Singleton, A., & Salmon, U. (2023). Barriers to entrepreneurship: an intersectional analysis of an early-stage refugee entrepreneurship programme in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-11-2022-1048

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10.1108/IJEBR-11-2022-1048

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Barriers to Entrepreneurship: an intersectional analysis of an early-stage refugee entrepreneurship programme in the United Kingdom

Journal:	*International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*
Manuscript ID	IJEBR-11-2022-1048.R2
Manuscript Type:	Research Paper
Keywords:	Business Development, Start-ups, Entrepreneurship, Ethnic Groups

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APPENDIX 1

Research Aims

- Evaluate the barriers to entrepreneurship for refugee entrepreneurs.
- Understand how social positionality – specifically on how their refugee status affects their access to entrepreneurship opportunities.

Interview Questions – Project partners

1. Please tell me about your role working with refugee entrepreneurs?
2. What do you hope to achieve with this business support project?
3. In your experience, why would refugee participants be hesitant in seeking business support?
4. What do refugee participants find the most difficult about setting up their UK business?
5. What do you think has helped participants the most in setting up their UK business?
6. How do you build trust with participants?
7. How do participants' families (either in the UK or in their country of origin) assist with their business?

Interview Questions – Participants

1. What was it like when you arrived in the UK?
2. Why did you decide to set up a business?
3. What would you have done if you were setting up a business in your home country? (Where would you have got the money? What loan conditions were associated with this money e.g. interest; collateral)
4. Did you learn anything from this process of setting up a business in your home country that you can apply in the UK?
5. Was your family involved in setting up your UK business?
6. What did you find difficult about setting up your UK business?
7. What helped you the most in setting up your UK business?

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Figure 1 – Coding Process – Intersubjective and Experiential Spaces

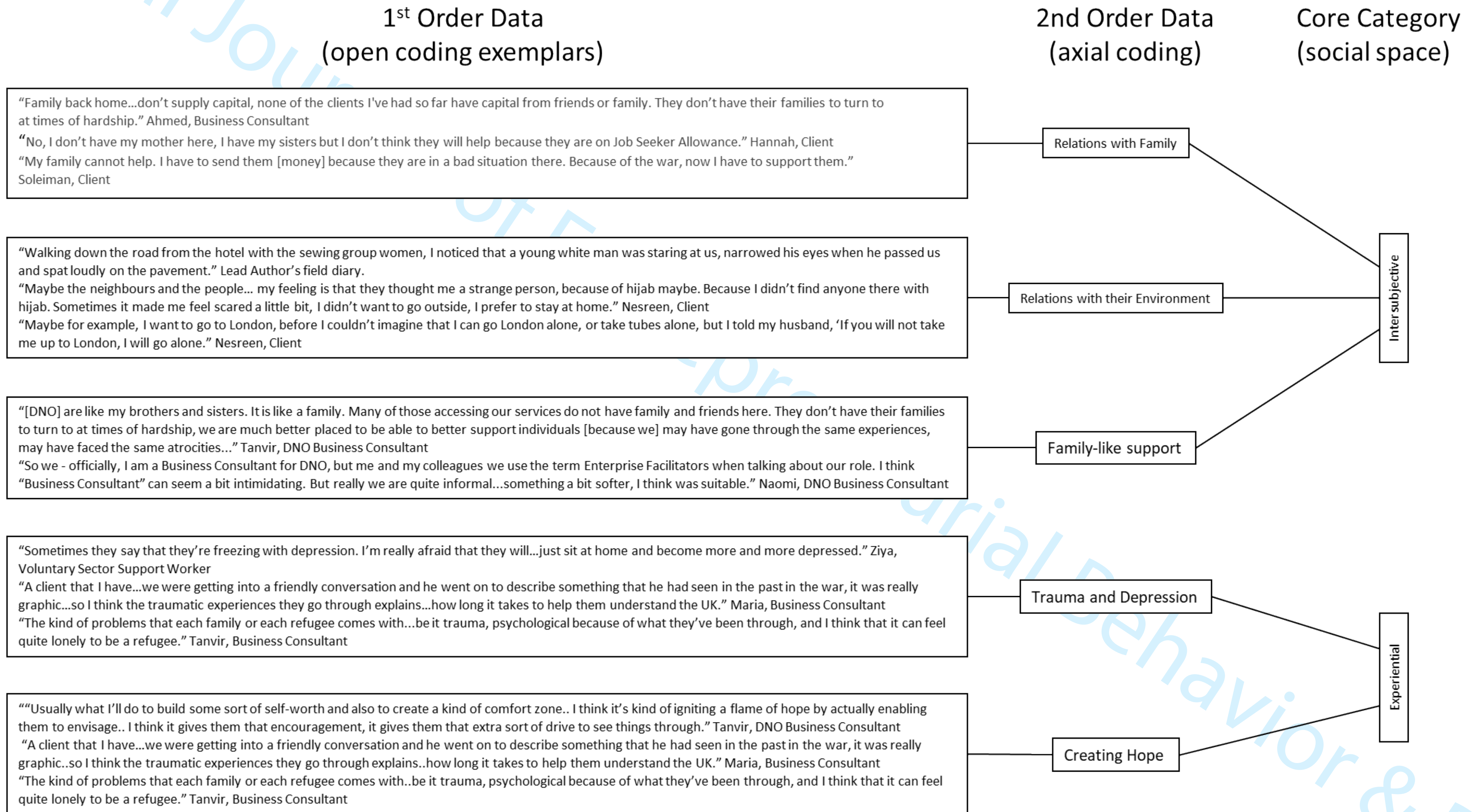

Figure 2 – Coding Process – Organisational and Representational Spaces

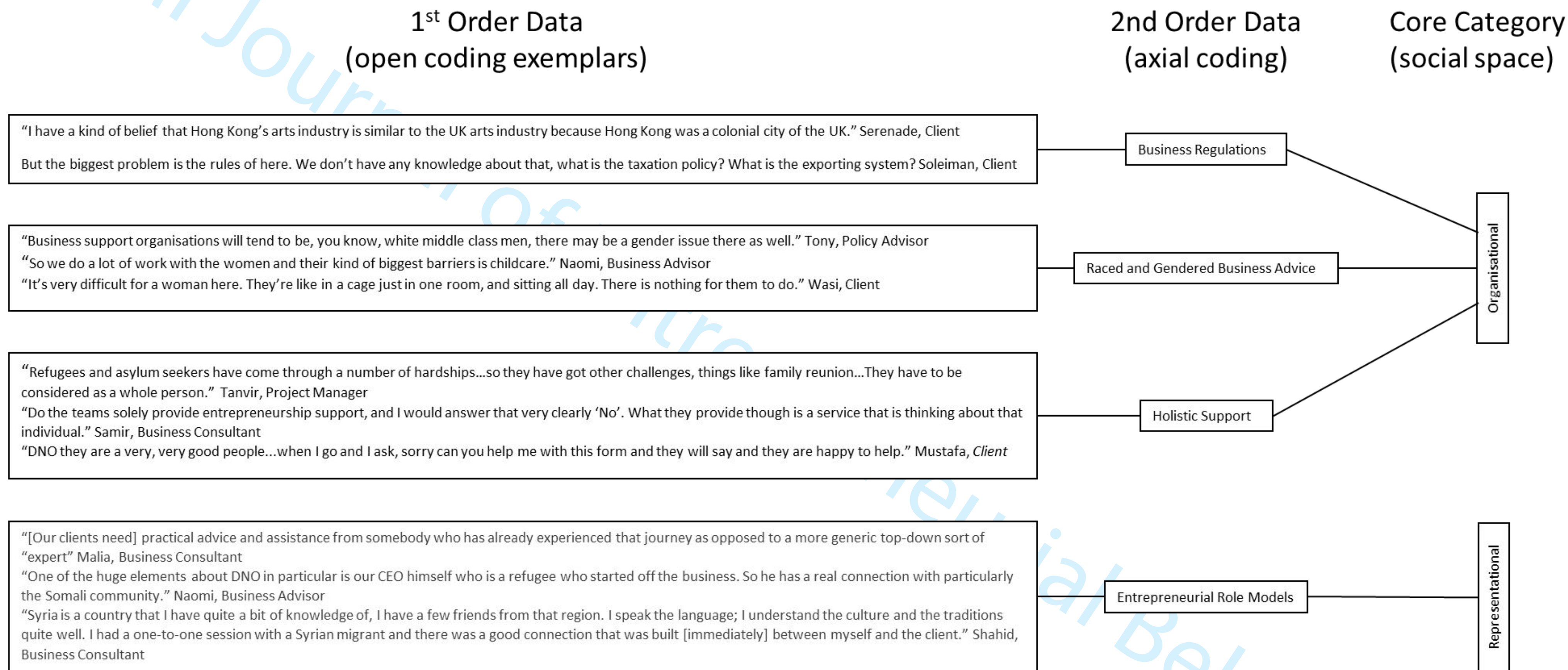

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Table 1 – Stakeholder Interviewees

Pseudonym	Gender	Role
Tony	Male	Director and Policy Advisor
Sorya	Female	Lead Business Consultant
Samir	Male	Business Consultant
Tanvir	Male	Employment and Careers Service Manager
Malia	Female	Business Advisor
Hamid	Male	Business Consultant
Jane	Female	Entrepreneurship & Engagement Manager
Penny	Female	Enterprise Manager
Claudia	Female	Translator/Council Business Support Worker
Julie	Female	Academic
Ahmed	Male	Project Support Officer
Cynthia	Female	Policy Analyst
Ziya	Female	Voluntary Sector Support Organisation
Adina	Female	Voluntary Sector Support Organisation
Maria	Female	Business Consultant
Naomi	Female	Business Advisor
Shahid	Male	Business Consultant
Sergei	Male	Business Consultant

