



# **Exploring self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom**

**O Khumalo**



**orcid.org 0000-0003-1133-8819**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Master's of Arts in Research Psychology* at the North-West University

Supervisor:

Ms JM van Aardt

Graduation: May 2019

Student number: 25798502

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES.....</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>GLOSSARY .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>PREFACE.....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>INTENDED PUBLISHER AND GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>XI</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>XII</b>
<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>XIV</b>
<b>OPSOMMING.....</b>	<b>XVI</b>
<b>PERMISSION TO SUBMIT ARTICLE FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES.....</b>	<b>XVIII</b>
<b>DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER.....</b>	<b>XIX</b>
<b>DECLARATION BY THE LANGUAGE EDITOR.....</b>	<b>XX</b>

### CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background information.....	1
Conceptualisation of Larger research project.....	1
Methodology of Larger Research Project.....	2
Present study and Problem statement.....	5
Outline of the dissertation.....	8
REFERENCES.....	9

### CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE OVERVIEW.....	13
A focus on families .....	13

Contextualization of resource constrained area's.....	18
Theoretical perspectives on need.....	20
Theoretical Foundation.....	22
REFERENCES.....	26

### CHAPTER 3

ARTICLE.....	34
Article title page.....	34
Abstract.....	35
Research Context.....	36
Introduction .....	37
Methodology.....	42
Research Approach and Design.....	42
Population.....	43
Data Collection Method.....	45
Trustworthiness.....	47
Data Analysis.....	48
Ethical Considerations.....	48
Findings.....	50
Discussion .....	57
Conclusion.....	63
REFERENCES.....	64

### CHAPTER 4

CRITICAL REFLECTION.....	74
Participatory Learning Action.....	75
Venn diagrams.....	75

Free drawings.....	75
Conclusion.....	76
REFERENCE.....	77

## **LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES**

### **List of Tables**

Table 1: Themes and Sub-themes – The self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families who live in a resource-constrained environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom

## GLOSSARY

**Apartheid:** Literally “apartness” in Afrikaans. A policy of racial segregation further entrenched by the National Party after it won the whites-only election in 1948. It brutally enforced a highly stratified society in which whites dominated politically, economically, and socially at the expense of blacks.

**Behavioral Confirmation:** A type of self-fulfilling prophecy in which people's social expectations lead them to behave in ways that cause others to confirm their expectations.

**Belief Perseverance:** Persistence of a belief even when the original basis for it has been discredited

**Child-headed household:** A household without an adult caregiver, which is headed by the eldest or most responsible child who assumes parental responsibility.

**Cohabitation:** A union in which two adults stay together without any contractual agreements, with or without children.

**Dysfunctional family:** A family in which conflict, misbehaviour, neglect, or abuse occur continually or regularly.

**Extended family:** A multigenerational family that may or may not share the same household.

**Family policy:** any direct and indirect policy that influences the well-being of families

**Family preservation services:** Services to families that focus on family resilience in order to strengthen families, so as to keep families together as far as possible.

**Family Resilience:** the ability of families “to withstand and rebound from disruptive life challenges.

**Family strengthening:** The deliberate process of giving families the necessary opportunities, relationships, networks, and support to become functional and self-reliant. The strengthening of families is driven by certain core areas, namely: family economic success, family support systems, and thriving and nurturing communities.

**Family:** A societal group that is related by blood (kinship), adoption, foster care or the ties of marriage (civil, customary or religious), civil union or cohabitation, and go beyond a particular physical residence.

**Green Paper:** a consultation document setting out government's policy position. As a discussion document, it affords government an opportunity to test its ideas on important matters among the public and to benefit from inputs and comments from the ensuing public discussion.

**Healthy family:** a family characterized by good interpersonal relations and good a state of physical, mental, and social well-being among all members.

**Intergenerational solidarity:** Reciprocal care, support and exchange of material and non-material resources between family members, typically younger and older generation.

**Nuclear family:** a family group consisting of parents with their biological or adoptive children only.

**Skip-generation households:** A family type where grandparents raise their grandchildren (without the grandchildren's parents).

**Social capital:** resources embedded within a person's social network that influence decisions and outcomes by shaping a personal identity while delineating opportunities and obstacles within a person's social world

**Social cohesion:** a process of building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community.

**Social protection:** policies and programmes that protect people against risk and vulnerability, mitigate the impact of shocks, and support people from chronic incapacities to secure basic livelihoods

**Township:** Black residential areas on the outskirts of South African cities created by the Apartheid government.

**White Paper:** A document used as a means of presenting government policy preferences prior to the introduction of legislation. Its publication serves to test the climate of public opinion regarding a policy issue and enables the government to gauge its probable impact.

**Work-family conflict:** a form of inter-role conflict in which the roles pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible



## PREFACE

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in Research Psychology. Chapter 3 is presented in article format and will be submitted to a journal, titled *Journal on Family Issues*, published by Sage Publications. Please note, for the purpose of examination the 6th edition of APA referencing was used in-text and in the reference lists. If this reference method does not align with that of the examiner, please refer to the following link:

- [http://student.ucol.ac.nz/library/onlineresources/Documents/APA\\_guide\\_2015.pdf](http://student.ucol.ac.nz/library/onlineresources/Documents/APA_guide_2015.pdf)

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore the nature of self-identified needs of families who live in a resource-constrained environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom.

This study is of interest to emerging scholars focused on developing issues in South Africa with an emphasis on families and their central position in a contemporary South African context. Researchers and individuals concerned with policy development and/or public servants can also use these findings as a point of reference for further exploration. The findings of this study can contribute to intervention strategies that aim to strengthen families in constrained environments in an effort to enhance the quality of life of South African families.

### **Intended Publisher and Guidelines for Authors**

The article (Chapter 3) will be submitted to a journal, titled *Journal on Family Issues*, published by Sage Publications.

Sage Publications is an independent publishing company that strives to educate and inform researchers, students and practitioners on a wide variety of subjects and fields. The company publishes books, e-books and peer-reviewed journals in science, social sciences, humanities, business, medicine and technology.

### **Instruction to Authors**

Manuscripts must be submitted electronically at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jfi>. The corresponding author must create an online account in order to submit a manuscript. Submitted papers should be in Word and must not exceed 30 double-spaced typewritten pages in total (text, references, tables, figures, appendices).

### **Manuscript Preparation**

Manuscripts should be prepared using the APA Style Guide (6th edition). All pages must be typed double-spaced (including references, footnotes and endnotes). Text must be in 12-point Times Roman. Block quotes may be single-spaced. Must include margins of 1 inch on all the four sides and number all pages sequentially.

The manuscript should include four major sections (in this order): Title Page, Abstract, Main Body and References. Sections in a manuscript may include the following (in this order): (1) Title page, (2) Abstract, (3) Keywords, (4) Text, (5) Notes, (6) References, (7) Tables, (8) Figures, and (9) Appendices.

#### **1. Title page.** Please include the following:

Full article title; acknowledgments and credits; each author's complete name and institutional affiliation(s); grant numbers and/or funding information; corresponding author (name, address, phone/fax, email).

**2. Abstract.** Print the abstract (150 words or less) on a separate page headed by the full article title. Omit author's or authors' names.

