

attention to social needs. Namely, it entails that scholars and community members are equal partners in the research enterprise. These partnerships, which are based on the sharing of power, leadership and decision-making (Trickett & Lustman, 1977), revolve around the definition of common research agendas and methods, which are however guided by community-defined needs (Kelly, 1970).

Community-based collaborative research is particularly important in the work with communities who experience marginalization and exclusion (Bond & Keys, 1993; Nelson, Prilleltensky, & MacGillivray, 2001). Combining multiple forms of academic and nonacademic knowledge, and acknowledging the strengths and resources of every partner, this approach fosters individual and collective processes of empowerment and capacity building (Vaughn et al., 2017). As Lykes argued, in participatory and action research “both the outsider researcher and the insider community are committed coparticipants and colearners in historically, socially, and culturally situated social processes. Further, these iterative action reflection processes reflect meaningful participation that is generative of critical consciousness and action informed by and informing of knowledge” (2017, p. 47).

These ideas, which have a long history of discussion, have become along the years a community psychology road map. Particularly, this approach has recently been used in the work with migrant communities as a meaningful tool to address the complex health and participation inequalities that affect them (Suarez-Balcazar, 2020; Vaughn et al., 2017). Being actively involved in all the phases of the study, including data generation, collection, analysis, and dissemination, migrant communities can gain empowerment and a sense of ownership over the research (Meyer, Torres, Cermeño, MacLean, & Monzón, 2003). Furthermore, the dialogue between the researcher(s) and these protagonists allows the creation of a space to bridge the different cultures at play and build a “new social world” (Westoby, 2007, p. 491).

In this paper we argue that, in order to engage in collaborative work with migrant communities, reflectivity (Esposito, 2017) and positionality (Sonn et al., 2017) are critical tools to be developed. These tools allow for the establishment of trust relationships (Arcidiacono, Natale, Carbone, & Procentese, 2017), where trust (similarly to collaboration) has to be intended not as an a-priori condition, but rather as a process that takes place in the context of a long-term relational engagement which is based on the acknowledgment of the complexities of identity, difference, power and privilege. That is why Israel, Schulz, Parker, and Becker (2001) emphasize the importance of differentiating between research that is conducted “in a community” and “with a community.” From a collaborative

perspective, the motto is: “Nothing about me, without me” (Nelson, Ochocka, Griffin, & Lord, 1998).

A collaborative and ecological approach to measurement translation and adaptation

Even if a collaborative stance lies at the root of community psychology research and practice, still few contributions address collaboration in measurement development, translation and adaptation (for exceptions see Gonzalez & Trickett, 2014; Sacchetto et al., 2016; Vinokurov, Geller, & Martin, 2007). This evidence resonates with Trickett and Espino’s argument that collaboration in community psychology is still a “partial paradigm acquisition” (2004, p. 62).

Translation has always been a major issue in cross-cultural research literature and, in spite of the considerable debate around it (Brislin, 1976, 1986; Lonner, 1981), there is not yet a consensual framework to guide scholars in this process. Similarly, a lack of agreement still exists around the importance of various types of translation equivalences and techniques (Vinokurov et al., 2007). To address this gap, some scholars have proposed a five-step method to achieve the highest equivalence between the original source and the final (translated) version of a measure (Beaton, Bombardier, Guillemin, & Ferraz, 2000). Namely, these steps are: forward translation; backward translation; synthesis; expert committee review; and pretesting.

The process of translating and adapting a measure is complex and requires an effort to ensure that the final version not only fits into the new context, but also conforms to the original source (Borsa, Damásio, & Bandeira, 2012). Some authors have highlighted that the quality of the translation primarily depends on the qualifications, knowledge, and cultural experiences of the translators (Beck, Bernal, & Froman, 2003). For instance, Beaton et al. (2000) argued that, in order to consider the nuances of the target language, translators must be fluent in the source language of the measure and native in the target language. Furthermore, for Kristjansson et al. (2003) translators must bear in mind the research goals and the concepts under study, both globally and in every single item.

Building on this work, in this paper we go a step further. In particular, we argue that translating and adapting a measure is not just a matter of language issues. Instead, this process involves, above all, a collaborative critical thinking process (or co-reflection) around what a measure and its items aim to examine, as well as on the relevance of these latter for the specific context under study and the people living in it. An ecological view of measurement translation and adaptation, moreover, emphasizes the unpredictability and uncertainty of this process (Temple, 1997). As

Vinokurov et al. (2007) argue, “there are no right or wrong translations, just different versions that fit particular contexts” (p. 3). From this viewpoint, translation discrepancies become key indicators, which shed light on the nuances of meaning – as constructed and expressed by the language – that would otherwise remain hidden. This does not mean giving up the search for linguistic equivalencies, but rather situating this search in the local environment where the study takes place and people’s everyday meaning-making processes (Jagosh & Boudreau, 2009).