Table 2 – Client Interviewees (Migrant Entrepreneurs)

First Name	Gender
Abdul	Male
Amina	Female
Daud	Male
Hannah	Female
Haroon	Male
Jahad	Male
Mustafa	Male
Neelam	Female
Rasheed	Male
Seema	Female
Solaiman	Male
Wasi	Male
Womens' Sewing Group	Female

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Figure 2 – Data Structure for the Intersubjective and Experiential Spaces

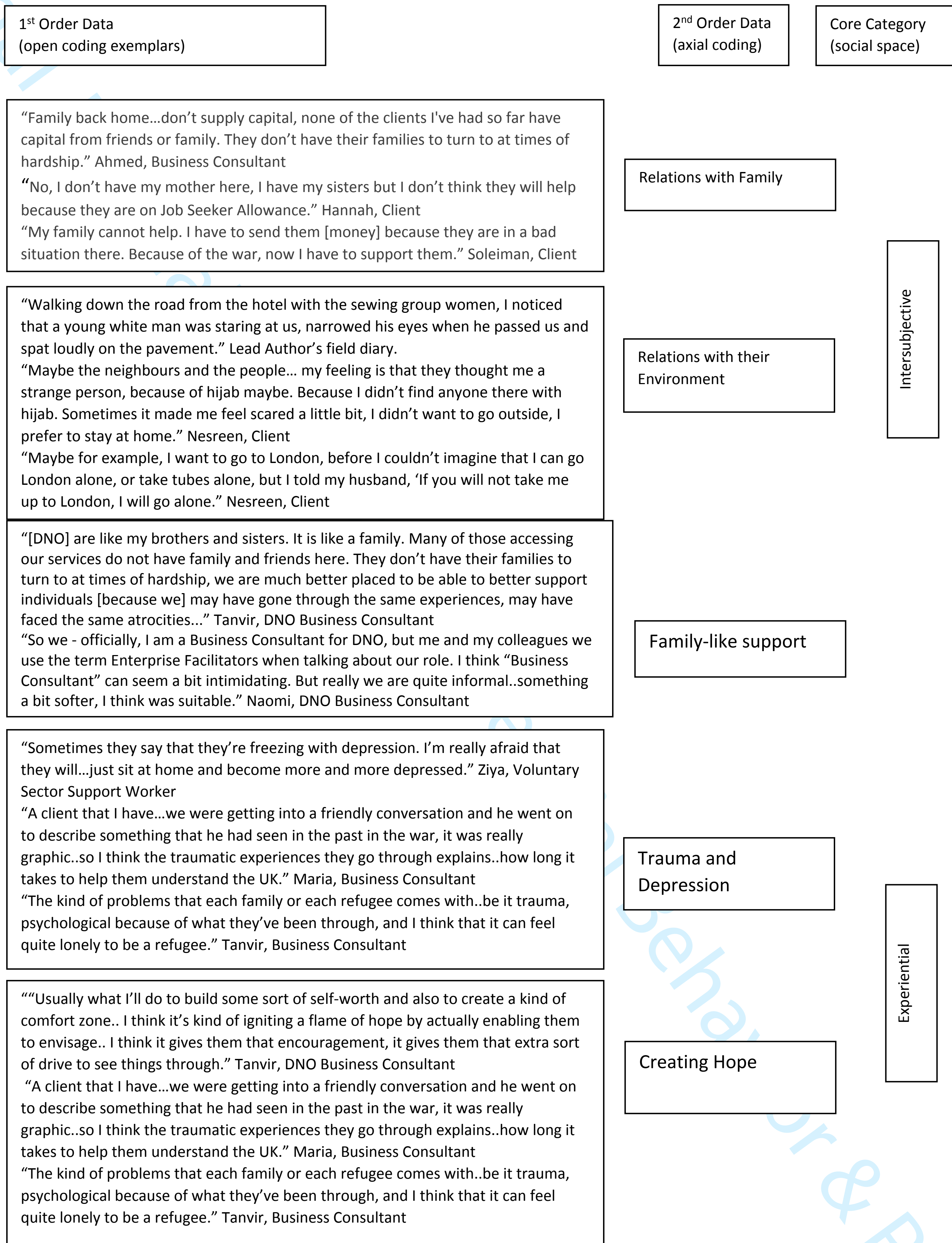

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Figure 1 – Data Structure for the Organisational and Representational Spaces

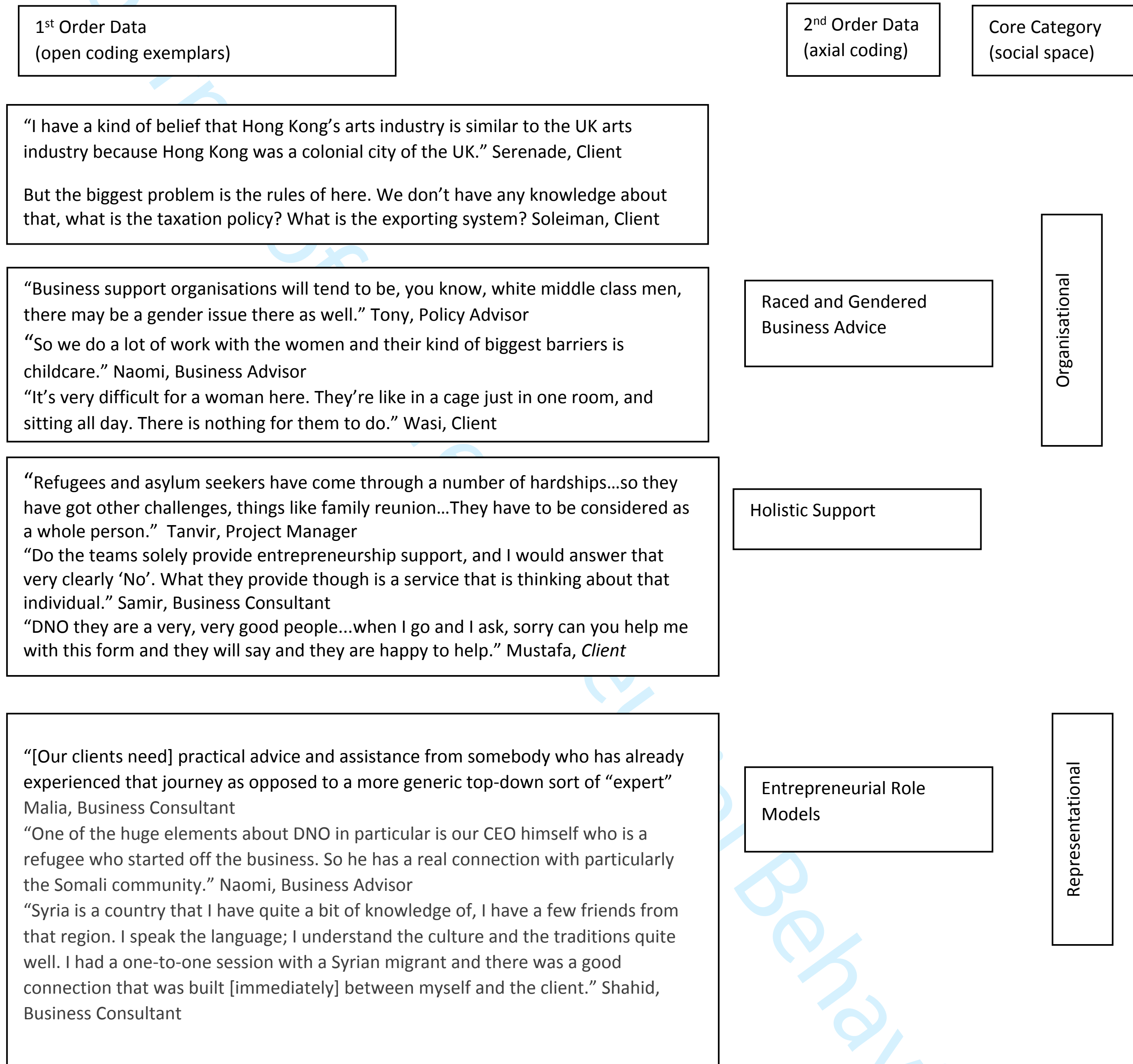

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Table 2 – Name and Gender of Clients

First Name	Gender
Abdul	Female
Amina	Female
Daud	Female
Hannah	Female
Haroon	Female
Jahad	Male
Mustafa	Female
Neelam	Female
Rasheed	Female
Seema	Female
Serena	Female
Solaiman	Female
Wasi	Female
Womens' Sewing Group	Female

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Barriers to Entrepreneurship: an intersectional analysis of an early-stage refugee entrepreneurship programme in the United Kingdom

1. ABSTRACT

Purpose

The study deploys Anthias' intersectional framework of social spaces and her concept of translocational positionality to explore the barriers to entrepreneurship for refugee entrepreneurs in the UK. In particular, the study aims to assess how migrant identities require a specific form of business support.

Design/methodology/approach

A total of 32 semi-structured interviews with 14 refugee entrepreneurs and 18 business support agents were conducted between April and October 2022 and, together with field notes, were combined for thematic analysis in NVivo 12.