**3. Keywords.**

**4. Text.** Begin article text on a new page headed by the full article title.

a. Headings and subheadings. Subheadings should indicate the organisation of the content of the manuscript. Generally, three heading levels are sufficient to organise text. Level 1 headings should be centred, boldface, upper and lowercase, Level 2 headings should be flush left, boldface, upper and lowercase, Level 3 headings should be indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period, Level 4 headings should be indented, boldface, italicised, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period, and Level 5 headings should be indented, italicised, lowercase paragraph heading that ends with a period. b. Citations. For each text citation there must be a corresponding citation in the reference list and for each reference list citation there must be a corresponding text citation. Each corresponding citation must have identical spelling and year. Each text citation must include at least two pieces of information, author(s) and year of publication. Following are some examples of text citations: (i) Unknown author: To cite works that do not have an author, cite the source by its title in the signal phrase or use the first word or two in the parentheses. For example, the findings are based on the study was done of students learning to format research papers ("Using XXX," 2001). (ii) Authors with the same last name: Use first initials with the last names to prevent confusion. For example, (L. Hughes, 2001; P. Hughes, 1998). (iii) Two or more works by the same author in the same year: For two sources by the same author in the same year, use lower-case letters (a, b, c) with the year to order the entries in the reference list. The lower case letters should follow the year in the in-text citation. For example, Research by Freud (1981a) illustrated that ... (iv) Personal communication: For letters, emails, interviews and other person-to-person communication, citation should include the communicator's name, the

fact that it was personal communication, and the date of the communication. Do not include personal communication in the reference list. For example, (E. Clark, personal communication, January 4, 2009). (v) Unknown author and unknown date: For citations with no author or date, use the title in the signal phrase or the first word or two of the title in the parentheses and use the abbreviation "n.d." (for "no date"). For example, The study conducted by of students and research division discovered that students succeeded with tutoring ("Tutoring and APA," n.d.).

**5. Notes.** If explanatory notes are required for your manuscript, insert a number formatted in superscript following almost any punctuation mark. Footnote numbers should not follow dashes ( – ), and if they appear in a sentence in parentheses, the footnote number should be inserted within the parentheses. Footnotes should be added at the bottom of the page after the references. The word “Footnotes” should be centred at the top of the page.

**6. References.** Basic rules for the reference list: The reference list should be arranged in alphabetical order according to the authors’ last names. If there is more than one work by the same author, order them according to their publication date – oldest to newest (therefore a 2008 publication would appear before a 2009 publication). When listing multiple authors of a source use “&” instead of “and”. Capitalise only the first word of the title and of the subtitle, if there are one, and any proper names – only those words that are normally capitalised. Italicise the title of the book, the title of the journal/serial and the title of the web document. Manuscripts submitted to XXX [journal acronym] should strictly follow the XXX manual (xth edition) [style manual title with ed]. Every citation in text must have a detailed reference in the reference section. Every reference listed in the reference section must be cited in text. Do not use “et al.” in the Reference list at the end; names of all authors of a publication should be listed there. Here are a few examples of commonly found references. For more examples please check APA (6th Ed).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** To encourage a faster production process of your article, you are requested to closely adhere to the points above for references. Otherwise, it will entail a long process of solving copyeditor's queries and may directly affect the publication time of your article.

**7. Tables.** They should be structured properly. Each table must have a clear and concise title. When appropriate, use the title to explain an abbreviation parenthetically. For example, Comparison of Median Income of Adopted Children (AC) v. Foster Children (FC). Headings should be clear and brief.

**8. Figures.** They should be numbered consecutively in the order in which they appear in the text and must include figure captions. Figures will appear in the published article in the order in which they are numbered initially. The figure resolution should be 300dpi at the time of submission.

**IMPORTANT: PERMISSION** – The author(s) are responsible for securing permission to reproduce all copyrighted figures or materials before they are published in JFI. A copy of the written permission must be included with the manuscript submission.

**9. Appendices.** They should be lettered to distinguish from numbered tables and figures. Include a descriptive title for each appendix (e.g., "Appendix A. Variable Names and Definitions"). Cross-check text for accuracy against appendices.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to God who have made this opportunity possible.

**Ms Janine van Aardt**, my supervisor, has been a beacon of light through this challenging journey of blood, sweat and tears. Her kindness, patience and understanding made this possible. She communicated at the oddest hours of the day and always checked up on my progress. Her dedication is one of the many things I admire about her.

**Prof. Herman Grobler**, for letting me be part of his larger project and assisting with many technical aspects of the application process and the study in general. Thank you.

I would like to thank the **North-West University** for this opportunity and for making it possible to reach my goals. The institution also afforded me the opportunity to meet friends who have now become my sisters. Thank you to **Lebogang Isidoro**, **Refilwe Seobi** and **Khumbudzo Leburu**. You guys brought so much joy to this experience and made sure we keep each other sane from the struggles of life. A special thank you to **Ramasela Mogomotsi**, colleague and friend, for always encouraging me to carry on, always saying “you can do it, buddy”.

I would also like to thank my family for their unconditional love and support. My mom, **Mapula Mpuleleng**, my little sister **Reamogetse Mpuleleng** (soon to be Dr Mpuleleng) and my late father (**Abraham Mpuleleng**) [who passed while completing this programme]. You carried me through the tears, and during the moments when I wanted to give up, but you rooted for me and kept praying for me through it all.

Finally, I would like to thank the two special men in my life, my husband, **Arnold Khumalo**, and our son, **Onalerona (Arnold Jr) Khumalo**. You gave me more reasons to

keep trying and to never give up, no matter how hard it was. You sacrificed what was supposed to be our family time to give me the time and space to do what I needed to do. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you and will forever be indebted to you.

## DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this research to my late father, **Mr Abraham Mpuleleng** (Ta' Ace), and my late sister, **Dulcey Tidimalo Montshioa** (Ausi Tidi).

I also dedicate this dissertation to my husband and son (Arnold and Arnold Jr Khumalo). Thank you for always being there for me. I appreciate all the support and endless care.

Finally, I dedicate my work to the strong women in my life: My mother (Mapula), my 94-year-old grandmother (Mamogo), my aunt (Mama Ausi), my sister (Sharpi) and my little sister (Rea).



## SUMMARY

Families as a social institution have undergone a tremendous transformation over the past years – members of a family represent more than just a collection of individuals. As a social institution, families consist of members from different generations who share physical and emotional spaces in time. These different generations create and sustain emotional bonds with individual members that differ in closeness.

South African families are exposed to numerous obstacles in their living environment that are translated into their interpersonal spaces. Poverty and unemployment are at the forefront in contemporary South Africa, where families suffer from numerous constraints. South Africa's most constrained areas are secluded with no formal roads or transportation systems available where children have to walk long distances to attend school, and the most basic services are not delivered. Families who reside in these areas are exposed to unimaginable circumstances in their community with salient changes in their mental health and capacity to deal with daily challenges. Consequently, families in resource-constrained environments are vulnerable to environmental adversities, such as floods, fires, poor agricultural conditions and illnesses caused by the poor infrastructure and access to little resources. These adversities produce a closed system where families live in extreme poverty, with high levels of unemployment and in many cases, unable to adequately satisfy basic needs. Poverty itself does not cause families (or communities) in resource-constrained environments to be classified as disadvantaged but rather the stress associated with poverty that results in low levels of optimal functioning amongst family members.

A vast body of empirical work exists that describes families – highlighting their dysfunction and deficits – but little insight is provided into the nature of the needs of already impoverished families who live in environments with ever-increasing constraints. The aim of this study was to explore the self-identified needs of families living in a resource-constrained

environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom. This study was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The researcher utilised qualitative research methods by applying a qualitative descriptive design and collecting data by means of participation learning action techniques. Venn diagrams and free drawings from the researcher's participation learning action toolbox were utilised. These methods allowed the researcher to obtain information to understand the viewpoint of individuals, irrespective of their basic education level. The participating families were able to transfer their knowledge by means of visual representations. The researcher was able to ask questions and probe to understand the nuances of the visual representations linked to the research question of the study. The visual data were used to stimulate conversations, and verbatim data were transcribed and analysed by means of thematic analyses.

