband and wife. But nowadays we have heard so many stories about people being robbed so that influence people when deciding to help. I think deep down inside, people do want to help but the fear of being robbed is much too powerful.	1. Generally, people would help a distressed couple 2. Sometimes, the fear of being trapped overpowers the intention to help, as their mind has been influenced by stories 3. People who do not hear any rumours about this event might help the couple naively

Those who are not aware of this crime would straightaway help this couple, I think.	
What have you learnt in the past that had influenced you to act that way? If it happened to other people and I am not suspicious of them, I would definitey help them. Because I was like them before.	1. Have gone through the same experience before, because of that, he would definitely help those who have the same problem, given that they are not suspicious. 2.He understands how the couple feels at that moment

Vignette 4 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

You hear a woman loudly crying and surrounded by a crowd of onlookers. As you approaching the crowd, you see a middle-aged woman lying on the ground and unable to get up due to a deal of blood loss resulting from an injury to her legs. Most of the crowd turns their head towards the woman, showing some curiosity as they hurried along, while some others appear to have conversation about the situation. One man bends down to calm her.

1. Bystanders availability with some precision on how they react to the event
2. Emotionally-charged situation
3. Role of gender in giving and requesting help

Data Extract	Coded for
If this situation happens, what goes in your mind? I think she is in real pain. Plus she is lying on the road, bloodied.	1. The woman is indeed in a serious situation, looking at her condition lying on the ground and bloodied
What do you think about the victim who is crying and complaining of pain when he or she is in this kind of situation ? Well their demeanor makes people more convinced of their predicament. It may	1. Convince the crowd that she is in a distress 2. Attract more people to help her

attract people to help if he or she cries rather than keeping quiet.	
How would you feel if you were in this situation? Sympathy and the need to help.	1. Sympathy and the urge to need
What kind of help would you offer him? In Malaysia, the crowd is not so helpful, because normally they are there to watch the whole scene and not to help. So for me, the least I could do is calling the ambulance, make sure they have come and only then I would leave the scene of accident. Or if I have the means, I would personally drive the victims to the hospital. But some people won't do that as they worry their car interior might be spoiled due to blood and dirt. Before calling the ambulance, we need to question the crowd what necessary steps have been taken to help the victims? But normally not much was done. I guess it's just the culture.	1. Knowing how normally the crowd in Malaysia would react (check out the scene without helping), he would initiate to call the ambulance, assured that they come, then only leave the scene 2. To expedite the time, he'd personally send the woman to the hospital, aware of the urgency of the treatment, ignoring all the risks that he might have with the decision 3. On the onset, a smart action is to ask the crowd what have they done to aid the woman, but he's already have the preoccupied thought that nothing much has been done, because it's a culture of the crowd in Malaysia to do less and to know most
What made you do that in this particular situation? If we don't take them to the hospital, it would get worse.	1. Her condition is getting riskier if a prompt action could not be accomplished

There will be not much of effects on me but we would feel we are helpful enough by calling the ambulance right away.	1. Feel that he himself is helpful and thoughtful enough to call the ambulance at the very least
Doesn't matter what kind of condition, if it involves old folks, we should call the ambulance if they weren't contacted already. This is to ensure the ambulance arrives the soonest or else we may lose the victims.	1. Under whatever circumstance, he would help the woman as she's old already and any delay might endanger her life
It's like a festival when people flock at the scene of accident, just being curious, on what had happened. I believe it's our culture to be like that, nosy. Our people like to help it's just that we don't have a sense of emergency, too relax. One more thing our people like to depend on other people when making the first move like calling the ambulance. If there is only one person at the scene, he or she may act fast but if there are many people, the reaction is slower.	1. Flock to the incident, looks like a festival. All are curious on what's going on 2. View it as a culture where Malaysians like being nosy 3. Malaysian are helpful, it is just the matter of they don't have a sense of emergency, too layback 4. Malaysian like to depend on others to make the first move in helping people, therefore the reaction would be slower, but if they are alone, the latency of giving help is faster
	1. A commotion surrounding the event has pros and cons; pros-it's an indicator or sign