Findings

Organisational, representational, intersubjective, and experiential barriers combined to create practical and psychological deterrents to entrepreneurship for refugees. However, an explicitly humanistic and de-centred approach to business support was (partially) able to counter such barriers.

Originality

Two intersectional concepts of social spaces and translocational positionality are brought into conversation with each other, creating a novel approach to framing the barriers to entrepreneurship for refugees.

Practical Implications

Policymakers and business support agencies should consider intersectional characteristics and the importance of a compassionate and individual approach when designing business support programmes for refugee entrepreneurs.

2. INTRODUCTION

This study uses an intersectional approach to explore the barriers and enablers of refugee entrepreneurship, in a particular case study of early-stage refugee entrepreneurs in the United Kingdom. Intersectional approaches are increasingly of interest in entrepreneurship research due to their ability to explain how combinations of social identity (such as gender, race, sexuality, and class) affect early-stage entrepreneurship in the context of minoritized entrepreneurs. Our paper joins such intersectional literature, including an exploration of entrepreneurial identity in relation to Polish entrepreneurs (Barrett & Vershinina, 2017), access to funding for women in technological entrepreneurship (Dy et al., 2017) and ongoing business support for Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) immigrant entrepreneurs (Högberg et al., 2014). This study works applies Floya Anthias' intersectional frameworks of social spaces (Anthias, 2013)and translocational positionality (Anthias, 2002, 2008) as a

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frame for understanding the barriers to entrepreneurship in relation to a refugee entrepreneurship project in the UK.

Refugee and migrant entrepreneurship take place under specific spatial and social conditions which incorporate movement across borders (Rath et al., 2020) and language acquisition and adjustment to cultural norms (Ram et al., 2017; Vershinina et al., 2019). Theories such as mixed embeddedness (Bisignano & El-Anis, 2019; Jones, Ram, Edwards, et al., 2014) have pointed to the specific barriers to entrepreneurship faced by migrants, while other studies have explored the limited extent to which mainstream business support is suitable for migrants and refugee entrepreneurs (Ram et al., 2017; Villares-Varela & Essers, 2018). Refugees are a particular subset of migrant, with distinct characteristics such as forced departure from their country of origin, limited or no ability to return, truncated social networks, and trauma relating to their migration journey. This study joins refugee entrepreneurship scholars in arguing that such characteristics necessitating a more nuanced approach to supporting refugee entrepreneurs (Abebe, 2022; Adeeko & Treanor, 2021; Högberg et al., 2014).

We can therefore formulate a specific research question:

"How does social positionality contribute to the barriers faced by refugee entrepreneurs?"

This study is based on the preliminary findings from a business support project designed to support early-stage refugee entrepreneurs, referred to here as the MES (Migrant Entrepreneurship support) project. The entrepreneurship project is implemented by a social enterprise, referred to here as DNO. The project name, staff and client names have been anonymised in this paper for confidentiality purposes. The MES project is designed to provide training, mentoring and business advice on a 1:1 basis for refugees who are seeking to set up their own business. This study is based on the incubation phase (2020-2022), whilst the full project looks to provide longer term refugee[1] entrepreneurship support in future years.

The theoretical contribution of this study is to put two of Floya Anthias' intersectional frameworks into conversation with each other. Firstly, her framework of social spaces which provides a structuring mechanism for exploring how power dynamics play out in terms of business support for refugee entrepreneurs. Secondly, Anthias' concept of "translocational positionality" is deployed to understand which class-based, ethnic, and gender identities have remained in force as the individual has moved across countries, and which identities acquired during migration (such as country of origin or route to the UK) have created or diminished their social status. This study is an early-stage exploration of the bedding in of the programme which aims to evaluate Anthias' concepts before refugees' positionality is changed by the programme's intervention. The authors conducted semi-structured interviews with 14 refugee entrepreneurs and 18 business support agents between April and October 2022. The interviews identified the barriers to entrepreneurship, the diasporic

[1] We use the term "refugee" throughout the paper, as the study participants shared the characteristics of refugees, rather than the broader category of migrants. MES clients included those who arrived as asylum-seekers, those who have been granted UK citizenship after their asylum claims were granted, and those (such as Hong Kong BNO citizens) who have been granted a BNO visa to live, work and study in the UK.

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support available to entrepreneurs, and the types of support that entrepreneurs found the most valuable. The interviews and field notes were combined for thematic analysis in NVivo 12.

The research contributes to studies which explore the role of social positionality in shaping entrepreneurial opportunities (Martinez Dy, 2020; Villares-Varela & Essers, 2018) and to the potential of social spaces and translocational positionality as frameworks to interpret the experiences of refugee entrepreneurs. We respond to calls for intersectionality to be considered in policymaking (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019) by drawing attention to the varying ways in which interlocking and multiple disadvantages are ignored by traditional business support programmes.

The paper is structured as follows: a literature review describes the characteristics of refugee entrepreneurship in the UK. The literature review then continues with an outline of Anthias' concepts of social spaces and translocational positionality, with a particular focus on the barriers to entrepreneurship for refugees. The methods section describes the qualitative research design and ethics approach. The findings are organised by Anthias' four categories of social space, allowing insight into how translocational positionality plays out within and across spaces relating to refugee entrepreneurship. There is a brief discussion, and the implications for policy and practice are presented before concluding.

This paper is not intended to be a comprehensive set of findings relating to the project, which is still in progress. Instead, this is a reflection, based on preliminary findings, on the potential of translocational positionality and social spaces to explore aspects of the refugee entrepreneurs' experience in the UK.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review starts by discussing the statistics and policy support relating to refugee entrepreneurship. We then outline the general concept of intersectionality, with a focus on Anthias' concept of translocational positionality. We then outline the barriers to refugee entrepreneurs, relating to their positionality status of being a refugee. The literature review concludes with a description of Anthias' concept of social spaces, which will be the organising mechanism for answering the research question.

3.1. UK government-produced data relating to Refugee Entrepreneurship in the United Kingdom

Refugee migration into the UK has included flows from Europe and the Global South in addition to regular migration flows from Commonwealth countries. Yet despite the long history of refugee migration to the United Kingdom, and the importance of entrepreneurship to the UK economy, accurate data on refugee entrepreneurship in the UK remain elusive. The ONS and Companies House do not record business owners' country of birth or citizenship. Data for 2021 show that six per cent of SME employers in the UK were led by individuals from a minority ethnic group (Office for National Statistics, 2021), which falls well below the 13% of the England and Wales adult population who self-described as BAME in the 2011 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2018). Entrepreneurship (in the context of small business ownership) therefore remains unrepresentative in terms of the

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BAME population. Undoubtedly some of these entrepreneurs will be refugees, although we are currently unable to understand how many. Despite the lack of government-produced data relating to refugee entrepreneurs, policy development relating to refugee entrepreneurship is becoming more pronounced, both by international organisations and across business support sectors.

3.2. Policy Support for Refugee Entrepreneurs

The OECD recommends tailored business support schemes for refugees. Such schemes are evidenced to have higher take-up rates, higher satisfaction levels and more positive outcomes than generic support schemes. However policy initiatives for refugee entrepreneurs remain largely rhetorical in the UK. Furthermore, there are no UK government funded schemes for refugee entrepreneurs.

In addition to tailored business support, the OECD also recommends seed-funding for new refugee ventures (OECD, 2021b). In the UK, while industry-led groups such as banks have provided mentoring, business skills and promotional activities for refugee entrepreneurs (UK Finance, 2022), seed-funding for refugee entrepreneurs remains rare.

The Nat West Group and CRÈME (a private-university partnership) additionally recommend that central government and local policy makers to act together with investment from the private sector (Kašperová et al., 2022). The early-stage entrepreneurship project which in which this study takes place is one such refugee-specific support scheme, albeit funded by the EU, rather than by a UK government-industry partnership. It is notable that no existing policy initiatives in the UK or OECD refer to the importance of intersectional policy development, as recommended by the field of critical policy studies (Hankivsky et al., 2014; Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019). Such an approach would explicitly develop policy based on the history, politics, everyday lived experiences, diasporic knowledges and intersecting social characteristics of refugee entrepreneurs.

3.3. Intersectional Frameworks

Intersectionality is the theoretical framework of our paper and we employ three inter-related concepts to provide a unique analytical framework. Firstly, the concept of intersectionality argues that social categories, such as race and gender, are inevitably inter-related (Crenshaw, 1989). While each category may be distinct, their full impact arises in combination. Secondly, Anthias' concept of social positionality represents an elaboration of intersectionality, arguing that discrimination arises from raced, gendered, and classed social positions in society. In this study, the intersections of race, class, and gender of refugee entrepreneurs (as non-white, poor, and mostly female) are combined to place them on a lower social footing than that of white, middle-class male equivalents. Thirdly, Anthias' framework of social spaces provides additional explanatory power in identifying the business and social environments which present barriers to refugee entrepreneurs. This unique framework will guide the analysis later in the paper. We start by outlining the first of these three frameworks: the over-arching concept of intersectionality.

