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The space between: Trustworthiness and trust in the police among three immigrant groups in Australia

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Research regularly finds significant variation in the perceived trustworthiness of police across different social groups. For example, studies from a number of different countries have shown that people from particular ethnic and racial minority groups tend to have less positive evaluations and lower expectations of police effectiveness, benevolence and integrity, compared to their majority group counterparts. However, much less is known about how trust – as a willingness to be vulnerable under conditions of risk – varies across groups. Moreover, the criminological literature regularly conflates trustworthiness and trust, and/or assumes the former translates unproblematically into the latter. In this paper, we use data from a survey of three immigrant groups living in Sydney, Australia, to explore the relationship between trustworthiness and trust. We focus on how aspects of the ‘immigrant experience’ may affect the translation of trustworthiness into trust, and whether there are factors that predict trust independent of evaluations of the trust object. Our results show that social norms, which vary across immigrant groups, predict levels of trust independent of trustworthiness, as do other individual and group-level characteristics. This has important implications, both for the conceptualisation and empirical study of trust in the police, and for policy efforts that seek to enhance public trust in this important state institution.

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Introduction

Public trust in institutions such as the police is premised on people’s intuitions, evaluations and expectations of their activity, behaviour and performance. As people gain direct and indirect information about and experience of policing, their perceptions of police trustworthiness and hence their trust in (willingness to be vulnerable in relation to) police changes and develops. Personal and vicarious contact is central to this process. Negative experiences seem to be more impactful than positive encounters (for a summary, see Oliveira et al., 2021). For example, people who have had recent contact

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with police have less trust, on average, because they tend to have more negative evaluations of policing.

Yet, trust is a more complex phenomenon than is typically represented in policing research, which moreover tends to conflate trust and trustworthiness. Drawing on Mayer et al. (1995), Hamm et al. (2017) argue that trust is a willingness to accept vulnerability, a psychological state that is driven by (a) perceptions of trustworthiness and (b) the individual's propensity to trust. On this account, trust involves a willingness to take *risk* – to be vulnerable to the agency and motives of another and to take the 'leap of faith' that the psychological state of trust represents (Möllering, 2006). Applying this empirically, Hamm et al. (2017) found that *trust* was a key mechanism through which perceptions of performance and behaviour motivate people to proactively cooperate with the police. Risk is present in this situation, they argue, because police may not help them, and/or may mistreat them. People are more likely to accept the risk that cooperation presents when they view the police as *trustworthy* and when they have a *general propensity* to trust. In other words, when people have positive expectations about the effectiveness, fairness and integrity of police (all elements of trustworthiness) and when they are more willing to take the risks trust implies (propensity to trust) they will be more likely to trust the police overall.

In this paper, we build on some of these ideas. We focus on the 'leap of faith' to trust, and the potential space between believing officers are trustworthy and accepting the risk inherent to encounters with them (given the power relationship between police and public). We address the potential for heterogeneity in the relationship between trustworthiness and trust among immigrants of Middle Eastern, Vietnamese and UK ancestry living in Sydney, Australia. We start from the initial premise that due to shared histories and identities, minority immigrant groups may see more uncertainty than non-minority immigrant groups in their relationships with police. If individuals see greater psychological risk in ceding power and control to authorities, they might need a higher level of perceived trustworthiness before they are willing to accept the resulting vulnerability. By decoupling trust from trustworthiness, our strategy allows us to examine whether individual and collective beliefs and motivations attached to immigrants' experiences help explain the disparate ways in which trustworthiness informs trust for each of the three immigrant groups, and why some group members may need a higher level of perceived trustworthiness before they are willing to place trust.

Overall, our empirical assessment of trust among these immigrant groups makes a novel and instructive analytical comparison. Our findings suggest that the strength of the relationship between trustworthiness and trust varies across groups, that individual and group-level characteristics are associated with trust independent of trustworthiness, and that individual- and group-level characteristics explain some but not all of the varying 'space between' trustworthiness and trust. Some group differences in trust remain even after we account for trustworthiness and other significant predictors of trust. Before presenting our results, we define and differentiate trust and trustworthiness, consider what the 'immigrant experience' might mean for trust in the police, and describe our methodological approach. We conclude with a discussion of theoretical and policy implications.

Differentiating trust and trustworthiness in police-citizen relations

Although other accounts of course exist, trust research across multiple academic disciplines has begun to converge on a shared conceptual definition that trust is:

[A] willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. (Mayer et al., 1995, p. 712)

According to PytlikZillig and Kimborough (2016, p. 9), people who trust an institution are ‘... willing to rely upon, give control to, or otherwise “be vulnerable to” [it] under conditions of risk’. This vulnerability, and the harms from breaches of trust it references, can range widely. As Hamm et al. (2017, p. 1188) outline in the context of the police:

Vulnerability refers to the potential for harms that run from concrete, individual injury to more nebulous psychological harms that can affect larger segments of society ... Regarding the police, vulnerability most obviously includes the potential for justified personal harms ranging from getting a ticket or being arrested, to more serious and unjustifiable harms such as experiencing excessive violence, bias, or disrespect at the hands of the police.

Hence, to trust police is to accept the ability of police officers to take control of relevant situations, decide on how best to act, intrude into our lives, and generally to impose social order and control. Crucially, if we are to trust police, we must be willing to do so even when we cannot know whether police will fail in their duties, or if their behaviour will violate norms, rules or laws. By definition, this risk or uncertainty is central to trust. If we knew for certain how police would behave and what they would achieve, *we would not need to trust them*.

By contrast, trustworthiness can be defined as the trustor’s evaluations and expectations of the competency and good intentions of the trustee (Hamm et al., 2017; Pytlik-Zillig et al., 2016; c.f. Hardin, 2002). The precise content of such judgements – what it is that makes an entity trustworthy – is likely to vary across contexts. Hamm et al. (2017, p. 7) note that most accounts of trustworthiness stress the importance of technical ability, benevolence and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995), with additional factors, including reliability, transparency, and identification emphasised more so in some contexts than others. In policing, assessments of procedural justice are generally positioned as central to perceptions of police trustworthiness (Tyler & Huo, 2002), not least because they ‘wrap up’ a number of the concerns listed above: benevolence, integrity, reliability, transparency, neutrality, a lack of bias, etc. But effectiveness, distributive justice and the idea of bounded authority (that police stay within the limits of their rightful authority) are possibly important additional factors (Ali et al., 2021, 2022; Jackson et al., 2022; Murphy, 2021; Pass et al., 2020; Pósch et al., 2021; Trinkner et al., 2018) and there are likely a wide range of other factors that are important to different people depending on time and place, e.g. the quality of informal social control processes in one’s immediate neighbourhood (Jackson et al., 2013).

Distinguishing between trust and trustworthiness in this manner has clear relevance and appeal in the context of policing. So defined, trust is a process founded in evaluations and expectations of police activity and behaviour, and crystallised in a psychological willingness to be vulnerable to police under conditions of risk. To summon or voluntarily interact with police officers requires a person to make themselves vulnerable. People

who enter into interactions with police are very often in situations where they have clear expectations that officers will perform actions important to them, perhaps most obviously by investigating a crime (Ali et al., 2022; Murphy et al., 2014; Pass et al., 2020). On a wider level, police organisations are constantly making decisions about how to deal with issues of crime and disorder. Failure to succeed, on the one hand, and unnecessary, inappropriate or nefarious behaviours, on the other, can have significant implications for individuals, communities and society as a whole. The extent to which perceptions of trustworthiness provide the basis of trust, moreover, means that there is an iterative or recursive aspect to these processes. People's direct and vicarious experiences of police are one factor that shapes their willingness to be vulnerable to, contact, interact or cooperate with police in the future.