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Just talking among themselves and not with the victim. Gathering around the victim may help in the sense that it is telling and showing to the public that there is something going on here but for the lady, gathering around her doesn't bring any benefits. Plus it may even gag her.	that an emergency is occurring and deem a prompt action. Cons-discomfort to the victim
I share similar experience with those who just watch. However, I might be the type who just watches the whole thing. Plus I would be stuck in a heavy traffic anyway.	1. Being an observer before and aware that he's part of the Malaysian crowd who has certain characters. Adding to his own character, despite of what he said what he's going to do in the event, he was in a difficult situation to give help
What have you learnt in the past that have influenced you to act that way? It's a different feeling if we just pass by without helping. But if I am somewhere near the accident I would feel guilty if I don't lend any help. Or if I am in a car and its difficult to stop, then I would be ok for not helping. I mean it's much better than standing with the crowd and not helping, right?	1. Different feeling for different characters Passer-by- Feel unobligated as sometimes his condition does not permit him to stop too and he regards it's better to not be a nuisance to the event, if nothing much he could contribute Event-bystander-guilty if nothing's done
Would you act and think differently if the situation involves an elderly man? The same. There is no difference because he shows his emotion, right. It is obvious that he is in pain, therefore there is not problem for me to offer some help.	1. Same reaction and perception as both are in painful condition and express their emotion fairly. Analyse that when male or female express their emotion when in a distress, they are fairly in a difficult situation

Vignette 5 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

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On a rush hour tram/train/bus, you see a casually attired passenger clenches his fist and collapse onto the floor with his eyes squeezed shut as a result of drunkenness, but the train continues on.

1. Stigmatized person- moral character flaw
2. The presence of the audience with less precision on each doing

Data Extract	Coded for
What goes in your mind in that situation? If he is drunk, the nits his own doing. What more if he is Chinese or an Indian, I would definitely won't help. But its different matter if he is sick and having a massive headache. Even if he is Malay, I still won't help. Meaning he doesn't perform his prayers and thus shows he is ignorant about Islam.	1. Won't help neither Malay nor Chinese/Indian when they drunk 2. The reason for not helping Indian/Chinese because they do not belong to the same group of races 3. The reason for not helping a Malay is because he do not abide the group's norms and ignorant about Islam 4. Would certainly help if he collapse due to the medical reason
How would you feel if you were in this situation? If he is Malay, I'd say serves him right! It is not our teachings to drink alcohol. If it's a Chinese I wouldn't feel anything because it's ok for their culture but just make sure not to burden other people. But if he has lost consciousness, then I'll call the ambulance for help. I would not touch him though, so I'll just help from afar. I worry that because he is in a drunken state, he might do stupid	1. The perception would vary based on the races; Malay- he deserves what he's got Chinese/Indian- drink responsibly, not to become a public nuisance 2. If both type of drunken are truly passed out, he'd call the ambulance, but not to be in contact with their body 3. Fear that the drunken man's unpredictable and he could do something aggressive/shameful

things and what more if he has HIV? I only can think negatively about him.	4. Label a drunken man with any other disgrace association
It is because he is drunk and it brings us back to our religion. It is totally against with our faith of religion. That is why if he is an Islamic Malay, I have no intention to help at all.	1. Because the man went against the Islamic principle, if the drunken man is someone who embraces that, he would even more loathe to help him
What do you feel if you don't help the drunkard? I would feel fine, not guilty at all. He's drunk anyways so he won't notice or appreciate my help but I think my action would impact those around me.	1. Fine, no guilty because of the mentioned reasons 2. He won't feel shameful not to help as the drunkard won't recognise him due to his condition. His condition does not permit him to even appreciate what others would help, his condition makes it less likely for people to help 3. Feel responsible of influencing the crowd not to help the man
In what situation and social condition would change your decision to help him? Maybe if there no people to help, then I would reluctantly help.	1. When the public is unreliable to help him or does not show any signs of helping, he would help unwillingly
How would the society react to the same condition? I used to see an Indian drunkard. When he was lying unconscious, people just ignored	1. His own observation, people would ignore the unconscious drunkard due to fear of being associated with this man

him. Plus, they are sometimes part of a thug group so if mess around with them, the gang would do bad things to us. So normally people just ignore these drunkards.	2. The society hold negative thoughts about the drunkard in which they are seemed as a part of a thug group, therefore none assistance would be offered

Vignette 6 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

A slovenly and dirty homeless man holding an empty can out approaches your vehicle and begging for some money to buy his food.