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3.4. Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a framework developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (Crenshaw, 1989) which originally highlighted the inadequacy of legal frameworks in redressing discrimination and exclusion resulting from the intersection of race and gender. The term originated from Black feminists, seeking to understand how power operated through both race and gender (hooks, 1987; Smith et al., 1974). Intersectionality theory has had a significant effect on feminist, decolonial and critical race theory and is now becoming an accepted part of legislative and policy initiatives. The Equality Act in the UK recognises multiple intersecting inequalities ("Equality Act 2010," 2010). Business policy, while still largely focussed on either gender or race, has mostly failed to reference the intersection of race and gender (Vorley et al., 2020). The UK publishes annual small business owner statistics which can be analysed by a combination of intersecting characteristics, include race, age, and gender (Department for Business, 2021). Recent research has argued that parsing such heterogeneity of business owners is crucial in understanding differential access to entrepreneurial opportunities (Owalla et al., 2021). Analyses have shown that during a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, such intersections can exacerbate existing inequalities (Choi et al., 2022; Hughes et al., 2022)

Whereas many entrepreneurship initiatives relating to under-represented groups focus on a single dimension of identity, such as gender (OECD, 2021a; Rose, 2019) , an intersectional approach acknowledges that one cannot divorce one's nationality or citizenship from one's class, gender, or other characteristics. Entrepreneurship research suggests that business support policies which address gender without attending to class are in danger of trapping educated women in low-return entrepreneurship activity (Villares-Varela, 2018). Conversely, policies which support low-income BAME entrepreneurs without attending to gender, tend to support ethnic minority men, but exclude ethnic minority women.

Entrepreneurship academic research has moved from exploring a single axis of identity, such as gender, to exploring the multiple, overlapping identities of entrepreneurs (Vorobeva, 2022). Academic researchers have investigated barriers to entrepreneurship arising from combinations of disability and gender (Williams & Patterson, 2019), age and gender (Stirzaker & Sitko, 2019), gender and social class (Constantinidis et al., 2019), gender, race and social class (Dy et al., 2017), migration status and gender (Al-Dajani et al., 2019; Webster & Zhang, 2020) and indigenous ethnic identity and gender (Croce, 2019).

3.5. Anthias' Concept of Translocational Positionality

This paper will deploy Anthias' concept of "translocational positionality" in identifying refugee-specific social identities. Entrepreneurship and intersectional literatures argue that social positionality creates a particular set of barriers for refugee entrepreneurs. Floya Anthias' notion of "translocational positionality" offers us an entry-point for mapping out such discriminations. Instead of assuming that individuals have a permanent and stable national identity which is ruptured when they migrate, "translocational positionality" acknowledges that some identities (such as class and gender) may remain in force as the individual moves across countries.

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> *"To be dislocated at the level of nation is not necessarily a dislocation in other terms, if we find we still exist within the boundaries of our social class and our gender. However, although we may move across national borders and remain middle class or women (for example) the movement will transform our social place and the way we experience this at all social levels and in different ways." Anthias, pg. 15, 2008*

The translocational dislocations arising from refugee status create multiple barriers for refugee entrepreneurs. The next section will detail the barriers and how they limit entrepreneurial opportunities.

3.6. Anthias' Framework of Social Spaces

Refugee entrepreneurs are situated in a particular setting in society, including their geographical location, their relationships with organisations, with individuals and with themselves. In seeking to understand how to apply intersectional theory to power relations in a time-bound, geographical space, intersectional models of analysis have evolved (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Such models allow us to understand how particular actors, their social spaces and a specific moment in time interact to produce multiple, interlocking forms of oppression. An early iteration of such a model originated from Patricia Hill Collins, who described the combined effects of housing, schools, government, and policing for Black US women in the 20th century as a "matrix of domination". Collins argued that the intersection of race and gender was enacted across four "interrelated domains of power, namely the structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal" (Hill Collins, 2000, p. 294). Subsequently, Floya Anthias (2013) developed these four categories into societal arenas, each with its distinctive but inter-related mechanisms of social control: organizational, representational, intersubjective, and experiential.

The four arenas, and how they relate to this research, are now set out as follows:

1. Organizational (structural position): this arena relates to how people are organised within institutional and societal frameworks. In the context of the MES project, the organizational position is how refugee entrepreneurs are situated in relation to the organizations who support them, such as DNO and the Growth Hub. The organizational arena also includes refugees' location in relation to their geography (either in Bristol or Birmingham) and their social position including their gender, class, and national status. This arena also includes government policies relating to refugee entrepreneurs, the banking, legal and taxation system.

2. Representational (discourses): this arena relates to the images, texts and documents which describe and inform a social arena. The representational category includes data which is collected by DNO and other bodies, photographs and images of refugees and entrepreneurs, research and policy papers, and the metrics which are used to evaluate the project.

3. Intersubjective (practices): this arena relates to social practices in relation to others, such as bonding, friendship and distancing. The intersubjective category includes how refugee

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entrepreneurs relate to each other, to their diaspora and to their families in their country of origin. This arena also covers their relationships with DNO and Growth Hub staff.

4. Experiential (narratives): meaning making and storytelling. The experiential arena includes identity narratives, such as the formation of an entrepreneurial identity, their identity as refugees, their stories of exile, their burgeoning identity in the UK and their perceptions of their gender, class, or nationality. The experiential arena also includes psychology characteristic of refugee entrepreneurs, such as trauma, resilience, and hope.

These arenas are presented not as autonomous or actual physical spaces. Instead, these arenas become an organising framework for the experiences of refugees who encounter multiple types of discrimination and allow for comparison between each arena. Anthias' four categories are therefore distinct for the purposes of analysis but are nevertheless interrelated: for example, refugees who are discouraged by organizational barriers, such as taxation and benefits regimes, may be reassured by intersubjective practices, such as a trusting relationship built with a business advisor.

3.7. Barriers to Refugee Entrepreneurship

This section discusses the literature relating to six barriers specific to refugee entrepreneurs.

Firstly, racism and Islamophobia have been a pervasive barrier for ethnic minority businesses (Ram & Jones, 2012) in the United Kingdom, yet the influence of race remains under-researched in entrepreneurship literature. Immigrants from non-Western countries remain under-paid and under-protected in the labour market (Baycan-Levent & Nijkamp, 2009), leading to inflated rates of faux self-employment in the gig economy while well-paid, secure jobs in the formal economy remain out of reach.

Secondly, refugee businesses tend to cluster in low-value, highly competitive, labour-intensive sectors and are therefore less likely to develop into larger, more profitable enterprises (Jones et al., 2018; Ram & Jones, 2012). In the United Kingdom, this includes Vietnamese immigrants in nail bars (Bagwell, 2008), South and East Asians in catering and food retailing (Hamlett et al., 2008; Kitcharoen, 2016), Pakistani men in the taxi business (Kalra, 2019) and black Africans in food retailing and fashion accessories (Ojo et al., 2013).

A third barrier is the lack of multi-dimensional support for refugees. UK and international policy (OECD, 2021b) has advised that business support for migrants, particularly those who have arrived seeking refuge, should encompass language support, business and legal advice, access to seed funding and business. However, such multi-dimensional support is unaffordable for under-funded business support agencies (European Union, 2016) and is politically unpopular. In the UK, the business support landscape for refugee entrepreneurs is particularly fragmented following the result of cuts to local authority funding driven by austerity measures (Clark & Colling, 2019). Further austerity measures enacted since 2022 are likely to exacerbate the lack of timely and effective refugee entrepreneurship support.

Fourthly, the access model of the typical business support organisation privileges middle-class white men, who have the class confidence and economic stability to pro-actively seek out business support. Mainstream business support has therefore evolved to be passive and

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await enquiry from potential entrepreneurs (Cunningham & McGuire, 2019). Refugee entrepreneurs are less likely to have the local knowledge, expectation of government help or spare time to visit an unfamiliar, state-associated organisation(Abebe, 2022).

Fifthly, ethnic minority (including refugee) firms are written off as "lifestyle," unlikely to meet the growth, innovation and profit targets required of much business funding, and therefore unworthy of the time investment required from business support organisations (Dy et al., 2017). By pursuing ethnicity or nationality as the defining characteristic of the refugee entrepreneur, policymakers, and business support organisations "other" non-white business owners (Högberg et al., 2014), consigning them to a ghetto of businesses which are unlikely to grow beyond a certain size.

Finally, for entrepreneurs with growth ambitions, their routes to achieve business success arise from social connections. In this sense, ethnic minority firms view entrepreneurship as a socially constructed activity (Anderson et al., 2012). Social connections result in co-production activity, where business activities are produced with the help of family, diasporic networks, and their local environment. As such, any support offering should account for these more socially embedded elements which influence the nature of growth and development (Basu & Altinay, 2002; Cunningham & McGuire, 2019). Unlike other migrant entrepreneurs who can connect to diasporic networks of support (Ojo et al., 2013, p. 291), refugees are more likely to have truncated diasporic connections, with existing families unreachable in conflict zones and few existing family connections in the UK. Yet, migrant entrepreneurs, even within the same diasporic community, are heterogenous and their ethnic identity is not necessarily salient in creating their entrepreneurial identity (Barrett & Vershinina, 2017).

Our contribution will explore how Anthias' concepts help to structure our understanding of barriers to entrepreneurship in the MES project. First, our research methods will be discussed.

4. METHODS

The authors present a qualitative research design which would start with narratives of life-stories as the point of departure for an empirical analysis of intersectionality. In preference to a quantitative approach, a qualitative approach is considered more appropriate to the refugee experience, the experiences of their business advisors, and the constructions of the social positionality of the refugee entrepreneur.

This interpretivist study is underpinned by the constructionist sociology of knowledge (Berger & Luckman, 1966): a theoretical conception which bridges the epistemological gap between objectivism and subjectivism. In line with other researchers investigating the nature of power in migrant and refugee entrepreneurship studies (Aldrich & Martinez, 2010; Hagos et al., 2019; Redien-Collot et al., 2017) , we interrogate subjective understandings. In this case, we examine the extent to which the individual entrepreneur, sometimes in conjunction with their business advisor, can navigate objectified power structures. As

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Dreher (2015) concludes "Power structures are a human product. Power is perceived as objective reality. Human beings are a social product formed with relation to power."

