11-21-2021

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10.1080/09585192.2018.1528556
This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* on 21 November 2018, Available online: http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/09585192.2018.1528556
This is an Author's Accepted Manuscript of: Seet, P. S., Jones, J., Acker, T., & Jogulu, U. (2021). Meaningful careers in social enterprises in remote Australia: Employment decisions among Australian Indigenous art centre workers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *32*(8), 1643 - 1684. Available here
This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ecuworkspost2013/6517

Meaningful Careers in Social Enterprises in Remote Australia: Employment Decisions among Australian Indigenous Art Centre Workers

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Acknowledgement

The authors would like to acknowledge the funding provided as part of this research by the Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation (Ninti One) for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies project. The Cooperative Research Centre for Remote Economic Participation (CRC-REP) receives funding through the Australian Government Cooperative Research Centres Program. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of CRC-REP or its Participants. The authors would also like to acknowledge the support of Desart, in particular, Marlene Chisholm, the Art Worker Program Manager, who was involved in many aspects of the research, in particular, the coordination of the Indigenous researchers who were conducting the data collection.

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Original citation:

Seet P-S.*, Jones, J*. Acker, T., Jogulu, U. 2021. Meaningful Careers in Social Enterprises in Remote Australia: Employment Decisions among Australian Indigenous Art Centre Workers. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*. 32(8):1643-1684. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1528556 [*both 1st authors]

Meaningful Careers in Social Enterprises in Remote Australia: Employment Decisions among Australian Indigenous Art Centre Workers

ABSTRACT

This research investigates why Indigenous workers decide to enter, stay or leave their positions in art centres that serve as important social enterprises in remote Australia. We develop a framework that integrates identity theory and push-pull theory via institutional logics, thereby extending Wry and York (2017)'s typology configurations that is applicable to other actors in the entrepreneurial eco-system, including Indigenous art centre workers. Based on a qualitative study of 72 Indigenous art centre workers employed in remote Australia, the results indicate that although art centres have dual for-profit and social missions, it is mainly pull factors related to paid, local employment aligned to vocational interests, and pro-social motives that are important in explaining why Indigenous Australians choose to work there. Career motives also explain workers' decision to stay, while diverse pull and push factors explain why workers quit. Importantly, the factors that explain employment decisions are multi-factorial, interrelated and closely tied to the social and cultural logics of community life. The research furthers our understanding of how identity factors contribute to decisions by Indigenous art centres workers to enter, leave or stay in their role, providing a more complete understanding of HRM within the context of social enterprises.

Keywords: Social Enterprises, Push-Pull Theory, Identity Theory, Institutional Logics, Indigenous research perspective, Indigenous Australians, Remote Art Centres

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INTRODUCTION

Social enterprises are unique hybrid organisations that engage in entrepreneurial action to address both social and economic issues (Battilana, Lee, Walker and Dorsey, 2012, York, O'Neil and Sarasvathy, 2016). Social enterprises differ from conventional ventures in that they have objectives other than economic wealth creation, integrating both social welfare logics, which focus on improving the welfare of society, and commercial logics, which focus on profit, efficiency, and operational effectiveness (Battilana and Dorado, 2010, Battilana et al., 2012). The terms "commercial" logics and "social welfare" logics follow Besharov and Smith (2014) and Wry and York (2017), in that they are based on the concept of institutional logics, which are socially constructed groups of tangible practices, beliefs, values and assumptions that mould cognition and behaviour (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury, 2012). A "commercial" logic leads to behavioural expectations related to the maximisation of efficiency and profit (Lok, 2010). In contrast, a "social welfare" logic leads to the pursuit of social welfare objectives. These rival logics, with their differing goals, values and shared meaning systems can be difficult for organisations (and the individuals within them) to balance, leading to conflict (Wry and York, 2017).

While there have been recent efforts to better understand people working in Indigenous social enterprises (Pearson and Helms, 2013), to date, the extant social enterprise literature has largely focused on the motives of managers (Seet, Jones, Acker and Whittle, 2015) or social entrepreneurs (York et al., 2016). There is a scarcity of empirical studies examining employment-related decisions of other actors in social enter-

prises, including employees and volunteers (Mair and Martí, 2006, Amin, 2009). Specifically, there is a dearth of knowledge on what motivates employees to work in the social economy, and what benefits they gain from it (Amin, 2009).

This lack of research is surprising, given the considerable economic importance of art centres, especially to workers in remote Indigenous communities. The art sector makes a sizeable contribution to their livelihoods, playing a role in generating employment, and is an important source of economic benefits, since in many communities, "art sales are the primary or only source of non-government income" (Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, 2012).

The purpose of this study is to begin to fill this gap, by exploring the factors that explain why Indigenous people choose to work in the art sector and as well as the reasons why they stay in or leave their positions. The study extends the research at the intersection of social enterprise and HRM, by providing qualitative evidence on what factors motivate Indigenous[1] Australians to enter, remain in or exit employment in remote art centres. It contributes to knowledge in the following three ways.

First, it extends the identity-based approach to interpret the decisions beyond that of social entrepreneurs to that of employees in social enterprises, in particular, decisions remote Indigenous art centre workers, face in balancing their interests and individual values, which are important in attracting them to the art centres. Identity theory

[1] Consistent with the title of the paper, and in line with established terminology used by academics, the Australian government and other agencies e.g. Mellor, S. and Corrigan, M. (2004), *The case for change: A review of contemporary research on Indigenous education outcomes*: Aust Council for Ed Research, Banks, G. (2007), *Overcoming indigenous disadvantage in Australia*: Productivity Commission, Sullivan, P. (2011), "The policy goal of normalisation, the National Indigenous Reform Agreement and Indigenous National Partnership Agreements," DKCRC Working Paper, Hollinsworth, D. (2012), "Decolonizing Indigenous disability in Australia," *Disability & Society*, 28, 601-615., the term "Indigenous" has been used in this paper to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is also used to refer to Indigenous peoples in places other than Australia in other sections of the paper.

is useful in terms of understanding the different motivations of varied actors in the social enterprise creation process as it can incorporate varied roles and individual self-meanings (Stryker, 2008).

Second, push-pull theory is used to classify research results into pull (discretionary) and push (non-discretionary) factors, which may respectively pull or push a worker into or out of work. In this context, pull factors for entry may include a source of income, an interest in the work, and/or the opportunity to contribute to the community; these motivators likely act in combination with push factors such as lack of other work options, a circumstance out of the worker's control which may push them to accept or remain in the role. Similarly, the decision to exit the sector could be related to push factors out of the control of the employee, such as low wages or limited opportunity for career development, but will most likely act in combination with pull factors such as other, better employment opportunities.

Thirdly, we integrate identity theory and push-pull theory through institutional logics, thereby extending Wry and York (2017)'s identity configuration framework to include configurations for employees / workers in Indigenous social enterprises in remote Australia. In so doing, the research furthers our understanding of identity work factors and how they contribute to decisions by these Indigenous art centres workers to enter, leave or stay in their role. We find that while the framework is well-supported, some aspects of culture among Indigenous Australians (e.g. the embeddedness of the workers in being part of the nature and the community) make it difficult for the workers to separate their role and personal identities, and also to keep these independent of their social identities. By interpreting motivational factors through this integrated lens, we

begin to provide a more complete understanding of HRM within the context of social enterprises.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. We begin with a context/ background section that elaborates further on the characteristics of Indigenous art centres as social enterprises in Australia and motivations for work among Indigenous Australians. This is followed by the literature review focusing on identity theory, push-pull theory and institutional logics leading to a configuration that integrates the dual tension faced by social enterprises affecting employees' identity with pull-push factors. This is followed by an explanation of the research method to apply the integrated framework to apply to identity configurations for employees / workers in remote social enterprises. The results are then presented and findings are discussed. The paper concludes with implications for future research and practice.

CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND

Indigenous Australian Art Centres as Social Enterprises

With the growth of interest in Indigenous art, Indigenous Australian art centres have become significant features of remote Australia. About 85 art centres support the creative and cultural expression of many Indigenous Australians (Fergurson, 2011) and, cumulatively produce a majority of the artworks that enable a national and international market to operate. Remote Australian art centres are generally incorporated organisations that have Indigenous artists as their members (Altman, 2005). They are led by art centre managers, who are officially employed by the board of directors comprising of Indigenous elders, and who operate like accidental quasi-entrepreneurs in that they are not selected for their entrepreneurial or business capabilities but for their skills in encouraging new forms of arts practice, nurturing and inspiring young artists, mentoring

established artists and providing professional development advice (Davidson, 2009). However, they also have significant responsibilities for business modelling, planning, developing new markets, marketing, operations, and management of staff that go beyond the specialised task of producing art (Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, 2012).