1. Gender's role in the likelihood of receiving help

2. Public response to a stigmatised person- physical deficiencies and associated moral flaw

3. Compliant helping

Data Extract	Coded for
What goes in your mind if this happens to you? I would give him money but still I would have a look at the beggar to see whether he is a drug addict or not. If he isn't, I would give more. If a drug addict I'd just a give a small amount of money just to get rid of him.	1. Judging on the physical appearance, it would determine how much amount of money he would donate to the man. If he doubtful over the man, he'd give a lesser amount of money, just to escape from the situation, not sincerely to help him
How would you feel if you were in this situation? Of course I would pity them but if the case is real, I would pity them even more. If the beggar is a drug addict I would not give much because he did that to his self. So I don't pity him that much. The amount is so little that he would not be able to buy the drug, just	1.If the beggar looks suspicious, he won't give as much, so that the donated money won't be the reason for any mischievous things spread 2. Pity with the beggar

enough to buy a drink. In other words I won't help him buy drugs.	
What made you do that in this particular situation? By looking at his condition, I would pity him. Perhaps I would think that he has had any meal at the time, and he is truly starving.	1.Deep sympathy for his condition that makes him begging 2. Too pity if he's starving
What would be the effect/s on you if you give money to the beggar? I'd be glad and happy to have able to help others. Even if the request a simple one, I would still be happy.	1.Happy to be able to help others in need even the request is simple and small
What would be the appropriate action/s that you would consider as prosocial/helpful in this situation? ...When we give, it's to help them buy food or clothing. In KL it's a different; when we are about to eat at a restaurant a couple of beggars would approach us begging for money. The one escorting the blind beggar is an able person. So I would normally give small amount of money, I have a feeling they are under a syndicate.	1.Donation for beggars is to help them buying the necessities 2. Depending on the setting, normally in the big cities, rampant syndicates are there, thus he would donate just enough for the beggar to buy a meal, suspecting that they belong to this syndicate
But still I'd still examine them before simply giving money. Like if the able person a young healthy person, then I wouldn't give any because I'm worried that the able one will take the money and not the blind one.	1.It's important to examine the beggar first before giving any donation 2. If the beggar is a healthy normal person, he won't give any donation, he realises that

The syndicate would send and fetch them every day. In Malaysia there are so many ways people will try to get money the easy way, just like this. But if people won't help, that means he or she is very wealthy person or just recently got wealthy.	there are many people in Malaysia try to get an easy money 3. Perceive that those who ignore the beggars are normally from a real fortune person or just recently got fortune
  If I feel that the whole thing is a scam, I won't give money. Buying drugs maybe, but I'm more offended with the syndicate kind of operations. The money will be given to the syndicate so these beggars would remain poor.	1.The way the money will be used would determine whether or not he would donate the money to the beggar 2. Won't give any if he knew that it's a scam as the donation would benefit others, not the beggar 3. Second-guessing himself to donate to the drug-abuser
How would the society react to the same condition? Normally, people would either refuse politely or rudely like telling the old woman off. Maybe because the way the beggars approach people are annoying. Even if they put on a sad face, people won't help. Or maybe because some people had a bad experience with beggars and therefore they treated the beggars harshly.	1.Society in Malaysia are normally ignore the beggars, either in a polite or a harsh way 2. One reason is the way they've been approached, annoying 3. People sometimes are assertive not to help even the beggars put an act of being in a bad condition 4. The way they treat the beggars normally is influenced by the experience that they have with the beggar before
Have you had similar experience before? Yes normally at a restaurant. If I see the beggars are old, I would help. But if he is	1.Have a similar experience with a different setting

healthy looking, I wouldn't help and just refuse politely.	2. The beggar's appearance is vital in deciding whether or not to help, if the beggar in an elder, he would help without any hesitant. But if the beggar is a normal and healthy person, he would refuse to help politely
Would you act and think differently if the situation involves an elderly woman? I would be more sympathetic with the old lady. Maybe I would start thinking about my mum, my grandmother. But if it's a man, one would expect him to be tougher, right?	1.Feel more sympathetic towards an old woman 2. Transcend the woman with his beloved ones like mother, grandmother 3. Expect that a man should be tougher than a woman, so he should not be in a begging situation

Vignette 7 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

You arrive at a deadly accident scene with couple of victims lying gravely injured on the road. One of the victim's head smashes through the windscreen of a car, while the other have flown through the air and landed near the centre lines of the road. Their eyes are swollen and their bodies are bloody. The breathing of other victims is taking place normally while one of them shows the signs of person going into shock. The crowds observe the scene from a distance.