The primary data consists of 32 interviews which are semi-structured to enable data-rich collection. Participants were recruited through DNO from those clients participating in the MES project. Consistent with recommendations that vulnerable populations should be recompensed for reliving traumatic incidents (Atakav et al., 2020; Bhattacharyya et al., 2018), participants were awarded a £20 gift voucher for participation. Stakeholder participants were recruited through professional contacts of DNO and of the authors. Invitations to interview were sent via email or Whatsapp, written consent to be interviewed was required, and participants were sent follow-up information after the interview. Participants were interviewed in person or on the telephone. Interview questions (provided in the Appendix) explored the barriers to refugee entrepreneurship, and the enabling factors within the MES project. A semi-structured format allows for the flexibility to follow up on ideas and interrogate responses. The lead author/interviewer was born in the Global South and brought her own life experience of migration to the interview topic. This may have facilitated refugee entrepreneur's engagement in interviews. Additionally, interviewees were more likely to be explicit when describing their experiences to a researcher who explicitly introduced herself as a refugee. Women were also more likely to trust another refugee woman born in the Global South. In line with calls for researchers to reflect on their positionality throughout the research process (Dawani Manohar et al., 2017), the interviewer and lead author discovered she had both insider/outside status. Her insider status was obtained through long residence in the UK, yet her outsider status was maintained through her class positionality: she found that trust was hard to build with more recent refugees and that misunderstandings were frequent. She found that, in line with other insider/outside researchers (Ganga & Scott, 2006), she was afforded a degree of social proximity that, paradoxically, increased awareness amongst both participants and researcher of the social divisions that exist between them.

Interviews were conducted between April and October 2022, lasted between 29 and 156 minutes, were recorded and professionally transcribed. Participants were entitled to withdraw from the study at this stage, although no participant chose to withdraw.

All names have been anonymised and quotes have been edited to remove identifying details such as country of origin or time spent in the United Kingdom. Table 1 and Table 2 provide such demographic information about participants as is possible given the stringent confidentiality requirements relating to refugees. Refugee participants expressed their fear of being identified due to repercussions for themselves, or their family in their country of origin. This was true of both MES clients and of DNO staff, some of whom were themselves refugees. Several stakeholders declined to share identifying details beyond gender due to reasons either related to the sharing of individual opinions which could have jeopardised their job, or due to repercussions for themselves or their family. For this reason, the demographic data has been generalised.

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Insert Table 1 here.

Of the MES client participants, 12 were from Afghanistan, 2 were from Syria and one was from Hong Kong. All MES client participants were between 18 and 40, and all, bar one, was married with more than one child.

Insert Table 2 here.

Of the stakeholder participants, 12 were British, 6 declined, or were reluctant to share their nationality for the purposes of this research. Of the stakeholder participants, ages ranged from 22 to 65, and most stakeholders were single.

The data were analysed using the constant comparative method and was conducted in four distinct stages. Shah and Corley (2006) described these stages as follows: the first stage involves coding, comparing and sorting the data into categories; the second stage encompasses integrating the categories and their properties in an axial coding process; the third stage consists of a comparison between the data and the theory and the final fourth stage involves writing up the findings.

In the first stage, in an inductive process, the authors analysed and marked up each transcript and note, line by line to identify the preliminary concepts in an initial "open" system. The audio recordings were then listened to, alongside the highlighted transcripts and interview notes. At this stage, the analysis included the dialogue as well as the underlying meanings of pauses, laughter, gestures, and other non-verbal communication. All data were then re-read to ensure content was not missed.

In the second stage, first order data were organised under open codes in an axial coding process. In an iterative process, the authors went back and forth between the first two stages: comparison of the transcripts with creation of the first order data. This middle-stage method related data together to reveal the central (i.e. axis) phenomena in the data, arising from participants' voices and other collected data. In line with best practice, we used axial coding as middle stage method for analysis (Allen, 2017). As part of the axial coding process, linkages were constructed between data. The authors grouped the codes, giving them descriptive names or discarding them. Additionally, the authors kept a memo to record actions taken, and to describe the nature and origin of any emergent interpretations.

In the third stage, the open codes were compared to the theory of social spaces, and, in a further iteration, open codes were redescribed or discarded. The third stage grouped the open codes across the four core categories, each of which related to one of Anthias' social spaces. The authors adopted a theory-based approach to the open codes, in which categories are not, as in the classical sense, mutually exclusive, but instead are aligned to theory (Dey, 2007): in this case, Anthias' four social spaces which are themselves adjacent, in which phenomena straddle more than one space. Our categorisation codes therefore followed the principle that 'similarity is an insufficient principle to constrain category formation' since 'perceived similarity changes in context-dependent ways and with knowledge and experience' (McGarty, 1999, p. 59). Some codes, such as the "Family-Like Structures" in the Organisational space include phenomena such as trust-building which also

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occur in the Intersubjective space. We therefore present Anthias' categories as mutually reinforcing and overlapping, rather than exclusive.

In the fourth and final stage, the findings were written up.

Figures 1 and 2 are summary diagrams of the thematic coding.

Insert Figure 1 here.

Insert Figure 2 here.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Returning to Anthias' four social spaces, the findings will be presented as they relate to barriers to entrepreneurship in each of the four spaces: the organisational, the representational, the intersubjective and the experiential.

5.1. THE ORGANISATIONAL SPACE

The organisational space contains the organisations and their policies and procedures which are not confined to the business arena but played a significant and disempowering role in refugees' lives. The organisational space included business regulations specific to the UK and to raced and gendered business advice which deterred migrants. In this space, we see how DNS' policies and procedures were able to counter, to a limited extent, societal policies which ignored the multiple, interlocking disadvantages of refugee entrepreneurs.

Business regulations

Former entrepreneurs found that their translocational positionality of class, experience and gender were not automatically transferred to the UK. Even when refugees were middle-class, experienced in business and male, they found themselves powerless in their ability to navigate the UK's business regulations. Consistent with findings from recent research into refugees from the Global South who have been relocated to the Global North (Abebe, 2022; Adeeko & Treanor, 2021; Bizri, 2017), refugees from countries with a more informal business climate spoke of their confusion. Legislative requirements were felt to be particularly confusing. These included local and national taxation regimes, the need for business insurance, how to rent business premises, compliance with employment and safety regulations. Such regulations were particularly onerous in the food industry.

> *"It is not easy to start a business in a different environment. I came from Afghanistan. It is quite a different environment to here. The problem is unfamiliarity, the differences. Everything is different....I don't know how to start that business myself here. I don't know where I have to go. I don't even know how to find a place for myself, for the business. I don't know that." Daud, Client*

Daud's description of his experience as a refugee entrepreneur starts calmly, with an understated "It is not easy," and rapidly descends into panic and overwhelm, repeatedly saying "I don't know." As an experienced small business owner in Afghanistan, he was

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frustrated by his dependence on advisors, and appeared to blame himself for not understanding what is required.

Consistent with entrepreneurship research into the impact of institutional distance between countries of origin and residence (Moghaddam et al., 2018; Nazareno et al., 2019), refugees from countries with a more formal business infrastructure were more confident about their ability to understand the UK's business regimes and industry requirements. Hong Kong clients were familiar with the culture of the UK, gained as colonial subjects. Such colonial and linguistic positionality, reinforced by the image of Hong Kongers as "good migrants" (Benson, 2021) were advantages upon relocating to the UK. Such transnational knowledge gave these clients relative power, compared to those from countries which were not as steeped in British cultural and regulatory systems, such as those from Afghanistan or Syria.

Raced and Gendered Business Advice

Consistent with findings from feminist entrepreneurship studies, (Dy et al., 2017), DNO business consultants pointed to a service delivery model focussed around white, English-speaking, male clients, with a focus on technology firms. DNO consultants critiqued policymakers who had failed to consider the intersection of race and migration experience when supporting refugee entrepreneurs:

> *"The more that they say this a 'hard to reach,' that's something that needs to be looked into more, right? Do you have representative staff that represent different cohorts and ethnic backgrounds? Are you going out into the community? Are you listening to the communities? Why is it so hard for you to reach them?" Malia, DNO Business Consultant*

Middle-class working women refugees who had used professional childcare in their countries of origin, found themselves unable to afford childcare in the UK. Given the much higher relative cost of childcare in the UK, their class privilege was not translated into a similar class privilege in the UK. Working-class women refugees who did not speak English, found it impossible to attend language classes due to the lack of childcare previously provided by family. As highlighted by the OECD (OECD, 2021b), policies which fail to provide childcare have profoundly reductive effects, reducing all refugee women, whatever their class status, to the economic position of unemployed dependents. As our analysis continues into the experiential social space, the findings will demonstrate how women's entrepreneurship potential is eroded through being forced into the home.

Unexpectedly, one client was reluctant to attend the sewing group, which was set up by DNO to create a child-free, social, women-only space for Afghan clients. Neelam considered herself to be better educated than the working-class women who were their clients.

> *"Oh, the sewing group. You know, those women do not speak English. They were staying at home in Afghanistan, looking after children. [Laughs]. I am not like them you know. [Laughs]" Neelam, client*

Neelam's social identity, in this situation, was constructed around class and education rather than around gender and nationality. Translocational positionality is a concept which

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maintains that differences of class and gender combine with diasporic attachments to nation and ethnicity in "complex interlockings" (Anthias, 2008, p. 11). In this case, Neelam declined to participate in activities that she considered to be incompatible with her class and educational status, thereby rendering the sewing group an inappropriate entrepreneurship support mechanism for this type of client.