What the community psychology ecological model ultimately suggests is that we shift the focus from universal to context-specific aspects of meaning and measurement (Trickett, 1996). Accordingly, the process of translating and adapting a measure is conceived as a “specifically and genuinely participative research activity” (Kelly, 1986, p. 583). Collaborative researcher-participant relationships – based on trust, respect, caring, critical reflection, and active participation – are regarded as a prerequisite to obtain measures capable of reflecting participants’ context-specific experiences (Gonzalez & Trickett, 2014; Kelly, 1986; Trickett & Espino, 2004). Through this, translation also becomes a democratic, reciprocal, nonhierarchical and cooperative process (Temple & Edwards, 2002).

Building on a community psychology ecological and collaborative paradigm (Esposito, Ornelas, & Arcidiacono, 2015), this paper illustrates the processes we engaged in to translate and adapt a measure for examining life in immigration detention centers from the perspective of migrants confined in these sites. Our study, developed over the period from March 2014 to January 2017, was based on the collection of multiple sources of information to be combined in the frame of a nested mixed methods design (Campbell, Shaw, & Gregory, 2017). According to Campbell and colleagues “nested designs have a clearly identifiable dominant method that guides the overall project, and within that (primarily quantitative or qualitative) there is a smaller simultaneous “mini project” (using the other method) that answers a complementary research question” (2017, p. 147). In our case, the dominant method was a qualitative one and involved participant observations and topic-focused interviews with detainees and practitioners (Esposito, Ornelas, Briozzo, & Arcidiacono, 2019; Esposito, Ornelas, Scirocchi, & Arcidiacono, 2019; Esposito et al., 2020). Once this qualitative phase was completed, a quantitative survey was prepared and administered to the people confined. In this paper we focus on this last phase of quantitative data collection and, in particular, on the collaborative process undertaken to develop an Italian version of the “Measure of Quality of Life in Detention” survey (Bosworth & Kellezi, 2015).

The research context

The Ponte Galeria detention center in Rome was one of the first centers opened in Italy for the purpose of detaining migrants (and non-citizens more generally) awaiting removal from the state territory. Since opening in 1998, right after the adoption of Law 40 (the so-called *Turco-Napolitano* law), Ponte Galeria has become the largest Italian immigration detention center. Currently the facility can hold up to 130 men and 80 women for a maximum period of 180 days (Law Decree 113/2018). Notably, Ponte Galeria is the sole Italian center where women can be detained.

As in other Italian detention centers, the people detained inside Ponte Galeria come from very different backgrounds and experiences. Asylum seekers, recently arrived migrants lacking documentation, visa over-stayers, people brought up or even born in Italy but who are not recognized as citizens (Italian citizenship law is largely based on the right of blood), stateless persons, former prisoners and even EU citizens subject to an expulsion order for security reasons all end up together behind the high fences of this facility. Nationalities also vary substantially. For instance, among the 1,665 men and women confined in Ponte Galeria from January 1 to December 20 2015, the largest groups were Nigerians (434; 26%), followed by Albanians (163; 9.8%), Tunisians (151; 9.1%), Romanians (144; 8.6%), Moroccans (112; 6.7%), Algerians (99; 5.9%), Chinese (73; 4.4%), Georgians (64; 3.8%), Egyptians (55; 3.3%), and Ukrainians (48; 2.9%) (Commissione Straordinaria per la Tutela e la Promozione dei Diritti Umani, 2016).

Throughout the years, several human rights organizations have denounced the degrading living conditions experienced by people detained in this site (Beretta et al., 2016; Barbieri, Peca, Castagna, & Zanchetta, 2012). Furthermore, previous research (Esposito, Quinto, De Masi, Gargano, & Costa, 2016; Esposito, Ornelas, Scirocchi, et al., 2019) and NGO reports (Beretta et al., 2016) have shown how women are frequently victims of gender-based violence, in their country of origin and Italy too.