- Audience availability, the public action has been detailed
- High-cost emergency and high level of emergency
- Having competency/ability to help, first-aid skills

Data Extract	Coded for
If this happens to you, what goes in your mind? I worry the victim would die because he is hurt badly. I'm not that strong when I see blood. People are hurt badly in this situation so maybe I can carry the victim to a safer place. I don't think I can't stand long enough to watch the gory scene.	1.Have a fear of blood, but would still save the victim hurriedly 2. Worried about the victim's life
How would you feel if you were in this situation? Of course I sympathize, but I still need to look out for myself because I don't know how to handle that situation. What if I see human meat, I'd be nauseous.	1.Have physical condition if seeing blood and people's meat, thus he would take care of himself first, help would be offered to his ability to handle the situation 2. Sympathise with the victim's condition
What kind of help would you offer him? Besides helping the victim I would also call the ambulance. Or I could also try to comfort	1.Do the best to save the victim, reaching all means to rescue them despite of the discomfort that he has to face

them by giving some water to drink. But the most important thing is to call the ambulance as this is about life. At least in this situation, I would have done my best and I would not walk away from the scene.	2. Won't ever ignore the situation because of his condition as this is a life-staking event
  I would think if that was me, wouldn't I want people to help me? When that happens to me, at least there would be somebody there to save me.	1.Put him in the victim's condition, in which at that time, nothing bigger would be appreciated other than people's help as it is a helpless condition 2. Karma (hopeful that someone would help him if he's in need in the future)
  I would feel so happy that I could help them out and more good deeds for me in a way.	1.Happy to be able to help others 2. Believe that rewards await him in the future for his good deed
  If I can see oil coming out of the vehicle then that would be dangerous to me. It's an uncontrollable situation.	1.Won't help when his life is at stake, when the situation is too dangerous for him to interfere as the massive condition is out of his control
  It's a serious case and I think people would do the best they could to help out. I think in situations like this the society should help as	1.Malaysian society would do their best to help as this is a real high-emergency situation, involving human's life 2. Fast and hurry in rescuing the victim

it's a matter of life and death. If we are slow in reacting, the victim may die so we should help in any way we can.	
Have you had similar experience before? No. The problem is, I have difficulties of looking at pictures of people with wounds and injuries. So I know the level of my capabilities.	1.Has no similar experience, but knowing his level of capabilities in handling situation involving injuries and blood, the help given would be limited

Vignette 8 and its theoretical foundation of the content and structure

While you sunbathing on the beach, you see an eight year old boy struggling to stay above the water, splashing and unable to swim to safety. The boy while thrashing his arms is unable to call for help. His body position is vertical in the water; the body is very low in the water with the mouth just above the surface. The victim goes up and down in the water as he pushes and tries to get air. The boy is drowning in the sea whereas you despite not being able to swim are incidentally caught up in the situation.

- High-cost emergency and high level of emergency
- Audience availability without precision on how do they respond to this event
- Gender's role in the likelihood of receiving help

Data Extract	Coded for
When this situation occurs, what is playing on your mind? Of course I want to help. But I just don't know how, so I'll just alert the people around that area of the situation and hopefully there would be people who know how to swim and save the boy. I'll scream and shout for help. We have to tell people because we are not able to swim.	1. He'd reach help from other people, and it should be done in a quick way. 2. Let other know that someone's in a dire need of help

How would you feel if you were in this situation?	1.The intention to help is there but he is not capable of providing help directly
I want to help but at the same time I would feel guilty because I am not capable of helping him directly. I would help as much as I could though.	2. Feel guilty of not helping directly because the situation happens before his eyes
	3. Would help at his best using other means