Having discussed the organisational space and its barriers of government and business support, the discussion will turn to other policies and processes, also institutional, but this time created by DNO.

Holistic Support

Consistent with research into the poor performance of traditional business support organisations who operate a passive model (Cunningham & McGuire, 2019), DNO Business Consultants visited clients in their refugee hotels and worked evenings and weekends to suit clients. DNO were also quick to pivot if one idea was not successful. Unlike the more traditional business support organisations, DNO's organisational hierarchy is flat and managers are willing to trust their junior staff who work directly with clients.

To counter the government policy of assuming that all entrepreneurs would seek out standardised business support services (Home Office, 2019), DNO understood their clients' need for a pro-active approach. DNO Business Advisors would make medical appointments, meet landlords to sign rental agreements for their clients, find housing, nursery, and school places. Such an approach was typical of DNO's policy. Unlike traditional business support organisations who would "signpost" clients for non-entrepreneurship queries, DNO Business Advisors resolved such queries themselves.

They aimed to understand the unique needs of each client, providing advice and guidance which aimed to cover personal, family and business needs.

> *"We build a relationship with the clients, a business relationship as well, being obviously human, you want to be able to understand what they've been through and how we can support them through that as well." Malia, Business Consultant*

Malia points to a shared humanity with her clients which necessitates an empathetic approach. Such an expansive view of a "business relationship" allows for compassionate listening while remaining a business relationship. As the findings will show, such a broadening of the typical business advisor-client relationship brings benefits to refugee entrepreneurs.

The gendered effects seen in the organisational space of the lack of childcare in the UK were partly countered when DNO set up creches, staffed by professional childminders.

> *"So I think because of the traumatic events that they've been through the children don't like to be away from their mum. So for some of our sewing classes, we've got a creche in place. Now one of our concerns is how the children are gonna deal with being away from their parents for those two*

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hours in a new space with someone who's not from their country." Naomi, DNO Business Consultant

Naomi's intervention demonstrated how business support organisations who understand translocational positionality can overcome barriers created in other social spaces. This finding is consistent with recent research which advocates female entrepreneurship programmes should incorporate child-care (Street et al., 2022). Consistent with findings from feminist studies in migrant entrepreneurship (Lassalle & Shaw, 2021), migration-created traumas had combined to create disincentives for would-be women entrepreneurs, while also isolating children. Yet Naomi addressed the combination of gender and refugee status through setting up the sewing group. This group combined child-care provision for refugee women with the provision of tailored business support. Yet such a pilot created its own risks: even though women would be able to pursue entrepreneurship, their children could have been further traumatised by being left with unfamiliar caregivers.

In conclusion, while DNO were unable to overcome exogenous policy and social factors, they were able to partly mitigate the effects through their own organisational policies. Taking this client-driven approach also delivered results in the representational space, which will be discussed next.

5.2. REPRESENTATIONAL SPACE

The representational arena refers to images, texts and information flows relating to intersectional identities within an institutional framework (Anthias, 2013). The representational relates, in this study, to how refugee entrepreneurs saw themselves reflected in their business environment.

Entrepreneurial Role Models

Role models were important in reassuring DNO clients of the viability of their entrepreneurial identity. Even experienced entrepreneurs were nervous about embarking on a solo entrepreneurship project in the UK. Such clients were often entrepreneurs in their countries of origin, but now lacked the social connections to find dependable business partners.

Like I can open a bubble tea shop…I can find one of my good friends and we can have a shared business. I can't do only by myself 'cause for one person it's so difficult to handle business. At least should be two. Like while there are people, it's so difficult to trust them. But if I can find like a person which is good and I can trust them and they said yes, why not." Mustafa Service User

A lack of other refugee entrepreneurs from their background compounded the sense that there were no comparable entrepreneurs, further dissuading them from starting or progressing in their entrepreneurial journey. Refugee entrepreneurs felt excluded from an entrepreneurial identity through not being able to see themselves in entrepreneurs around them. Anthias notes that "*Belonging is not just about membership, rights and duties, as in the case of citizenship,…but it is also about…the ways in which social place has resonances*

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on stability of the self, on feelings of being part of a larger whole…" (Anthias, 2008, p. 8). In this case, refugee entrepreneurs were excluded, not through a lack of citizenship, but through a lack of representation. For refugees, the formation of entrepreneurial identity is essential to a successful business incubation period for refugees (Meister & Mauer, 2019). DNO clients who were not only refugees, but also newly arrived, unable to work and unfamiliar with the language found it particularly hard to see themselves as entrepreneurs. Research suggests that co-ethnic role models encourage entrepreneurial identity formation (Contín-Pilart & Larraza-Kintana, 2015). DNO provided three types of entrepreneurial role model, which are described below.

The first type of role model was that of the refugee entrepreneur. The most significant role model of this type was the founder and Chief Executive Officer of DNO. His journey from refugee to successful social entrepreneur in less than 15 years was inspiring for Somali and Muslim clients. He played an active and visible role in the project, helping to establish the organisation's credibility from the outset.

The second type of role model was a well-networked facilitator from the same national or cultural background, who provided an informal community liaison role. Language became a mechanism to develop trust, both with refugees and with the organisations who supported them.

> *"' [Hong Kongers] are bilingual, they speak English and Cantonese, I can speak Cantonese as well. Sometimes it's a lot easier for me to engage and build the trust with them…for 20 % of [Hong Kongers], their English level may not be too high, you need to speak Cantonese then. It's not about the language, it's the rapport [from speaking] that language that is where is important…" Claudia, Council Business Support Worker*

Anthias notes that language is one way of essentialising the migrant, by being an objective measure by which individuals are "othered" through their fluency or accent. Yet here, language has been repurposed by the business advisor. Cantonese is not merely as a way of communicating information, but is also a signifier: an indication of trustworthiness, of value-sharing and of cultural solidarity.

The third type of role model was the compatriot who shared the same culture and language. DNO business consultants were recruited partly with the objective of having shared experience, such as language, culture, and friends from within client communities. In line with previous findings (Cunningham & McGuire, 2019; Högberg et al., 2014), consultants from similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds immediately established rapport with clients and their business advice was thereby trusted.

The representational space shows how clients were able to see themselves, their language and culture, within the wider project. The ability to build trust quickly was crucial in establishing productive relationships with clients. The project's ability to build social networks will be explored in the next section.

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5.3. INTERSUBJECTIVE SPACE

The intersubjective arena refers to the interpersonal relations that take place outside official space of organisations and occurring between people in informal situations (Anthias, 2013). The intersubjective space relates, in this study, to how refugees coped with severed relations with their families and shows how they developed family-like relations with DNO's business agents.

Relations with family

Family members, both in the UK and in their country of origin, played a significant role in MES clients' lives. The role of family was often the crucial factor in whether they would start a new business. As in previous research, refugees with prior entrepreneurial experience had often been part of a family business. The position of the refugee entrepreneur is therefore significantly different to that of other refugee entrepreneurs, who retain diasporic connections to financial and social capital (Honig, 2020; Rath et al., 2020). As previous research has indicated (Ojo et al., 2013), refugee clients had lost contact with the family members who would normally have helped them with advice, encouragement, and seed capital.

For others, the family who accompanied them to the UK, or who had been left behind, were a source of worry. For men, patriarchal economic roles were brought with them.

> *"Yeah. I'm also responsible for my family. They are not familiar with anything. I am looking after them. I have to think about university for them. They don't know how to apply for university. I am thinking about their education and their futures as well. At the moment, I am very under pressure." Daud, MES Client*

Here the concept of translocational positionality explains how gender roles have remained unchanged from the country of origin. Daud is trapped in the gendered expectation of being solely responsible for the need to provide immediate financial support for these family members. Such pressure drives him towards employment, which would generate a more immediate and reliable income. Yet there is also a possibility for change as his family learn about the UK and become more independent. Translocational positionality is not fixed. As Daud's family settle into the UK, he expects that they will become "familiar" with their environment which will reduce the burden of having to provide for them.

Relations with their Environment

Newly arrived MES clients had no understanding of the local culture in the cities where they had arrived, and a limited understanding of wider British culture. Afghan women who wore the niqab tended to leave the refugee hotel in groups. The lead author, who on one occasion accompanied them, noted that passers-by viewed them with suspicion. Raced and gendered hostility trapped another client in her house, as she was initially too afraid to venture outside. As feminist studies of Islam and entrepreneurship have noted (Ozasir Kacar & Essers, 2019), visibly Islamic women were doubly isolated as refugees: both from their country of origin and from their unfamiliar environment in the UK. The ability of women

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refugee clients to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities is subject to the raced and gendered nature of Islamophobia.

There was a wide variation in the ability of MES clients to acclimatise to life in the UK, which appeared to work broadly along the axes of gender and age. Women and younger refugees were more positive about their entrepreneurial opportunities in the UK, indicating their nascent entrepreneurial identity may be formed more quickly due to their ability to adapt to their host country (Walsh & Cooney, 2022). A focus group, simultaneously translated from Pashto to English by a translator, explored the sense of new potentials amongst a group of women refugees from Afghanistan.