Notwithstanding the argument that trust is a process, a small number of studies support the idea that perceived trustworthiness and trust are distinct, albeit highly correlated (e.g. Hamm et al., 2017). This opens the conjoined possibilities that, first, the factors important for trust are not limited to or exhausted by positive evaluations and expectations of police behaviour. Second, it may be that perceived trustworthiness does not always translate into trust. Perhaps greater levels of trustworthiness are needed for some groups if they are to be willing to trust. Third, some of the factors that inform trust (and explain varying gaps between trustworthiness and trust) may be group or context-specific. We explore each of these claims in more detail below.

The multiple sources of trustworthiness and trust

The idea that perceptions of police trustworthiness are founded in a variety of factors is widely accepted in the literature. To give just two examples, many studies have shown that neighbourhood conditions can be strongly associated with people's perceptions of the trustworthiness of police to be fair and effective (e.g. Jackson et al., 2013; Kwak & McNeeley, 2019; Wu & Liu, 2021). Those who hold authoritarian attitudes (Roché & Roux, 2017; Yesberg & Bradford, 2019) also tend to consider police as more trustworthy than people without those attitudes. Yet, many studies in this area are limited because they do not also consider trust. They thus fail to test whether certain social conditions and cultural experiences that are outside of police control might predict willingness to be vulnerable to police. Perhaps trustworthiness may mediate this association. We test this idea, but also assess whether factors external to policing predict trust directly, *bypassing* perceptions of trustworthiness. People who have a positive general orientation towards authority, for example, may be more willing to trust police, regardless of positive or negative expectations about police behaviour.

Hence, one goal of the current study is to assess whether variables unrelated to police performance/behaviour have associations with trust, independent of evaluations of trustworthiness. This is central to Mayer et al.'s (1995) model, which positions the propensity to trust alongside perceptions of trustworthiness as dual predictors of trust. It also resonates with other aspects of the trust literature. Uslaner (1995, 2002), for example, argues that some people are simply more trusting than others, and that 'trust is not about having faith in particular people or even groups of people. It is a general outlook on human nature and mostly does not depend upon personal experiences or upon the assumption

that others are trustworthy' (2002, p. 17). On this account, people may be socialised at familial, parochial and societal levels to be more or less trusting of others.

These ideas have met with some support in previous studies. For example, Lee and Lee (2021) explored attitudes toward police among a South Korean sample and found that propensity to trust had a significant correlation with constructs such as procedural justice, trustworthiness and legitimacy. PytlikZillig et al. (2017) further suggest that propensity to trust and/or other measures of dispositional trust such as generalised institutional trust are particularly important when the trustor lacks information about the trustee. As they gain such information, dispositional trust becomes relatively less important. Other studies, however, have found little correlation between measures of propensity to trust, which usually refer to 'other people', and trust in institutions (e.g. Hamm et al., 2013).

Trust and the immigrant experience of policing

To explore how trustworthiness translates into trust in police, and what might intervene in this process, we focus on three specific immigrant communities in Sydney, Australia. The immigrant experience of policing provides an intriguing frame to explore the issues raised above. Contrary to some prior expectations, research has found that perceptions of police can in fact be *more* positive among immigrant than non-immigrant groups (e.g. Bradford et al., 2015; Pass et al., 2020; Röder & Mühlau, 2012a, 2012b). Yet *ethnic minority* status is frequently associated with more negative perceptions (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). This might be due to the fact that minorities typically have more frequent and more negative interactions with police (Bradford, 2017), and ethnic minority status may thus complicate the immigrant experience. The idea that immigrants can be unwilling to turn to police for help, and be less likely to cooperate with officers across a range of activities, is a frequent topic of concern in policing and policy debates (e.g. Davies & Fagan, 2012; Davis et al., 2001; Menjivar & Bejarano, 2004). Immigrants may thus have relatively favourable perceptions of police (on average), but there may also be various barriers that prevent these positive perceptions from translating into behaviours, at least for some immigrant groups.

Generally speaking, experiences and perceptions of police among immigrants are likely to be shaped by five important sets of processes. Perhaps most fundamentally, immigrants have been exposed to a different policing context to that of their destination country (unless they migrated as young children) and can compare different policing structures and processes based on lived experience. Among some immigrants in the global north with roots in the global south, this seems often to lead to more favourable evaluations of police seen as less corrupt, and more efficient, than the systems experienced in their birth country (Bradford et al., 2015; Nannestad et al., 2014; Röder & Mühlau 2012a). In general, where this pattern is found it seems to disappear in the second generation. Indeed, trust in police among second-generation immigrants is often lower than among non-immigrant groups (Bradford et al., 2015; Pass et al., 2020; Röder & Mühlau, 2012a). The extent to which immigrants are often from visible minority groups (in the destination country) is one obvious reason for this – as noted, studies in many parts of the world have found that trust in police tends to be lower among ethnic minority immigrants (for Australian examples see Ali et al., 2022; Oliveira &

Murphy, 2015; Pass et al., 2020). But it may also be the case that second-generation immigrants lose their parent's cross-national frame of reference and, broadly speaking, regress to the mean level of trust in the population.

Instead of assessing whether immigrants to Australia have different views of police than non-immigrants, though, we concentrate on four further inter-related processes. First, we assume that, in a general sense, trust is a norm that varies across different groups and contexts (Helliwell et al., 2016; Ostrom, 2000; Rothstein, 2000). This is precisely why the members of some immigrant groups who share the same ancestry may tend to be more trusting than the members of other ancestral groups – they have been socialised in contexts where there is a norm to trust others. Perhaps, as Uslaner (2002) argues, this occurs in recognition of the innate moral value of human beings as *worthy* of trust. Conversely, others are socialised in contexts where there may be strong norms to *distrust* state authorities. The fact that interpersonal, social and political trust varies significantly across countries (Delhey & Newton, 2005; Norris, 2011) may thus affect different immigrant groups' readiness to trust police in their new home. Naturally, other psychological traits and dispositions also vary across cultures (Hofstede, 2011). To give just one example, authoritarian attitudes and associated constructs may be important. As suggested above, people high in Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) have been shown to value authorities, be more submissive or obedient towards them, and to be more accepting of their place and role in society (Duckitt & Bizumic, 2013; Mallinas et al., 2020). They may therefore be more 'willing to be vulnerable' to institutions such as police.

Second, research across multiple contexts has suggested that social norms underpin attitudes toward police *as a specific institution* (Antrobus et al., 2015; Jackson et al., 2021); perhaps due to historical and/or ongoing experiences of wrongdoing in relation to this institution (Christmas, 2012; Kochel, 2019) and its wider state framework (Weitzer, 2010). Indeed, it seems almost self-evident that different immigrant groups will have different norms relating to trust in the police. Among those with historically poor relationships with the police there may be a norm not to trust (Kwak et al., 2019), and this may inhibit, over-ride or interact with individual evaluations of police behaviour. The kinds of processes described above, such as geographically patterned experiences of crime, (dis)order and policing, may also shape the social norms of populations themselves differentially distributed over social and geographical space (c.f., Jackson et al., 2013). And of course, if an immigrant (or their parents) was socialised in a context where norms of trust in police were weak – or where there was a norm to *not* trust – then this may continue to affect their behaviours and attitudes even after moving to a new country.

