



Understanding Place Histories to Inform Positive Ageing-in-Place Transitions: An Intersectional Place Perspective of Forced Relocation Experiences

RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Background: Forced relocation is not always experienced as a single occurrence or event in time. Currently, there is a limited knowledge on how several substantial relocations across a lifetime impacts the health and wellbeing of older people.

Aim: This study explores forced relocation experiences of older, low-income migrant Canadians through inquiries into their past place histories and examines how these have shaped opportunities and oppressions leading up to transitions into affordable housing in Richmond, BC, Canada.

Methods: Informed by an intersectional place perspective model developed specifically for this research, a multi-method, qualitative community-based approach was undertaken involving in-depth interviews (N = 15), storytelling sessions (N = 10), and photo-tours (N = 8), with 28 participants. Narrative and visual data were co-analysed with participants, using a framework thematic analysis approach.

Results: The analysis revealed oppressive structures that influenced the everyday lives of older people, which generated feelings of distress, fear, exclusion, feeling unsettled, and being 'othered'. However, within oppressive structures of enforcement emerged experiences of empowerment engendered through gaining a sense of community, realising social belonging and family, maintaining pride and personal integrity as well as capturing community, social, psychological, physical and health transitions.

Discussion: Unique insights acquired from an intersectional place analysis highlight how past experiences of place shape current perceptions of home and provide important implications for supporting and maintaining the health and wellbeing of older people during this type of relocation. The theoretical resource developed for this study, offers researchers, planners and developers an important tool for procuring a more critical perspective when creating homes for marginalised persons.

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KEYWORDS:

Ageing-in-place; forced relocation; intersectionality; older adults; migration; place history; transitions

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Fang, M. L., Sixsmith, J., & Woolrych, R. (2023). Understanding Place Histories to Inform Positive Ageing-in-Place Transitions: An Intersectional Place Perspective of Forced Relocation Experiences. *International Journal of Educational and Life Transitions*, 2(1): 15, pp. 1–24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijelt.49>

Ageing-in-place is a well-known concept and policy driver in urban planning and environmental gerontology, understood as the “ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably regardless of age, income, or ability level” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). Notions surrounding ageing-in-place posit that because older people have reported a preference to remain living in their homes for as long as possible, following ageing-in-place policies will inevitably create optimal social and health outcomes for older individuals. Often, ageing-in-place is assumed to be a positive experience, however this is not always the case for all older individuals (Sixsmith & Sixsmith, 2008). For example, older people who have limited income, are living alone and living with multiple co-morbidities may find it extremely difficult to maintain their homes and the lifestyles that they have grown accustomed to. Thus, for some people, the ‘home’ can have distinct negative connotations associated with feelings of imprisonment, unnecessary obligations, loneliness and distress, fear and resentment (Sixsmith & Sixsmith, 1991). As such, place transitions can be a common occurrence in later life.

According to Schlossberg (1989), adults continuously undergo transitions. A transition can be viewed as an event followed by a process occurring over an undetermined period of time that includes phases of assimilation and continuous assessment and reassessment as people move in, through and out of the transition event (Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg, 2012). Yet, how one responds to the transition depends on the type of transition event, one’s perception of it and the context in which it impacts an individual’s everyday reality (Anderson et al., 2012). In terms of life transitions, ‘moving home’ is deemed to be one of the most stressful events that can occur in a person’s life (Makowsky et al., 1988; Spurgeon, Jackson & Beach, 2001). Many people would prefer to not move and continue to live in their homes, even if circumstances are not ideal. Though, for many older people, the decision to remain living at home may not be one that is in their control, and as such, they are forced to relocate. Research indicates that a significant proportion of older individuals have experienced forced relocation at some point in their life (Davison, Camões-Costa & Clark 2019; Kumar & Tjepkema, 2019; Kusmaul and Anderson 2018; Seebauer and Winkler 2020). Perceived as hostile environmental transitions that contribute to vulnerability in old age, commonly reported forced relocation events in later-life include: natural disasters (Fletcher et al., 2022; Tuohy & Stephens, 2012); transitions to (Bekhet et al., 2009; Davison, Camões-Costa & Clark, 2019) or between (Falk et al., 2011; Holder & Jolley, 2012) institutions; and across different levels of care (Canham et al., 2018a; Shippee, 2009).

Typically requiring substantial uprooting, a forced relocation event can lead to the loss of social networks and supports and significant challenges during the readjustment period, resulting in overwhelming impacts on one’s physical and mental health (Bradley & Van Willigen 2010; Canham et al., 2018b). However, it is important to note that the notion of ‘forced relocation’ is not always best described as a singular occurrence or event in time; and can encompass several experiences of many types of involuntary place transitions at different time points throughout a person’s life (Rowles & Watkins, 2003). For instance, experiences of forced migratory relocations can include movement across countries, provinces and cities, and displacement of homes throughout the life-course (Rowles & Chaudhury, 2005; Morris, 2019). Such events can acutely impact the health and wellbeing of older people (Canham et al., 2018b; Kearns & Mason, 2015) who can be more dependent on the immediate environment and sensitive to rapid urban change (World Health Organization and Centre for Health Development, 2010). Frequently, experiences of forced movement and migration become common episodic transitions for more vulnerable older adults. This can result in disruptions to their existing social relationships impacting personal place connectedness to future homes (Dupuis-Blanchard et al., 2009). As described by Oswald and Rowles (2006),

“From a long-term temporal perspective, relocation can be understood as a dynamic ecological transition, a developmental process in which each change of residence is experientially linked to the move that preceded it and to future moves that are anticipated to follow as a normative component of the individual’s life course” (pp. 22).

To better understand older peoples’ experiences of forced relocation and the impact on their present living circumstances, this study explores forced movement and migration occurrences of older Western Canadian migrants through inquiries into their place histories. It examines

how these histories have shaped opportunities and oppression leading up to a forced transition from precarious into affordable housing. This study is timely and important because, at present, many older adults in Metro Vancouver are experiencing forced relocation from their homes, an event propelled by the decrepitude of older buildings when they become worn down and the drive towards high density modern apartment living (Metro Vancouver, 2018). The current research offers important insights into a crucial problem area; involving the increasingly limited adequate housing in Metro Vancouver for the diversity of growing older populations from across the world, particularly considering migrants from East Asia (Metro Vancouver, 2018) and their socio-cultural contexts.

To do this, we provide a unique, intersectional place analysis of past and present experiences of place in a group of predominantly ethnically-diverse, low income, older people living in the City of Richmond – a municipality within Metro Vancouver. To effectively capture the socio-cultural, and historical nuances of forced migratory and relocation transitions, a new theoretical model informed by Collins's (2000), the Intersectional Place Perspective (IPP) was developed for this research. Grounded in concepts underpinning the notions of place and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1995), the goal of IPP is to bring together diverse experiences of place and devise an analytical perspective that recognises the importance of psycho-social and physical places and how they shape and centre marginalisation processes across the life-course. Thus, the originality of this study arises, in part, from the design and development of a theoretical model that bridges existing theoretical ideas in intersectional and gerontological scholarship. As well, existing planning methods appear to lack consideration for the combined effect of social factors and transition events and processes that ultimately shape experiences of health and wellbeing across different time points in a person's life (Corburn, 2017). To address these conceptual, methodological, and theoretical challenges, IPP was designed to enhance explorations into how combined effects of unique socio-cultural, environmental, and physical factors and transition events can influence experiences of opportunity and oppression.

Foundational features of this model are grounded in central tenets of intersectionality which Hankivsky and colleagues (Hankivsky, 2011; Hankivsky et al., 2009) suggest are that: (i) individual lives cannot be reduced to single traits, nor can single traits accurately depict understandings of individual experiences; (ii) person categories or locations are socially constructed, fluid, flexible, and inseparable, shaped by social processes, structures, power relations, and influenced by time and place; and (iii) prioritization of social justice and equity are of utmost importance. IPP contends that various types of oppression are located in place, are often interlaced with 'constrained' opportunities, and are not only interrelated, but present interlocking dimensions of differentiation used to dominate and exclude those that diverge from normativity (Sixsmith et al., 2019). At present, there are no analytical models that effectively conjoin these elements for an in-depth exploration of 'marginality in place' across time – the notion that certain transition events can leave people feeling marginal, disconnected and that they do not matter in time and place (Schlossberg, 1989). Informed by IPP for this research, we address the following research questions:

1. How can we help older people who have transitioned through experiences of forced relocation to age well in place?
2. How can we enhance our theoretical understandings of and capture socio-cultural nuances of forced migratory experiences?
3. How are older persons' experiences of forced relocation shaped by their combined multiple identit(ies), positionalit(ies), oppression(s) and opportunit(ies) across time and place?