To a large extent, Australian Indigenous art centres are hybrid organisations that play the role of social enterprises with a social and economic mission, and to a large degree are "multidimensional" (Ohana and Meyer, 2010) in that they are "at the crossroads of market, public policies and civil society" (Nyssens, 2006). They operate in the commercial sphere through the selling of Indigenous art, the public sphere (by creating jobs for local Indigenous Australians and accessing significant government subsidies) and the social sphere through encouraging new forms of arts practice, nurturing and inspiring young artists, mentoring established artists and providing professional development advice (Davidson, 2009, Kerins and Jordan, 2010, Kerins, 2013). In addition, most Australian Indigenous art centres, including those in this study, are classified as "very remote" based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index for Australia (ARIA)[2]. To that end, these remote art centres are characterised by local embeddedness (Shaw and Carter, 2007, Mair and Marti, 2009) whereby the ability to combine art production with meaningful work as a novel social innovation is created in locally-embedded contexts,

[2] The ARIA classifies localities by their "remoteness", defined as the distance along road networks to service centres (a hierarchy of urban centres with a population of 5000 people or more) Department of Health Australia (2001), "Measuring Remoteness: Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) Revised Edition," Commonwealth of Australia. Generally it is assumed that "remote" is four hours' or more drive from an urban centre and "very remote" is usually more than four hours' drive from a range of services and may be inaccessible by an ordinary car, this implies a non-bitumen road ABS (2011), "4714.0 - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008," Australian Bureau of Statistics.

and a feature which is common among social enterprises (Dacin, Dacin and Tracey, 2011).

While there has been a fascination with Indigenous art, to date, there is very limited research into or understanding of the employment of Indigenous people in remote Indigenous communities. This includes factors that motivate Indigenous people to take up paid employment in art centres. Anecdotal evidence indicates that recruitment and retention of appropriate staff is one of the most significant challenges for remote art centres (Acker, Stefanoff and Woodhead, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review outlines identity theory and push-pull theory which provide theoretical perspectives that explains these influences/ decisions. This is followed by a review of the limited empirical research that has examined the factors that influence Indigenous people's participation in work in remote Australia. It concludes with the development of a framework that integrates identity theory and push-pull theory via institutional logics, thereby extending Wry and York (2017)'s typology configurations that is applicable to other actors in the entrepreneurial eco-system, specifically, Indigenous art centre workers.

Identity Theory

Identity refers to "the set of meanings that define who one is" (Burke and Stets, 2009p.1). This meaning can be created through several processes, including conscious inward-facing reflection (Clarke, Brown and Hailey, 2009), and is partially generated by choices about individuals and groups with whom one associates (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010), appearance and physical surroundings (Weaver, 2001).

In the context of groups, whether organisations, family or community, identity is a social process involving perception and differentiation: this can be defined as the ways in which individuals and groups regard themselves as similar to, or different from, each other (Sherry, 2008). In particular, identities are associated with culturally defined social roles that comprise sets of named categories that people learn to apply to themselves and others (Burke, 2004). Each identity carries a set of behavioural expectations valuing certain behaviours that individuals are expected to adhere to in a role (Mead, 1934, Stryker and Burke, 2000). In the example of arts centre workers, examples of role identities are an employee in the arts sector, an artist, a custodian of culture, a community member, and the breadwinner in the family.

Besides role identities, personal identities that comprise of desirable behaviour and beliefs that create authenticity help individuals generate self-meanings in their relationships and different situations (Hitlin, 2003, Burke, 2004). Personal identities are not attached to roles but are enacted through other identities and they may affect individuals when choosing roles that are aligned to their personal identities (Hitlin, 2003, Wry and York, 2017). For example, among art centre workers, a person who is artistic or loves producing art, may adopt an artist role in the art centre as opposed to an administrative or business-related one.

Identities are strongly motivational (Wry and York, 2017). Acting in accordance with their behavioural standards verifies important self-conceptions, leading to positive affect and self-esteem; discrepant acts are associated with negative emotions. Because identities are embedded in social groups, identity-consistent behaviour elicits positive reactions from valued others while inconsistency brings derision and scorn (Stryker and Burke, 2000).

Recently, there has been a move beyond categorisation of these tensions to a more process-based approach in the social enterprise creation processes, attempting to understand the "why" and "how" in terms of individuals engaging in social entrepreneurship (York et al., 2016, Wry and York, 2017). In particular, Wry and York (2017) have developed a theoretical model based in identity theory that helps to explain: (1) how the commercial and social welfare logics become relevant to entrepreneurship, (2) how different types of entrepreneurs perceive the tension between these logics, and (3) the implications this has for how entrepreneurs go about recognising and developing social enterprise opportunities.

Despite the advancements in understanding how identity affects social entrepreneurs, and how social enterprises are affected by founder social identities, relatively little research has been conducted on employees and workers within social enterprises, whether new or established. It may be because, as highlighted earlier, identity theory has been applied in many organisational contexts before. However, social enterprises, by their mission to try to reconcile both social and financial goals, would also attract, recruit, motivate, train and develop their employees in different ways. From the employees' perspective, those that are attracted to join and work in social enterprises could be very different, in identity terms, from those that join and work in other types of organisations and there is an opportunity to address this research gap.

In this research, we extend this model, which was originally applied to social entrepreneurs, to the motivations of employees of social enterprises, specifically remote Indigenous arts centre workers. This model proposes that both commercial and social logics may exist in the same individual, who may be balancing multiple role identities, but also multiple personal identities, which may carry conflicting logics to one's role identities.

In the next section, we outline the push-pull theory that provides a theoretical framework to examine the reasons why people enter or leave a sector. After that, we will elaborate on the link between role and personal identities and commercial/ social logics.

Push-Pull theory

We begin with the assumption that there can be several reasons behind an individual's decision to enter or leave work in remote art centres. Entry can be seen as being caused by "pull" (discretionary) factors, "push" (non-discretionary) factors; most likely, such factors will act in combination. In a remote Indigenous context, pull factors for entry may relate to employment opportunities in the remote arts sector, often acting in concert with push factors such as lack of other work options in their community outside the remote arts sector. Similarly, the decision to exit the sector may relate to push factors such as the closure of a remote art centre, poor work conditions, low wages or lack of interest in the job, but will most likely act in concert with pull factors such as other, better job opportunities outside of the sector (e.g. higher wages, better work conditions etc.).

Pull factors are attractors which pull people into or out of a sector, and about which people make a voluntary decision to enter or leave (Stimson and McCrea, 2004). They may be economic or social/ non-economic in nature. Economic factors that pull people into a sector include employment or career development opportunities, opportunities for higher income or a better work environment. Non-economic factors include a better lifestyle and quality of life, and access to services and amenities, and social ones refer to those that are related to relationships, family and community concerns and group cohesion (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso and Werther Jr, 2012, Thorn, Inkson and Carr,

2013) including strong connections with nature (York et al., 2016) and culture (Ho, Seet and Jones, 2016).

Push factors are stressors that push people into or out of a sector as a result of force; in other words, because people have no choice (i.e. non-discretionary decisions) (Stimson and McCrea, 2004). Push factors may also be economic or social/non-economic/social in nature. For example, for economic push factors, a reduction in the number of positions, a hard work environment, a decline in work conditions or deteriorating financial conditions are factors inside the art sector that may force workers out. Non-economic factors which push people out of a sector include poor living conditions and lack of quality of life, or lack of access to services and amenities with social ones including family and community (Richardson, 2006). For example, in relation to the lack of resources and infrastructure in remote indigenous communities, social push pressure in the form of family can be seen from the view that relocating to a less remote area will bring a better future for the whole family, especially for their children and future generations (Carr, Inkson and Thorn, 2005). Research has shown that in Australia, there has been a long term trend of people moving away from less-remote areas to more urban areas for both economic and non-economic reasons (Hugo, Rogers and Collins, 2001).

As with the extension of application of identity theory, this current research aims to address this gap in career research by exploring push and pull factors beyond entrepreneurs or managers of social enterprises (Hakim, 1988, McClelland, Swail, Bell and Ibbotson, 2005, Schjoedt and Shaver, 2007) and extending it to employees in social enterprises, in particular, the decision by these employees of Indigenous Art Centres to leave or stay (Schjoedt, 2009).

Indigenous Australians' motivation to work

In a study of woodcarving in Arnhem Land, Koenig, Altman and Griffiths (2011) find that over half the adult population of the region are actively involved in art production. Monetary returns (which are economic pull factors) although relatively low (around AUD$12 -$14 per hour), nonetheless make an important contribution to people's livelihoods as this income is often the only form of non-welfare income in remote communities. Thus, Indigenous artists have economic motivations for arts production, with participation in the Indigenous visual arts sector providing one of the few market opportunities (Koenig, 2007). The lack of opportunities for work, especially in conventional mainstream economies (such as mining and tourism), for Indigenous Australians living in remote regions of Australia can be seen as a push factor and is a recurrent theme in the literature (Wright, 1999, Koenig et al., 2011, Fleming, Petheram and Stacey, 2015). While socially and/or culturally aligned community-based businesses and enterprises - pull factors - provide an opportunity for Indigenous employment participation, outcomes have been mixed, with Indigenous work participation most successful in the natural resource management sector (e.g., ranger positions).