The overriding need of families living in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, was found to be relational needs, followed by physical and environmental needs and the need to aspire. In addition, the themes were found to interrelate and some of the themes emerged almost simultaneously. These findings contribute to empirical knowledge of the structure of families in a South African context; their self-identified needs and more importantly, the nuanced nature of these needs against the backdrop of the current socioeconomic climate.

**Keywords:** Families, self-identified needs, resource-constrained environments.

## OPSOMMING

Families as 'n sosiale instelling het 'n geweldige transformasie in die afgelope paar jaar ondergaan – lede van 'n familie verteenwoordig veel meer as net 'n versameling van individue. As 'n sosiale instelling, bestaan families uit lede van verskillende generasies wat fisieke en emosionale spasies deel. Hierdie verskillende generasies skep en onderhou emosionele bande met individue wat in diepte van mekaar verskil.

Suid-Afrikaanse families word blootgestel aan talryke hindernisse in hulle leefwêreld wat 'n invloed het op hulle interpersoonlike verhoudings. Armoede en werkloosheid is 'n harde werklikheid tans in Suid-Afrika met families wat gebuk gaan onder verskeie beperkings. Areas in Suid-Afrika wat as “beperk” beskou word, is afgeleë met geen toegang tot formele paaie nie, geen vervoerstelsel nie en kinders moet ver afstande loop na hulle naaste skool. Basiese dienste is nie beskikbaar nie. Families wat in hierdie areas woon, word blootgestel aan haglike omstandighede in hulle gemeenskap wat merkbare veranderings veroorsaak in hulle welwees en kapasiteit om daaglikse uitdagings te hanteer. Gevolglik is families in hierdie areas kwesbaar ten opsigte van omgewingstruikelblokke soos vloed, brande, 'n swak landbou-omgewing en siektetoestande wat veroorsaak word deur 'n swak infrastruktuur met bykans geen toegang tot hulpbronne nie. Hierdie truikelblokke veroorsaak 'n geslote stelsel waarin families te kampe het met geweldige armoede, 'n hoë werkloosheidsyfer en in die meeste gevalle kan hulle nie in hulle basiese behoeftes voorsien nie. Armoede is nie die hoofrede waarom families (of gemeenskappe) in hulpbronbeperkte omgewings as benadeeld beskou word nie, maar eerder die spanning wat geassosieer word met armoede wat optimale funksionering tussen familieledede kortwiek.

'n Groot hoeveelheid empiriese navorsing bestaan oor families wat disfunksie en tekorte beklemtoon, maar weinig insig word verskaf oor die aard van die behoeftes van families wat alreeds gebuk gaan onder armoede en dan boonop in omgewings woon met

nimmereindigende beperkings. The doel van hierdie studie was om die selfgeïdentifiseerde behoeftes van families te verken wat in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, woon met geweldige beperkings. Hierdie studie is goedgekeur deur die Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) van die Noordwes-Universiteit, Potchefstroomkampus. Die navorser het gebruik gemaak van kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodes deur 'n kwalitatiewe beskrywende ontwerp en data is versamel deur middel van deelname-leertegnieke (DLT). Venn-diagramme en vrye sketse vanuit die navorser se DLT gereedskapskis is gebruik. Hierdie metodes het die navorser in staat gestel om inligting te bekom om sodoende die siening van die individue te verstaan ongeag hulle basiese opleidingsvlak. Die families wat deelgeneem het kon hulle kennis oordra deur middel van visuele voorstellings. Die navorser kon vrae vra en ondersoek instel na die nuances van die visuele voorstellings wat verband gehou het met die navorsingsvraag. Die visuele data is gebruik om gesprekke te stimuleer en data is verbatim getranskribeer en geanaliseer deur tematiese analises.

Die heel grootste behoefte van families wat in 'n area met geweldige beperkings in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, woon, is verhoudings gevolg deur fisieke en omgewingsbehoefte asook 'n behoefte om meer te bereik. Verder kon die temas met mekaar verbind word en sommige van die temas het feitlik tegelyk verskyn. Hierdie bevindings dra by tot die empiriese kennis van die struktuur van families in 'n Suid-Afrikaanse konteks, hulle selfgeïdentifiseerde behoeftes en nog meer van belang, hulle behoeftes ten opsigte van die huisige sosio-ekonomiese klimaat.

Sleutelwoorde: Families, selfgeïdentifiseerde behoeftes, omgewings met beperkings.

**PERMISSION TO SUBMIT ARTICLE FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES**

The candidate opted to write an article with the support of her supervisor. I hereby grant permission that she may submit this article for examination purposes in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Masters of Arts in Research Psychology.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janine van Aardt', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is enclosed within a light gray rectangular box.

Ms Janine van Aardt

**DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER**

I, hereby declare that this research, **Exploring the Nature of Self-identified Needs of Families Living in a Resource-constrained Environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom**, is entirely my own work and that all sources have been fully referenced and acknowledged.

Furthermore, I declare that this dissertation was edited by a qualified language editor, as prescribed.

  
.....

**O Khumalo**

**DECLARATION BY THE LANGUAGE EDITOR**

I, hereby declare that I have language edited the dissertation: **Exploring the Nature of Self-identified Needs of Families Living in a Resource-constrained Environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom**, of O Khumalo for the degree of MA in Research Psychology.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter orientates the examiner and reader by providing background information on the larger research project, contextualises the present affiliated study and briefly discusses the problem that motivated the initiation and completion of this dissertation.

#### **Background information**

##### **Conceptualisation of the Larger Project**

The present research formed part of a larger research project titled, *Strengthening Compromised Families and Disadvantaged Communities Through a Community Engagement Initiative* – ethics number NWU-00329-15-A1. The larger research project focused on the implementation of the White Paper on Families, 2012, with specific reference to the strengthening perspective strategy (Department of Social Development, 2012). The larger research project aimed to understand and identify the needs and strengths of families who live in resource-constrained areas in South Africa in an effort to contribute to the body of knowledge on family studies and to promote the strengthening perspective, as suggested in the White Paper. The initial aim of the larger research project can be framed as follows: To explore and describe how compromised families and disadvantage communities can be strengthened through a community engagement initiative. This aim was explored by means of a qualitative inquiry in three separate phases during January 2015 and December 2017. Data were collected in three different provinces (the Western Cape, Northern Cape and North West) in South Africa with various different data collection sites.

For the purpose of this study, ample contextualisation is provided regarding phase one of the larger research project, as the present research study was an affiliated study of phase one of the larger research project. Phase one of the larger research project commenced in 2015. This project was led by two aims:



- To explore and describe the needs of compromised families in disadvantaged communities.
- To explore and describe the strengths of compromised families in disadvantaged communities.

**Methodology of the larger research project.** The two above-mentioned aims were explored by means of a qualitative approach while a qualitative descriptive research design was applied. Qualitative research allows researchers to explore a topic and gain in-depth knowledge from the perspective of participation in a social world (Snape & Spencer, 2003). In the case of the larger research project, the research approach allowed the research team to gain an in-depth understanding of constrained families, their strengths and needs. A qualitative descriptive research design provided the opportunity for an all-inclusive summary to be created from the data (Lambert & Lambert, 2012). Sandelowski (2000) suggests that researchers should apply a qualitative descriptive design when they are interested in answering a specific *what*-question (in this case, the two formulated aims of phase one), to emphasise the *who* (in this case, families) and the *where* (the constrained areas where families reside in South Africa). To answer these two aims of phase one, data were collected by means of Participation Learning Actions (PLA), a method deemed appropriate that enables qualitative researchers to study a phenomenon embedded in the world view of participants (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010). PLA techniques stimulate a research process where qualitative researchers learn about groups of people through active engagement (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010; Gupta, 2000).