METHODS

STUDY CONTEXT

This research stems from an affordable housing redevelopment project that was designed and developed to house low-income older adults who lived in the City of Richmond, in Metro Vancouver, Canada. To provide relevant historical context, it is important to note that the original building (later redeveloped) was built in the 1960s – at a time where the population consisted of mainly of White European migrants. The housing block consisted of 122 units

(24 wooden construction cottages and 98 bachelor suites in a community of 3-story apartment buildings). These bungalow, styled apartments were rented to low-income older people (aged 60+ years) for independent living at a reduced cost of approximately one fourth of the average rent in Metro Vancouver. In 2005, members of the housing society, whose primary mandate is the provision of low-cost senior housing, raised concerns regarding the age and quality of this building. Subsequently, an affordable housing redevelopment project for older adults emerged followed by an extensive relocation process that spanned three years – an event which forced tenants to transition from bungalow style apartments into two 16-storey purpose-built high-rise condominiums at higher rental costs to tenants.

Importantly, over the years, with increased migration from East and South Asian countries into Metro Vancouver, the population mix of the redevelopment site had changed. The residents in the new build constituted a unique blend of older people (over the age of 65), 70% from Southeast Asia (mainly Hong Kong and Mainland China) and 30% of White European decent, recognised in recent decades as the Southeast Asian region of Metro Vancouver. This presented a complex situation consisting of distinct Canadian migration experiences of recent migrants, shaped by post-colonial nuances of Canadian history alongside the difficulties associated with resettlement; and conversely, feelings of forced displacement by previous White European settlers. However, the social mix of different cultural groups was only one of many social issues which challenged the notion that the health and social wellbeing of older tenants could be optimised through environmental design alone. To provide adequate housing for marginalised persons with unique backgrounds and diverse place experiences, necessitated a complex study design that allowed for multiple forms of inquiry, together with a deeper intersectional place analysis, to understand wholly how present housing circumstances are shaped by multiple social factors and place experiences across time. We subsequently acquired funding from the Vancouver Foundation and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to document and analyse tenants' transitional experiences of forced relocation.

STUDY DESIGN

To meaningfully capture a complex trajectory of forced relocation events and processes, a rigorous multi-method, community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach was undertaken. CBPR is a collaborative research approach that promotes the reciprocal transfer of knowledge and expertise; inclusive participation; power sharing and equity; and co-creation and co-ownership of data across all partners (Jagosh et al., 2015; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2008). Guided by a CBPR approach, specific methods: in-depth interviews (N = 25), storytelling sessions (N = 15), and photo-tours (N = 16) were selected. Each of the methods served a specific purpose, prioritised the social and relational aspects of the research process, and enabled the emergence of different viewpoints of the problem area (Fang et al., 2018). Figure 1 presents a flow diagram that explains the method selection strategy.

The richness of the data was enhanced by the level of methodological rigour that constituted the application of the three qualitative methods. In combination, the methods worked as a creative, collaborative system to engage and empower a diversity of older people to share their important and unique stories. The first method employed was the in-depth interview, which consisted of 45-minute one-on-one audio-recorded interviews with the participants. These were conducted in the participant's first language and at their convenience, any time during the day or in the evening, either in person or by telephone. The flexible, open-ended interview process helped establish rapport between researcher and participant and allowed for building trust through mutual sharing of lived experiences, as well as the development of important relationships necessary for the research. In-depth interviews identified important background context including participants' past housing and relocation experiences in Metro Vancouver and their desires and expectations for their new homes, post-move.

Subsequent to in-depth interviews, the interview participants were given the opportunity to take part in participant-led photo-tours and/or storytelling sessions (Fang, 2020). Photo-tours are a way of generating data through a group tour of the participant's immediate living environment (e.g., at home and in the community) where they take photographs of the aspects of home and the community that they find meaningful (Fang, 2020). The 8 photo-tours in the current study consisted of 2-hour sessions that were led by the participants and conducted in the

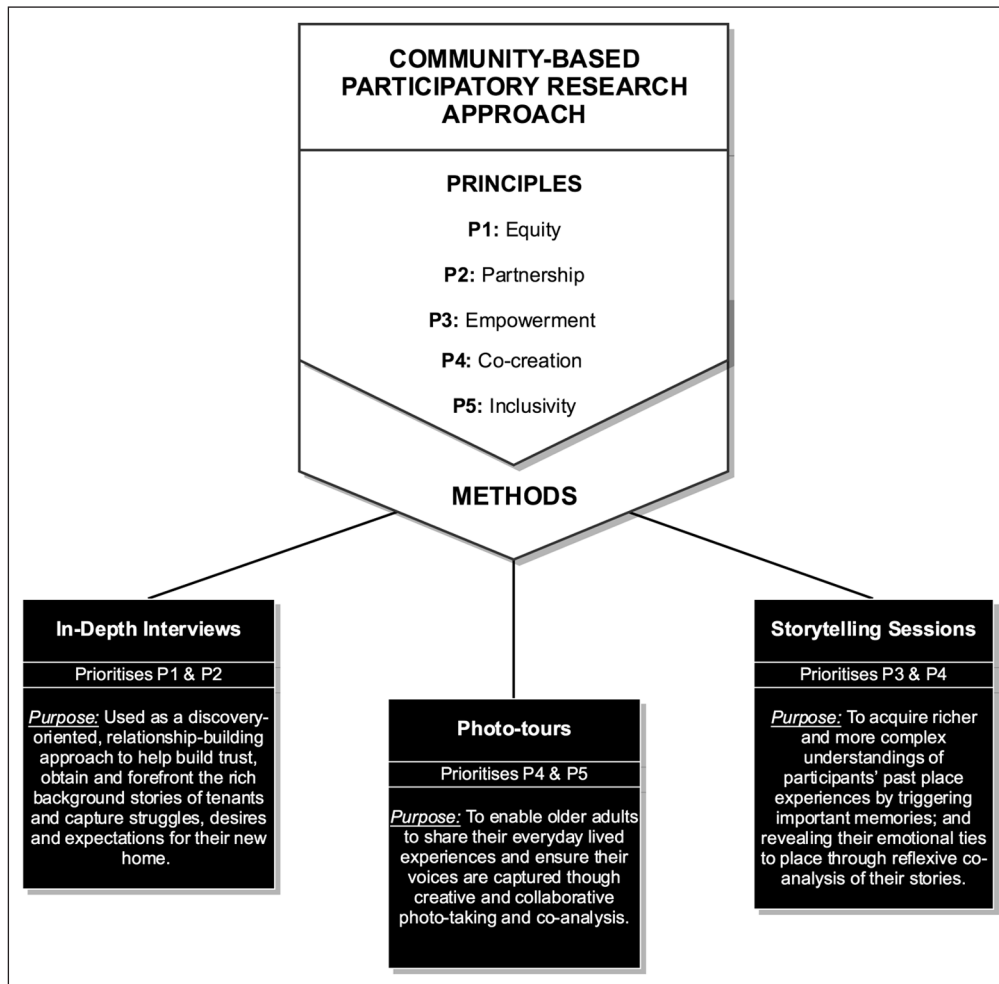


Figure 1 Flow diagram to illustrate the community-based participatory research (CBPR) method selection strategy.

participant's first language, starting at the participant's place of residence and proceeding in and around their neighbourhoods. For each tour, participants were provided with an iPad and asked to guide the researcher on a tour of their home and neighbourhood whilst capturing photographs of meaningful places, objects, landmarks and aspects of their everyday life that were of importance to them in relation to their relocation. Although place histories were not the main topic of focus during the tour, past experiences of place, especially as it pertained to how the area had evolved or compared to past living environments, were a popular topic for many participants. Finally, 2-hour audio-recorded storytelling sessions ($N = 10$) conducted in the participant's first language (Mandarin, Cantonese) were held at the participant's preferred location (predominantly in their homes), at an agreed upon time, between the participant and the researcher. Storytelling is a method whereby participants share personal stories about a topic or phenomenon. According to Keats (2009), the storytelling method is unstructured and often led by the participant (as opposed to the researcher). The key characteristics of storytelling include that they are: un-structured; led by the participant to reveal or inspire understandings about a particular topic or phenomenon in relation to self, whilst simultaneously providing important, in-depth information to the researcher; and often audio-recorded or video-recorded (Keats, 2009). It is a method that uses a reflexive approach, facilitates inquiry into a person's life story without having to use language that is difficult for a participant to comprehend.