In addition to economic motivations for artists, arts production is seen as an important and revered profession (Perren, 2000, Corn, 2003), as well as generating indirect and non-economic returns (Koenig et al., 2011) that can also be seen as pull effects. According to Allain (2011), art centres are beneficial to the wellbeing of Australian Indigenous communities not only from a social and cultural perspective, but also due to their effect on the economic, physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional development of the whole person and the whole community.

In contrast, Fleming et al. (2015) report that Indigenous women believe that culturally-aligned commercial enterprises, in this case aquaculture enterprises, should meet both economic and community needs such as generating employment, providing skills and knowledge, keeping the younger generation occupied and providing greater access to fresh foods. The generation of local youth employment in aquaculture was seen by female traditional owners and senior elders as essential to redressing the youth's general disengagement with community life. Employment was also recognised as essential to mental and physical well-being.

Identity Theory, Push-Pull theory and Institutional Logics

Institutional logics facilitate the integration of identity theory and push-pull theory as they provide deeper understanding of the suitability of the actions linked to behavioural standards among various actors in these organisations. As constructs, identities and logics are related but distinct (Wry and York, 2017) in that "institutions provide the shared meaning that gives coherence to social life through the creation of social identities … that define the cognitive schemas and roles governing behaviour in a given situation" (Misangyi, Weaver and Elms, 2008p.754). As Thornton et al. (2012p.90) note, "logics comprise shared meanings systems that justify particular values and goals, while identities specify the practices through which these values and goals are pursued in particular contexts". For this research, the particular context, as discussed above, is the remote Indigenous art centre.

Role and personal identities, as discussed above, are related to commercial and/or social welfare logics in the entrepreneurial process for social enterprises (Wry and York, 2017). Wry and York (2017) offer examples of role identities and personal identities associated with either social or commercial logics, and how they may be in conflict or in balance in an individual – for example, how a business leader (role iden-

tity) who is also an active environmentalist (personal identity) makes a trade-off to remain internally and externally accountable to conflicting priorities. Conversely, an individual working in the healthcare sector, with its associated social logics, may be motivated by the commercial logics of financial success and power.

Research on social enterprises have not really focused on this relationship of identity theory, push-pull theory and institutional logics, especially in terms of the different groups of actors in the social enterprise eco-system, given that different actors and groups react differently because they are socialised into different logics (Pache and Santos, 2013). Existing research has mainly looked at the founders or managers of the social enterprises (York et al., 2016, Wry and York, 2017). It is recognised that founders and managers of social enterprises, as institutional entrepreneurs, are engaged in constructing dominant logics with their associated identities (Creed, Scully and Austin, 2002, Reay and Hinings, 2005, Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005), but other actors in their entrepreneurial eco-system e.g. customers and employees are seen as unconscious victims (or "targets") of coercive pressure (Lok, 2010) and/or "symbolic violence" (Oakes, Townley and Cooper, 1998). In other words, leaders of social enterprises are normally depicted as active identity producers or "heroic change agents" (Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca, 2009), but these other identity targets like employees are seen as relatively passive users of the ready-made identities constructed for them (Lok, 2010), thereby "blinding institutionalists to the possibility that identities can be subtly transformed through the everyday talk and activities of all actors, not just those of institutional entrepreneurs." (p.1306) As such, it extends on research on institutional logics on actors besides entrepreneurs like public sector workers (Thomas and Davies, 2005), media workers (Storey, Salaman and Platman, 2005), aviation pilots (Ashcraft, 2005),

financial investors (Lok, 2010) and physicians (Dunn and Jones, 2010). Figure 1 outlines the framework integrating Identity theory with Push-pull theory within the institutional logics frame. It extends the typology of identity configurations that Wry and York (2017) established for social entrepreneurs to employees working in the context of social enterprises in remote areas. Specifically, it shows combinations that include both commercial and social logics in aspects that apply differently to distinct art centre employees as they engage in employment decisions in their places of work, and of how the dual tension faced by social enterprises affects employees' identity. As the push-pull factors overlap with but also transcend logics, they are described separately in the figure.

Insert Figure 1 about here

In line with research on the entrepreneurial process (Venkataraman, 1997, Shane and Venkataraman, 2000, Alvarez and Barney, 2007), Wry and York (2017)'s framework focuses on the social entrepreneur, and they examine the emergence of social enterprise in terms of opportunity recognition and opportunity development. In terms of understanding how different identities are related the pull-push factors, employees in social enterprises, who are less involved in opportunity recognition and development, are more affected by motivational factors in their work. As highlighted earlier, push-pull factors may be economic or work-related versus social welfare or non-work related. The relationship between role identities and push-pull factors has been explored in research on the impact of gender among entrepreneurs (Orhan and Scott, 2001), with males, who are associate themselves with financial provider roles, likely to align with economic pull factors (monetary motivations) and their perceptions of

providing for their children in material ways (Kirkwood, 2009). In contrast, household and family pull factors (e.g. flexibility and being home with children) are significant to explaining women's entrepreneurship (de Bruin, Brush and Welter, 2007). Among managers of Indigenous art centres, the tensions of reconciling their personal and role identities as well as the various push and pull factors in highly remote settings means that, on average, most last only two to three years before they are "burnt out" (Wright and Morphy, 1999), as they are unable to reconcile the different factors "pushing" and "pulling" them, often in seemingly opposite directions (Seet et al., 2015).

METHODOLOGY

In this section, we elaborate on methodological positioning of the research using an Indigenous research perspective before detailing the research design and method.

Indigenous research perspective

In recognising that identities may not be universally similar, cultural theory (Waldinger, 1984) and ethnic enclave theory (Portes and Bach, 1980) are a couple of approaches that have been used to better understand labour mobility and employment in different cultural settings, especially those with significant ethnic immigrant minorities. However, these are not fully transferrable to settings with largely Indigenous populations which need to contextualise interpretation of theories into the cultural and social perspectives and histories meaningful to Indigenous research participants (Choy and Woodlock, 2007). This is also the case when identity theory is applied to the understanding of workplace spirituality as this is often focused on clearly defined organisation workplaces (Crossman, 2016) and may not be relevant in the quasi workplaces, that incorporate community and social life, that Indigenous art centres are. In terms of management research, this responds to critiques that as the domain of organisational research becomes more global, it raises more challenges to transport social science

models from one society to another with the need to take into account diversity of work and work settings (Rousseau and Fried, 2001). It also responds to calls for high quality context-sensitive research (Tsui, 2007) and specifically, "for high quality indigenous research as an important approach towards contributing to global management knowledge." (Tsui, 2004p.492). In this regard, our research uses an Indigenous research perspective to bridge the gap (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). The research team consists of one Indigenous member and three non-Indigenous members. Given that we were a transdisciplinary team of non-Indigenous and Indigenous members, the Indigenous research perspective allowed us to reflect, preserve, and promote the culture, histories, and narratives of the community, as well as complemented and informed the qualitative strategies we were using (i.e. interviews) (Cunsolo Willox, Harper and Edge, 2013).

Research Design and Method

A qualitative research design utilising semi-structured interviews provided the means of exploring the employment motivations and decisions of Indigenous Australian art centre workers in remote art centres of Central Australia and Far North Queensland. The study was part of the larger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies research project, which is investigating and reporting on key parts of the supply chain linking remote area artists, art businesses and consumers.

Ethics approval was obtained from the Central Australian Human Research Ethics Committee. As we were seeking a diverse group of participants with a range of perspectives, art centre workers were purposefully selected to include:

- males and females,
- from art centres in a range of remote locations, covering several different cultural areas and language groups, and

- from a range of ages and years of experience.

Participants were identified through a variety of strategies, including liaison with a regional advocacy body (Desart, Alice Springs, Northern Territory) for art centres in Central Australia, the cooperation of art centres and the self-identification of participants.

The research process recognised the power dynamics inherent between the researchers and the participants. We ensured that participants knew their employment would not be compromised if they declined to participate or withdrew from the study, or on the basis of their responses. Semi-structured interviews provided participants with a means to control the topics discussed and the depth in which they were discussed in a flexible and iterative process. An interview guide was used to provide a general list of topics for conversation, including participants' reasons for working in remote art centres, their intentions with respect to staying or leaving, and their roles within art centres. This ensured the issues covered were consistent, with prompts provided when deemed necessary by the interviewers in order to provide additional information. We highlighted that all questions were optional. Despite this, the completion rate was high, with the overwhelming majority of questions answered, albeit some with short, limited responses. Culturally-appropriate methods led by qualified Aboriginal Community Researchers with relevant language skills were contracted to carry out the interviews and fieldwork (in other words, peer-to-peer interviews) in art centres in Central Australia and Far North Queensland. Participants were given the opportunity to use their preferred language, which included languages other than English (or through an interpreter). This provided a genuine opportunity for Indigenous art centre workers to express in their own words, their motives, and intentions. In spite of being offered to be interviewed in their native language, surprisingly, almost none of the interviewees asked for this to occur, which may have resulted in very short and limited responses.