PLA have ample tools available to engage with groups of people and in turn, communities. However, these tools should always be aligned with the needs of the participants. The researcher chose, therefore, a technique that was the most effective for the

collection of data (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010; Gupta, 2000; Thomas, 2004). Techniques associated with PLA can be used in contexts where individuals with different levels of literacy and representations are explored (Bozalek & Biersteker, 2010). The pool of inclusion is, therefore, enhanced while participants are provided with a fair space of expression that adds to the nuances of data collection (Appel, Buckingham, Jodoin & Roth, 2012; Connelly, 2015).

For the purpose of phase one of the larger research project, the researchers made use of Venn diagrams and free drawings as stimuli during data collection. Families were asked to present their family by means of free drawings. Everyone in the family had the opportunity to add drawings of what was the most important to them. Families were then prompted to complete their free drawings by highlighting the position of their family within their community and the resources available to them in their community. Venn diagrams were used to obtain a sense of the roles and relationships amongst the individual family members, their strengths and needs. These two techniques were used to stimulate narratives amongst family members and the researcher. Family members provided meaning to their free drawings and explained the different Venn diagrams (Appel et al., 2012; Thomas, 2004).

Data were collected in the Western Cape, Northern Cape and North West for the purpose of phase one of the larger research project. The present study (an affiliated study) only discusses data collected in the North West Province at the Ikageng data collection site and only the process followed in the North West is, therefore, discussed.

During the planning phases of the larger research project, a relationship was established between the research team and the executive board of a local non-profit organisation in Ikageng. Underpinned by the focus of the larger research project, the research team reached out to the chief executive officer (CEO) of the Mosaic Community Centre that forms part of the non-profit organisation. The Mosaic Community Centre is located in one of

the most underdeveloped areas in Ikageng. After an initial contact, a mediator was assigned by the CEO to assist with recruitment of participants and access to community members of Extension 12, Ikageng. A formal permission letter was submitted to the community leader in Extension 12, and formal permission was granted to the mediator to contact community members. The mediator received rapid training to recruit possible community members for the larger research project and to inform them about this project. Information pamphlets were distributed throughout the community and the mediator announced the larger research project at formal community meetings and church gatherings. Families had the four weeks to decide if they wanted to participate, and had the opportunity to share information of the larger research project to other family members, as the aim was to participate as a family who share living space and not as individual members. The families who indicated their possible participation received relevant information about the time and venue of the data collection, which occurred at the Mosaic Community Centre in Extension 12, Ikageng. Families had the opportunity to suggest a theme for the day of data collection, and the project team organised a family fun day in accordance to the needs and suggestions of the families.

On the day of the data collection, families were briefed (on the ground floor of the Mosaic Centre) by the project leader and they had the opportunity to consider their participation. It was emphasised that families can enjoy the fun day activities irrespective of their participation. After the group discussion and breakfast, all of the families who still wanted to participate were asked to assemble in their different family groups. An independent person explained and managed the consent and assent of family members. The participating families were given an opportunity to ask any questions and any uncertainties were discussed and resolved. After consent and assent were given by the participating families, the project leader explained to them that data were to be collected on the first floor in sound proof rooms, and only members of a family were to attend the PLA sessions privately. While some

of the families were busy with the research process, the other families had the freedom to enjoy the recreational activities. The recreational activities included a jumping castle, group work, board games, water slides and finger paint that were facilitated by two caretakers.

The families who went to the first floor were only allowed to go there under supervision of a researcher in an effort to ensure confidentiality and the privacy of families who participated in the PLA groups. Each researcher only saw one family per session in a private room on the first floor of the Mosaic Community Centre. The aspect of partial confidentiality was explained verbally and in a consent/assent form by virtue of the familiarity of participating families. All of the activities during the PLA groups were recorded and transcribed by the researchers involved and the confidentiality agreements were signed by the mediators, community workers, translators, fieldworkers and students. During and after all of the PLA groups debriefing was available and families had the opportunity to make use of these services if needed. The day concluded with a shared lunch and food parcels were distributed to neighbouring families who live close to the Mosaic Centre. The collected data (electronic) are stored on a password-protected computer and the visual data are stored in a locked cupboard in a locked office. Data will be stored for five years in the office of the COMPRES Research Unit at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, and will be destroyed as stipulated in the standard operating procedure for recordkeeping.

### **Present Study and Problem statement**

For the purpose of completion and submission of a dissertation, an affiliated study was proposed with the aim to only use a segment of data collected during phase one of the larger research study. The aim of this affiliated study aligned with the aims of phase one of the larger study, and the researcher endeavoured to only use data collected at the Ikageng data collection site in the North West.

The aim of the affiliated study was formulated as follows: To explore the nature of self-identified needs of families who live in a resource-constrained environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom. This study aimed to shed light on the self-identified needs of families in Ikageng, to explore and describe the nuances of these needs embedded in these families whose physical environment is stricken by constrained resources and how they use strength to persevere as a unit. The researcher moved from the position that the needs of families (even in resource-constrained environments) are not self-evident, and the nuances of needs should be explored carefully, especially in the case when families are viewed as units and not just as individual members of families.

**Problem statement.** South African families are organisationally complex systems, constructed by members of different generations and racial groups, historically and/or biologically related (Babington, 2006; Koen, 2012; Neff, 2006; Ziehl, 2003). This view differs from what Amoateng and Richter (2007) and Harvey (1994) describe: In the past, South African families were dualistically underpinned by segregation in the Apartheid era. Segregation led to a strong differentiation between white, black, coloured and Indian families in South Africa (Harvey, 1994). Before 1994, white families in South Africa were treated as superior in the Apartheid regime, whereas black, coloured and Indian families had to survive with little to no resources provided by the government (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Amoateng & Richter, 2007; Harvey, 1994; Ziehl, 2003). After 1994, the dispensation of a democratic government was instituted and an equal approach to all families in South Africa is followed now (Harvey, 1994; Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Hosegood, 2009). This approach of equality changed the socioeconomic environment of some families by the provision of running water and sanitation to families in need (Seekings, 2010). However, little change occurred in the demographic profile distribution of families in South Africa (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; Walker, 2010). After 1994, South African families continue to

live in the designated areas as assigned by the Apartheid regime, a phenomenon that is very visible in a contemporary South Africa (Christopher, 2002; Seekings, 2010). South African families are still demographically divided by race, albeit families can now relocate to different areas in South Africa supported by their socioeconomic status (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). South Africa's demographic dividend results in a rigid hierarchy of social classes where a notable separation is evident between upper-class, middle-class, lower-class and under-class income families (Seekings, 2010). Normally, lower-class and under-class income families live in underdeveloped areas, characterised by informal settlements, poor sanitation, no running water and a general lack in resources (Christopher, 2002; Crankshaw, 2008; Statistics South Africa, 2016).

Smith, Cowie, and Blades (2003) characterise a resource-restrained environment (or community) as an area in which families have little resources and access to public services. In resource-constrained environments, reduced opportunities exist, the infrastructure is often underdeveloped and a lack in social capital and networks occur that could have provided resources for action (Coleman, 1988). Seekings (2010) describes South African families in lower-class and under-class income groups as disadvantaged and resource-constrained, as they face high rates of unemployment, lack of social capital and little to no resources in their immediate environment. Families find themselves in a closed system, characterised by extreme poverty and unable to adequately satisfy basic needs (Crankshaw, 2008; Seekings, 2010). Munsamy, Parrish and Steel (2014) suggest that poverty itself does not cause families (or communities) in resource-constrained environments to be classified as disadvantaged but rather the stress associated with poverty that causes low levels of optimal functioning amongst family members. This viewpoint supports Patterson's (2012) argument where families have a greater ability to face adversities when they have access to adequate social and economic resources. Families struggle to overcome everyday challenges when basic

needs, such as water, sanitation and cohesion, are not met (Patterson, 2012). On the backdrop of this argument and the response strategies of the White Paper on families (Department of Social Development, 2012), it was of great importance to explore the current needs of resource-constrained families in South Africa. The research question that led this affiliated study was formulated as follows: What are the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in Ikageng, Potchefstroom?