Examining life in detention: developing the MQLD–Italian version

To examine life inside Ponte Galeria we relied on the “Measure of Quality of Life in Detention” (MQLD) developed by Bosworth and Kellezi (2015). The MQLD, which is inspired by the “Measure of Quality of Prison Life” (MQPL) (Liebling, assisted by Arnold, 2004), was originally composed of 64 items measured on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly agree, 5 = Strongly disagree, and a final option for “Don’t know/not applicable”). This survey was developed by Bosworth and colleagues with the aim of understanding the experiences and needs of migrants held in immigration detention facilities in the UK, and their views of the detention context (Bosworth, 2015). The idea was to develop a quantitative tool, to use

alongside qualitative methods such as participant observations and in-depth interviews, to gather the viewpoints of large groups of detained people. Also, the quantitative nature of the survey made it suitable for political engagement, in order to promote meaningful changes.

As stressed by Bosworth and Kellezi “‘quality of life’ is a broad ranging concept that connects health, relationships, autonomy, personal beliefs and legitimacy, to salient features of the environment in which people live” (2015, p. 2). Accordingly, the MQLD was designed as based on 11 dimensions, namely: Dignity; Safety; Staff decency; Staff Help and Assistance; Distress; Healthcare; Immigration Organization and Consistency; Immigration procedural fairness; Communication and autonomy; Care for vulnerable; Drugs (for a description of each dimension see Bosworth & Kellezi, 2015, pp. 2–3). The 64 items composing the survey overall reflect these dimensions, while also including some stand-alone statements. A final section provides detainees with the opportunity to offer additional comments based on their experiences.

After obtaining the authors’ consent, the MQLD was translated and adapted to the Italian context through a collaborative process involving the participation of researchers, practitioners working in the detention field, and people with lived experience of detention. In particular, a man previously held at Ponte Galeria for 6 months and then released in the community, accepted to engage in this process thanks to the relationship of trust and friendship established with the first author during the time she spent inside the center. The primary goal of this process was to develop a measure capable of examining that specific detention context (Ponte Galeria), in many aspects different from the UK detention centers, and grasping the complexity of life therein from the perspective of the migrants detained. It is important to say that, since the very beginning, we acknowledged the complexity of language issues when working with a heterogeneous group of participants. Yet, not being able to engage in multilingual translation due to the lack of funds for this particular project, we opted for translating the survey into Italian (which is a language many detainees speak as they have been living in Italy for many years) and then relying on interpreters, when needed, to support the researchers in the survey administration (which in all cases took place through face-to-face interview). As during the process we realized that English was another important language spoken by many people, we decided to prepare an English version of the final Italian survey, which however was translated manually by the research team and not double-checked by experts.

The process of adaptation of the MQLD consisted of the following phases:

- a. *Forward translation*: The first step was the forward translation performed by multiple independent translators. According to existing guidelines (Beaton et al., 2000; Swaine-Verdier, Doward, Hagell, Thorsen,

& McKenna, 2004), this phase was aimed at producing a preliminary translation of the MQLD from its source language (English) to the target language (Italian). Yet, as previously explained, this translation was not merely a matter of language. Indeed, this process was also focused on adapting the concepts, meanings and definitions used to the specific context at study. To do so, four people with different backgrounds were involved: a member of the research team, a language expert, a practitioner working in the detention field, and a person with lived experience of detention. The member of the research team was aware of the concepts examined and was thus able to provide a more reliable translation of the measure (Del Greco, Walop, & Eastridge, 1987; Guillemin, Bombardier, & Beaton, 1993). The other translators, instead, were not aware of the underlying theoretical dimensions and, therefore, they were more likely to identify unexpected and ambiguous meanings of the original items. The expertise of the practitioner and, above all, of the migrant with lived experience of detention was particularly important for their deep knowledge of the Ponte Galeria detention context (Cull et al., 2002; Guillemin et al., 1993). The four translations provided were discussed in a collective meeting to obtain a commonly agreed synthesis (interim version).

- b. *Blind backward translation*: This step was aimed at improving the interim version of the measure and identifying misinterpretations due to ambiguities in the original version or incorrect cross-cultural and contextual adaptations of the original items (Feijó, Ávila, Souza, Jaarsma, & Rabelo, 2012). In our case, as recommended by experts in the field of cross-cultural research (Brislin, 1986; Chapman & Carter, 1979; Werner & Campbell, 1970), the backward translation was blind as the translator was not aware of the concepts examined by the survey. The main reasons for performing a blind backward translation is to ensure that “the translated version is reflecting the same item content as the original versions” (Beaton et al., 2000, p. 3188).
- c. *Synthesis of the translations*: The goal of this phase was to produce a semifinal MQLD Italian version (MQLD-IT). To do so, all the people involved in the forward and backward translation steps met up to discuss and reach a consensus about the translated items. In particular, each item of the MQLD was reviewed in order to maintain the semantic, idiomatic, experiential, and conceptual equivalence (Beaton et al., 2000; Guillemin et al., 1993), as well as its comprehensibility, contextual relevance, and cultural appropriateness (Hendricson et al., 1989; Herdman, Fox-Rushby, & Badia, 1997; Wagner et al., 1998). This collaborative process led to the revisions of some items, and the creation of new items and dimensions. In particular, the dimensions “Security Staff Decency” (referring to the members of the inter-force police unit

Table 1. Italian adaptation dimensions of MQLD.