Third, turning to the experience of immigrants in their destination country, a wide gamut of factors may be important for willingness to trust the police. We concentrate here on differential and often racialised experiences of policing, the state and society. People from visible minority groups in a country such as Australia are likely to experience broader societal discrimination, and have different experiences of policing than those not from visible minority groups (e.g. Murphy et al., 2022; Murphy & McPherson, 2022). Previous work in Australia has demonstrated that a perception or experience of societal discrimination can be associated with attitudes towards the police (Murphy et al., 2022), not least because the police represent and reflect society in important ways (Loader &

Mulcahy, 2003), meaning that societal discrimination can be taken as an indicator of police discrimination.

Finally, research demonstrating that neighbourhood characteristics are important predictors of perceptions of police (e.g. Jackson et al., 2013) may also be important. Evidence from many studies suggests that people who live in more orderly, cohesive and affluent neighbourhoods have more favourable views of police, on average, than those who live in less orderly, less cohesive and poorer neighbourhoods (Sampson & Bartusch, 1998). If different immigrant groups self-select into or are pushed towards specific neighbourhoods, this spatial factor may have important implications for trust (Markus, 2014; Sydes, 2019).

It should be clear from the above that none of this is unique to immigrants. There are a number of reasons why immigrants' background and experience might be important for trust judgements, the relevance and salience of which are likely to vary across different groups. But people from many groups in society have different experiences of policing, vary systematically from others in terms of authoritarian and other attitudes, tend to live in more or less orderly and socially cohesive neighbourhoods, and/or have different group norms about what constitutes an appropriate relationship with the police. Certainly, we would argue that our research questions could apply across society as a whole - the immigrant experience of policing is merely a particularly visible and distinct version of the experience of everyone.

Research questions

Building on the preceding discussion we develop four research questions that explore the extent, nature and potential causes of any gap or break between immigrants' perceptions of trustworthiness and trust in the police.

- (1) Is there variation in trust in police across different immigrant groups?
- (2) Are there personal, social and neighbourhood characteristics that are associated with immigrants' trust in police that are *independent* of evaluations of police trustworthiness and propensity to trust? We focus on perceived norms to trust and support police, while also including attitudes towards authority, experiences of discrimination, and neighbourhood structural characteristics in our models.
- (3) To what extent are any differences in trust between immigrant groups accounted for by: (a) variations in perceptions of trustworthiness; *and/or* (b) these other personal, social and cultural factors?
- (4) Is the link between trustworthiness and trust consistent across immigrant groups, or does it vary?

To answer these four questions, we analyse data from a large-scale survey of three immigrant groups living in Sydney, Australia. After first assessing the strength of the association between trustworthiness and trust in police, we then explore a set of (potentially) culturally-specific experiences, norms and attitudes that may lie in the 'space between' trustworthiness and trust. Assessing potential barriers between positive evaluations and trust, we ask: are there factors that inhibit people from making the 'leap of faith' to trust (Möllering, 2006), *even if* they have a positive sense of the trustworthiness of police?

Data and methods

Data and data collection

The *Sydney Immigrant Community Survey* was conducted in the greater Sydney metropolitan area in 2018/2019 (for more information see Murphy et al., 2019). Sydney was chosen as the study site for three reasons. First, it is Australia's most populous city, accounting for about 20% of Australia's total population. Second, it has the eighth largest immigrant population among metropolitan areas world-wide, with overseas-born residents accounting for 43% of Sydney's population. Third, it is a major hub for a number of immigrant communities (e.g. seven out of 10 Lebanese immigrants in Australia settle in Sydney, which also has the largest Muslim community in Australia; ABS, 2016).

The survey covers three immigrant groups. First, two racialised minority groups: Vietnamese and Middle Eastern Muslims. Both have historically had strained relationships with police in Australia and both are expected to have lower levels of trust in police (e.g. Cherney & Murphy, 2016; Meredyth et al., 2010).¹ These groups also represent two of the largest ethnic minority immigrant groups in Australia. Muslim immigrants, mainly from the Middle East, comprise 2.6% of the Australian population, while Vietnamese immigrants comprise 1.2% of the population (ABS, 2016). The third group – immigrants from the UK – serves as something of a control group. UK immigrants to Australia tend *not* to come from racialised minority groups, and by the second generation will tend to see themselves, and be seen by others, as unproblematically 'Australian'.² This group of immigrants are expected to have higher levels of trust in the police.

All participants had to be Australian citizens to be eligible for inclusion.³ A company specialising in the recruitment of hard-to-reach ethnic minority populations was retained to recruit survey participants. As Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese immigrants comprise fewer than 4% and 3% of Sydney's overall population, standard random sampling techniques were inadequate. An 'ethnic surname' sampling strategy was therefore used to sample Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese populations. This involved identifying common surnames for both groups (e.g. Ahmed; Nguyen) and generating records (name and telephone numbers) from Sydney's Electronic Telephone Directory.

A sampling frame was constructed containing 15,118 names (7823 for the Middle Eastern Muslim cohort; 7295 for the Vietnamese cohort). Potential participants were randomly contacted by phone from each sample list. A next-birthday method was used to select a single person aged 18+ living in the contacted household, ensuring random selection from within households. An additional screening question for the Middle Eastern group was also included to ensure all respondents were Muslim. Demographic quotas for gender (50% female), age (50% <30 years of age), and immigrant status (50% 1st generation immigrant (overseas born; both parents born overseas) and 50% second generation immigrant (born in Australia, both parents born overseas)) were also applied to more closely represent population characteristics of the two immigrant groups. Interviewers arranged face-to-face appointments with those who were eligible and interested in participating. Interviewers spoke English and either Vietnamese or Arabic, allowing participants to complete the survey in their language of choice. A quota for 395 completed surveys for each of the Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese groups was set. While this non-probability sampling strategy has yielded representative

samples in previous studies (e.g. Himmelfarb et al., 1983) it should be noted that the method has limitations. Specifically, bias can be present, and representativeness is not guaranteed, compromising the ability to generalise findings to broader populations (Etikan et al., 2016). This should be considered when interpreting the results.

The UK immigrant sample was generated in a different manner as their surnames are not easily discernible from other 'White' immigrant groups in Australia (e.g. Canadians, New Zealanders). Recruitment was achieved by sampling individuals from locations known to attract UK immigrants. This included social and sporting club affiliations (e.g. football clubs), intercepts at local centres, via social media (e.g. Facebook, Airtasker), recruitment agencies, and snowball sampling. We acknowledge that recruiting participants from clubs and centres may have biased our UK sample toward those who felt more socially integrated in Australia. This needs to be considered when interpreting the findings. Due to the difficulties associated with sampling from this group, only 393 sample records were compiled and participants were randomly contacted by phone and recruited for face-to-face interviews in the same procedure outlined for the Vietnamese and Middle Eastern Muslim cohorts. A quota of 110 completed interviews was set for the UK cohort. We should note that this *N* was somewhat smaller than the other two immigrant groups, but there was sufficient power in the final sample to reliably detect large effect sizes involving that group.

All respondents were paid \$40 to participate, and surveys were completed with 903 immigrants (395 Vietnamese; 398 Middle Eastern Muslim; 110 UK immigrants). Consistent with Sydney's population estimates Lebanese immigrants comprised 87% of the Middle Eastern Muslim respondents. Respondents were clustered in 172 different 'suburbs' with a mean number of 5 respondents per suburb. In Australia, a suburb is a known geographic boundary that forms part of one's residential address.