### **An Outline of this Dissertation**

The remainder of the dissertation is structured by means of three separate chapters. Chapter two consists of a literature overview that provides the reader with important background information and concepts that are relevant to this study. Chapter three focuses on the empirical work done during the larger research project. Chapter three presents a journal article, which will be submitted to the *Journal of Family Issues (JFI)* for possible publication. The article aims to address the methodology used, the findings of the study and offers a discussion and conclusion of the study findings. Chapter four consists of a critical reflection presented by the researcher.

## References

- Amoateng, A. Y., & Heaton, T. B. (2007). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa: Socio-demographic perspectives*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Richter, L. M. (2007). Social and economic context of families and households in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng & T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 1-26). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Appel, K., Buckingham, E., Jodoin, K., & Roth, D. (2012). *Participatory learning and action toolkit: For application in BSR's global programs*. Retrieved from <https://herproject.org/downloads/curriculum-resources/herproject-pla-toolkit.pdf>
- Babington, B. (2006). (2017, June 20). Family well-being in Australia: A Families Australia version. Families Australia Inc. Retrieved from <http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au>
- Bozalek, V., & Biersteker, L. (2010). Exploring power and privilege using participatory learning action techniques. *Social Work Education*, 29(5), 551-572.  
doi:10.1080/02615470903193785
- Christopher, A. J. (2002). To define the indefinable: Population classification and the census in South Africa. *Area*, 34(4), 401-408.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120.
- Connelly, S. (2015). *Participatory learning and action: The coproduction of knowledge and action in the global South*. Retrieved from [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/usp/staff/steve\\_connelly](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/usp/staff/steve_connelly)
- Crankshaw, O. (2008). Race, space and the post-Fordist spatial order of Johannesburg. *Urban Studies*, 45(8), 1692-1711.



- Gupta, A. (2000). *Participatory learning and action: A review*. Retrieved from <http://www.copasah.org/uploads/1/2/6/4/12642634/participatory-learning-and-research-a-review.pdf>
- Harvey, E. D. (1994). *Social change and family policy in South Africa, 1930 to 1986*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Holborn, L., & Eddy, G. (2011). *First steps to healing the South African family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations. Retrieved from <https://irr.org.za/reports/occasional-reports/files/first-steps-to-healing-the-south-african-family-final-report-mar-2011.pdf>
- Hosegood, V. (2009). The demographic impact of HIV and AIDS across the family and household life-cycle: Implications for efforts to strength families in Sub-Saharan Africa. *AIDS Care*, 21(1), 13-21. doi:org/10.1080/09540120902923063
- Koen, V. (2012). Family psychosocial well-being in a South African context. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa). Retrieved from [https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen\\_V\\_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen_V_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific rim international journal of nursing research* , 16(4), 255-256. Retrieved from: [//www.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/PRIJNR/article/view/5805](http://www.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/PRIJNR/article/view/5805)
- Munsamy, J. I., Parrish, A., & Steel, G. (2014). Conducting research in a resource-constrained environment: avoiding the pitfalls. *Healthcare in Low-resource Settings*, 2(1009), 14-15.

- Neff, D. F. (2006). Subjective well-being, poverty and ethnicity in South Africa: Insights from an exploratory analysis. *Social Indicators Research*, 80, 313-341. doi: 10.1007/s11205-005-5920-x
- Patterson, J. M. (2012). Integrating family resilience and family stress theory. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 64, 349-361.
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). Focus on research methods: Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, 23, 334-340.
- Seekings, J. (2010). Race, class and inequality in the South African city. In G. Bridge & S. Watson (Eds.), *The new Blackwell companion to the city* (pp. 532-546). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Smith, P., Cowie, K., & Blades, H. M. (2003). *Understanding children's development* (5th ed.). West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons.
- Snape, D., & Spencer, L. (2003). The foundations of qualitative research. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice – a guide for social science students and researchers* (1st ed., pp. 1-23). London: Sage Publications.
- South Africa Department of Social Development. (2012). *White Paper on families in South Africa*. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFgguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom\\_docman%26task%3Ddoc\\_view%26gid%3D370%26Itemid%3D3&usg=AOvVaw3ZrBDosqEvzSAysu0G0w.pdfqf](https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFgguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom_docman%26task%3Ddoc_view%26gid%3D370%26Itemid%3D3&usg=AOvVaw3ZrBDosqEvzSAysu0G0w.pdfqf)

Statistics South Africa. (2016). *Census 2016: Mid-year population estimates (P0302)*.

Pretoria: SSA. Retrieved from

<http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022011.pdf>

Thomas, S. (2004). What is Participatory Learning and Action (PLA): An introduction.

*Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT)*, London.

UNICEF. (2016). *Report on expert panel on intergenerational solidarity*. New York, NY:

United Nations Headquarters. Retrieved from

[https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

[pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

Walker, C. (2010). Restitution in default: Land claims and the redevelopment of Cato Manor,

Durban. In C. Walker, A. Bohlin, R. Hall, & T. Kepe (Eds.), *Land, memory,*

*reconstruction, and justice: Perspectives on land claims in South Africa* (pp. 255-272).

Athens, GA: Ohio University Press.

Ziehl, S. C. (2003). The family and social cohesion. In D. Chidester, P. Dexter & W. Jones (Eds.),

*What holds us together: Social cohesion in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE OVERVIEW

#### A Focus on Families

Families can be viewed as an important social construct and refer to groups of people who are biologically or historically related to one another who share physical and emotional spaces (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Anastasiu, 2012; Walsh, 2015). As a social group, family members create and sustain emotional bonds with individual members that differ in closeness (Alesina & Giuliano, 2007; Chudhuri, 2016). Families are rooted in multiple contexts and reflect community structures and processes (Mancini & Bowen, 2013). African families have been described as the simplest form of a community, characterised by a “large structure and supportive systems” (Keating & De Jong Gierveld, 2013 p. 261). Keating and De Jong Gierveld (2013) explored the idea of African families and their findings resonate with research done by Belsey (2005) as well as Koen, Van Eeden and Rothman (2013) and accentuates the role and contribution of families in the formation and organisation of communities. Families as a social construct and an elementary institution of community represent basic social units that allow individuals to group themselves in order to find emotional, physical and collective support (Becvar, 2013; Becvar & Becvar, 2006; Belsey, 2005; Koen et al., 2013).

Empirical work on families, especially on an international level, supports the importance and highlights the position of families and family life in society (Boss, 2001; Conger, Conger, & Martin, 2010; McGoldrick, Carter, & Gracia-Preto, 2011). The structure and role of families have changed over the years, underpinned by demographical, socioeconomic and reproductive changes across the globe (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004; Okon, 2012; Walsh, 2015). Goldenberg and Goldenberg (2004) urge researchers to shift their focus and adapt their empirical lenses, as contemporary families constitute of individuals

biologically and historically related who share living spaces and resources. Contemporary families are very different from what can be described as “traditional families”. Same sex families, child-headed families, single parent families and third generation carer families are all outcomes of the development of human rights, epidemiological changes (HIV and AIDS), demographical and socioeconomic changes (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003; Chudhuri, 2016; Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2004; Walsh, 2015).