Guided by Keats (2009), the storytelling sessions revolved around sharing stories of relocation from place to place and homeland to new country. Several participants requested an informal gathering over food as they engaged in rich storytelling dialogue with the researcher. Storytelling was the final method employed because this process required deep sharing and reflection of personal and often difficult past experiences of forced relocation. This intimate form of knowledge exchange and co-creation of meanings would not have been possible without, first, an establishment of trust, and second, the forming of a bond between the researcher and the participant via the first two methods.

In terms of the study instruments, these were informed by IPP. Ensuring that the data generation tools would capture complex intersectional place experiences was crucial for the data analysis and necessary for addressing the research questions. Hence, both the interview guide and especially the storytelling guide were created under the principal assumptions of intersectionality, emphasising the importance of treating one's social identities and the positions that they hold in society as conjoined influencers of oppression and opportunity (Bowleg 2008). Table 1 provides examples of the various formulations.

Table 1 Provides examples of questions used to guide the interviews and storytelling sessions.

**Note:* References to 'China' were amended when interviewing participants from different places and were described more broadly.

QUESTIONS INFORMED BY THE IPP INTERSECTIONAL PLACE MODEL

Take me back a happy time when you lived in China, how would you describe yourself? If I were to ask, you please describe yourself to me, for example, who you are as a person, what would you say?

Take me back to a challenging time when you lived in China, how would you describe yourself? If I were to ask, you please describe yourself to me, for example, who you are as a person, what would you say?

Where did you grow up in China?

Who was in political power at the time and how did that impact your family life?

What did your parents do for a living?

What would you class yourself/your family as growing up? Would you say you were poor, middle-class, wealthy?

- How did this impact your life growing up?
- How would it be different if you were a boy/girl?
- How would you describe the benefits or challenges you had growing up as a boy/girl living in China?

How would you describe China in relation to the idea of 'home'?

Can you describe the events that have led you to coming to Canada?

How would you describe yourself now living in Canada? If I were to ask, you please describe yourself to me, what would you say?

- Take me back a happy time when you lived in Canada, how would you describe yourself? If I were to ask, you please describe yourself to me, for example, who you are as a person, what would you say?
- Take me back a challenging time when you lived in Canada, how would you describe yourself? If I were to ask, you please describe yourself to me, for example, who you are as a person, what would you say?

Can you describe the types of successes you've had in Canada? Can you please describe them to me?

- What types of things about you do you think have helped you achieve these successes

Can you describe the types challenges you've had in Canada? Can you please describe them to me?

- What types of things do you think contributed to these challenges? Whether it is things about yourself or were they things that were out of your hands? Things that you could not control?

How would you describe Canada in relation to the idea of 'home'?

Tell me about your family circumstances when you first arrived in Canada compared to now?

Now try and imagine all the events that have brought you to where you are living right now, what are some thoughts that come to mind?

Tell me about your current home situation (working, financial, caring for anyone etc.).

What is about your current housing situation that promotes a strong sense of feeling you're at home or that this is your home?

Tell me what a typical day looks like for you – routines, activities, community engagement, and interaction with neighbours?

Tell me what is it about living here (current housing situation) that you like the most (housing and community)?

Tell me what it is about living here (current housing situation) that you dislike the most (housing and community)?

Specifically, all participants were asked to describe how they perceived themselves (in terms of their most rewarding and challenging place-based memories and moments) during three temporal locations (pre- and post- migration and post-relocation into the newly built affordable housing for older people). As such, any jargon and inaccessible terminology as well as structured questions were avoided. Last, it is important to note that the narratives are further illuminated by the digital photographs taken by participants during photo-tours of their homes and neighbourhoods.

STUDY RECRUITMENT AND PARTICIPANT DETAILS

To ensure the voices of tenants in the design and planning of the redevelopment, we formed a partnership with the City of Richmond, the older adults' housing society, the developer, local

municipal government, several local service organizations, and older people. Relationships with local older adults' service providers, the property manager, municipal government workers and senior members of the older adults' housing society that emerged at the initial proposal development phase, and were thus maintained throughout the project, enabled us to reach a group of predominantly older Chinese migrants specific to the housing relocation project. In total, 28 older adults over 60 years of age were recruited:

- Gender: N = 11 Men; N = 17 Women.
- Ethnicity: N = 1 East African; N = 19 Chinese; N = 8 European Canadian.
- Tenancy Status: N = 23 Grandfathered Tenants (those who had lived in the old build); N = 5 New Tenants.

Approximately two thirds of the participants identified as being Chinese and reported having arrived from various cities (Beijing, Changchun, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Tianjin), provinces (Hunan, Guangdong, and Hubei), and autonomous provincial regions or territories (Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Macao) across the People's Republic of China. The remainder identified as European Canadian from two provinces (Ontario and Quebec), and one participant identified as East African having been born and raised in Tanzania. The sample reflects both new tenants and existing tenants (those relocated from the old development). Because this is an independent living residence rather than a nursing or care home, one of the key stipulations for tenancy is that the older person must be ambulatory. Thus, all participants were able-bodied and cognitively sound older people. Tenants were identified through community stakeholders and organisational leaders and invited to participate in the research.

To ensure that Chinese participants whose first language was not English fully understood the research process and their involvement, the interviews were conducted in the participant's first language (i.e. English, Mandarin or Cantonese) and the study information sheet and consent forms were translated into simplified Chinese and explained in Mandarin or Cantonese. Finally, to capture the full essence of the data provided in Mandarin or Cantonese, all storytelling and interview data were digitally recorded, translated and back-translated as necessary by a researcher that was fluent in both Chinese dialects and in English.

DATA ANALYSIS

Using the IPP model, an intersectional place analysis was conducted to help reveal tenants' self-reported identities and positionalities, and intersectional place experiences of oppression and opportunity. IPP is predicated on the notion that people construct meanings of place through the multiple identities that they hold, the social positionalities which they occupy, the multifarious oppressions they face, as well as the opportunities that are presented as they negotiate their everyday lives—all of which coalesce to create a system that drives various configurations of discrimination and privilege (Sixsmith et al., 2019).

IPP, a new theoretical model, developed specifically for this study, emerged from the multidimensional intersectionality framework (MIF) developed by Sixsmith and Fang to challenge extant over-positivised notions of ageing-in-place, and to explore how agency is manifested by older adults in vulnerable social positions when negotiating for permanent housing solutions (Sixsmith et al., 2019). The MIF was derived based on Collins's (2000) notion of intersectionality as an interweaving of multiple systems of oppression. Specifically, it was based on how such systems are organised through interrelated domains of power. This framework enabled the identification of older adults' positions in society, the identities they assumed or that were imposed upon them, and the oppressions they experienced within the dominant social, structural systems as well as organisational and policy contexts. However, the MIF lacked the necessary analytical features, such as temporality and place, to sufficiently capture experiences of opportunities and oppression across different socio-societal and socio-cultural environments, structures, and time.

Across time, older adults' experiences of place mature. During maturation, new opportunities will have emerged. Subsequently, constructions of meanings and memorable experiences associated with past experiences of home can now shape the present (Hillcoat-Nalletamby & Ogg, 2014). Older adults can, therefore, use their past experiences of oppression to become

more resilient as they learn, with varying degrees of success, to manage, align, or fit their changing physical and cognitive abilities within the confines of the physical, social, cultural, and structural dimensions of their new home (Kahana et al., 2003).

Subsequently, the MIF was reshaped to the IPP, which enabled a deeper analytical process that allowed for temporality when examining intersectional experiences of oppression and opportunity across different places. IPP encompassed analytical features that were well-suited for responding to the shortcomings of ageing-in-place, through an analysis of the interlocking social and cultural drivers of inequity such as age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigration status, partner status and generation status across place and time. Described in Figure 2, IPP can be understood using a mathematical formulation to better frame the analysis.