> *"Interviewer: Did they have businesses in Afghanistan?*
>
> *Translator: [speaking Pashto]*
>
> *Interviewer: No…They say they were housewives.*
>
> *Translator: So why do they want to start a business here?*
>
> *Interviewer: [speaking Pashto]*
>
> *Translator: They are saying there was no opportunity to start their own business or own work because of the [position of] woman in Afghanistan. They can't work. Now is opportunity. They say they want to do a business because they can. [Laughter in the room]." Women's' Sewing Group*

Translocational positionality highlights the dialogical potentialities for refugees, as some identities lead to complex and unexpected effects. Women, some of whom had only arrived a few weeks ago, had already assessed their improved earning potential. In contrast to Daud, who remained trapped in a gender role which could not see the economic possibilities for his wife, these women (which included Daud's wife, Fatima), were quick to imagine a different alternative for themselves. The sewing group was promoted as an opportunity for women to learn a new craft while taking a break from their childcare duties. Yet, the group also became a crucible for entrepreneurial ambition. Al-Dajani et al.'s (2019) study of displaced women's entrepreneurs in Jordan notes that such "defiant entrepreneurs" operate within women-only, informal, hidden entrepreneurial networks. Such defiance has no equivalent within existing conceptions of entrepreneurship that originate from advanced economies. The potential for marital discord is also inherent, as women carved out a new, entrepreneurial identity for themselves. Support in navigating such discord will be required if these women are to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions.

As in the organisational space, DNO realised the importance of operating in the intersubjective space. Unlike traditional business support advisors who remained at arms-length from their clients, DNO advisors deliberately moved into the space vacated by refugees' family.

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Family-like Support

All DNO staff related to their clients beyond a conventionally professional and superficial level. Several DNO staff described how their firsthand experiences of migration informed their desire to step into a personal and intimate role. DNO's work culture is close and informal, like a family. This points to the high degree of trust and openness within the organisation. Yet it also points to the extent to which DNO advisors brought their own histories to their work. The expectations of their job became quickly overwhelming.

> *"I'm very invested in them, I give them my phone number, I tell them to call me or text me whenever they need anything. If I don't respond by the end of the day, they text me, then they know they can reach me." Hamid,* DNO *Business Consultant*

Hamid's description of his personal commitment to clients brings into question DNO's business model is sustainable. In the long-term, their staff may be psychologically overwhelmed by their clients' expectations of a highly personal and individualised commitment.

Advisors' intention to be "family-like" to their clients was clearly communicated to their clients. DNO clients described their relief in finding a substitute for family after having been separated from their own homes and families.

> *"When we came here, the* DNO *members helped a lot. They provided a lot of things. English classes and they act like our family members. That was a brilliant and amazing moment for me. It touched my heart because we left behind what we had in Afghanistan, a beautiful home, a beautiful family." Neelam, Service User*

The result of DNO providing more than simply business support, was that their clients were given confidence and dignity: qualities of support which normally would come only from family. Consistent with earlier findings (Zhang & Hamilton, 2010), a business support culture of trust has been found to be essential at the start of the entrepreneurial journey.

Some DNO business consultants had modified their job title to better describe their roles as facilitating social interactions: a linguistic move which they hoped would reduce the hierarchy and distance they thought was incorporated into the "Business Consultant" job title. Such an attempt to mitigate the perceived lack of relatability was important to these staff members' social identity: they wanted to be perceived as "softer," "informal" and more family-like.

The intersubjective social space contains a spectrum of responses from refugee entrepreneurs towards building relationships. The divergence in responses, from isolation to participation is contingent on their translocational positionality. This heterogeneity of responses presents a key explanatory factor in the barriers to refugee entrepreneurship, a notion which resonates through the findings.

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5.4. EXPERIENTIAL BARRIERS

The representational arena refers to images, texts and information flows relating to intersectional identities within an institutional framework (Anthias, 2013). The representational arena relates, in this study, to how refugee entrepreneurs saw themselves reflected in their business environment.

The experiential arena is internal, and is where an individual forms an identity and develops emotional responses to their social surroundings. The experiential arena is where, as Barrett and Vershinia describe in their study of entrepreneurial identity formation for Polish migrants, the "trajectory of their ethnic and racial identity" takes place (2017, p. 440). The findings show that refugee entrepreneurs were so desparate to explain their migration journey, that interviews were often spent entirely on reliving their experiences of leaving, their flight to the UK, and their experiences of their new surroundings. While Anthias suggests that "dislocation at the level of nation is not necessarily a dislocation in other terms" (2008, p. 15), the findings demonstrate that the contrary is true: for many refugee entrepreneurs, a profound sense of confusion and rupture was proving to be a barrier to starting their new business.

Trauma and Depression

Several MES clients, particularly those who had recently arrived in the UK, found it difficult to focus on the interview questions, instead talking to the interviewers about their shock at the political events in Afghanistan, Syria and Hong Kong which had forced them to leave. Several MES clients had experienced violence and all were deeply traumatized by having to leave family members behind.

The more established MES clients spoke of isolation and loneliness after arriving in the UK, particularly women who had found themselves confined to the house. For previously confident, outgoing individuals, being removed from their familiar environment and finding it hard to meet new people was a disincentive to starting their own business.

> *"When I arrived, I had to stay alone for more than 13 hours...At the time I needed to [see] friends, I needed to speak to someone." Nesreen, Service User*

A voluntary sector support worker working with Afghan refugees described how some of her clients could fall into depression after living in the UK. The project aims to counter the experiential barriers of trauma, loneliness, and depression by providing emotional and psychological support.

Creating Hope

Business Consultants encouraged hope in their clients. Such confidence is vital for early-stage entrepreneurs, particularly post-Covid (Hart et al., 2022). Clients pointed to the importance of positivity and bodily affect when contemplating entrepreneurship:

> *"The people in DNO. They have a very nice,* [hesitates]*, they are always smiling. They're smiley people. They give you help by this smile, it's not*

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> *easy to do it because to be smiley person is very important for the foreigners. It gives me positive energy. It encouraged me to do more and more and more.' Nesreen, Client*

DNO Business Consultants, who were themselves migrants, recognised that providing a sense of agency was crucial in for refugees who had been repeatedly rejected. In their view, psychological and emotional support was not an abstract concept. Encouraging agency and self-worth was an essential part of helping their clients embark on the entrepreneurial journey:

> *"I think because of the journeys they've been on and the kind of experiences that they've faced, there's a huge lack of optimism. There's a lack of expectation, there's a lack of hope, because throughout their journey to the UK, they've been faced with a lot of rejection. Whereas if you see someone in a similar position to you that has actually done it, "oh it's doable now"." Samir,* DNO *Business Consultant*

In summary, the experiential space is where barriers created in the organisational, intersubjective, and representational combine to create overwhelm and despair in refugee entrepreneur. Yet, through taking an expansive view of their role, DNO Business Consultants were able to (partially) counteract such effects by actively cultivating hope and a sense of agency.

Having presented the findings, the paper now moves to the limitations of our study and the implications for policy and practice.

6. Implications for Policy and Practice

This paper argues for the validity of Anthias' lens of social spaces as a practical tool, enabling cross-arena policy recommendations which address both policy changes (the organisational space) and interpersonal personal approaches (the intersubjective and experiential space). Policymakers and business support organisations should explicitly recognise translocational positionality as profoundly affecting access to entrepreneurship opportunities. An intersectional methodology, such as that recommended by Hankivsky et. al. (2014) when designing refugee policy would address migration trauma, gendered social roles, the lack of family networks and capital. Such an equity-focussed methodology, while costly and time-consuming to implement (Hankivsky & Cormier, 2010), would address the broader structures of inequality that affect not only access to entrepreneurship, but the outcomes of entrepreneurship support programmes for groups that are currently ignored.

In the organisational space, migration and entrepreneurship policies which incorporate childcare would do more to enable entrepreneurship for women, particularly women who are undertaking entrepreneurship in defiance of patriarchal family norms. Such policies have long been advocated by policymakers and researchers who note that the UK is

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particularly lacking in family-friendly business support programmes (Kašperová et al., 2022; OECD).

In the intersubjective and experiential spaces, business support policy which prioritises trust-building and taking care of the whole person would encourage refugees to access entrepreneurship support programmes. Research recommends that entrepreneurship education schemes include the discussion of "norms of appropriateness" relating to the equal treatment of women and minorities in the UK. Such discussions would explicitly refute the gender expectations (Redien-Collot et al., 2017, p. 75) which deter women, both refugees and UK-born, from pursuing entrepreneurship.

The OECD notes minority-focussed entrepreneurship programmes are often run by volunteers, making such support vulnerable to burn-out and funding gaps (OECD, 2021a), a finding which this study observed in stakeholders who supported women refugee entrepreneurs. Governments should provide long-term funded entrepreneurship training programmes for refugees, ensuring consistency of approach with existing business support mechanisms, such as the Growth Hub, to provide a less fragmented business support landscape.

Our methodological recommendation is to argue for the role of "thick description" and qualitative evaluations in eliciting life-views. Such research should be conducted by trusted confidants and family members to elicit meaningful responses. Such a recommendation is consistent with calls for new forms of evaluation of business support programmes for refugee entrepreneurs (Jones et al., 2018; Kašperová et al., 2022).