Nkosi and Daniels (2007) are of the opinion that families in Africa can only be understood if viewed from an African perspective, because no universal family structure exists. African families are predominantly viewed as families where individuals collectively live together and are related by kinship or marriage and share material resources (Nkosi & Daniels, 2007). Traditional family patterns of African families evolved tremendously over the last couple of years, underpinned by increased modernisation and urbanisation on the African continent (Ekane, 2013; Oheneba-Sakyi & Takyi, 2006; Okon, 2012). The socioeconomic environment in Africa stimulates changes in African families, where younger members of a family move away from the nuclear family to fulfil educational and economic needs (Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003). Most of the younger generations migrates to urban areas where they start their own nuclear families and in turn weakening the extended African family structure (Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003; Oheneba-Sakyi & Takyi, 2006).

Traditionally, African families were characterised by strength, as a large group of individuals was a source of labour and an indication of emotional and economic prosperity (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003; Mokomane, 2014). In the past, extended family systems ensured that poor families were generally supported in Africa: Families survived in cases of crises and adversity (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003; Mokomane, 2014). A phenomenon that is, unfortunately, not visible in modern Africa with a developing economic system in which individuals have to survive and

sustain themselves economically. Younger generations do not have the necessary means to look after extended family members on a continent already plagued by political and socioeconomic fragility that is caused by poverty and public / political conflicts (Aboderin, 2007; Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2013).

Families from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have also changed in recent years, as these families face unemployment, little to no resources and economic constraints (Aboderin, 2007; Oheneba-Sakyi & Takyi, 2006; Okon, 2012), making them particularly vulnerable on many different levels (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Amoateng & Richter, 2007). However, families from the SSA have also been described as close-knitted structures in which members serve as a source of support and where connectedness is established by shared social norms (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015; Hook, Watts, & Cockcroft, 2002; Koen, 2012; Mokomane, 2012; 2014). Aboderin and Hoffman (2015) describe Sub-Saharan families as vibrant institutions where their cohesion assists them in overcoming adversities associated with their physical demography and socioeconomic climate. The role and position of older family members in Sub-Saharan families have undoubtedly been highlighted over the years, especially in light of the HIV and AIDS pandemic (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015). Older family members play a vital role in Sub-Saharan family structures, they serve as primary caregivers to orphaned children or children whose parents migrated to urban areas. Older family members take care of children irrespective of their relation to them by providing support beyond the nuclear family and a society of multi-generational members is formed who support each other whether emotionally and financially (Aboderin & Hoffman, 2015). This is another phenomenon evident in a developing country, such as South Africa, where the history of the country and the impact of HIV and AIDS on generational members in families are quite severe (Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Hosegood, 2009).

To understand the diverse context of South African families, light needs to be shed on the unique history of South African families. Amoateng and Richter (2007) together with Harvey (1994) describe South African families dualistically; underpinned by segregation in the Apartheid era. Segregation led to a strong differentiation and physical separation between white, black, coloured and Indian families in South Africa (Harvey, 1994; Seekings, 2007; 2011). Before 1994, white families in South Africa were treated as superior and as a priority by the Apartheid regime, where black, coloured and Indian families received little to no resources from the government (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Harvey, 1994; Ziehl, 2003). After 1994, the dispensation of a democratic government was instituted and an equal approach to all families in South Africa was followed (Harvey, 1994; Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Hosegood, 2009). This approach changed the socioeconomic environment of some families. Running water and sanitation services were provided to families (Seekings, 2010). However, little changes occurred in the demographic dispersal of families in South Africa (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; Walker, 2010). After 1994, South African families continued to live in the areas assigned to them by the Apartheid regime; a phenomenon that is still visible in a contemporary South Africa (Christopher, 2002; Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016). South African families are still demographically divided by race albeit families can move and relocate to different areas in South Africa that support their socioeconomic status (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). South Africa's demographic dividend results in a rigid hierarchy of social class where a notable separation is evident between upper-class, middle-class, lower-class and under-class income families (Seekings, 2010). Lower-class and under-class income families live in underdeveloped areas characterised by informal settlements, poor sanitation, no running water and a general lack in resources (Christopher, 2001; 2002; Crankshaw, 2008; Statistics South Africa, 2016).

According to Statistics South Africa (2016), socio-economic class and the availability of resources have the same marginalisation effect as Apartheid, where individuals place themselves demographically within a bounded system underpinned by their socioeconomic means. This placement has led to a country in which groups of people are able to live in areas characterised by abundant resources, areas with access to resources and areas with access to little or no resources (Özler, 2007; Statistics South Africa, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). Seekings (2010) refers to people who live in these areas in South Africa as the upper-class, middle-class, lower-class and under-class income families, separated not necessarily by race but rather by economic means and resources. Families who have little to no economic means are most likely to reside in areas characterised by little to no resources, areas that Crankshaw (2008) refers to as resource-constrained areas. These resource-constrained areas in South Africa are often referred to as informal settlements, squatter camps or shanty towns. South African families make informally use of unwanted land for the purpose of living, often accompanied by poverty, unemployment, formal housing issues and stunted demographic growth (Barry, 2003; Marutlulle, 2017). Although families in South Africa find some form of refuge there, these areas are often located on barren grounds, on pavements, along rivers and canals, in areas prone to flood and other hydro-meteorological hazards, on extremely insalubrious sites with health hazards, such as sewage outlets, near or on dump sites and in areas with little access, such as alleys and corridors of buildings (Barry, 2003; Marutlulle, 2017). Informal settlements often do not receive any formal services from municipalities and illustrate a severe spatial dysfunction on social, economic and ecological levels with regard to poor families in South Africa (Marutlulle, 2017; Steenekamp, 2012). Informal settlements are characterised by extreme poverty and a weak provision of resources as South African municipalities cannot meet the enormous demands of a growing phenomenon all over South Africa (Barry, 2003; Marutlulle, 2017; Steenekamp, 2012).



On the backdrop of this argument, it is, therefore, important to contextualise resource constraints in South Africa, especially in light of South Africa's current socioeconomic climate and service delivery dilemmas within municipalities.

### **Contextualising Resource-constrained Environments: Repositioning South African**

**Families.** In a contemporary South African contexts, it is of great importance to contextualise the nuances of resource constraints, as the country is facing various constraints irrespective of socioeconomic means or the class of individual families. Underpinned by the mismanagement of municipalities and public funds, both affluent and poor neighbourhoods lack basic services, such as access to running water or electricity (Marutlulle, 2017; Steenekamp, 2012). It is important to note that the researcher acknowledges the current socioeconomic climate of South Africa but refers to resource-constrained environments as a setting where communities and in turn families are exposed to extended periods with access to no basic services, as constituted by the South African government in the absence of a state crises.

Marutlulle (2017) compares resource-constrained areas in South Africa to informal settlements, where little to no opportunities are provided to the individuals living there, which causes the living standard to be of poor quality. Resource-constrained communities are characterised by poverty and a deficiency in basic needs and services, such as water, sanitation, education and healthcare (Aliber, 2001; Marutlulle, 2017; Nkosi & Daniels, 2007). Resource-constrained areas in South Africa, especially the families who reside in these areas, have to be understood in light of the aftermath of Apartheid. The history of the country and the current absence of effective state policies and the misuse of public funds all contribute to resource constraints and South African families are exposed to more risks on a continual basis. A considerable amount of South Africa's total population lives in underdeveloped areas, characterised by no formal sanitation systems, electricity provision and employment

opportunities (Marutlulle, 2017; Statistics South Africa, 2016). Some of these constrained areas are close to more developed areas that are contributing to employment opportunities and basic service prospects. However, some of South Africa's most constrained areas are secluded with no formal roads or transportation systems where children have to walk far to attend school, and the most basic services are not delivered (Aliber, 2001; Casale & Desmond, 2007; Nkosi & Daniels, 2007; Triegaardt, 2006; Sartorius & Sartorius, 2016).