Response rates were calculated as those who agreed to participate, divided by the number who could be contacted by phone (34% for Middle Eastern Muslim immigrants; 45% for Vietnamese immigrants; 80% for UK immigrants; average response rate across the three groups was 42%). Table 1 presents the final sample's demographic composition.

Constructs and measures

See Appendix Tables A1 and A2 for the full wordings of all items covered in this section.

Trust in police, propensity to trust, and trustworthiness

We utilise three measures associated with trust and trustworthiness. *Trust in police* is our dependent variable, measured by two items adapted from Hamm et al. (2017): 'I am comfortable allowing the police to decide how best to deal with problems of crime and disorder' and 'I am happy to accept the ability of police to intervene in people's lives'. These items tap into the notion of trust as vulnerability; that trust involves allowing police to make important decisions (with the associated risk that they will make bad choices). *Propensity to trust* is measured by two indicators: 'Most people can be trusted'; and 'Most people try to be fair'. *Trustworthiness* was measured by four different latent constructs – positive or negative evaluations of: procedural justice, distributive justice, bounded authority, and police effectiveness. Each was measured by several observed

Table 1. Characteristics of the final sample.

Variable	N	%
Immigrant group		
Vietnamese	395	43
Middle Eastern Muslim	398	44
UK	110	12
Gender		
Male	448	50
Female	455	50
Immigrant status		
1st generation	457	51
2nd generation	446	49
Educational attainment		
<Year 12	105	12
Year 12	193	21
Diploma/Certificate	324	36
Bachelor degree	197	22
Postgraduate Degree	84	9
English speaking status		
Speaks English poorly	77	9
Speaks English well	826	91
Age (range 18–84; Mean = 33.7; SD = 12.9)		
<30 years	479	53
>30 years	424	47

indicators that referenced *general* opinions of and beliefs about police rather than specific experiences with officers. Together, these constructs represent a wide range of evaluations of the general ability, competence, fairness, good intentions and benevolence of police.

Other factors potentially important for trust

In addition to propensity to trust and perceptions of trustworthiness, we include other personal and social characteristics and experiences that might be important for immigrants' trust in police. First, respondents' sense that others from their own ancestral group trust and support police, which we label *norm to trust*. This was measured by two items: 'How many people in Australia with your ancestry do you think Have trust and confidence in the Australian police' and 'Support the actions of the Australian police'. We specifically primed survey respondents to think about their ancestral group when answering these questions because their different countries of origin may have socialised them to trust others in potentially different ways. As we are interested in the immigrant experience, specifically, this formulation also prevented respondents from thinking about other groups to which they might belong (e.g. the norm to trust in the community where they reside, which may not contain many immigrants). We should note that respondents' self-reported ancestral group in the survey was the same as that recorded for their immigrant group (i.e. Vietnamese; Middle East; UK). Second, authoritarian attitudes were measured by two items, 'Obedience and respect for authority are the most important values children SHOULD learn' and 'People who break the law SHOULD be given harsher sentences'. Third, experiences of *societal discrimination* are measured by five items probing respondents' sense they could get on, or not, in Australian society (e.g. 'Do you feel disadvantaged because of your race, ethnicity, or religion when it comes to getting a job in Australia') and

respondents' perceptions of discrimination (e.g. 'Australians are disrespectful of people like you').

To capture respondents' personal experiences of policing they were asked two *contact with police* questions: 'In the last 2 years, how many times have you had contact with a police officer in Australia (do NOT include any work or social contact)?'; those who answered at least once were asked a follow up, 'Overall, how satisfied were you with your most recent contact with police?', with answers on a 5-point scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Three dummy variables were created to measure contact with the police, representing contact-and-satisfied, contact-and-dissatisfied, and contact-and-neither. The reference category was 'no contact'.

Neighbourhood characteristics

We measured three neighbourhood-level variables: crime rate; suburb deprivation; immigrant concentration. *Crime rate* was represented by a factor score derived from the rate of eight crime types within each suburb. Taking inspiration from Brunton-Smith et al. (2014) neighbourhood ecology approach to measuring deprivation, *suburb deprivation* was measured by a factor score derived from five indicators including proportion of households with incomes under \$400 per week and proportion unemployed. Similarly, *immigrant concentration* was represented by a factor score derived from three variables assessing the proportion of non-Australian citizens, foreign-born population, and Language Other Than English (LOTE) spoken in households within each suburb. The crime rate data were sourced from 2018 crime statistics collected by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. The suburb deprivation and immigrant concentration data were both sourced from the 2016 Census data,⁴ housed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Respondent immigrant group

Immigrant group was represented by two dummy variables for Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese groups; the reference category was UK. We also controlled for whether the respondent was born in Australia or not, indicating whether they were a first- or second- generation immigrant.

Control variables

Demographic variables employed as control variables included: *age* ($M = 33.71$, $SD = 12.85$), *gender* (0 = male; 1 = female), *highest educational attainment* (ranging from 1 = no/limited formal schooling to 10 = having a post-graduate degree), and *English-speaking status* (0 = speaks English poorly; 1 = speaks English well). Additional control variables were participants' *perceived level of crime in their suburb* ('Overall, would you say crime in your suburb is ...' 1 = very low to 5 = very high; $M = 2.58$; $SD = 1.14$), and *prior victimisation*. The number of 'yes' responses given to eight different types of crime victimisation (e.g. burglary, physical assault) was summed to compute a victimisation score out of 8 ($M = 0.99$; $SD = 1.53$); higher scores indicate experience of more types of victimisation.

Measurement properties of latent variables

Confirmatory factor analysis in Mplus 8 was used to derive and validate most of the variables of theoretical interest. This was a two-part process. First, we modelled *trustworthiness* as a second-order latent variable measured by the first-order latent variables procedural justice, distributive justice, bounded authority, and effectiveness. This approach was taken for two reasons. Conceptually, given the general stance taken in this paper, it makes sense to model these different sets of evaluations of police as indicators of one underlying construct, the perceived trustworthiness of police. Practically, initial analysis indicated that the individual sub-scales were strongly correlated with one another, with correlation coefficients ranging from .5 (bounded authority and effectiveness) to .8 (bounded authority and distributive justice). This made including all in the same model problematic; yet all seem potentially important for trustworthiness. Appendix Table A1 shows results from the second-order latent variable model. Model fit was adequate and, notably, the regression weights of the four sub-scales on the latent variable are all over .7, indicating all four made a substantial contribution to the definition of the second-order construct. Scores on this variable, *trustworthiness*, were extracted and saved for further use. The second step was to model all the remaining latent variables. Results are shown in Appendix Table A2. Model fit was again adequate, and scores on the latent variables were extracted and saved for further analysis.

Descriptive statistics

Table 2 shows the correlation matrix for the continuous variables. Perhaps most noteworthy is that while trustworthiness is strongly correlated with trust, so also are societal discrimination, authoritarian attitudes and norm to trust. Victimisation, perceived crime, and suburb deprivation were all negatively correlated with trust.

Results

To address Research Question 1, we turn to the distribution of our key measures across the three immigrant groups. Table 3 shows that Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese immigrants tended to have less trust in the police, and rate police trustworthiness as significantly lower, than UK immigrants. Variation in trust also seems to be somewhat greater than variation in trustworthiness across the full sample.

