



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Exploring the 'felt sense' of placelessness: A Reflexive Thematic Analysis of How Counsellors Negotiate *Bêcihî* (the 'felt sense' of placelessness) within their Professional Identity and Practice.

Researcher: Mehmet Sercan Erbecer, MSc Student at the University of Edinburgh.

You are being invited to take part in research on the psychological experience of placelessness within clinical practice. Mehmet Sercan Erbecer, MSc Student at the University of Edinburgh is leading this research. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important you understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to explore the professional experiences of counsellors using the concept of *Bêcihî*—a Kurdish term describing a "felt sense" of placelessness. While the term has specific cultural roots, this research uses it as a universal phenomenological lens to understand the internal sense of displacement that practitioners from any background may experience. We aim to investigate how this "felt sense" of not having a place shapes a counsellor's professional identity and their clinical presence in the therapeutic encounter. This research is being conducted as part of a Master's dissertation at the University of Edinburgh.

WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been invited because you are a qualified or trainee counsellor/psychotherapist practicing in the UK who resonates with the "felt sense" of not having a place within your personal or professional world.

DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?

No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Deciding not to take part or withdrawing from the study will not affect your legal rights.

Please note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, theses and reports) prior to your withdrawal. You may withdraw your data from the study for up to 14 days (two weeks) following your interview. After this period, data will be pseudonymised and integrated into the analysis, making individual withdrawal no longer possible.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DECIDE TO TAKE PART?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign an Informed Consent Form. You will then participate in a single semi-structured interview lasting approximately 60 minutes. The interview will take place in a safe environment, either in person or online via Microsoft Teams. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

There are no direct benefits, but by sharing your experiences, you will be helping the researcher (Mehmet Sercan Erbecer) and the University to better understand the impact of internal displacement on clinical practice.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS OR DISADVANTAGES ASSOCIATED WITH TAKING PART?

There are no significant risks associated with participation. However, reflecting on placelessness may evoke mild emotional discomfort. If you feel upset or distressed, a full list of professional support resources (including helplines and counselling directories) is provided in the Participant Debrief Form, which you will receive at the end of your interview. Limits of Confidentiality: I am required to break confidence if a disclosure is made regarding a child or vulnerable adult currently at risk of harm.

WILL MY TAKING PART BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

All the information we collect during the research will be kept confidential and there are strict laws which safeguard your privacy at every stage.

HOW WILL WE USE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU?

We will need to use information from **you** for this research project.

- **Identifiers:** This information will include your **name** and **contact details**.
- **Access Control:** People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code number (unique participant ID) instead.
- **Safe Storage:** We will keep all information about you safe and secure. All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected University of Edinburgh OneDrive account.
- **Restricted Access:** Your identifiable data will only be viewed by the lead researcher, **Mehmet Sercan Erbecer**. Your anonymised data (transcripts where identifiers are removed) may be viewed by the project supervisor or



examiners to check the results and ensure the research is being done properly.

- **Audio Recordings:** As you are consenting to being audio recorded, after the interview, recordings will be moved to a secure encrypted University OneDrive and deleted from the source (recording device or Teams cloud) immediately after the interview. For online interviews conducted via Microsoft Teams, the platform's built-in transcription function will be used. For in-person interviews, the researcher will transcribe the audio recordings manually. Once transcription is complete, the raw audio recordings will be permanently deleted from OneDrive. Transcripts will be fully pseudonymised.
- **Separation of Records:** Your consent information will be kept strictly separately from your interview responses (answer sheets) in order to minimise risk.
- **Reporting:** Once we have finished the study, we will keep some of the data so we can check the results. We will write our reports in a way that no-one can work out that you took part in the study.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason.
- We need to manage your records in specific ways for the research to be reliable.
- 14 days after interview means that the data has been anonymised and the analysis has begun, we won't be able to let you see or change the data we hold about you.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

For further information about data privacy for research participants please refer to: <https://data-protection.ed.ac.uk/privacy-notice-research>

By asking the researcher, **Mehmet Sercan Erbecer**. E-mail: s2797903@ed.ac.uk

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY?

The results will be summarised in a Master's dissertation. Additionally, they may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. You will not be identifiable from any published results. Quotes will always be made anonymous in any formal outputs. Identifiable information will be destroyed 14 days after completion of the interview, while your anonymised data will be retained for up to one year following submission of the dissertation for audit purposes, after which it will be securely



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deleted. A summary of the findings will be made available via email to participants who indicate they would like to receive this.

WHO IS ORGANISING AND FUNDING THE RESEARCH?

This study has been organised by Mehmet Sercan Erbecer as part of the MSc in International and Cross-Cultural Counselling Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

WHO HAS REVIEWED THE STUDY?

The study proposal has been reviewed by the School of Health in Social Science Research Ethics Committee.

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

Lead Researcher: Mehmet Sercan Erbecer (s2797903@ed.ac.uk).

Independent Contact: Head of Counselling, Psychotherapy and Applied Social Sciences:

- Fiona Murray (Fiona.A.Murray@ed.ac.uk)
- Sally Brown (sbrown25@exseed.ed.ac.uk)

Complaints or Concerns: Prof. Matthias Schwannauer, Head of School of Health in Social Science (hos.health@ed.ac.uk)