This is especially true in South African communities where different sub-sections exist within one community. One section has access to all of the basic services and boasts a good infrastructure but not very far away another sub-section is underdeveloped with no access to basic services (Marutlulle, 2017; Moche, Monkam, & Aye, 2014; Sartorius & Sartorius, 2016). It is, therefore, important to explore South African families not only within their larger community, but also to highlight their unique living spaces to capture the nuance makeup of each family. Families exposed to prolonged periods in an environment with little to no resources are almost salient to changes in their mental health and capacity to deal with daily challenges (Beeble, Bybee & Sullivan, 2010). In turn, the capacity of these families to function optimally as a structure are reduced and their role in society is impaired. Consequently, families in resource-constrained environments are vulnerable to environmental adversities, such as floods, fires, poor agricultural conditions and illnesses supported by the poor infrastructure and little resources readily available within their environment (Aliber, 2001; Hunter, Strife, & Twine, 2010).

Following this argument, it becomes evident that South African families are vulnerable, particularly those who live in resource-constrained areas. It is, therefore, self-evident that families who live in resource-constrained environments in South Africa experience a lack of resources in their environment and the socioeconomic climate. The White Paper on families highlights the needs of South African families with a significant

focus on families who live in resource-constrained areas (Department of Social Development, 2012). However, little is known concerning the needs of South African families, particularly from a psychological perspective. Walsh (2015) suggests that the needs of families can never be self-evident, irrespective of their socioeconomic means. The needs of families are ever-changing despite their context, social relations and economic resources.

**Theoretical Perspectives on Needs.** Human beings all have basic needs, yet the composition of the needs of individuals differ (Johnston & Finney, 2010; Walsh, 2015). Neff (2008) suggests that Maslow's hierarchy of needs can serve as a theoretical tool to engage in a comprehensive and accurate understanding of human behaviour and the role of basic needs in human survival. However, Maslow's theory on needs has been scrutinised by many researchers in an effort to suggest different views on human needs. For the purpose of this study, the researcher did not aim to contextualise the opposing views on needs as a psychological construct, but rather to contextualise these needs, as Maslow (1943) proposes these needs to be on the back drop of families as systems.

Maslow (1943; 1998) identified five different levels in his hierarchy of needs. Physiological needs are determined by homeostasis in the body and appetites; safety needs emerge when physiological needs are satisfied; feelings of belonging and love needs are satisfied next, which can include affection; esteem needs include strength, mastery and competence, reputation and prestige; and lastly the need for self-actualisation. Needs are commonly understood as fundamental concerns for the provision of care in a physical, health and social context within family systems (Sheppard & Woodcock, 1999; Holmes & Warelou, 1997). The needs of families from a relativism perspective are viewed as a relative concept that changes over time when changes in society occur and are based on the needs of individual members of families (Sheppard & Woodcock, 1999; Holmes & Warelou, 1997; Walsh, 1996; 2015). Families as systems and social constructions have their own needs that

may differ from the individual needs of family members (Neal & Neal, 2013; Rose & Tudge, 2013). The needs of families and of individual family members evolve with time and are closely connected to place and available resources. Some families in a contemporary Western context view Wi-Fi access to the Internet as a need of their family and individual members, while the needs of families in Malawi centre on survival (Walsh, 2015).

Walsh (2006; 2007; 2015) uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a departure point to discuss the needs of families, and suggests that the emotional and social needs of families resonate with the needs described by Maslow (1943). However, the hierarchy of those needs is flexible and embedded in time and space. Maslow suggested that all humans strive towards the fulfilment of basic needs before moving towards more advance needs, such as emotional and social needs (Maslow, 1943; Tudge, 2013). Physiological needs are described by Maslow (1943) as needs that act as motivators and Maslow referred to these as *physiological drivers*. If all the needs experienced by individuals are not satisfied, physiological needs will be dominant. In other words, families who are already entrenched in an environment characterised by poverty and resource constraints, will most likely be driven by their physiological needs. Maslow (1943) clustered psychological needs and identified them as basic needs necessary for human survival, such as food, water, biological functions and rest. Maslow further theorised that if the basic needs of individuals (families) are not met, the less attention will be given to needs higher in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). Only when these basic physiological needs are met, higher needs will emerge in individuals (families). Families will only be able to move to more complex needs (belonging, love, self-esteem and self-actualisation) when basic needs are sustainably met (Maslow, 1943; 1998).

Maslow's hierarchy describes important aspects of human motivation, yet shed little light on needs of individual members of families who live in underdeveloped areas with little to no resources. The hierarchy suggests that disadvantaged families living in Extension 12 of

Ikageng, Potchefstroom, are unable to progress to more advanced needs, such as belonging, love, self-esteem and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1943; 1998). This implies that families in Extension 12 cannot move towards a state of self-actualisation where they can focus on creativity, morality and growth within family structures (Maslow 1954; 1998).

## **Theoretical Foundations**

### **Theoretical Framework**

In an effort to understand, describe and interpret the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families, the ecological systems theory (EST) was used as the theoretical framework. EST focuses on individual members of families and on families as units – integrating systems that connect and integrate with larger systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1986; 1994; 2001). EST moves beyond Maslow's hierarchy of needs and positions the needs of families as social units and individual members within the different layers of connections and interactions amongst members of a family (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1986). This systematic paradigm of EST conceptualises families as systems existing within a larger relational context of other systems that shape and influence how families function and define their needs (Magnavita, 2012; Rose & Tudge, 2013). A systematic approach to family life and its functioning moves beyond nuclear families while acknowledging the position of individual members and taps into relational strings and their reciprocal nature (Bronfenbrenner, 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013).

EST is based on the ontological believe that individuals are in constant interaction with their environment and are encircled within networks that have a direct impact on them and can influence families either positively or negatively (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013). Bronfenbrenner (1979) developed EST that depicts the interactions and transactions of people in a range of contexts. These contexts include the microsystem (the immediate context occupied by individual); the mesosystem (relations between two or more

microsystems); the exosystem (the social settings that individuals are not a part of but these settings have an impact on them); the macrosystem (the impact of events or transitions over the course of the life of individuals); and the chronosystem (the patterning of events and transitions, and sociohistorical events that influence individuals over time). Bronfenbrenner's emphasis on the roles, activities and relations of individuals within these systems provides a valuable avenue for exploring how individuals make sense of their circumstances and how their understanding translates into behaviour (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001).

Families as social structures serve as microsystems consisting of contexts that are directly experienced by individual members of families, and encompass distinctive physical features, activities, individuals, and relationships (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Families as microsystems can play an integral role in the realisation of potential, regardless of the socioeconomic status of these families or individual members of families (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013). Bronfenbrenner (1994) explained that the potential of families is embedded in the interrelated elements of a microsystem. Family members have regular interactions, especially when they share space and resources and the microsystem creates a space of co-dependence in which each individual member of the family contributes to each other's lives and family life in general (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001). This is particularly important with regard to families in a South African context who actively apply the principles of *Ubuntu*, where the identity of each family member is dependent on the collective identity of their family (Kamwangamalu, 2007). In a microsystem, the beliefs, values of families and their culture are developed. However, these aspects are always influenced by the mesosystem.

The mesosystem in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model describes the relations between the immediate surroundings within a microsystem and in turn, families. A mesosystem encompasses the links between two or more microsystems and the similarities

and inconsistencies that occur between these two systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001). Families who are financially disadvantaged are, therefore, more likely to live in low-income neighbourhoods connected to families with similar circumstances and resources. Individual family members are exposed to beliefs and value systems that are believed to be established within these two systems and determine the nature of their cultural and social capital (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001). Individuals learn how to act in different settings and around different people based on the behaviour they perceive is required, yet individuals are most likely to transfer some of their cultural aspects from their microsystem to their mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001).