This may indicate participants' reluctance to express their views; or it could reflect their inability to.

Despite this limitation, we believe the study allowed active participation by all participants who presented a range of perspectives that have not yet been heard in relation to employment motivations and decision-making. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were written to a pre-determined structure covering a consistent range of issues to allow easier analysis across interviews. These included:

- demographic and personal background;
- motivations for becoming an arts worker;
- intention to continue (or not) in arts roles in arts sector;
- intention to stay in current art centre or move to a different art centre; and
- personal, familial and wider network influences on becoming an arts worker.

Individual transcripts were initially analysed with themes or patterns coded. Specifically, the constant comparative method was used to derive patterns (themes) from the data. This method involved looking for "recurring regularities" (Patton, 1990), including recurring phrases in the verbatim expressions of interviewees. The identification of key patterns (themes) does not simply depend on the number of times a pattern emerges, but interpreting the extent to which the pattern is salient to the phenomenon being investigated (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thereafter, these were combined across the entire interview data and overarching themes identified. For example, recurring phrases or expressions in interviewees' responses to the question why arts workers work in art centres included *"an artist myself", "an interest in art", "enjoyed painting"* and *"passionate about art"*. While interviewees did not explicitly state they were mo-

tivated to work in arts centres by vocational interests, we labelled these responses "vocational interests" on the basis that the phrase *"vocation"* encapsulates an occupation or career to which someone is drawn, suited or called. We supplemented the phrase "vocational interests" with the term *"paid job"* aligned to vocational interests on the basis that this phrase reflects the fact that respondents pointed to jobs in arts centres as not only reflecting their vocational or career interests, but also providing payment (e.g., *"the best job for me to paint and sell"*). Similarly, respondents pointed to paid jobs as artists in remote art centres as enabling them to work (e.g., *"a place for artist to work and sell their art from so they don't have to leave the community"*) and socialise (e.g., *"enjoy sharing stories and talking with elders")* in their local community. Thus, we identified an overarching theme as employment opportunities for paid, meaningful work that reflects the career aspirations of art centre workers, and their desire to stay, work and socially interact in their local communities.

We used the same approach to derive all themes discussed below. We did not explicitly ask interviewees whether they were pulled and/or pushed into arts work in art centres, but categorised and tabulated factors as push or pull on the basis of Stimson and McCrea's (2004) work reviewed above (see push-pull theory). Similarly, we categorised factors as commercial, social or commercial-social based on key ideas and concepts derived from the literature reviewed above. We compared results with the literature (Eisenhardt, 1989), and sent our interpretations to Indigenous representatives of the regional advocacy body (Desart, Alice Springs, Northern Territory) for art centres in Central Australia for validation.

Given that the respondents could not provide us with elaborate responses, we suspect due largely to language limitations, we did not need to use Computer Assisted Qualitative Data AnalysiS (CAQDAS) software to analyse the interview data. Coding

occurred inductively (Saldana, 2009) in order to draw out the main themes and patterns.

The findings from the interviews are presented under the following three headings:

- motivation for becoming an art centre worker;
- future intentions with respect to staying or quitting; and
- the influence of social networks on these decisions.

First, however, we provide an overview of the sample.

RESULTS

Sample

The research involved 72 Indigenous Australian art centre workers; three quarters (or 55) of art centre workers are also artists. The majority of interviewees were female (47 or 65%), broadly in line with the gender composition of Indigenous artists in remote Australia (Acker et al., 2013). Art centre workers' ages ranges from 19 to the mid-60s, with equal proportions (i.e. 25%) over 50 or between 25 and 35. Twenty per cent of arts workers were between 36 and 45, 15% younger than 25, and 10% between 46 and 50, with a small number of respondents not providing age details. While the majority of participants have completed some high school education (ranging from year 9 to year 12), a few interviewees, particularly older women, did not continue past primary school (year 6), with one interviewee stating she had no schooling and another was educated on a station. This is in line with research showing that Indigenous Australians have significantly lower rates of education attainment as compared to non-Indigenous Australians (Daly and Hunter, 1999, Stephens, 2010). In remote areas, this gap is exacerbated by substandard education service provision in remote Australia (AHRC, 2009). Roughly half of interviewees have undertaken further formal education

or training, typically unrelated to the arts sector (e.g. courses in first aid, computers, business, hairdressing, beauty or mechanics).

A small minority of participants undertook formal vocationally-related training with certificates in arts administration/visual arts. Arts workers were more likely to undertake informal, on-the-job training and participate in workshops and artist-in-residence programs. It should also be noted that social and cultural structures in remote communities are different to those in mainstream Australia. Indigenous Australian people in remote communities are still heavily connected to traditional knowledge systems and practices and serve long cultural apprenticeships – an apprenticeship that is often not compatible with, or recognised, by mainstream education or training systems. Most art centre workers have prior work experience; however, it is often unrelated to the arts sector (e.g. cleaning, administrative and sales roles in local stores, childcare/youth work, ranger work, night patrols and kitchen hands in mines).

The tenure of art centre workers range from six months to 23 years, with about half of interviewees (or 37) working in their art centre for three years or more. Around three quarters of art centre workers are part-time, averaging between 20 and 30 hours per week, and earning approximately $410 to $450 per week. The remaining art centre workers work between 34 and 40 hours per week, earning around $770 to $865 per week. The majority of art centre workers are employed on casual contracts. From the one-third of interviewees that gave background residential geographic information, the majority of them (more than 90%) lived in the same local community all of their life.

Motivation for becoming art centre workers in remote art centres

The results indicate that Indigenous Australians are attracted to work in remote art centres predominately because of pull factors reflecting vocational interests,

and specifically, employment opportunities for paid, meaningful work that reflect the career aspirations of art centre workers, and their desire to stay, work and socially interact in their local communities. Cultural and other factors related to negative aspects of day-to-day life in remote, Indigenous communities were also influential in pushing workers to art centres. Altruism, and intrinsic and social motives, also cut across interviewees. Thus, a plurality of pull and push factors underpinned or linked to dimensions of Indigenous identity and culture explain the motivations of arts workers in remote Australia. We discuss these factors below.

Vocational interests and/or interest in art explain why interviewees are pulled to work in art centres. The majority of participants point to the fact that they are artists themselves, with employment opportunities in art centres in their local, remote community providing market or paid opportunities for work as artists as illustrated by the following quotes:

> *I am good at painting. I am an artist myself* (Interviewee 61).
>
> *I enjoyed the work...the art centre...being an abstract artist myself* (Interviewee 62).
>
> *It was the best job for me to paint and sell* (Interviewee 51).
>
> *The job opportunity... [I] have an interest in art* (Interviewee 57).

In addition to art centres offering paid jobs aligned to vocational interests or aspirations, interviewees referred to employment in remote Australia as providing Indigenous Australians with the opportunity to stay on their land, in their local community or "place" where they have their roots and kinship ties:

> *I've always been passionate about art...when the island established the art centre, I knew it was a place where I can do what I love doing* (Interviewee 7).
>
> *A place for artist to work and sell their art from so they don't have to leave the community* (Interviewee 14).

In the Indigenous context, the concept of "place", or sometimes referred to as land or country, has much more meaning than just a physical space or specific location, and instead reflects the physical and spiritual landscape (Foley, 2003). Country provides the basis for indigenous identity (Doohan, 2008) embodying familial, spiritual and cultural values. (We pick up on the theme of the importance of "place" in employment decisions further below.) Some participants spoke of their Indigenous culture and traditions as influencing their ability to work in art centres and inter alia, enable a close and continuing connection between art, land and culture. Thus, interviewees are pulled to work in art centres because they provide desirable meaningful work that draws on Indigenous interest and capabilities:

> *Knowledge of art and understanding what it means to the community* (Interviewee 58).
>
> *I wanted to work here because I know about story and dreaming to paint* (Interviewee 69).
>
> *I worked with my grandmothers and they taught me about dreamings. Can learn about their dreaming's and get paid* (Interviewee 70).

Dreaming - a governance system of the Indigenous Australians – provides social / ecological responsibility and moral order that help guide them in how to live their lives (Foley, 2003). Paintings, together with dancing and traditional ceremonies, are used to transmit cultural knowledge and maintain connections to country. Thus, being an arts worker also provides a way of continuing and transmitting traditional Aboriginal culture and traditions, as illustrated by the following quotes from respondents:

> *Enjoy sharing stories and talking with elders* (Interviewee 72).
>
> *I like being around them [elders] and hearing their stories and the stories in their paintings* (Interviewee 26).
>
> *I really like the workshops we hold here ... It's a great way to learn about the ...culture and build a stronger relationship with the Artists* (Interviewee 15).