There were other differences between groups, too. Respondents from the two visible minority groups tended to see Australian society as more discriminatory and had lower levels of propensity to trust. The Middle Eastern Muslim group also had slightly higher levels of authoritarian attitudes compared to the other two groups. Minority immigrants were also significantly less likely to feel that others from their ancestral group trusted the police (i.e. norm to trust was lower in the two minority immigrant groups).

Figure 1(a–c) display the distribution of our key variables – trust, trustworthiness, and the norm to trust – across the three immigrant groups. Note, in particular, how values of both trust (Figure 1(a)) and the norm to trust (Figure 3(c)) are more tightly clustered around the mean in the UK group compared with the Vietnamese and particularly the Middle Eastern Muslim group. On this basis, we might tentatively conclude that there

Table 2. Correlation matrix.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Trust (1)	1											
Trustworthiness (2)	0.63	1										
Propensity to trust (3)	0.15	0.28	1									
Norm to trust (4)	0.72	0.68	0.27	1								
Societal discrimination (5)	−0.45	−0.48	−0.37	−0.57	1							
Authoritarian attitudes (6)	0.39	0.26	−0.10	0.23	−0.06	1						
Suburb crime rate (7)	−0.02	−0.05	0.00	−0.02	0.07	−0.06	1					
Suburb immigrant concentration (8)	−0.01	0.01	−0.08	−0.01	0.08	0.05	0.34	1				
Suburb deprivation (9)	−0.11	−0.08	−0.19	−0.15	0.31	0.06	0.09	0.53	1			
Education (10)	0.02	0.02	0.07	0.02	−0.13	−0.03	0.00	−0.07	−0.17	1		
Victimisation (11)	−0.24	−0.24	−0.13	−0.27	0.20	−0.06	0.04	0.13	0.20	−0.05	1	
Perceived crime (12)	−0.16	−0.36	−0.24	−0.21	0.30	0.01	0.19	0.26	0.36	−0.07	0.33	1

Table 3. Variation in key measures by immigrant group.

	Group means			Scale mean	Std. Dev.	Scale min.	Scale max.
	Middle Eastern Muslim group	UK group	Vietnamese group				
Trust in police	−0.13*	0.48	−0.01*	−0.01	0.82	−2.46	1.82
Police trustworthiness	−0.13*	0.21	0.08*	0.00	0.61	−2.35	1.97
Propensity to trust	−0.28*	0.47	0.04*	−0.05	0.85	−1.96	1.94
Norm to trust	−0.22*	0.52	0.06*	−0.01	0.80	−2.43	1.90
Societal discrimination	0.24*	−0.65	−0.06*	0.00	0.56	−1.51	1.61
Authoritarian attitudes	0.12*	−0.09	−0.11	−0.01	0.65	−2.34	1.36

*Different to UK group at 5% significance level.

is indeed a stronger norm to trust the police within the UK group, and that UK immigrants trust police more than minority immigrants.

To explore research questions 2, 3 and 4, we used random effects models to predict trust in the police, with the Level 2 variable set to suburb (see Table 4). We estimated a series of nested regression models that (1) establish the basic correlation between immigrant group membership and trust. Then, in a stepwise fashion, we added (2) neighbourhood-level variables; (3) demographic and other control variables; (4) perceptions of trustworthiness and propensity to trust and (5) experiences of police contact, societal discrimination, authoritarianism, and the norm to trust.

We consider first whether there are personal, social and neighbourhood characteristics that are associated with immigrants' trust in police that are independent of evaluations of police trustworthiness and propensity to trust. Model 1 reproduces the mean level differences shown in Table 3 – immigrants from the Middle Eastern Muslim ($b = -.61$) and Vietnamese ($b = -.47$) groups had lower levels of trust in police than UK immigrants. Note that the Intra-Class Correlation (ICC) of .1 indicates that 10% of the variation in trust is explained at the level of the suburb. Model 2 adds the neighbourhood-level variables, none of which are significant. At least at the level of the suburb, crime rates, suburb deprivation and immigrant concentration do not appear to be important for trust in the police in this Australian sample. Model 3 adds the socio-demographic and other control variables. Only victimisation was significant at the 5% level, with higher levels of prior personal victimisation associated with lower levels of trust in police.

Model 4 shows that, as would be expected, there was a significant and substantively large association between trustworthiness and trust in police ($b = .86$). Conditioning on this, there was a weak but significant *negative* association between propensity to trust and trust in police ($b = -.05$). This rather counter-intuitive finding is probably an artefact of the statistical model. It emerges conditional on all the other variables included, while Table 2 shows that the pairwise correlation between propensity to trust and trust in police was positive. Note that in Model 4 the coefficients for the Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese group dummies reduce in size, although they are still statistically different to the UK group.

The remaining variables are added in Model 5. Among these, there is a relatively strong, positive, statistically significant conditional correlation between authoritarian attitudes and trust in police ($b = .27$), and an even stronger positive, statistically significant,

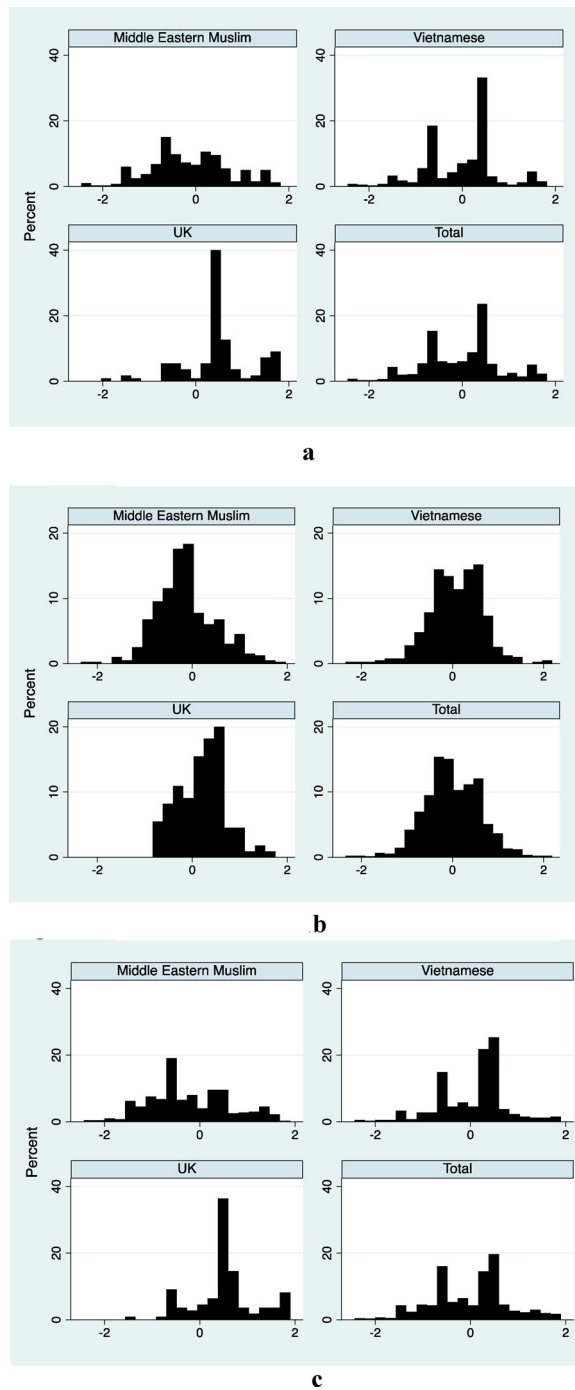


Figure 1. (a) Trust in the police, by immigrant group; (b) Police trustworthiness, by immigrant group; (c) Norm to trust, by immigrant group.