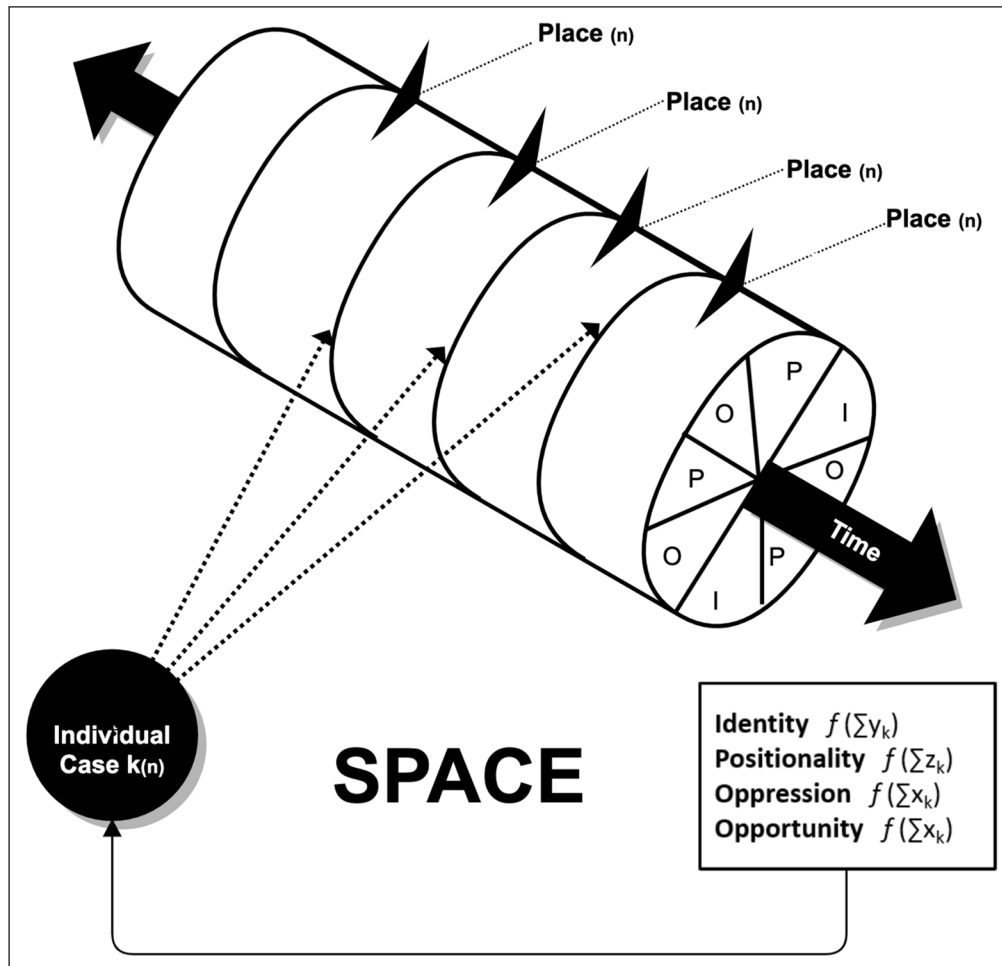


Figure 2 The Intersectional Place Perspective: Theoretical model used to analyse the study data.

To conceptualise and facilitate the analysis, each participant or case is denoted as 'k' with the number/type of places described with subscript of 'n' – under the assumption that people reside in several places across the life-course. Specific to each place, each individual can have claimed several identities and held multiple social positions that shape experiences of oppression and opportunity. Identity, positionality, and oppression and opportunity are denoted as accumulation of meaning derived from experiences captured at the different axes of place, respectively identity (f_1), positionality (f_2), and oppression (f_3). This formulation is based on the Multidimensional Intersectionality Framework developed by Sixsmith and Fang and can be found in Sixsmith and colleagues (2019).

Storytelling and interview data were analysed in HyperResearch 3.7.3 via a structured Framework Method (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003), where a coding framework was developed systematically by three researchers through initial coding of three transcripts. Subsequent transcripts were analysed using the framework by case and by code (Gale et al., 2013). An initial coding structure was developed using low-level, descriptive coding. Coding units of text were labelled with words or phrases that closely corresponded to participants' accounts. To refine the coding structure, an iterative process of reading and re-reading the text was conducted. During this process, codes were subject to interpretation and notes were made to establish

the relationships between codes based on their similar meanings. Codes with similar meanings were combined to form larger patterns and structured as initial themes. To ensure the validity and reliability of the coding structure, the initial themes were further interpreted and defined through team discussions. Any disagreements or conflicts in the interpretation of codes were resolved through discussion. As a result, a comprehensive coding structure and framework were developed and agreed upon by the three researchers involved in the study.

Informed by IPP and a reading of all transcripts to establish familiarity, a code tree (see Figure 3) was used to organise participants' identities, positionalities, and experiences of oppression and opportunity according to the three temporal locations and place. Temporal locations indicate a specific time-point where participants had encountered a significant place transition. In the current project, the temporal locations reflect pre-migration (before arriving in Canada), post-migration (after arriving in Canada) and post-relocation (after the housing relocation) experiences. Within each temporal location, a range of self-reported identities, positions held in society, and experiences of oppression and opportunity, were identified and reported within sub-categories.

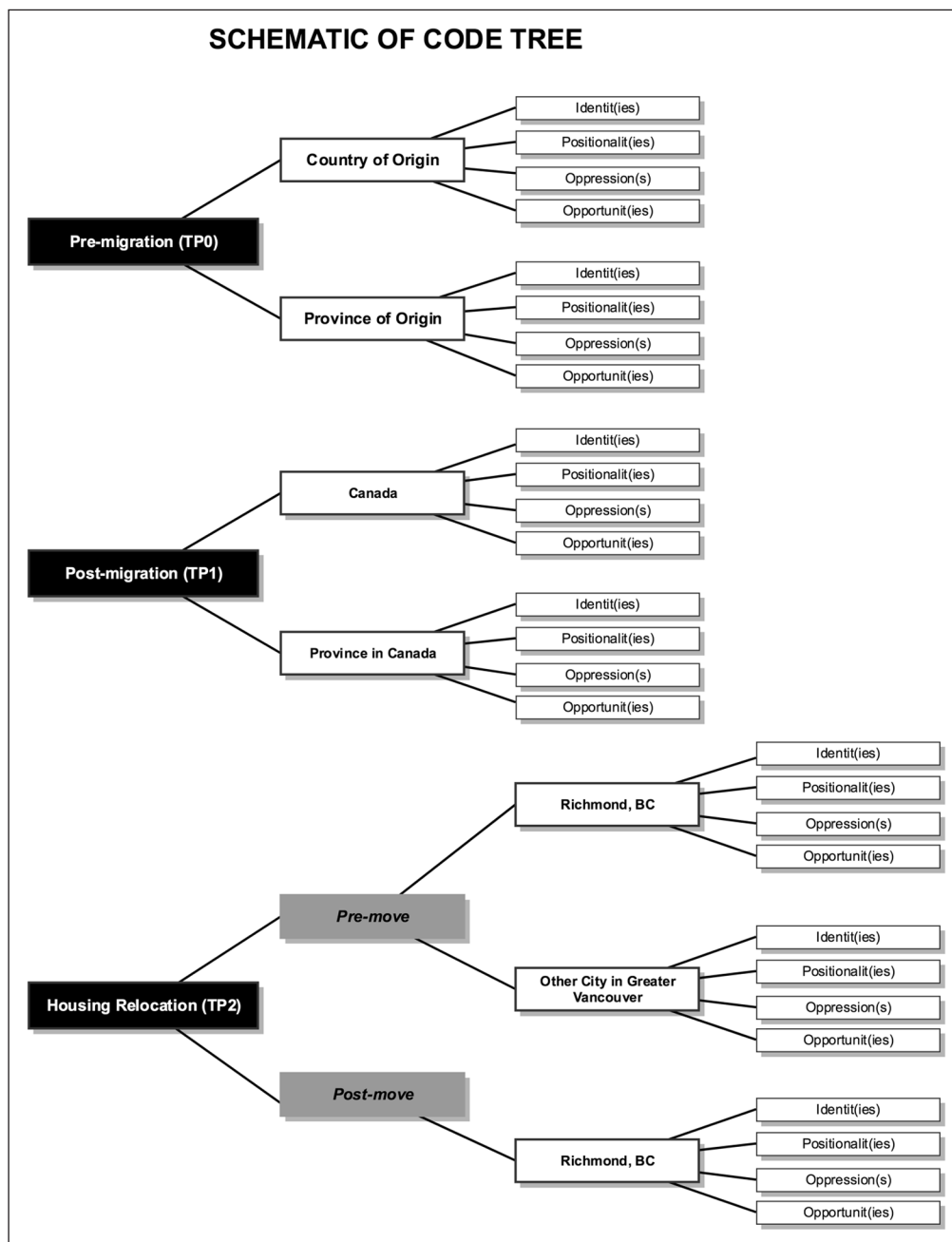


Figure 3 Schematic of the code tree informed by IPP used to guide data coding. Note that TP = time-point.