Helped me to help others, learn more about art and culture (Interviewee 64).

[help] keeping culture strong by sharing stories (Interviewee 71).

Interviewees also spoke of educating children and young adults. In so doing, they transfer and safeguard traditional knowledge and skills, leading to another generation of Indigenous arts workers for the future. As with other indigenous traditions, such education and skills are only available through this channel.

I now help new staff members and show them how to do things (Interviewee 51).

I am good at doing paintings, teach the kids art (Interviewee 70).

I like to help people to develop as an artist and share my experiences as an artist ... (Interviewee 14).

However in some places, the continued transmission of cultural knowledge to younger generations is not straightforward, which has implications for the inter-generational sustainability of traditional aspects of Indigenous culture. The following quote illustrates this point, and the value of arts centres in equipping workers with knowledge that can then be shared:

The culture of this place is slowly fading away - as a middle aged bloke, it's gone from me too....I'm learning things here about our history/culture and I like to share that ... culture (Interviewee 25).

Some participants also spoke of facilitating cross-cultural education, by sharing knowledge of cultural practices to tourists, and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

S*how[ing] our culture to tourists* (Interviewee 57).

Retelling history to tourists/guests (Interviewee 41).

Talking with customers who wants to buy artwork and explaining the stories and give an insight to ... [our] culture (Interviewee 14).

Maintaining traditional stories. The art centre is an educational tool for non-Indigenous people (Interviewee 16).

This reflects Tamisari (2006)'s assertion that art production among Indigenous Australians is often understood as a form of diplomacy used to negotiate their place in Australian society (Coleman, 2009).

However, for a small number of art centre workers, it was not an interest in the creative industries per se, but a paid job providing a means to an end, indicating a more instrumental motive:

> *It's a job, I have two children. It helps me to look after my family i.e. food and money* (Interviewee 53).

A few interviewees pointed to external and bureaucratic factors (over which they have no agency) associated with their existing job pushing them to work in art centres - for example, in order to keep welfare benefits:

> *[I] had to do it to keep my Centrelink money* (Interviewee 51).
>
> *CDEP[3] job [was] transferred to arts worker* (Interviewee 59).

For some art centre workers, negative aspects of their existing life in remote Australia pushed them to work in art centres, with boredom referred to by a number of participants, and work at the art centre providing workers with *"something to do".* Interviewee 56 stated *"I got bored staying at home",* while Interviewee 71 said, *"[I] have the skills... [am] an artist and wanted to work, boring at home."* Along similar lines, Interviewee 43 stated, *"[it's a] good environment, alleviate the boredom".* Indeed for almost all interviewees, the art centre provided a refuge from some of the emotionally-taxing aspects of life in remote Australia, including Indigenous culture: Interviewee 68 said *"It's good work. I'm happy to work, nothing is boring ... and [I*

[3] The Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme is a program provided by the Federal Government for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote and rural areas, enabling an Indigenous organisation to pool the unemployment benefit entitlements of individuals into direct wages for those people who work in local employment in various community development or organisation programs - in this study, art centres - as an alternative to receiving individual income support payments.

do] not ...get shame", while Interviewee 50 pointed to *"time out from day to day humbug[4]"*. Similarly, Interviewee 67 stated *"It's a good job, I get to clear out from sorry business and focus on training".* Thus, on the one hand, employment in arts centres provide culturally aligned work opportunities; and on the other, opportunities to escape from emotionally-taxing aspects of Indigenous Australian culture, including shame, humbug and sorry business.

All of the art centre workers were pulled to work in art centres because they are perceived as "a good place to work", with most interviewees repeating this point in their responses to various questions. Aspects which participants stated contributed to making art centres good places included: income/ earning a wage; learning and skills development, culture and stories from elders; and social interaction.

Social motives (i.e. interaction, companionship and inclusion with partners, other family members and art centre workers, as well as non-Indigenous people such as tourists and buyers) and the personal, intrinsic benefits (e.g. feelings of joy, happiness, pride etc.), plus wider community benefits from this interaction, were influential motivators that cut across interviewees as illustrated in the following quotes:

> *I like ...sharing a joke with [the other ladies]... and having tea and some refreshment together....helping each other with our artwork....we enjoy working together... as a team ...* (Interviewee 9).
>
> *Most happy to [be] working with fellow workers at my work place* (Interviewee 10).
>
> *Enjoy[ed] getting together with ladies, feel[ing] proud about sharing culture with other Meeting artists. Meeting new people, feel[ing] good* (Interviewee 63).

[4] Humbug refers to demand for resources such as money and other materials, and is part of a system of reciprocity and expected demands for money/resources. See Nic Peterson: Demand Sharing: Reciprocity and the Pressure for Generosity among Foragers Nicolas Peterson, American Anthropologist New Series, Vol. 95, No. 4 (Dec., 1993), pp. 860-874).

I enjoy meeting new people (Interviewee 57).

Working with and talking to other non–aboriginal people like buyers and tourist (Interviewee 61).

Thus the results show that being an art centre worker in arts centres in remote Australia provides important psychological functions: it is a source of pride, fulfilment and social identity formation. Working at an arts centre also empowered participants, enabling them to develop capacity by providing workers with the opportunity to learn culturally relevant skills and knowledge, particularly about Indigenous Australian's traditional or customary beliefs, values, practices and experience, and inter alia, promote a sense of community and identity:

I really like the workshops we hold here ... It's a great way to learn about the ...culture and build a stronger relationship with the Artists (Interviewee 15).

Good job to gain skills, courses, learning, skills development, connection to communities, seeing what field workers do (Interviewee 56).

It's enjoyable, good learning about my work and culture (Interviewee 53).

I now help new staff members and show them how to do things (Interviewee 51).

I am good at doing paintings, teach the kids art (Interviewee 70).

I like to help people to develop as an artist and share my experiences as an artist ... (Interviewee 14).

A related motive is that art workers are pulled to work in art centres for altruistic reasons with participants sharing a strong motivation to help others - particularly the elderly and young - in the workplace. As a consequence of helping, interviewees experienced intrinsic benefits, such as feeling proud and confident:

To help the elderly and I enjoy it. It has made me confident, showing younger kids and helping them (Interviewee 56).

Helping young ones ... family and friends working together (Interviewee 25).

I want to assist and make it [art centre] stronger (Interviewee 66).

It has made me confident, showing younger kids and helping them (Interviewee 56).

> *I felt good and proud to help the older ladies to understand the workplace* (Interviewee 59).
>
> *Showing others what we do here at the art centre and encouraging school kids and teenagers* (Interviewee 44).
>
> *... trying to find new ways to work with young people...* (Interviewee 26).

Art Centre Workers Intention: To stay or go

Art centre workers were asked about their intentions regarding staying at, or leaving their role as art centre workers in their art centre. Roughly two thirds of participants aspire to remain at art centres in creative roles. However the nature of these creative aspirations vary, ranging from no change (*"right now, I just like to do what I'm doing now by being just an artist"* (Interviewee 12) and *"keep working here [in] same job"* (Interviewee 32)), to doing more art work (*"all I want to do is more art work"* (Interviewee 7)), to becoming a famous artist teaching others (*"I would like to be a great artist, so I can teach others that like to learn art"* (Interviewee 24)), or managing their own studio (*"getting all the skills I need to run my own studio"* (Interviewee 36)).

Approximately one in five interviewees said that they hope to become an art centre manager:

> *[I'm] hoping my job will change ... [to] take on some more management"* (Interviewee 35); and
>
> *the board plan is for me to step up ... I can see myself taking over* (Interviewee 30)

This was typically for altruistic reasons such as to *"help the community"* (Interviewee 54), or *"so that we can manage our own affairs"* (Interviewee 16). However, for one interviewee, being an arts worker was not their ambition, but nonetheless their goal was to be a manager: *"An arts worker wasn't really what I wanted to be, but I'm here now and taking on Cert[ificate] III in business. So yes, I'd like to see myself as an arts manager, within the next couple of years."* (Interviewee 28). Taken together, the results

indicate that, overwhelmingly, Indigenous Australians choose to work, and pursue a career, as arts workers in remote art centres.