Table 4. Random effects models predicting trust in police.

Level 2 variable is suburb	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	b	se(b)	b	se(b)	b	se(b)	b	se(b)	b	se(b)	b	se(b)
Unstandardised coefficients												
Immigrant group (ref: UK)												
Middle Eastern Muslim	−0.61***	0.1	−0.63***	0.11	−0.63***	0.11	−0.43***	0.09	−0.25***	0.08	−0.22**	0.08
Vietnamese	−0.47***	0.1	−0.49***	0.11	−0.52***	0.1	−0.46***	0.09	−0.26***	0.07	−0.22**	0.07
Generation (ref: 1st)												
Second	−0.07	0.05	−0.06	0.05	0.01	0.06	0.08+	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.06	0.04
Neighbourhood characteristics												
Crime rate			0.01	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Immigrant concentration			0.02	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.01	0.04	−0.02	0.02	−0.02	0.02
Deprivation			0.01	0.05	0.06	0.05	0	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03
Personal characteristics												
Age					0	0	0.00+	0	0	0	0	0
Gender (male = 0)					0.09+	0.05	0.01	0.04	0	0.04	0	0.04
Educational attainment					0	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01	0	0.01
English speaking (0 = no)					−0.13	0.11	−0.1	0.09	−0.05	0.07	−0.05	0.07
Victimisation					−0.11***	0.02	−0.06***	0.01	−0.02+	0.01	−0.02+	0.01
Crime perception					−0.05+	0.03	0.09***	0.02	0.04*	0.02	0.04+	0.02
Police trustworthiness							0.86***	0.04	0.30***	0.04	0.48***	0.1
Propensity to trust							−0.05*	0.03	−0.05*	0.02	−0.06*	0.02
Norm to trust									0.50***	0.03	0.50***	0.03
Societal discrimination									−0.04	0.04	−0.04	0.04
Authoritarian attitudes									0.27***	0.03	0.26***	0.03
Contact with police (ref: none)												
Yes and satisfied									0.03	0.04	0.03	0.04
Yes and ambivalent									−0.06	0.06	−0.06	0.06
Yes and dissatisfied									−0.11	0.07	−0.11	0.07
Interactions												
Middle Eastern Muslim*Trustworthiness											−0.19+	0.11
Vietnamese*Trustworthiness											−0.20+	0.11
Constant	0.50***	0.09	0.53***	0.1	0.72**	0.22	0.09	0.18	0.18	0.15	0.16	0.15
ICC	0.1		0.07		0.06		0.14		0.01		0.01	
N	903		898		898		898		898		898	

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

conditional correlation between the perceived norm to trust and trust in police ($b = .50$). All else equal, those who perceived that others from their own ancestral group trusted the police were much more likely to report higher levels of trust in police themselves. Note that the coefficient for trustworthiness reduces by more than half in Model 5. Once norm to trust and authoritarian attitudes are added to the model, the link between trustworthiness and trust is attenuated somewhat. The coefficients for immigrant group are again reduced in magnitude, compared with Model 4 and certainly with Model 1, although significant differences between immigrant groups persist. It therefore seems that (1) some of the variation in trust between immigrant groups can be explained by the other variables in the model, and (2) a significant part of the association between trustworthiness and trust in police can be explained by the perceived norm to trust and authoritarian attitudes. Lastly, in Model 5 we see that net of the other variables in the model contact with police had no relationship with trust, nor did broader experiences of societal discrimination. Note that the ICC for Model 5 is just .01, implying that the ICC of .1 for Model 1 was largely down to compositional effects (i.e. different types of respondents living in different areas). Once the characteristics of respondents are taken into account, very little variation in trust is explained at the suburb level.

Is the link between trustworthiness and trust consistent across immigrant groups?

To consider whether there might be variation across immigrant groups in the association between trustworthiness and trust, an interaction term (i.e. trustworthiness x immigrant group) was added – see Model 6 in Table 4. The interaction was significant at the 10% level, and the statistical effects involved are substantively relatively large: Figure 2

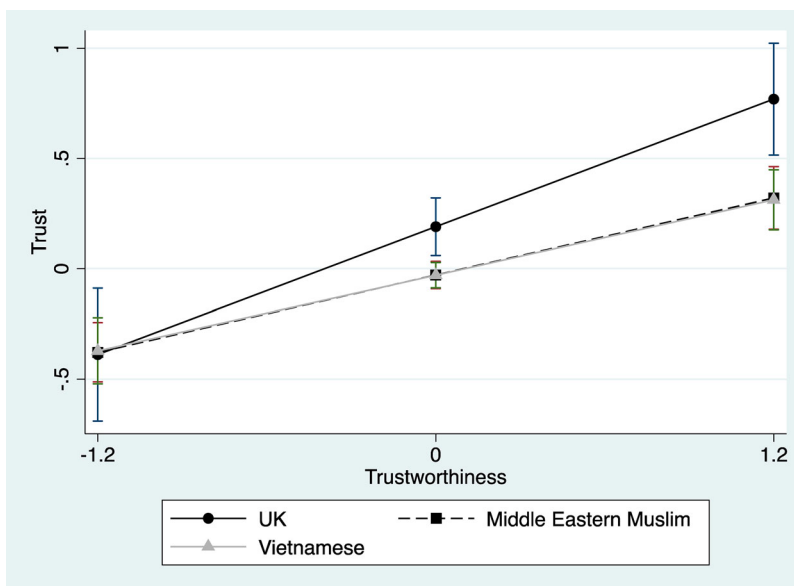


Figure 2. Interaction between immigrant group and police trustworthiness as predictors of trust. Vertical bars indicate 95% confidence interval.

represents the results. In sum, the partial correlation between trustworthiness and trust in police was weaker among the Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese groups than it was among the UK group. Moreover, at low levels of trustworthiness there was essentially no difference between immigrant groups, with differences becoming most apparent at high levels of trustworthiness. It thus seems that perceptions of trustworthiness were relatively more important for trust among the UK immigrants than among Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese immigrants.⁵

Persistent variation in trust across immigrant groups

The models shown in Table 4 suggest that even after relevant confounds are taken into account group-level differences in trust persist. To further illustrate the extent of variation in trust across the three immigrant groups conditional on key variables, we calculated fitted values from Model 6 in Table 4. Figure 3 shows the fitted values for trust, across the three immigrant groups, under four sets of conditions: (1) trustworthiness and norm to trust held at their overall mean; (2) trustworthiness increased by 1SD while norm to trust is held at the overall mean; (3) trustworthiness held at the mean while norm to trust is increased by 1SD and (4) both trustworthiness and norm to trust increased by 1SD.