For data that fell outside of the initial coding structure, new codes were created and integrated into the framework. An example of a coding framework can be found in another recent publication (see Fang et al., 2018). Each transcript was imported into the software as

an individual case and distinguished by a unique identifier (e.g. age, ethnicity, gender, case no.). After the initial coding, cases were cross analysed via constant comparison enabling the generation of themes.

Last, informed by Pink's (2013) visual data analysis, photo-tour visual data were analysed: (i) using older people's dialogue exchange during participant led tours of their pre-move homes and surrounding neighbourhoods, (ii) digitally recorded discussions with the older people were conducted after the tour to interpret the photos they had taken, and the subsequent transcriptions were (iii) thematically analysed alongside interview transcripts where quotes of interest were matched with corresponding visual depictions. Relationships between the visual imagery, and storytelling and interview data, enabled data and interpretational triangulation to occur by illuminating different facets of the everyday socio-cultural experiences of older people by viewing the information in different data mediums.

ETHICS

Ethical clearance for this study was obtained through two institutions: (i) Office of Research Ethics at Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, Canada and (ii) Heriot-Watt University Ethics Committee, Edinburgh, Scotland. The current study was conducted in accordance with the British Psychological Society's (2010) ethical guidelines. Informed consent was obtained from all participants; and participants were asked to only share information they were comfortable with. Because this study focused on older people, extra care was taken to ensure that specific issues in relation to: safety, mobility and cognition were addressed. For instance, it was made clear if at any point the participant felt uncomfortable or unsafe, there was the option to withdraw from the study and this decision would not impact their access to housing supports or services. To ameliorate any mobility issues, participants selected the time and where data generation procedures would take place.

FINDINGS

Findings are reported in the form of migration stories illustrating how older Canadian migrants modify their place of residence because of a series of constraints or decisions, which carry distinct meaning and significance, and stories of forced relocation. Themes and visual imagery are presented according to each participant's self-reported identities, positionalities and experiences of oppression and opportunity within three temporal locations: (i) pre-migration experiences to Metro Vancouver, Canada (ii) post-migration experiences to Metro Vancouver, Canada and (iii) forced transitions between affordable housing.

PRE-MIGRATION EXPERIENCES

Findings in this section were situated within pre-migration contexts before arriving in Metro Vancouver, Canada. Migration for the purposes of this study is defined broadly as a process where individuals born outside of Metro Vancouver have travelled to the city to settle and start new lives. Because most participants reported having migrated from different countries, their stories largely depicted processes that highlight relocation complexities involving adjustments across cultures and nationalities.

The reported social identities appeared strongly tied to the positions participants held in society. For example, age identifiers were coupled with professional social markers and/or family roles or partner status. Situated within the temporal context of pre-migration, most participants self-identified as being young, working professionals or students, highlighting their professional identities (teacher, soldier, musician, truck driver, factory worker, manager, office worker, model and fashion designer), partner identities (married, widower) or family identities (mother, father, sister and brother). All participants from China identified themselves explicitly as Chinese. Cultural norms, beliefs and practices were reported by participants as being directly linked to China, as their place and their motherland. Yet, the majority reported Canada as being their home, although, no participants who were born outside of Canada identified themselves as Canadian despite having lived in Canada for, at minimum, 5 years.

Pre-migration social positions varied across a continuum of being poor, working class (approximately two-thirds of participants) to middle-income or middle class (approximately one-sixth of participants) and wealthy, upper-class; with a similar number of individuals

reported as having come from a wealthy family (approximately one-sixth of participants) to those of middle-class or middle-income backgrounds. Family status did not appear to impact whether individuals from China received an education. All participants from China identified themselves as educated or having received education whether they had reported as having grown up in poor working class families or not. Conversely, all participants identifying as European Canadian reported to only have received primary or middle school education, having left home at a young age and either went straight into the workforce or were married. All participants identified as 'employed' or 'having employment' once they had left school or home as young people. Participants from outside of Canada had all held professional positions, often viewed as middle class occupations, either in managerial positions, higher positions within academia or self-employed business owners; whereas European Canadian participants revealed having held manual labour employment positions.

Experiences of oppression, although shaped in part by the positions held in society, were more heavily influenced by macro socio-political and cultural contexts of place. For most European Canadian participants, who were mostly women, they had expressed experiencing gender oppression as single, young, women with "nomadic" lifestyles (i.e. persons without a home-base who travelled continuously). The women reported struggling with gendered roles, norms and expectation such as pressures to marry at a young age and adopting the housewife role as well as dissuasion away from taking the career path; particularly work roles that were deemed only suitable for men. One participant described a "time when women weren't allowed on the racetracks until 10am..." so she would "dress up like a man and put on a hat and pretend as a regular guy" (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151103-8). Another, spoke of fears of sexual assault as it was uncommon for young women at the time to live on their own. She detailed one experience of a man who watched her through her bedroom window and propositioned her: "when you're alone, let me know. Pull the blind down and I'll come up to your room" (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151030-6).

For older Chinese participants, regardless of social position, pre-migration experiences of oppression were significantly shaped by the Cultural Revolution. These include experiences of dangerous work cultures and environments, poor, overcrowded living conditions, forced relocations from urban to rural parts of China, severe income inequities, and limited choice and freedom that often impinged on individual human rights. As illustrated by older Chinese participants, persecutory policies and practices instilled during the Cultural Revolution created an atmosphere of fear and helplessness, often imposed through threats of family separation:

"During the cultural revolution, I was assigned to work in rural China. If I accepted, I would have had to migrate my older parents and three children there. I couldn't let my children live in the countryside. If I refused, I would have been charged with going against the Cultural Revolution. I chose the latter option, even if it meant that I had to go to prison, but luckily, I was fine." (Older Chinese Woman, Case 0160416-1)

Other stories of oppression were similarly linked to political subjugation yet were unique and within different contexts since these stemmed from the effects of European imperialism. Experiences of turmoil and loss of cultural and /or sovereign identity were consistently reported by individuals who originated from countries once ruled by Portugal such as Macao, or the United Kingdom such as Hong Kong, and Tanganyika (currently known as the United Republic of Tanzania after its unity with Zanzibar). For years, such countries struggled with attempts to regain independence or resist returning to oppressive regimes linked to communism. Hardships were experienced most severely as countries transitioned into independence or toward reunification. Participants described periods of intense political unrest that often resulted in forced displacement as demonstrated by one example here:

"The political situation wasn't good, so we were afraid. We saw, as many places acquired their independence, people getting hurt. With the riots and fighting and, you know, the power struggle. So, we were just afraid, and as the rules and regulations changed, it worked against us, in a sense...the way we were living could not stay the same way as before." (Older African Man, Case 160415-3)

In a struggle to regain normalcy and stability after forced relocations, the consensus was that individuals subsequently lived under impoverished conditions and worked tirelessly, making sacrifices for the greater good of the family. Nevertheless, several participants seized

opportunities by overcoming their challenged circumstances, which were impacted by their positionalities (e.g., students, professionals, from wealthy families) and identities (e.g., men, women, migrants), as well as the place contexts at significant historical moments. As described in the next passage, despite reports of the Cultural Revolution being a tumultuous period with much human suffering and poverty, living through such an event instilled a sense of resilience in some participants:

“I came from a poor family, which has helped me a lot. I understood the harshness of life and how hard life can become even when I was a child. Experiencing poverty can help a person be stronger.” (Older Chinese Man, Case 160406-2)

European Canadian participants also reported similar stories of resilience through the seizure of opportunistic moments during periods of oppression, as described by two European Canadian women who escaped a life of patriarchal suppression (e.g., being a young woman, whose choices are dictated by the males in their family) by undertaking risky, nomadic lifestyles. The key message here is that despite being challenged by uncertainty and instability, participants often utilised such difficulties as motivation to express their agency as they transitioned through challenging life experiences.

POST-MIGRATION EXPERIENCES

Identities and positionalities evolve across time and place. Pre-migration identities emphasised childhood and youth conjoined with national and professional identities, as well as partner status. Whereas post-migration identities emphasised immigration and citizenship, as well as personal attributes, roles and responsibilities that exemplified transitions into maturity as one progresses through the life-course. The majority participants at this temporal location identified themselves as older people, highlighting character traits such as ‘hospitable,’ ‘resourceful,’ ‘humble,’ ‘quiet,’ ‘open-minded,’ ‘assertive,’ alongside their roles and responsibilities associated with being an older person such as ‘grandparent,’ ‘carer,’ and ‘survivor.’ Identities that were reported in association with immigration and citizenship were expressed only by ethnic minority participants. Immigrant status was described in reference to a legal category that was assumed, rather than an embodied trait or a self-selected identifier of personal expression. Citizenship was implied as a form of prestige that was earned through the ability to acculturate and become more Western. This was emphasised by one older Chinese woman as an unattainable status for Chinese migrants because, “we cannot become Canadian because we are not white” (Older Chinese Woman, Case 150720-5).