For those workers that expect to leave the art centre, family responsibilities (to look after children and old people) and community financial pressures (to share money) were nominated as the main pull reasons. Financial factors, such as poor pay, hours and work conditions, and the art centres' limited (financial and other) resources, were also influential push factors. Other personal characteristics such as loss of interest in the job (manifest in boredom), together with workers simply not seeing themselves as having a career in art, also explained why a small number of arts workers (about 6%) intend to leave. The following quotes illustrate this point:

> *I don't know if I'll be here for much longer. Doesn't really offer...future employment"* (Interviewee 26)

For these workers, being an arts worker was simply a job at particular point in time

The results indicate that art centre workers are unlikely to be pulled geographically to other art centres (e.g. for better salary and conditions). These interviewees were unanimous in stating that they would not move because *"this is my home town"* (Interviewee 53); and *"This is the only one I'll work in, I'm connected to this place"* (Interviewee 51).This reflects the interviewees' strong desire to remain and work in their local community and their attachment to the physical, social and/or cultural place, which is linked to individual and collective Indigenous identity (Davenport and Anderson, 2005). The remaining arts workers who were willing to relocate cited factors related to better financial or other opportunities in other art centres. The following quotes illustrate these pull factors: *"if it was a good offer"* (Interviewee 66) or *"for the experience"* (Interviewee 70).

Influence of social networks on arts workers decision to go to, stay or leave art centres.

Prior research has emphasised the enduring importance of maintaining connections to kinship and networks (Dockery and Colquhoun, 2012), thus we are interested in the influence of these connections to arts workers' decision to work in art centres, and to go or stay. Arts workers stated that the person most likely to influence them to work in art centres was their self, followed by family members (e.g. partner, nana, mother, aunt) particularly family members who were also arts workers/artists, and to a lesser extent, art centre managers and others related to art (e.g. art teacher at school) – "*I got support from the artist ladies with stretching and mixing up paints*" (Interviewee 59).

The overwhelming majority of arts workers pointed to support being provided to them whilst working in the art centre by family, friends, the art centre manager, other arts workers, and Desart, a peak body for art centres. Support from other members of the community was less prevalent, with only a few arts workers pointing to previous bosses and their pastor's wife and family as indicative of this support network as follows: "*Easy, good support"* (Interviewee 69) and "*I get all the support I need"* (Interviewee 57). As outlined in the preceding section, the overwhelming majority of arts workers were unlikely to move to more distant art centres because of strong connections or ties to their community: "*No, this is home"* (Interviewee 60) is indicative of this position. Thus, arts workers are relatively stable with a low degree of mobility, with connections and ties pulling them to remain in local remote communities.

Summary

Table 1 summarises the findings into push-pull factors together with commercial/social logics influencing Indigenous art centre workers based on the stages of recruitment, retention and exit and this will be discussed further in the following section.

Insert Table 1 about here

DISCUSSION

Australian Indigenous art centres provide a unique context in which to study the decisions to engage in and continue employment in locally embedded social enterprises operating in highly remote areas. The factors that motivated the Indigenous arts workers were diverse, spread along a spectrum running from the conventional (income, skills development, etc.) to the culturally-specific (cultural maintenance, family relations).

Identity Theory

In terms of Identity Theory, a few themes emerged from this study, some of which were aligned with previous research. While earlier research has found that social entrepreneurs may hold different role and personal identities that align with commercial and/or social logics and can be matched into a typology (Wry and York, 2017), our research results defied neat categorisation in terms of identities. There was a diversity of role identities among the art centre workers as the nature of their employment and the variability of the Indigenous art market meant that almost all of them were undertaking multiple roles to make ends meet. For example, arts workers might be artists as well as paid art workers. Most art workers are employed as casuals, thus undertaking work as artists might occur when they have finished their commitment to their art centre for the day as a paid art worker (e.g., undertaking studio practice, photographing art

works, cataloguing art works into SAM (Stories Art Money) data base etc.). In no particular order, Table 1 above shows the five main jobs/tasks that art centre workers were engaged in at various stages of the week.

In terms of personal identities that comprise self-meanings about who they are across situations and relationships, while Wry and York (2017) note that these were broader when enacted within the varied social relationships, they were especially hard to pin down given the diffuse and varied nature of Indigenous community life and expectations. In that sense, we come to similar conclusions among other researchers who have attempted to use concepts such as Identity to understand Indigenous phenomena i.e. that "the individualistic actor defies generalisation and prediction" (Stafford Smith et al., 2003p.31).

The model proposed by Wry and York (2017) recognises that commercial and social logics may exist within the same individual carrying out identity work on their multiple personal & role identities, attempting to find balance while holding oneself internally accountable – and being held externally accountable by one's society. While the commercial logic of seeking an income is expressed by the majority of participants, this can also be attributed to the importance of economic inclusion to quality of life, and may not indicate commercial logic as the salient logic in one's role identity. The strength of social and commercial logics appear to vary between respondents, with the majority of interviewees expressing that both income and connection to culture were a factor in their work. In terms of commercial logic, some interviewees expressed their aspiration in terms of career development in the arts sector as a factor, while others expressed concerns as to a lack of opportunity for career development; it appears that in terms of commercial logic, this can pose both a pull and push factor for arts centre workers. This is important in terms of economic development in remote areas, as some

of the arts centre workers who are motivated by commercial logic could perhaps be entrepreneurs themselves if lack of economic opportunities were not an obstacle.

The relationship with commercial logic is also complicated by one's social relationships: humbug creates a paradoxical situation in which the income associated with employment can be viewed as both a pull and push factor; however, an escape from humbug is also described as a pull factor into work. Social relationships are also a key pull factor in terms of the respect and support which art centre workers receive from their peers, leading to role identities of revered custodian of culture (associated with social logic) who is proud of their achievements in their employment (associated with commercial logic). Similarly, the role identity of a parent can be described in the context of both pull and push factors, leading to both entry to and potential exit from the sector, and can be interpreted as a difficult balance of the commercial logic (breadwinner) and social logic (carer) of a parent.

Wry and York (2017) assert that how an individual manages these misaligned logics within their plural identities can lead to significant differences in the decisions they will make throughout the entrepreneurial process. In our research, we draw parallels in the results of interviews with remote indigenous art workers, the complexity involved in balancing these logics within their own identities, and how they may pull/push an art centre worker to enter or leave work.

Further to commercial/social logics, while there were differences among the art centre workers, these logics was easier to categorise and we were able to also match them to push-pull factors, which influence decisions of Indigenous art centre workers to join, stay or leave the art centres, based on the stages of recruitment, retention and exit (see Table 2 below).

Insert Table 2 about here

In the recruitment phase, we find, like Amin (2009), that some employees are motivated to pursue work for professional (commercial logic) or social (social logic) reasons. Other employees "fall" into jobs but value the experience, and remain committed to the aims and values of the social economy. In contrast, other employees work merely as a means to secure income, or for the experience before moving on.

In terms of commercial logics, it appears that for Indigenous art centre workers, the decision to work is motivated by the likely outcomes, especially economic ones. Almost all respondents identified with the extrinsic consequences from their work at the art centres, mainly in terms of improving themselves and upgrading and developing tangible skills through training and education, some for pragmatic reasons based on their financial circumstances i.e. to provide for living expenses necessity. Almost all the art centre workers noted that they would be unhappy if they stopped working and that was largely due to not having any more paid work.

In addition, there were other Indigenous art centre workers that were motivated by a social logic with numerous respondents wanting to *"help the elderly"* (Interviewee 56), *"help my people"* (Interviewee 61) or *"show our culture"* (Interviewee 55). This supportive, culturally secure space the art centre provided gave them the confidence to *"want to achieve something"* (stated by 37% of participants). Moreover, in Indigenous settings, this social logic has an extrinsic value in that there is significant pride in the ability to produce work in order to gain status not only among the other artists but also among the community in general. Many felt "good" or "proud" of their identity as part

of the group of "good people" working at art centres (stated by almost 85% of respondents). Pride in one's status in the community as an arts worker can be seen through lenses of both pride in one's achievements, and pride in the value of one's work to others. According to the Australian Government Department of Health (2013), culture plays a central role in the health of Indigenous Australians, and connection to culture is positively associated with general wellbeing outcomes, as well as health, education and employment. The role of an arts worker can be seen as a custodian of culture, respected in the community for enabling the transmission of that culture from generation to generation, helping to preserve knowledge & tradition. This ensures continuity of identity, culture, country and law, and contributes to the intrinsically-linked social & spiritual wellbeing of the socioeconomically disadvantaged communities in which they live and work. This Indigenous Australian perspective is further reinforced below.

Push-Pull Theory

The study also employed the push-pull theory to explain these decisions, including the extent to which decisions are based on choice or forced, non-discretionary decisions. Our results show that there were several reasons behind the decisions of Indigenous Australians to work in the remote art sector. These reasons are heterogeneous, and can be grouped as pull and push factors. Indigenous Australians are pulled to work as art workers in remote art centres because of vocational interests, with art centres providing opportunities for income from culturally relevant, meaningful employment; intrinsic motives, including the inherent psychological satisfaction and feelings of pride from working, and intellectual stimulation from increasing their skills and knowledge; altruism such as helping others, particularly the elderly and young, including educating the next generation of arts workers; and social motives, specifically socialising at work with other Indigenous artists and non-Indigenous people. These pull factors worked in

combination with emotionally taxing aspects of Indigenous workers existing life and Indigenous culture (i.e. boredom, shame, humbug and sorry business) and limited other paid employment options in remote Australia that pushed workers to work in arts centres.