Dimensions of the MQLD-IT	
Dignity	An environment characterized by kind regard and concern for the person that recognizes the value and humanity of the individual.
Security	The feeling of security or protection from harm, threat and danger.
Staff Decency	The extent to which center staff are considered reasonable and appropriate.
Help and Assistance from the Staff	Support and encouragement given by center staff.
Distress	Feelings of severe emotional disturbance.
Healthcare	Feeling and believing they (detainees) are receiving and have access to good healthcare (doctors, nurses, dentists) and that doctors believe their medical concerns.
Immigration Organization and Consistency	The clarity, predictability and reliability of the immigration system.
Immigration Procedural Fairness	The perceived impartiality and legitimacy of immigration officers.
Communication and Autonomy	Detainees' feelings of agency and self-determination.
Care for the Most Vulnerable	Feeling and believing that the detention center helps victims of rape, domestic violence, torture, and those who attempt suicide and self-harm.
Drugs	Feeling and believing drugs are being used and that there are problems related to drugs in the center.
Security Staff Decency (new dimension)	The extent to which the members of the inter-force police unit are considered reasonable and appropriate.
Contact with the Outside (new dimension)	Detainees' perception of being able to have contact with the outside (e.g., family, friends).

in charge of maintaining order and security inside the center) and “Contact with the Outside” were added (see Table 1). Overall, these dimensions included seven new items (see Table 2).

- d. *Setting up an Expert Committee:* An Expert Committee composed of three scholars, three practitioners, and three migrants with experience of detention inside Ponte Galeria (different from the persons involved in the previous steps) was created in order to assess: the equivalence between the original and the translated versions of the MQLD (according to existing guidelines of Beaton et al. (2000) Borsa et al. (2012) and Guillemin et al. (1993), four main areas of equivalence were considered: *Semantic equivalence*, *Idiomatic equivalence*, *Experiential equivalence* *Conceptual equivalence*); and the relevance of the items for the dimensions they intended to measure, taking into account the specificity of the detention context at study (content validity). In particular, the panelists were invited to assess each item on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = not at all equivalent/relevant, to 5 = very equivalent/relevant). They were also asked to provide their comments and suggestions for improvement. The feedbacks provided were then analyzed by the research team. Notably, this process led to the revision of some items (see Table 2).

Table 2. Items translation and adaptation.

Italian final version	English version
10. Se ho un problema posso ricevere aiuto da un membro del personale di questo centro.	10. I have been helped significantly by an officer in this center with a particular problem.
24. Quelli/e che non parlano l'italiano hanno la vita difficile qua dentro.	24. People who don't speak English have a hard time in here.
30. La maggior parte del personale qui non tratta in modo uguale i/le detenuti/e quando applica le regole del centro.	30. Most staff here do not treat detainees fairly when applying the center rules.
41. Di solito riesco a vedere rapidamente un/a dottore/essa quando ne ho bisogno.	41. I can usually see a doctor within a reasonable amount of time.
52. Quando mi sento davvero male c'è qualcuno/a qui con cui posso parlare.	52. When I am feeling really upset, there is someone here I can talk to.
65. In questo centro il personale dell'unità interforze di sicurezza (Polizia, Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza e Esercito) tratta i/le detenuti/e con rispetto.	65. Item not present in the original version.
66. In caso di aggressioni da parte di altri/e detenuti/e, il personale dell'unità interforze di sicurezza (Polizia, Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza e Esercito) interviene per tutelarli.	66. Item not present in the original version.
67. In questo centro il personale dell'unità interforze di sicurezza (Polizia, Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza e Esercito) interviene con l'uso della forza.	67. Item not present in the original version.
68. In questo centro posso facilmente comunicare con l'esterno se ne ho bisogno.	68. Item not present in the original version.
69. Appena entrato/a in questo centro mi hanno spiegato la procedura per ricevere visite dai miei familiari/amici.	69. Item not present in the original version.
70. In questo centro il personale dell'unità interforze di sicurezza (Polizia, Carabinieri, Guardia di Finanza e Esercito) tratta tutti/e i/le detenuti/e in modo uguale.	70. Item not present in the original version.
71. Appena entrato/a in questo centro ho avuto accesso ad un telefono.	71. Item not present in the original version.