Shifts in social positions were revealed by participants as it pertained to the processes that surrounded ageing and changes in family structure, both of which can determine one’s ability to maintain employment and an adequate household income. In general, most participants lived alone as their partners have passed on and because their children now resided with their own families. Older women who still had their partners with them, had assumed the role of caregiver. All older men who lived alone were divorced except for one older African man who revealed that his wife had passed away years ago from terminal illness. With the exception of one older Chinese man who worked part time bagging groceries at a Chinese market, none of the participants held paid employment positions, although many were engaged in voluntary work.

Several older women participants had reported either living with a long-term health condition or were survivors of a terminal illness. Meanwhile, all participants both men and women had a social network of friends, although, a few older women indicated that they did not enjoy socializing with others and preferred their own company because developing new relationships was too physically and mentally overwhelming in old age. All participants also referred to themselves as low-income or poor older adults; although, existentially, some indicated they were ‘wealthy’ either through spiritual fulfilment or having overcome past challenges. One unique distinction between persons born in Canada and those that were from outside of Canada, were experiences of transitioning downward down the social status scale as expressed here:

“The living environment (housing) here is not as good as when we lived in China. Our home in China had four rooms, a living room and a dining room. We had everything including a study room and a piano. Here, we rent a small one-bedroom suite.

We are unable to afford a house here. With our combined work income, we had nothing after paying post-secondary education for our two kids.” (Older Chinese Woman, Case 150721-2)

Post-migration experiences of oppression were consistent with reports of having acquired lowered social positioning; a frequently reported occurrence which many argued as stemming from the socio-cultural changes associated with Canada as a post-colonial nation. Within the Canadian context, post-colonialism describes the remnant effects of the colonization of aboriginal land. Primarily through British imperialism, this event has over time, drastically influenced legal, cultural, and political practices and beliefs, creating social and health inequities for both Aboriginal peoples and non-white settlers (Rutherford, 2010). Within the current context, older adults of ethnic and cultural sub-groups reported experiencing complex migration challenges that were often discriminatory in nature. For example, some participants felt saddled with disadvantages through experiences of ‘otherness’ living in Canada, despite a sense of legitimacy through societal contributions:

“Even though they (White-Canadians) were polite to us, we knew that they didn’t like us. For changes of my social position, I am fine with it because this was the fact of reality. However, we educated our children here. Our daughter works here and pays tax to the government and thus we are eligible for public services and subsidies. We are not refugees. We have contributed to this country.” (Older Chinese Man, Case 160402-2)

Meanwhile, rapid changes in the Canadian urban and cultural landscape, as a result of modifications to immigration policies to entice foreign investors, were reported as contributing to feelings of oppression by some participants. Many felt that Chinese immigrants were perceived as invaders of ‘our space’ – people that occupy without having contributed and/or assimilated socially, politically, and economically. For example, Richmond, Canada before the late 1970s, early 80s, was predominantly farmland and inhabited by mostly European migrants. More recently, with an influx of foreign Chinese investors, Richmond is infamously known as the Chinese region of Metro Vancouver, with unique culturally influenced building designs and Chinese signage. Several European Canadian participants expressed feeling forcefully displaced from a place where they once felt a sense of pride, ownership, and familiarity, to a place that now feels foreign:

“That’s why I loved it here in Richmond because, at the beginning, I loved this country. When we first came here, it was farmland all around and I loved it. And then they started building on it. I remember telling my friend, “Oh they’re ruining my place. I liked it here...they’re putting all the buildings on this beautiful land.” (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151103-8)

Despite reports of historically-influenced, complex challenges, all participants described the opportunities they have gained, and the benefits they have received, simply as a result of living in Canada. A sense of empowerment emerged as participants expressed their achievements. The majority of Chinese participants proclaimed that “Canada is my second motherland” (Older Chinese Man, Case 160406-2), emphasising the substantial improvement in their overall health and wellbeing since moving to Canada as described here:

“My biggest success is my healthy body. Canada has given me health. The medical situation here is really good. Medication for older adults is mostly free. Canada has good medical system and a good natural environment. Clean cities have less disease. So, I seldom become ill. Because of this, even though I am over seventy years old, I look like I’m in my 60s.” (Older Chinese Man, Case 150720-4)

It was strongly believed that the opportunities afforded to older Chinese migrants were depicted as the result of Canada’s deeply embedded altruistic values, beliefs, and practices. One man described the country as, “a truly humanistic society” (Older Chinese Man, Case 150720-4). Despite having experienced social and structural challenges living in Canada, according to several participants, Canada’s redeeming qualities are its establishment of egalitarian principles, alongside preservation of its natural resources. In essence, the opportunities participants acquired through their transitional relocation to Canada were described as having outweighed their struggles and difficulties.

Previous sections illustrate place history accounts focused on oppressions and opportunities of forced location as it pertained to movement across Canada and across nations. The following narrative, shaped by prior place migration experiences (temporal locations I and II), demonstrates a microcosm of the broader relocations, and reveals forced transitions between affordable housing contexts. The next sections are depicted according to two transitional and temporal sub-locations: pre-move adversities and post-move prospects.

Despite unique social differences between participants, all older people in this study had one commonality that concerned their shared experience of forced relocation into older adults' affordable housing. Accordingly, identities and social positions in the current temporal location had not changed considerably. However, participants discussed their experiences of oppression and opportunity more openly as "older adults with limited income". In particular, place identity was articulated in relation to meanings of home and how such understandings were shaped by migration processes in conjunction with becoming even older. By and large, pre-move experiences depicted the difficulties of moving homes as a much older person with limited resources, whereas post-move experiences tended to highlight the positive aspects of their new home.

Pre-move adversities. A key challenge revealed by participants was finding a temporary home. Finding a home and the subsequent tasks associated with the move itself was challenging for most people, yet what was notable in this particular case was that the bodies responsible for the move (including the housing society, property management and developer), had exhibited an overall lack of compassion with limited notice and support, as revealed here:

"I was angry with the moving process from the previous housing. They [building management and developer] informed us that we needed to move as soon as possible, but they didn't help us to look for a new place to live." (Older Chinese Woman, Case 141014-38)

For older adults with limited financial resources, being forced from their homes created heightened stress and anxiety, especially for those with pre-existing conditions. One older Chinese woman (portrayed in [Image 1](#)) had requested us to take a photo of her knees as she explained her transitional health struggles with rheumatoid arthritis, and the impact of the move on this health condition.



Image 1 Photograph depicting a chronic health condition.

This story was one that was shared by several participants who revealed how forced relocation as a transitional process, had resulted in mental and physical distress and even death. Participants highlighted how numerous older adults "became sick and ill...because of the

stress of having to move”, and further emphasised that, “there was a lot of people who died through this transaction that they [building management] put forward” (Older Canadian Man, 140917-1).

Meanwhile, the ‘worries’ linked to forced relocation extended past securing a home for the duration between moves. As a result of the nature of the redevelopment process, previous grandfathered tenants were required to find ‘temporary homes’ for 3 years while the new building was being developed. [Image 2](#), taken by an older East African man, was used to express the transient nature of his living situation, portrayed by a partially made bed with old sheets that could be discarded once he moved back into the redeveloped building.



Image 2 Photograph depicting the transient nature of forced relocation.

Most participants were very reluctant to move from the previous residence, primarily because of the affordability of the rent, and the convenient location situated within an age-friendly community. However, due to the initial temporary nature of the forced relocation process, many disclosed how they found themselves being “shuffled around, here, there and everywhere” in addition to “having to sell everything” and moving back to “live with our children” (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151103-8). As the transition period progressed, often a sense of home and community became lost or difficult to establish, as revealed here:

“It still takes quite a while to settle down...to get used to things. It takes, oh, gosh, months and it never used to. I mean, the more I moved, the longer it takes me to settle down. To get to call it home again.” (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151030-6)

This particularly related to transient dwellings which impinged on older peoples’ ability to adjust and re-establish themselves in a new place and new community. Accordingly, forced relocation had a significant impact on tenants’ ability to establish new social networks and relationships. However, the inability to do this effectively resulted in transitional experiences of loneliness and social isolation. One individual felt it was often challenging to “get out into the community” and “that it takes a lot of work to make friends” so they preferred not “to have to do it twice” (Older Canadian Woman, Case 151103-8).