While the results point towards a pull more than a push, suggesting that working in the remote arts sector is more choice than force, both push and pull factors actually work together in accordance with the behavioural expectations associated with being part of a community, and the complex associated internal and external accountabilities. As such, the factors that explain why art centre workers are attracted to art centres are multi-factorial, interrelated and closely tied to the social and cultural aspects of Indigenous community life.

Conversely, the results indicate that it is possible to point to one or a few single causes to explain why workers choose to stay in the arts sector, with paid arts-related careers a salient pull factor, providing professional development opportunities, and social and other community benefits (e.g. self-determination).

The reasons for leaving arts jobs are more diverse and can be seen as an effect of discretionary pull (i.e. familiar obligations and responsibilities), and discretionary (i.e. loss of interest) and non-discretionary push (i.e. poor pay, resourcing and work conditions in art centres) factors. The results also indicate that factors that affected some arts workers' decision to work in art centres conversely influenced other workers' decision to leave. For example, "humbug" is cited as a push factor into work at arts centres as interviewees responded that work was a refuge from humbug. But demand sharing can also be a pull factor out of work. In the community context where there are few jobs, having an income other than Centrelink is conspicuous, despite it not necessarily being a much higher income. This can mean the employed arts workers attract more demands

to share money or resources (cars etc.) than their unemployed family members, which can be exhausting and a pull factor away from employment. Similarly, "Sorry Business" is cited as a push factor into work. But whilst work can be a welcome distraction from grief, work obligations can also be an additional stress. Losing close family members on a regular basis can create overwhelming grief and trauma, and sometimes, people need to take lots of time off work or need to resign. Under this scenario. "Sorry Business" may be a pull factor out of work, not just a push factor into it from a HRM perspective, and this suggests a need for managers to understand and empathise the complex nature of these aspects of culture, and support employees in a culturally-appropriately and empathetic way.

Art Centre Worker Identity Configurations – An Integrated Understanding

In Figure 1 above, we presented an integrated perspective of typologies representing the different configurations of social enterprise employees in terms of identity theory, Push-Pull theory and institutional logics, in an attempt to better understand their motivation to work in these hybrid organisations.

From the qualitative evidence presented and analysed above, in terms of where the majority (about 3 out of 4) of these Indigenous art centre workers in remote Australia sit, most of them will be situated in cell A (Balanced: Strong). While there was strong social welfare logic, complemented by cultural and community pull factors, the art centre workers also experienced professional satisfaction in their art work and some even had ambitions for further career development (e.g. to progress to become art centre managers). Similar to Wry and York (2017)'s balanced entrepreneurs, these balanced employees may hold many role identities that line up to different logics (Tetlock, 1986, Stryker, 2008).

In the small minority of art centre workers that expressed that they may leave their jobs at art centre (6%), it appears that they were unable to reconcile both social and commercial logics and were further subjected to significant push factors in their places of work and/or pull factors in their families and communities, and would be situated in cell D in Figure 1. They would have been affected by family care responsibilities, poor pay and other conditions that reinforced pressing financial pressures (not only to themselves but also to their community). For the art centre workers who lost interest in their jobs and hence career aspirations in Indigenous art, the personal identity would come into play and like social entrepreneurs who did not have such personal identities that provide for the appropriate combination of competencies and knowledge to exploit opportunities (Zott and Amit, 2007, Wry and York, 2017), these art centre workers would not purse further work as they could not adopt an aligned role (Stets and Carter, 2012).

For the remaining fifth of art centre workers interviewed, they would fall either in cells B (Mixed: Commercial) or C (Mixed: Social welfare). From our responses, it is likely that more of them were in the Mixed: Social welfare categories as there were more expressions of pull-factors in terms of contribution to the community and aboriginal art and culture.

Although, as discussed above, we have based our research on identity theory (Stryker, 2000) with a focus on role and personal identity as per Wry and York (2017). This assumes that the individual art centres are seen as collections of interrelated individuals, with few inter-group interactions and as such, is sufficient for analysing "how behaviour is motivated and takes place through roles that are embedded in these groups" (Wry and York, 2017). However, this view of identity may have limitations in a highly community-based or communitarian setting that characterises

these remote Indigenous communities, whereby the Indigenous community/environment plays an important role (Humphreys, Wakerman, Pashen and Buykx, 2009, Keane, Lincoln and Smith, 2012).

It may be therefore appropriate to expand the view of personal identity to include a sense of community, which refers to "… the perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them [and] the feeling that one is a part of a larger dependable and stable structure" (Sarason, 1974p.157). The socially interdependent nature of desert communities is reflected in participants' responses to questions regarding the support they sought or received in their employment as arts workers. The overwhelming answer was that support came from *"family and friends"*, with almost equal emphasis on the support from the art centre manager and, to a slightly lesser degree, from Desart and their Aboriginal Arts Worker Program. A typical response is something along the lines of *"I get good support from my family and friends and the art centre manager"*. Social interaction is part of all workplaces, but the emphasis of arts worker responses to this question foregrounds the importance of support, self-esteem-building social relationships both in the workplace, but also (primarily) from outside of it. The external forces of family and friends and the continuity provided by training, such as that through Desart, appear to be central to attracting and retaining arts workers, and the social logic of Desart as an organisation, which embodies a "Culture First" mindset in its dealings with communities, presumably appeals to individuals whose salient identity is associated with social logic. This, in a sense, may overlap more with the social logic of working in social enterprise.

Implications for practice

Two main implications for practice come out of this research. Firstly, to help in developing similar and strong commercial and social logics as well as enhance knowledge, competencies and social relationships, there is a need to move beyond the segmented approach of Australian Government's Indigenous Art Centre Plan (Commonwealth of Australia, 2016) which sees separate strategies for 'community and culture' as opposed to 'employment, professional development and training'. Instead, in line with Table 1 above, in order to develop strong attraction and retention processes for art centre workers, there should be better reconciliation between the non-professional with the professional aspects among art centre workers' careers (Acker and Congreve, 2016). For example, this should see better integration of the support for the development of art centre workers as leaders and integrators within their community (given that arts production is seen as a significant profession by the community), with that of support for mentoring, professional development and exchange opportunities for art centre workers (as opportunities for paid, meaningful work that meet the art centre workers' career aspirations are important attraction and retention factors), in a culturally-relevant and holistic manner.

Secondly, the different configurations of Indigenous remote art centre workers in terms of identity theory, Push-Pull theory and institutional logics in these hybrid organisations, combined with the entangled social structures of desert communities – and the central place of family, friends and colleagues in sustaining arts workers' employment – means that it is not really possible to adopt standardised approaches to frame the delivery of training and professional development. Art centre peak bodies, based in key regional centres, and who centralise and coordinate these programs, will

need to provide a tailored and a mix of off-site, structured and accredited training balanced by on-site mentoring, coaching and information, based on the configurations of the art centre workers in these different centres. To do so, mentoring and coaching, for example, will need to take on further, aspects of personal support, built on the personal relationship between trainer and trainee. For example, innovative programs like Desart's Art Worker Program (Desart, 2018) and ANKAAA's Arts Worker Extension and Arts Worker Graduate programs (ANKAAA, 2014), should be extended to other remote art centre areas. These started from a peak-body/ organisational perspective, but they have been improved through customised training and professional development that is increasingly aligned to the values and motivations of arts workers as well as the needs of the industry and the community, thereby strengthening culture as well as building economic and social empowerment, that together, serve to underpin improvements in important aspects of Indigenous life like that of education, employment and health and well-being (Ninti One, 2017).

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the conviction of arts worker responses in wanting to maintain their work at the art centre and their very limited interest in other professional opportunities (e.g. relocating for work) is conspicuous, the interviewee data was restricted by the English language limitations of respondents. Despite allowing the interviewees to respond in their own native language, most chose not to do so and this resulted in many giving very limited responses. We are also cognisant that despite using an Indigenous research perspective with a research team consisting of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers, some of our research methods (e.g. interviews) may serve "as a metaphor for colonial knowledge, for power, and for truth" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) (p.4).

To improve reliability of the findings, further research should also include other perspectives of stakeholders in the Indigenous art ecosystem and the perspectives from the regional and national program managers (e.g. Aboriginal Arts Worker Program). This would also hopefully lead to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how Indigenous culture affects art centre workers' employment decisions. In addition, the research covered two very large and geographically different areas in Australia - Central Australia and Far North Queensland (FNQ) (where the Indigenous researchers that we engaged were based), which arguably are also culturally distinct. We have not incorporated regional differences into our study and further research should factor that it. For example, aspects of human capital development (e.g. skills and training) seemed to differ between the 2 regions (e.g. FNQ interviewees stated that *"learning new skills"* more often than Central Australian interviewees who state *"a good place to work"* more frequently) but we are unsure if these were real cultural and context differences. Also, one of our findings was that Indigenous art centre workers were unlikely to move geographically. This was obviously the case for these 2 sites that were very far away from each other. Future research should look at whether if art centres were closer together and less culturally distinct, that workers would re-locate for work opportunity.