- e. *Pretesting and debriefing interviews:* As reported by Beaton, Bombardier, Guillemin, and Ferraz (2007), a measure translation and adaptation process ends with a pretesting. In our case, this step consisted in the administration of the translated measure (the MQLD-IT) to a group of 15 detained people who agreed to collaborate in the study. These were people with whom the first author had already established a relationship of proximity and trust during her fieldwork at Ponte Galeria, and they all understood and spoke Italian quite well. All of them had been talked through the goal of the study and of the translation and adaptation process. At the end of each administration, a debriefing interview – inspired by a cognitive interviewing approach (Willis, 2005; see also Gonzalez & Trickett, 2014) – was conducted to examine how the participants had understood the meaning of each item and their related responses. A general feedback about the clarity, relevance and

contextual/cultural appropriateness of the measure was also elicited. As a result of this process, some items were further reviewed (see Table 2).

The questionnaire resulting from this five-step process – the MQLD-IT – consists of 71 items and 13 dimensions: 11 dimensions correspond to the respective dimensions of the original English version (Bosworth & Kellezi, 2015), and two new dimensions were introduced as a result of the adaptation process (see Table 1). As in the original version, the survey includes also 12 stand-alone items and a final section for additional comments from participants. The two new dimensions, as mentioned above (see *Synthesis of the translations*), emerged through the collaborative critical thinking process undertaken, which saw the active involvement of researchers, practitioners working in the detention field, and migrants with lived experience of detention. This highlights the importance, and unique value, of conceiving measurement translation and adaptation as an ecological and collaborative endeavor. Still, it is worth noting that the long-term engagement of the first author in the field was crucial for the development of this process. Indeed, and as reported elsewhere (Esposito, Ornelas, Briozzo, et al., 2019), she spent about 617h inside the center taking part in everyday life and speaking with both detainees and practitioners. This sustained engagement, based also on an ongoing questioning of her own positionality (Esposito, 2017), opened up a space to forge relationships of trust with different actors, and above all with the migrants detained, as well as to discuss with them their perspectives and the issues to be prioritized in the study. The collaborative process of translation and adaptation described in this paper is therefore an outcome of this long-term engagement in the field, which allowed the researcher to be viewed as both accompanying and bearing witness to detainees' suffering and struggles (Lykes, 2013).

Conclusive remarks

The literature has highlighted the many benefits of involving migrants as collaborators in community-based research projects (Vaughn et al., 2017). However, in our case the adoption of a collaborative approach was not straightforward, due to the oppressive environment where our study took place. Some of the barriers we faced in our work inside Ponte Galeria were the high levels of suffering and anguish, the atmosphere of distrust that reigned in the center, the strict provisions concerning everyday life, the high turnover of detainees and the linguistic, cultural, and gender differences. These barriers hindered the creation of a space for a collaborative endeavor to thrive. However, the multi-step process we undertook, which involved a long-term critical engagement in the detention setting (Esposito, 2017), allowed us to partially overcome this situation and assure

trustworthiness in our research (Connelly, 2016). Unfortunately, due to the limited number of our research participants, the validation of the MQLD-IT was not accomplished and it is therefore a task for the future. Also, as mentioned above, due to lack of funds and resources, we were not able to provide multilingual translations.

In our collaborative experience all the experts involved brought their specific knowledge into the process of translation and adaptation, ensuring that the new measure was able to grasp all the key dimensions of people's detention experience at Ponte Galeria. Particularly meaningful was the contribution of the migrants with lived experience of detention, both the one who first translated the measure and the three who participated in the Expert Committee. Ultimately, the pretesting allowed for a refinement, and further improvement, of the quality of the items based on the voice and feedback of our participants.

Overall, and in spite of the limitations mentioned above, we do believe this was an important experience both for us and our collaborators. By sharing it through this article we therefore wish to provide inspiration and operational guidelines for those scholars who want to use translated and adapted measures in their community-based work. We indeed do think this experience demonstrates how a community psychology ecological and collaborative approach to measurement translation and adaptation is an essential step to develop culturally and contextually relevant research findings (Vinokurov et al., 2007). Furthermore, it can be a means to break "down (the) boundaries between the researchers and the researched" (Birman & Bray, 2017, p. 323), ultimately providing a platform for the participation of marginalized groups in the co-construction of meaningful academic knowledge.

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