For individuals who were unable to secure temporary accommodation with friends or family, many had to move in extremely poor housing conditions. One type of temporary dwelling unknown to the researchers or to housing professionals prior to this study, was the notion of ‘family hotels’. Family hotels were described as a popular (temporary or permanent), ‘cheap’ housing arrangement common within the local Chinese community. Logistically, foreign Chinese investors would purchase a run-down house and advertise in a local Chinese newspaper as an inexpensive shared housing arrangement with other Chinese persons. Family hotels are neither legal nor are they regulated; spawning unkempt, poorly maintained living conditions. Often targeting impecunious persons, owners (with designated local representatives to prevent traceability) would charge each tenant approximately \$400 to \$500 dollars per month. Each house would lodge approximately ten to twelve individuals, typically with shared rooms split

by bed sheets. Visual depictions (Images 3 and 4) of one such case was captured by an older Chinese man who spent years co-habiting in a family hotel with others in similar circumstances, after moving from their previous housing arrangement.

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DOI: 10.5334/ijelt.49

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Image 3 Photograph depicting a room split by bed sheets in a 'family hotel'.



Image 4 Photograph depicting the crowded nature of the 'family hotel'.

However, when asked whether this individual was looking forward to moving back into a newly built apartment suite, his response identifies home as much more than just a physical space and shelter:

“We come from various parts of China and share and prepare cuisines from the different areas. We really enjoy getting together. This is one of my concerns about moving back. Our relationships here are so good. The new building might be better, but the social relationships will not be as good. If anyone here gets sick here, at least one of others will offer medicine immediately.” (Older Chinese Man, Case 141023-13)

It was clearly voiced by many older people that home is as much about building a community and a social support network, as it is about the physical fabric of place. Establishing new relationships and finding familiarity in the surrounding neighbourhood requires motivation, time, and effort throughout the transition, which can be a rewarding yet simultaneously stressful process. Living spaces without relationality were considered to be transient dwellings rather than homes.

Post-move prospects. At the outset, there were concerns regarding the ‘social mix’ of tenants in the new building that relate to ‘culture clash’. Besides language barriers, there was also general concern over differences between cultural norms, behaviours and expectations; nevertheless, several older adults of Chinese descent stressed that they preferred, “not to isolate myself from the English speaking or European people” (Older Chinese Woman, Case 141023-34). Similarly, many English-speaking participants expressed the desire to actively engage with and/or befriend non-English speaking persons because they wanted to socially connect. To support integration across individuals, social, and cultural differences, the new build held several cultural events and celebrations in the multi-purpose room. This was one of the shared amenity spaces used primarily to promote different cultural mixing and shared cuisines (as illustrated in [Image 5](#)).



Image 5 Photograph of Chinese cuisine prepared by a participant.

Moving into a brand-new apartment, as many emphasised was ‘a privilege’ as the high cost of apartment living in Vancouver means that many people are not able to afford to live in a new development. Transitioning into a new place offered the opportunity to ‘recreate home’ by purchasing new furniture, even though it was often a challenge to find items that were affordable and of high-quality:

“Well, that’s my aim right now. So, the next four months, I’ll be going around looking around and searching for cheaper, new stuff. Good stuff, that is comfortable for me. Otherwise, I have nothing to add in the sense that is new. My new sofa! I’m looking

forward to having this, you know? I'm looking forward to...my new things...my new furniture." (Older African Man, Case 160415-3)

Many also expressed how the perception of living in a brand-new place allowed low-income older people to visualise themselves as different people; particularly in respect to elevating their social status in Metro Vancouver. Several individuals reminisced about their previous living arrangements where they experienced "rodent infestations, bedbugs and bad neighbours" (Older Chinese Woman, 141031-31). It was clear that having limited financial means prevented them from living in a comfortable and safe environment. The new living opportunity had enabled many participants to feel for the first time in a long while that they "weren't poor"; 'recreating home' and 'recreating self' were an important part of the transition process as highlighted in [Image 6](#) by a proud participant of her new home.

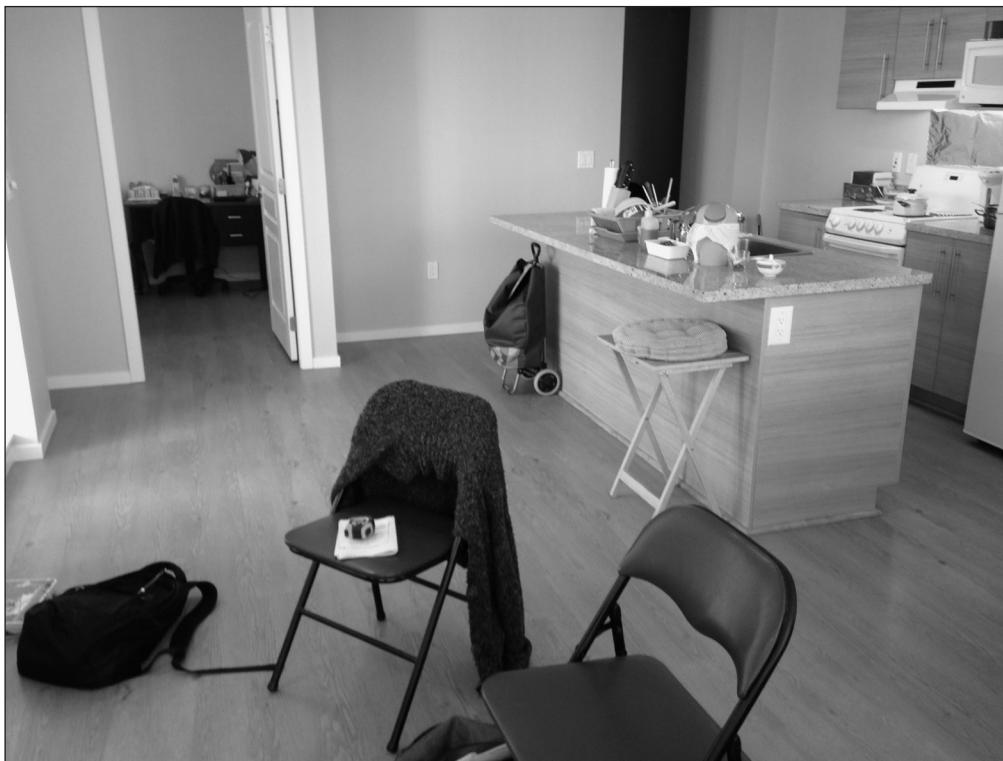


Image 6 Photograph of a participant's new apartment.

Restricted financial freedoms often meant that for older people with minimum income, their personal place preferences were limited or non-existent. Conversely, in this instance, the realization of choice was not bound by their ability to purchase or pay, because potential tenants were able to choose their own suite. Thus, it was less about what they could afford but more about what was available at the time. One individual expressed, quite jovially, how she "liked it [her new apartment] because it's bigger...and it's very nice" and that "there's nothing wrong with it" (Older Chinese Woman, 141188-38), because often, persons in her circumstance were required to compromise and accept the defects that came along with the place.

DISCUSSION

As the number of older adult populations is projected to increase worldwide over the next decades, global leaders have appealed for much needed discussions on how to effectively house and care for older people ([United Nations, 2017](#); [World Health Organization and Centre for Health Development, 2010](#)). Other key considerations for ageing populations have emphasised the development of age-friendly cities and communities ([WHO, 2018](#); [Woolrych et al., 2022](#)). and helping older people to remain in their homes for as long as possible ([Fang et al., 2016](#); [United Nations, 2015](#)). However, creating optimal housing solutions for diverse older populations is difficult when individual's social circumstances can change across time, and investors prefer high end, for-profit housing ([McCall et al., 2020](#)). Given individual and group diversity, and organisational as well as socio-structural constraints, ageing-in-place is not possible for all older people. Hence, it is crucial to work towards creating more appropriate homes (as opposed to more housing), that will ultimately enable older people to 'age in the right place' ([Golant, 2015](#)) or more appropriately, 'age well in the right place' ([Sixsmith et al., 2017](#)).