7. Conclusions

The paper makes three contributions to the literature, Firstly, we demonstrate how differences in refugees' positionality creates barriers to entrepreneurship, thereby affecting their ability to enter the entrepreneurial space. Our findings are consistent with intersectional studies of migrant entrepreneurship which identify colonialism as the historical force which continues to create an unlevel playing field (Moghaddam et al., 2018). Consistent with research into recent arrivals from Hong Kong to the UK (Benson, 2021), we found that middle-class Hong Kong entrepreneurs benefited from contacts in the UK. The Hong Kong business infrastructure is a British colonial legacy, meaning they were more quickly able to identify high-value opportunities and navigate legal and financial regulations. For other refugees, we found their positionality as non-colonial subjects intersected with their class and race to create additional barriers: previous literature echoes our findings: such entrepreneurs are unaware of regulations, (Jones, Ram, Li, et al., 2014; Kašperová et al., 2022), lack the social capital required to obtain seed funding (Bizri, 2017b) and are more likely to be deterred by a lack of co-ethnic role models (Heilbrunn, 2019; Turkina & Thi Thanh Thai, 2013). The fragility of refugee entrepreneurial identity is further reinforced by

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gender (Ahl & Marlow, 2021), as in the case of the Afghan woman who rejected the women's sewing circle even though it exacerbated her social and economic isolation. Such refusals to mobilise around a national or ethnic identity are, as noted by Barrett and Vershinina (2017), a reminder for researchers to avoid assumptions as to how gender and class are constituted in the formation of entrepreneurial identity.

Our second contribution is to provide policy suggestions for overcoming such barriers. Our findings show that, in line with previous policy directives (European Union, 2016; OECD, 2021b; Ram et al., 2013), refugee entrepreneurs are subject to unique stresses and require support in developing and maintaining resilience (Shepherd et al., 2020). Mainstream business support organisations could valuably introduce the DNO business support model, which is personalised, holistic and highly responsive to the specific needs of refugee entrepreneurs. Intersectional policymaking, which explicitly addresses gender, class, religion without prioritising one dimension (such as gender) over others (Hunting & Hankivsky, 2020), would create genuine, lasting entrepreneurial opportunities for refugee entrepreneurs (Ahl & Marlow, 2021).

Our final contribution is to suggest how Anthias' framework of social spaces can be deployed to explore how social spaces amplify position-based inequalities. The four social spaces interact to create multiple, overlapping barriers to entrepreneurial opportunity. Refugee entrepreneurs encounter policy-based barriers to family reunion in the organisational space, which then damage relationships with extended family in the intersubjective space, resulting in the psycho-social conditions of loneliness and trauma, which further deter would-be entrepreneurs in the experiential space. Such a finding echoes Anthias' observation that ethnic ties only become social capital for entrepreneurs if they can be mobilised (Anthias, 2007). The social spaces lens also illuminates the power of DNO's trust-building approach and is consistent with findings that new relationships in the host country can bolster a nascent entrepreneurial identity (Adeeko & Treanor, 2021c; Ryan, 2011). Creating human connections in the intersubjective space also counteracts the isolating effect of the poverty and lack of connections (Hankivsky & Jordan-Zachery, 2019). DNO's focus on the intersubjective, representational, and experiential spaces has the multi-dimensional benefit of restoring refugees' agency, dignity, and sense of hope.

Combined with the concept of translocational positionality, the analysis presented here concludes that many barriers faced by refugees are both newly acquired during their migration journey, but also persist from a previous life. Such barriers are emotional, relational, and concerned with identity. Once in the UK, these barriers of trauma, isolation and enduring gender and class positions are reinforced across multiple social arenas and profoundly affect their ability to start a new business. Effective support which (to some extent) mitigates such barriers is dependent on the willingness of business support advisors to relate to refugee entrepreneurs as individuals. This paper is a call for greater compassion from policymakers and business support agencies in designing and implementing support for refugee entrepreneurs.

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8. Limitations

The study does not account for the role of time in the changing nature of the refugee's positionality. The first stage in the study is a snapshot in the lives of refugee entrepreneurs in the early stage of setting up their venture. A longitudinal study would track how identities play out over time, and how refugees position themselves in terms of race, class and other identities as defined by and structured within the UK.

Positionality Statement

The lead author is an Asian, cis-gender, heterosexual, middle-class woman, who was born in South Asia and migrated to the UK at an early age. The desire to understand refugee experiences was, in part, a desire to understand her own history. To her discomfort, she found that the length of time spent in the UK and her own class position became a distancing factor when interviewing project clients whose migration journey was far more recent.

The second author and principal investigator for the project is an academic who works at the interface of migration research, policy, and activism. She sees this discussion of the Anthias approach as potentially important in bringing the insights and experiences of refugee entrepreneurs to academic and policy audiences.

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Manuscript ID IJEBR-11-2022-1048 entitled "“Being Obviously Human”: Doing Intersectionality in Migrant Entrepreneurship Support in the UK"

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6th September 2023

Dear Professor Vershinia and reviewers,

Thank you for allowing us to submit a minor revision. The reviewers’ comments have greatly helped us to finesse the final version of this paper.

The table below addresses each of the comments. In the case where reviewers have differing suggestions, we have tried to suggest a compromise.

Number	Referee 1 Comment	Authors’ Response
1.	It seems to me that the main shortcoming of the article is its poor and inadequate communication. In fact, the text suffers from poor academic language. The good news is that this can be easily overcome by referring to professional services.	The paper has been proof-read and grammatical mistakes have been removed.
2.	In Design/methodology/approach on the first page, please state how many interviews were conducted with entrepreneurs and how many with support agents.	The number of interviews have been added.
3.	In the introduction, the first paragraph should not be one sentence; authors are advised to combine it with the next paragraph	The first sentence has been combined with the following paragraph.
4.	In the research question you don't really need to mention your theoretical framework, i.e. Anthias' social spaces. The approach you take is up to you (as long as it is well justified) and is not related to the research question as such. Please reformulate the research question accordingly.	The research question has been re-formulated as “How does social positionality contribute to the barriers faced by refugee entrepreneurs?”
5.	In the Introduction, add more information about the number of people interviewed, the questions asked and the methods used to analyse the data.	A summary of the number of people interviewed, questions asked and methods used to analyse the data has been added.
6.	In the literature review, the statistics and discussion of policy support may be better placed at the end of the chapter and linked to the discussion of how these support mechanisms help to mitigate intersectional barriers. However, this is recommended, not required.	While we agree with this helpful suggestion that links policy support with how such support mechanisms work in practice, Reviewer 2 has made a differing suggestion,

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		which is connected to their suggestion for a restructuring to the literature review section. Therefore, we have decided not to implement this recommendation.
7.	In 3.3, the first sentence does not belong in the section; it describes the approach and does not introduce the reader to the relevant literature. Authors are advised to move it elsewhere.	The first sentence has been removed.
8.	It seems that 3.6 justifies the framework chosen for the analysis. It would therefore be better placed in the Methodology section.	3.6 has been introduced earlier in the Literature section, as advised in a detailed suggestion by Reviewer 2.
9.	On page 6 you say: "Despite being middle class, business experienced and male, the refugees found themselves". However, the tables in the appendix show that the overwhelming majority, 30 (!), of your interviewees were female. I would advise the authors to reflect on this gender imbalance in the sample and how it might have affected the results of the current study.	This sentence has been re-written as follows “Even when refugees were middle-class, experienced in business and male…” Table 2 contained the incorrect gender for many participants. The gender has now been corrected and is less imbalanced than before. Thank you for spotting this error!
10.	The text needs professional editing and a thorough check of academic writing style. The paper suffers from complex syntax, unclear wording and inappropriate vocabulary.	The text has been edited for grammatical and spelling mistakes. It would be helpful to understand which particular choices of syntax, working and vocabulary are unacceptable, as other reviewers have not criticised these aspects of the paper.
	Reviewer 2	
11.	Paper would still benefit from an over-arching description and introduction of theoretical framework that better guides the reader, and shows how the intersectionality, social positionality, and social spaces work together. (section 3.3).	Section 3.3. has been rewritten to provide an over-arching description of the theoretical framework.

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Manuscript ID IJEBR-11-2022-1048 entitled "“Being Obviously Human”: Doing Intersectionality in Migrant Entrepreneurship Support in the UK"

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12.	Some of the in-depth detail on social spaces could be moved or re-iterated in findings section.	We have chosen to keep the detail on social spaces in place, as we believe that readers require an up-front explanation of social spaces.
13.	I would recommend building your theoretical framework: intersectionality as meta theme>Anthias social positionality>Anthias social spaces> showing how this unique framework will guide the paper. THEN discuss barriers unique to refugee entrepreneurs, which you build on in your contributions.	The theoretical framework has been re-structured in Sections 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 to explain how the framework will guide the paper.
	I would recommend a broader research question focused on social identity and barriers for refugees in UK that is more aligned with methodological approach/story.	The research question has been rewritten to focus more on social identity and barriers.
14.	I only see Table 2 pasted 2x in the document.	Tables 1 and 2 were provided in a separate file to the main document. The main document has the correct instructions for placing both tables. We do not know why only Table 2 has been pasted twice into the document. Perhaps this is an administrative error?
15.	Minor comment - 5.3 intersubjective and 5.4 Experiential Barriers jump straight to analysis and each section needs 1-2 intro sentences that prepare/guide the reader.	5.3 and 5.4 have been updated to include introductory sentences that prepare and guide the reader,
16.	Paper also needs another proof read for grammar and tenses etc.	The paper has been proof-read for grammatical and spelling mistakes.
17.	Table 1 is missing in the document	As above. Table 1 has been provided and the instruction in the main document for placing Table is current.
18.	In Limitations (6) you point out that further findings may contradict those mentioned in this paper. I would elaborate on this or take it out, it degrades	We have removed this point.

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	credibility of the paper.	
19.	I also recommend moving limitations to very end, following conclusions.	Limitations have been moved to the very end.

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