Plot 1 in Figure 3 visualises the differences between the three immigrant groups when trustworthiness, norm to trust and all other variables in the model are held at their overall means. If we take three otherwise ‘identical’ individuals, one from each group, living in similar neighbourhoods, with similar demographics, experiences of policing, and attitudes – including, crucially, perceptions of police trustworthiness – the UK immigrant will have higher trust in police than their counterparts from the Middle Eastern and Vietnamese groups. Plot 2 shows that if we increase the score for trustworthiness by 1 SD, while holding all else constant, trust increases in all three immigrant groups – but the difference between UK immigrants and the two other groups also increases. This

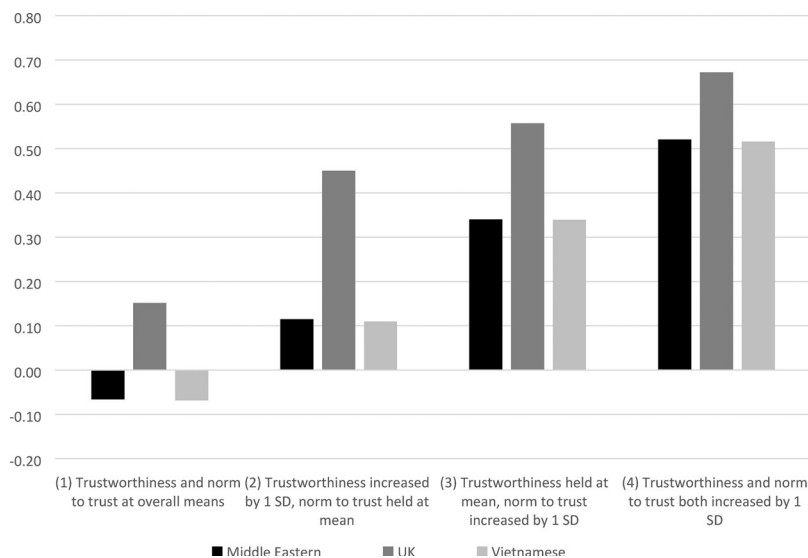


Figure 3. Fitted values for trust in police, across the three immigrant groups.

reflects the fitted values shown in [Figure 2](#): the statistical effect of increases in perceived trustworthiness is weaker among individuals from the Middle Eastern Muslim and Vietnamese groups. Finally, Plots 3 and 4 show how even when the norm to trust increases (Plot 3), and both trustworthiness and norm to trust increase (Plot 4), the gap between UK immigrants and the other groups persist.

Discussion

Returning to the research questions motivating our analysis, we first find that trust does vary between different immigrant groups; specifically, trust in police, propensity to trust, and the trustworthiness of police were all found to be higher in the UK immigrant group than in the two minority immigrant groups. Such a finding was perhaps not unexpected, given prior research has shown that minorities typically distrust police more than non-minorities (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005), and minority immigrants being more distrusting of police than non-minority immigrants (e.g. Ali et al., 2022).

Second, we also find there are personal and social characteristics associated with immigrants' trust in police that are independent of evaluations of police trustworthiness and propensity to trust. Specifically, we show that adjusting for the other factors in the model, a perceived norm to trust police among one's 'ancestral' group is associated with higher trust, as are more authoritarian attitudes. It seems that other factors can indeed 'insert themselves' into what might otherwise be considered a relatively straightforward relationship between trustworthiness and trust. It cannot therefore simply be assumed that an increase in perceived trustworthiness will translate automatically into an increase in trust.

Third, we asked whether immigrant group differences in trust could be explained by the individual and social characteristics of group-members. We find that *some but not all* of the group variation in trust in our sample was accounted for by variation in perceived trustworthiness, and the other personal and social factors included in our models. Specifically, the differences between the Middle Eastern Muslim, UK and Vietnamese immigrants' expected levels of trust were reduced, but not accounted for entirely, when perceptions of trustworthiness, authoritarian attitudes and norms to trust were taken into account. Further analysis, and a greater variety of measures, are needed to explore this finding further. It could be that our models are capturing the collective experience of immigrant groups that predisposes group members toward particular trust judgements – in which case group membership is in and of itself important for trust. Relevant here is research that shows people's social identities are central to their relationship with police (e.g. Bradford et al., 2014; Murphy et al., 2018, 2022). Moreover, we surveyed two groups with a history of problematic relations with police, that have been the target of police suspicion in Australia as part of the 'war on drugs' (Vietnamese) and 'war on terror' (Middle Eastern Muslim) (e.g. Cherney & Murphy, 2016; Meredyth et al., 2010). It may be that this history is being picked up in our models. Examining other minority immigrant groups without such tenuous histories with police would be useful in the future.

Fourth, we asked whether there was variation in the strength of the association between trustworthiness and trust across immigrant groups. We find some, slightly ambivalent, evidence for such an effect. When thinking about trust, immigrants from the UK seemed to attend more closely to their perceptions of police trustworthiness

than their counterparts from the Middle East or Vietnam. Again, why this is so cannot be answered with the data at hand, and further work is needed.

Taken together, our findings suggest that while trust in police may be founded in people's perceptions and evaluations of police activity and performance, it may also be based on group membership. One way in which group-level processes might work in this context is through vicarious experience – when people hear about officers treating other members of their own group poorly, they may be less inclined to trust police despite their own views about police effectiveness or some other evaluation. Knowing that police have mistreated one's own group may increase the perceived risk involved in trusting them. It is also tempting to consider the collective experience of two immigrant groups caught up in the domestic 'wars' against drugs and terrorism *vis-à-vis* the UK group, who have been described as an 'invisible' immigrant group due to the similarities they share with the majority of the Australian born population and the relative ease of their assimilation into Australian society (Sydes, 2019).

The relative 'reluctance' to trust among the Vietnamese and Middle Eastern Muslim immigrant groups in our sample may therefore stem from multiple sources. Their minoritised status and histories of poor relations with police in Australia, but also the cultural resonance of policing among communities that can reflect on even more repressive police systems in their countries of origin. The Middle Eastern Muslim and particularly Vietnamese groups may also be more cohesive and connected with their respective immigrant groups than the UK group, enabling the transmission of vicarious experiences proposed above. These things may come together, jointly and severally, to make vulnerability to police appear riskier for the visible minority immigrant groups. Unpicking which is more salient, under what conditions, and the extent to which the fundamental association between trustworthiness and trust is affected, would again be fruitful areas for future research. Equally, it would be fascinating to compare the experience of immigrants (the only people in our sample) with *non-immigrants*. Much current research suggests the latter might have less positive perceptions of trustworthiness, but they might also be *more* willing to trust. This may be due to their relatively more privileged position, and associated sense of security, suggesting there is less risk for them in trusting police.

Limitations

Before concluding we should highlight that our study has several limitations. First, our data are cross-sectional, so the causal relationships between our variables of interest cannot be determined. Second, immigrant groups sampled in the survey had different response rates. This may be due to how participants were recruited (UK immigrants were recruited through community clubs and social media, while the other groups were recruited via telephone), or it may reflect levels of general distrust among different immigrant groups (i.e. perhaps those less trusting of others or police are less likely to participate in research on policing). Third, as the telephone directory was used to sample participants from Vietnamese and Middle Eastern Muslim immigrants, it is possible that we missed those without a phone-line. Further, the electronic telephone directory contains predominantly landline numbers: our sample is thus skewed toward those who reside in households with landline numbers. Finally, measurement of some of our key

constructs was limited by survey-space – in particular, trust in police and the norm to trust would have ideally been measured by more than two observed indicators in each case.

Conclusion

Our findings in this paper are important on theoretical and policy grounds. First, while it may still be useful to regard trust in the police as a process that ‘wraps up’ perceptions of trustworthiness and the willingness to be vulnerable, a line between the two needs to be maintained. Put differently, trustworthiness seems to be a necessary but not always sufficient condition for trust. Attempts to measure the latter solely with indicators of the former risk mis-specifying the construct (c.f. Dietz & Den Hartog, 2006).