Our research, integrating identity theory with push-pull theory through institutional logics, from an Indigenous research perspective, found aspects of Indigenous culture that were difficult to include in either identity theory or classify under social or commercial logics. Besides the importance of community, thereby alluding to the need to incorporate social identity theory in our research, this also included the importance to Indigenous people of the concept of "place" or country where they have their roots and traditional ties. While we found the importance of "place" in employment decisions, "place" provides the basis for indigenous identity (Doohan, 2008), which also

needs further exploration.

Furthermore, our research found evidence of motivations and attitudes that did not necessarily link to any formal human resource management systems. Informality in managing people is largely the case in small enterprises (Cardon and Stevens, 2004, Mayson and Barrett, 2006) and even likely in social enterprises as employees who join social enterprises are largely driven by social or moral concerns (Ohana and Meyer, 2010). However, there have been recent changes in government policy and funding emphasising a "normalization" regime focused on "getting Indigenous Australians into work" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015a). For the art centre network, this is seen largely through the development of the Indigenous Employment Initiative (IEI) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015b) which has resulted in remote art centres increasingly becoming the focus of their community's aspirations for local livelihoods and engagement of young people (ANKAAA, 2014). This has seen the rapid creation of over 300 art centre worker positions across remote Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2015b) and just like the case for growing for-profit enterprises (Barrett and Mayson, 2007), this points to more formal HRM processes in the art centres as social enterprises in order to cope with growth and the need for more research in this area.

CONCLUSION

Understanding place-based employment and how it intersects with cultural/ artistic practices in social enterprise structures is vital for a remote Indigenous community's economic self-determination. While art centres as social enterprises have a dual for-profit and social mission, our study finds that it is mainly factors related to paid local employment, aligned to vocational interests together with pro social motives, that are important in explaining why Indigenous Australians choose to work in remote art centres, especially among those with longer tenures.

The study contributes to theory by integrating identity theory and push-pull theory with institutional logics by examining the factors behind labour force participation among Indigenous Australians in these art centres through an Indigenous research perspective. We specifically extend and apply Wry and York (2017)'s identity configuration framework beyond that of the social entrepreneur to Indigenous employees working in these social enterprises. Despite both identity and push-pull theory having been used to explain decisions, motivations and intentions in social entrepreneurial contexts, most of this research to date looked at the entrepreneur/ founder-owner and has largely been restricted to the initial entrepreneurial entry event. This research has therefore attempted to address the gap in the existing research by applying these concepts to better understanding the subsequent phases of the entrepreneurial journey, in particular, the decision by these employees of remote Indigenous art centres to leave or stay (Schjoedt, 2009).

While there are many descriptive and empirical studies that purport to examine what is happening among Indigenous workers, often, these are aimed at policy makers specifically and are not grounded in theory. In terms of identity theory, while we do not find clear evidence of role and personal identities in their traditional form, if we expand the view of personal identity to include cultural specific aspects like a sense of community, the socially interdependent nature of identity is quite evident. In terms of commercial/social logics, which are also important components in an identity-based approach, the research found that like social entrepreneurs, art centre workers had different preferred logics in terms of their motivation to join, stay or leave the art centres, with many having to reconcile both commercial and social logics differently based on the stages of recruitment, retention and exit.

Finally, most of the studies that have been conducted in Indigenous contexts are highly specific and confined to one particular geographic region. To some extent, this is due to the acknowledgement that there is a lack of cultural homogeneity among Indigenous peoples, and especially so among Indigenous Australians (Rigney, 1999) reinforced by limited resources to tackle this research. We are able to address this apparent gap through a collaborative study with the peak Indigenous art and business bodies representing all the different remote art centres among different Indigenous Australian communities located in Central Australia and Far North Queensland. The research contributes to the limited understanding of career deliberations in remote communities, an aspect that has not traditionally been studied especially at the grassroots level. This has significance for management, in helping motivate Indigenous workers in highly remote areas and thereby "closing the gap" in terms of socio-economic disadvantage.

While the context of their employment is complicated and often does not align to the purposes of the funding that enables it, on an individual (and community) level, the ability to access culturally relevant work is important, esteemed and, given the limited job options in remote Australia, rare. Although art centres remain a prominent feature of remote Indigenous communities in Australia and there appears to be relative employment stability suggested by the attachment of arts workers to their employment, there are considerable forces of change at work in the remote employment sector. Higher level policy shifts aside, the sizeable role of employment (with its attendant challenges for resource poor, not-for-profit arts organisations) and the funding (and funding dependency) it triggers is creating a new and unfamiliar environment for art centres to negotiate. How art centres adapt to the new range of expectations from both inside and outside is unclear and an area that would benefit from further research.

In spite of these trends, and in line with this Special Issue's call to explore factors that affect work attitudes and behaviours of workers in social enterprises as well as a better understanding of what motivates in social enterprises (Newman, Mayson, Teicher and Barrett, 2015), this research on the whole finds that from the perspective of the Indigenous art centre workers, not only are they able to effectively translate "dreams" into meaningful careers, but the art centres as locally embedded social enterprises are also extremely meaningful places to work in.

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FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1 – Indigenous Art Centre Worker Identity Configurations

		Identities associated with commercial logic	
		Role identities	**Personal identities**
		Future Art Centre Managers, Employee, self-employed artist, seller of art	Income, Breadwinning (Feed the family), career-motivated, pride in personal successes
Identities associated with social welfare logic	**Role identities** Cultural custodian, community member, social activist, artist, member of social enterprise, good contributor to community	**A. Balanced*: Strong*** **Retention pressures:** *Similar and strong* for commercial and social logics Economic push factors (low), pull factors (strong) Social/non-economic push factors (weak), pull factors (strong) **Knowledge, competencies and social relationships:** deeper and more focused for commercial logic	**C. Mixed**: *Social* **Retention pressures:** Stronger for social welfare logic Economic push factors (strong), pull factors (weak) Social/non-economic push factors (low), pull factors (strong) **Knowledge, competencies and social relationships:** deeper and more focused for social welfare logic
	Personal identities Social justice, nurturing, benevolence, cultural diplomacy, pride in contributions to successes of community	**B. Mixed: *Commercial*** **Retention pressures:** stronger for commercial logic Economic push factors (weak), pull factors (strong) Social/non-economic push factors (strong), pull factors (weak) **Knowledge, competencies and social relationships:** deeper and more focused for commercial logic	**D. Participation in Social Enterprise unlikely** **Retention pressures:** *similar but weak for both logics* Economic push factors (strong), pull factors (weak) Social/non-economic push factors (low), pull factors (strong) **Knowledge, competencies and social relationships:** *similar but weak for both logics*

(Interpretative model based on Wry and York (2017)'s Entrepreneur Identity Configurations)

Table 1 –Art Centre Worker Commercial/Social Logics and Push-Pull Factors

Push-Pull factors/ Logics	Pull factors - attraction	Pull factors - retention	Push factors - Go	Pull factors - Go
Commercial Logic	Arts work as a means to an end (wages to buy food, clothes, look after family)/instrumental motive	Arts work as a career, to e.g. open up own studio	Poor pay, work conditions, lack of resources in art centres	For better pay/conditions, experience
	Arts work tied to welfare benefits			
Social Logic	Arts workers as two way mechanism for transmission of Indigenous identity/culture e.g. stories - elders to artists, & artist to children/other Indigenous/non-indigenous people		Family pressure to leave to e.g. look after children	Unwilling to move due to attachment to place/community
	Arts work as an escape from negative aspects of Indigenous culture e.g. humbug, sorry business, shame (family relationships)		pressure to share financial benefits from work (family relationships rules of behaviour)	
	Arts work as an opportunity to escape boredom in remote communities.			
	Opportunity for social interaction with other arts workers, tourists etc., and concomitant intrinsic benefits e.g. joy, happiness, pride (Human World)			
	Altruistic motives			
Combined Commercial/ Social Logic	Place-based, paid work as an artist that aligns w vocational aspirations Physical world, Sacred world	Arts work as a path to management role, for altruistic reasons e.g. manage own affairs/self determination		

Table 2 –Art Centre Worker Work/Roles

S/No	Type of Work / Role[5]
1.	Making artworks - doing painting, carving, weaving, etc.
2.	Cleaning and/or other Art Centre maintenance.
3.	Cultural work like translating and collecting stories.
4.	Packing artworks.
5.	Driving to pick up/drop off artists, or collect/deliver things.

[5] Nationally IEI Art Workers' wages and training government funding guidelines stipulate that making artworks is not an art worker's role. However, art centre workers may be a casual / part time worker and paint in their own time at the art centre.