According to Carroll and colleagues (2020), creating appropriate living spaces for older adults from diverse backgrounds can be a complex process that requires a comprehensive understanding of their social and cultural experiences, as well as their social positions within societal structures. A deeper understanding of these factors is therefore crucial to ensure that living spaces meet the diverse needs of older adults, and reflect the multifaceted aspects of their lives. As such, past place scholars have emphasized the importance of exploring one's own interpretation of their social and cultural world in order to create suitable homes for older adults (Kaufman, 1981; Rowles, 1983).

In the current study, accounts of place transitions (encompassing forced relocation) across the life-course were explored in a group of older, low-income adults, and (predominantly) migrants of diverse cultural backgrounds. We aimed to broaden and enhance current understandings of ageing-in-place and inform future urban development initiatives to consider how past encounters of place can shape health and wellbeing experiences in the present. According to Hareven (1982), a fuller understanding of life transitions requires delving into past events in order to gain context for looking to the future. Hareven (1982) argues that "chronological age is a less significant variable than the status within which individuals or groups find themselves at a particular point in time" (p. 14). Aligned with this notion, our findings confirm that positive ageing-in-place events were experienced inconsistently, often shaped by various socio-cultural factors (i.e., across a continuum of positionalities), which ultimately impacted quality-of-life as people transitioned from place to place across the life-course. The intersectional place analysis revealed that ageing in place cannot be considered as a one-dimensional encounter and extends past the physical aspects of moving place to recreating self, and social and cultural meaning in everyday life. As such, experiences of ageing in place were complex, unique to each person and often shaped by evolving social, cultural, economic, and political contexts. These contexts include norms, values, and expectations of the different local, regional, and national places individuals have resided throughout their lives (Rowles, 1983).

Over a life span, people can encounter several inter-connected, migratory events in different places – but not all will carry the same meaning and significance. For example, events linked to specific places that created deeper emotional ties than others, as exemplified in the resulting trauma from the Cultural Revolution reported by several participants, which has significant implications in relation to how key societal changes shape individual transitions. Thus, illuminating place intricacies and the impact of such experiences on wellbeing as people establish permanence and settlement in new places, requires considerations for multiple social, environmental and temporal transitions.

In addition to the built features of place, were nuances associated with notions of social and emotional bonding, or rootedness (Tuan, 1977), and factors associated with pre-arrival histories that influenced post-arrival successes and challenges that shaped marginality in place (Fang et al., 2015). For instance, migration is commonly perceived as a process by which individuals are relocating to a place with better prospects, yet this is not always the case, as revealed in the intersectional place analysis. Often, individuals experience many difficulties when migrating to and on arriving in a new place, which can have both short and long-term impacts on health and well-being, particularly in later life (Haque et al., 2010; Khanlou, 2010; Kirmayer et al., 2011; Samuel, 2009). Highlighted in our analysis are distinct challenges confronting older migrants, such as social isolation, caregiver exploitation, mobility issues coupled with language difficulties, and cross-cultural adjustments (Guruge et al., 2008; Guruge et al., 2010; Hassett & George, 2002). Therefore, it is important to consider the interrelated complexities of one's identities (assumed or imposed), positionalities (an individual's position or positions in society), and the oppressions and opportunities encountered across time and place, when exploring factors that shape marginality in place. The implication here is that environments that support ageing should provide opportunities to enable people to connect and be actively involved in the community in order to feel central to the place, rather than feeling like they are living on the outskirts of society (Schlossberg, 1989).

Our analysis revealed that in order to feel involved in and central to a new environment, there are many factors to consider. However, to date, there are limited theoretical perspectives available that can comprehensively capture the complex ways in which our social world shapes our ability to feel connected and involved in new environments. IPP, an intersectional place

perspective which interweaves important features of intersectionality, place and ecological theories, was developed purposefully to address this problem and was thus used to frame the study design and subsequent analysis.

The IPP helped to uncover, on a case by case basis, shifts in social identities and positionalities across time and environments, and how these conjoined to shape opportune and oppressive experiences of wellbeing and place. For example, while pre-move interviews were conducted with emphasis on age, income and ethnicity, pre- and post-migration events and place experiences highlighted the need for consideration of temporal locations, which was not possible without further theoretical development. IPP enabled the contextualisation of forced relocation events as it related to both experiences of oppression (e.g. the mistreatment of older migrants as ‘invaders of our space’) and opportunity for wellbeing (e.g. the success of securing a home, despite its dilapidated state, afforded social supports and networks). Through an in-depth, intersectional place analysis of the temporal shifts in one’s identities and positionalities across time-points, the IPP highlighted temporal, place-based, and socio-psychological transitions.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

While this study has notable strengths in theoretical development, implications for housing and place design, and understanding the life experiences of highly marginalised people, it also has limitations. For the analysis, we only examined three temporal locations, limiting the explanatory power to elucidate the continuum of social influences of earlier life experiences that impact later experiences of forced relocations. Additionally, due to the diversity of participants, it was not possible to accurately identify the continuities and discontinuities of participants’ ages. The final limitation of the study relates to the challenges associated with the use of an IPP. A key tenet of intersectionality posits that social categories or locations that shape individual experiences of oppression and opportunity is interlocking and inseparable. However, despite attempts to cross-analyse coded categories during data analysis, the very act of analytical coding, in itself, influenced the separation and creation of new social categories.

To address these limitations, we recommend, first, further research to examine across life stages i.e. early life, mid-life and late-life as opposed to specific temporal locations. Second, we encourage social scientists and place scholars to consider investigating more broadly how upstream structural factors impact the health and wellbeing of individuals that hold specific or multiple social categories. For example, instead of pin-pointing these across different individuals, examining how people who hold different social traits manage and operate within structural constraints.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In an effort to inform future ageing in place initiatives, it is important to acknowledge that diverse historical contexts and life encounters experienced between the different groups of older people, required reconciliation of the differences in interests and concerns. This is exemplified by feelings of discrimination experienced by Chinese migrants, which had emanated from native-born groups’ feelings of being social and culturally displaced from their familiar environmental surroundings. To address such challenges, we suggest, at the start of public health and urban planning projects, an exploration of the historical, transitional and contextual experiences that capture important social facets. These facets include identity, positionality, oppression, and opportunities across time and place of urban ageing populations to better understand how past place experiences have shaped not only their perceptions of home and place but also their wellbeing. Crucial factors for consideration highlight transitional place elements that challenge relocation (e.g. pre-move experiences of hardship and trauma, poverty, lack of familiarity and family ties, cultural dissonance and discrimination), as well as those that can help ease the process (e.g. wealth, transferrable social status, established social support networks and/or prior knowledge of the place). Responding to these through design can enable older people to not only age well in place but age ‘well’ in the right place.

Finally, as knowledge translation is important for research dissemination and shared learning, we would like to conclude by sharing a video developed for the project showcasing one of the forced relocation stories: <https://youtu.be/apkPMvZNaxg>.

DATA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Data associated with this research is available upon request from the authors. Our goal is to promote the openness and accessibility of scientific research while also respecting the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals and organizations involved in our study. To request access to the data, please contact the corresponding author via email.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are especially grateful for our community-based partners for their valuable input, hospitality and research and developmental support. We would like to thank all the older adults living in the Richmond, British Columbia community for sharing their important stories.

FUNDING INFORMATION

This project is funded by the Vancouver Foundation [UNR13-0506] and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [752-2016-0059]. Our funders did not have any role in the study design, collection, analysis, interpretation of the data, or writing of the manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Judith Sixsmith is a member of the Ageing Through a Transitions Lens special issue editorial team. She was removed from any decision making related to the abstract submission and acceptance as well as the review process to ensure independent review and editing.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: (1) project conception and design: MLF, RW & JS; (2) project instrument design: MLF; (3) data collection: MLF; (4) analysis and interpretation of results: MLF, JS & RW; (5) draft manuscript and preparation: MLF; (6) critical revision of manuscript for important intellectual content: MLF, JS & RW. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

EDITORIAL AND PEER REVIEW INFORMATION

Editor(s): Dr Josephine McMurray

Reviewer(s): Dr Susan Buell & Dr Tanka Dahal

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TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Fang, M. L., Sixsmith, J., & Woolrych, R. (2023). Understanding Place Histories to Inform Positive Ageing-in-Place Transitions: An Intersectional Place Perspective of Forced Relocation Experiences. *International Journal of Educational and Life Transitions*, 2(1): 15, pp. 1–24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijelt.49>

Submitted: 30 November 2022

Accepted: 04 May 2023

Published: 19 May 2023

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International Journal of Educational and Life Transitions is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Ubiquity Press.