More widely, debate is beginning to turn, particularly among scholars actively engaging with procedural justice theory, to whether the updating of trustor’s evaluations and expectations of trustees occurs in an entirely straightforward manner, and the extent to which any such changes feed into ‘summative’ judgements of trust or legitimacy. On the one hand, it has been argued that one-off encounters with police officers, or wider, mundane and possibly vicarious or mediated experiences of policing, may not be enough to shift what are likely to be deep-seated, ‘sticky’ orientations (Nagin & Telep, 2017, 2020). On the other hand, pre-existing attitudes might affect how those encounters are experienced, and therefore what kind of updating effect they have on perceptions of police trustworthiness (Kyprianides et al., 2021; Waddington et al., 2017). Depending on prior levels of perceived trustworthiness, for example, individuals may differentially focus attention on fairness-relevant information in an encounter with the police to either highlight or ignore unfairness (Jackson & Posch, 2019; Madon & Murphy, 2021; Sargeant et al., 2018). Once a relatively stable fairness heuristic is ‘set’, it may take a particularly vivid and unexpectedly fair or unfair police-citizen encounter to change one’s general impression about police (Lind, 2001).

Such discussion is important and warrants further empirical attention, but the focus of the debate so far has been on perceptions of the trustworthiness of police (as well as legitimacy). Our findings complicate the picture further. For example, another heuristic people may use when thinking about whether they trust (are willing to be vulnerable to) the police is their understanding of what others in their own immigrant community think and do (i.e. whether trust, or distrust, is the norm) and this may largely bypass their personal assessments of police. Membership of certain social groups, communities or neighbourhoods may have a similar effect or role (see, for example, Antrobus et al., 2015). Given a particular set of heuristics, people may attend more or less to the actual content of police activity when considering the ‘leap of faith’ to trust.

Finally, from a policy perspective our findings offer insight into why efforts to increase trust in the police may fail to achieve expected impacts. By necessity, and normative desirability, such efforts will concentrate on improving trustworthiness – ensuring police are competent, effective, fair, benevolent and so on. In our sample, these were important correlates of trust. But so were other factors associated with group norms and individual propensities that are much less amenable to policy intervention. In particular policing contexts such factors may inhibit the translation of trustworthiness into trust, diminishing the effect on the latter of attempts to enhance the former. In this Australian sample, for example, it seems that increasing the perceived trustworthiness of police, even if this can

be achieved (Worden & McLean, 2017) might have less effect on trust among minority immigrants from the Middle East and Vietnam, at least compared to immigrants from places like the UK. Those engaged in change programmes and reform efforts aiming to increase public trust in police need to think carefully about their intended audience and how different groups may react to shifts in policy or practice.

Notes

1. Middle Eastern Muslims were the focus given prior Australian research has shown Middle Eastern Muslims to have lower trust in police than Muslims from other parts of the world (Murphy et al., 2015).
2. Only four UK immigrants surveyed reported being from a visible minority background.
3. Only Australian citizens were included in our study to avoid confounding migrant versus immigrant status, as well as legal versus illegal immigration status. Illegal migrants are those that overstay temporary visas and are distinct from legal migrants or immigrant citizens. The number of illegal immigrants residing in Australia is low (about 0.2% of the total Australian population; Coyne, 2019).
4. The national census is held every 5 years in Australia, with the closest census to the survey data collection period occurring in 2016.
5. We also tested interactions between trustworthiness and: authoritarian attitudes; norm to trust; and propensity to trust. None was significant in the model ($p > .1$, with small effect sizes) indicating that the association between trustworthiness and trust is not moderated by authoritarian attitudes, perceived norms to trust police or the general propensity to trust.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Appendix

Table A1. Police trustworthiness – results from second order confirmatory factor analysis.

	Standardised factor loading	Item R^2
Procedural justice (How do you think police in Australia behave?) (5-point scale, Strongly disagree – Strongly agree)		
Police are approachable and friendly	0.78	0.60
Police treat people fairly	0.80	0.63
Police treat people with dignity and respect	0.87	0.76
Police let people speak before making a decision	0.82	0.67
Police care about people	0.86	0.73
Police are polite to people	0.85	0.72
Police make their decisions based upon facts, not their personal opinions	0.81	0.66
Police give people a change to express their views before making decisions	0.85	0.72
Police take into account the needs and concerns of the people they deal with	0.83	0.69
Police effectiveness (On the whole, how good a job are police doing at ...) (5-point scale, Very poor job to Very good job)		
Solving crime	0.92	0.84
Dealing with problems that concern you	0.92	0.84
Working with people in your suburb to solve problems	0.91	0.83
Detering criminals	0.94	0.89
Catching criminals	0.91	0.83
Preventing crime	0.93	0.87
Keeping order	0.85	0.73
Keeping the community safe	0.88	0.77
Distributive justice (5-point scale Strongly disagree – Strongly agree)		
Australian police unfairly target people like you because of your race, ethnicity or religion	0.80	0.64
Police in Australia treat everyone in the community equally, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or religion (rev)	0.59	0.34
Police in Australia sometimes give people from specific ethnic, racial or religious background less help than they give others	0.75	0.57
Police in Australia provide better service to the rich than the average citizen	0.66	0.44
Bounded authority (Please indicate how often you think the police in Australia ...) (5-point scale, Never to Always)		
Police overstep the boundaries of their authority	0.89	0.79
Police act as if they are above the law	0.93	0.87
Police bother citizens for no good reason	0.85	0.73
Police get involved in situations they have no right to be in	0.83	0.69
Second Order Factor		
Police trustworthiness		
Procedural justice	0.86	0.74
Police effectiveness	0.73	0.53
Distributive justice	−0.87	0.76
Bounded authority	−0.70	0.49
Fit statistics		
Chi-Square	2108.01	
Degrees of Freedom	269.00	
p-value	<.0005	
RMSEA	0.09	
CFI	0.97	
TLI	0.97	
SRMR	0.04	

Table A2. Other constructs and measures – results from confirmatory factor analysis.

Results from a 5-factor solution with no cross-loadings

	Standardised Factor loading	Item R^2
Norm to trust (How many people in Australia with your ancestry do you think ...) (5-point scale, Nobody to Everyone)		
Have trust and confidence in the Australian police	0.88	0.77
Support the actions of the Australian police	0.94	0.87
Authoritarian attitudes (5-point scale, Not at all important to Of utmost importance)		
Obedience and respect for authority are the most important values children should learn	0.76	0.58
People who break the law should be given harsher sentences	0.80	0.63
Societal discrimination (5-point scale, Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)		
Do you feel disadvantaged because of your race, ethnicity or religion when it comes to getting a job in Australia	0.61	0.37
There are many opportunities for you to succeed in Australia	0.42	0.18
You have the same chance of achieving success as anyone else in Australia	0.49	0.24
Australians are disrespectful of people like you	0.85	0.73
Australians are suspicious of people like you	0.85	0.71
Trust in police (5-point scale, Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)		
I am comfortable allowing the police to decide how to best deal with problems of crime and disorder	0.93	0.87
I am happy to accept the ability of the police to intervene in people's lives	0.82	0.68
Propensity to trust (5-point scale, Strongly disagree to Strongly agree)		
Most people can be trusted	0.97	0.94
Most people try to be fair	0.91	0.82
Fit statistics		
Chi-Square	313.19	
Degrees of Freedom	54	
p -value	<.0005	
RMSEA	0.07	
CFI	0.99	
TLI	0.98	
SRMR	0.04	