An exosystem refers to environments that affect individuals, but they do not directly participate in these environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). One example of interaction within the exosystem includes a neighbourhood that has an effect on individuals. The work lives of parents can also affect household resources and the stress levels that have an impact on the interactions between parents and their children (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001). Government departments, such as the Department of Basic Education in South Africa, is another example of an environment within an exosystem. Decisions concerning educational programmes by the Department of Basic Education can affect the lives of learners on school level. For young adolescents from a low socioeconomic background, their exosystem can wield its influence by indirectly restricting opportunities.

A chronosystem, included in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model, represents the patterning of events and transitions that occur over the course of the life of individuals, and also sociohistorical events that have an impact on them. Events that have occurred prior to the era in which individuals are alive can significantly affect and shape how individuals function or develop. This is of particular importance in a South African context, especially with regard to the impact of Apartheid and the unique history of the country (Seekings, 2010). When

poverty is investigated, a chronosystem comprises organisations and individuals who make decisions about the allocation of public resources and funds. Moreover, a chronosystem reflects the transmission of social advantages or disadvantages from one generation to the next (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001).

The family as a social institution and family life have direct linkages on all the different levels of systems, and thus the needs of individual members and collective needs of the institution have to be discussed in the light of the multiple connection shared in all systems.



## References

- Aboderin, I. (2007). *Intergenerational support and old age in Africa*. Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Aboderin, I., & Hoffman, J. (2015). Families, intergenerational bonds, and aging in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Canadian Journal of Aging*, 34(3), 282-289.  
doi:org/10.1017/S0714980815000239
- Alesina, A., & Giuliano, P. (2007). The power of the family. *J Econ Growth*, 15, 93-125. doi: 10.1007/s10887-010-9052-z
- Aliber, M. (2001). *Study of the incidence and nature of chronic poverty and development policy in South Africa: An overview*. Cape Town: Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Heaton, T. B. (2007). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa: Socio-demographic perspectives*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Richter, L. M. (2007). Social and economic context of families and households in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng & T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 1-26). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Anastasiu, I. (2012). The social functions of the family. *Euromentor*, 3(2), 36-42.
- Barry, M. (2003). Peri-urban tenure management in South Africa. *Marrakeck* 2(5), 2-14.
- Becvar, D. S. (2013). *Handbook of family resilience*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Becvar, D. S., & Becvar, R. J. (2006). *Family therapy: A systemic integration* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Beeble, M.D., Bybee, D., & Sullivan, C.M. (2010). The impact of resource constraints on the psychological wellbeing of survivors of intimate partner violence over time. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 15(3), 93-125. dio:10.10.02/jcop.20407
- Belsey, J.A. (2005). Wellbeing among family members in communities. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 93(8), 16-21.

- Bigombe, B., & Khadiagala, G. M. (2003). Major Trends Affecting Families in Sub-Saharan Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/Publications/mtbigombe.pdf>.
- Boss, P. (2001). *Family stress management: A contextual approach* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22, 723–742.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Vol. 3, pp. 1643–1647). Oxford, UK: Pergamon Press and Elsevier Science.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2001). The bioecological theory of human development. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopaedia of the social and behavioural sciences* (pp. 6963–6970). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Casale, D., & Desmond, C. (2007). The economic well-being of the family: Households' access to resources in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng & T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 61-88). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Christopher, A. J. (2001). Urban segregation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Urban Studies*, 38(3), 449-466. doi:10.1080/00420980120027447
- Christopher, A. J. (2002). To define the indefinable: Population classification and the census in South Africa. *Area*, 34(4), 401-408. doi:org/10.1111/1475-4762.00097
- Chudhuri, S. (2016). *Social development and the family*. Retrieved from <http://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c11/e1-11-02-04.pdf>

- Conger, R. D., Conger, K. J., & Martin, M. J. (2010). Socioeconomic status, family processes, and individual development. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 685-704. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00725.x
- Crankshaw, O. (2008). Race, space and the post-Fordist spatial order of Johannesburg. *Urban Studies*, 45(8), 1692-1711. doi:org/10.1177/0042098008091497
- Ekane, D. (2013). *Fertility trends in sub Saharan Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:602495/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Goldenberg, I., & Goldenberg, H. (2004). *Family therapy: An overview* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.
- Harvey, E. D. (1994). *Social change and family policy in South Africa, 1930 to 1986*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Holborn, L., & Eddy, G. (2011). *First steps to healing the South African family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations. Retrieved from <https://irr.org.za/reports/occasional-reports/files/first-steps-to-healing-the-south-african-family-final-report-mar-2011.pdf>
- Holmes, W.R., & Warelow, A.S. (1997). Positive and negative global self-esteem: A substantively meaningful distinction or artifact? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70, 810–819.
- Hook, D., Watts, J., & Cockcroft, K. (2002). *Developmental psychology*. Lansdowne, CT: UCT Press.
- Hosegood, V. (2009). The demographic impact of HIV and AIDS across the family and household life-cycle: Implications for efforts to strength families in Sub-Saharan Africa. *AIDS Care*, 21(1), 13-21.

- Hunter, L., Strife, S., & Twine, W. (2010). Environmental perceptions of rural South African residents: The complex nature of environmental concern. *Society and Natural Resources*, 23(6), 525-541. doi: 10.1080/08941920903357782
- Johnston, M.M., & Finney, S.J. (2010). Measuring basic needs satisfaction: Evaluating previous research and conducting new psychometric evaluations of the Basic Needs Satisfaction in General Scale. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 35, 280–296.
- Kamwangamalu, N.K. (2007). Ubuntu in South Africa: a sociolinguistic perspective to a pan-African concept. *Critical Arts*, 13(2), 24-41.
- Keating, N., & De Jong Gierveld, J. (2013). Families and Aging: From private troubles to a global agenda. *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 34 (3), 261-263 doi: 10.1017/S0714980815000276
- Koen, V. (2012). Family psychosocial well-being in a South African context. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, North-West University, Potchefstroom). Retrieved from [https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen\\_V\\_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen_V_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Koen, V., Van Eeden, C., & Rothmann, S. (2013). Psychosocial well-being of families in a South African context: A prospective multifactorial model. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 23(3), 409-418. doi:10.1080/14330237.2013.10820645.
- Magnavita, M.M. (2012). Macro-structure influences on child development and the need for childhood social indicators. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 45(4), 516–524.
- Mancini, K.K., & Bowen, P. (2013). Families and community. *Journal of family studies*, 8(5),413-420.
- Marutlulle, N.K. (2017). Causes of informal settlements in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality: An exploration. *Africa's Public service delivery and Performance review*, 5(1) a13 doi.org/10.4102/apspdpr.v5i1.131

- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. doi:10.1037/h0054346
- Maslow, A. H. (1998). A Theory of Meta-motivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value-Life. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 7(2), 93–126.  
doi:10.1177/002216786700700201
- McGoldrick, M., Carter, B. A., & Gracia-Preto, N. A. (2011). *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family, and social perspectives* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Mokomane, Z. (2012). *Role of families in social and economic empowerment of individuals*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2012/FamilyZithaMokomane.pdf>
- Mokomane, Z. (2014). *Work–family interface in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and responses*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Moche, T. J., Monkam, N., & Aye, G. C. (2014). Fiscal decentralization and poverty in South Africa: Evidence from panel data analysis. *Investment Management and Financial Innovations*, 11(2), 69-76.
- Neal, J.W., & Neal, Z.P. (2013). Nested or Networked? Future Directions for Ecological systems theory. *Social Development*, 22(4), 722–737. doi:10.1111/sode.12018
- Neff, K. D. (2008). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2, 223–250. doi:10.1080/15298860390209035
- Nkosi, B., & Daniels, P. (2007). Family strengths: South Africa. *Marriage & Family Review*, 41(1), 11-26. doi: 10.1300/J002v41n01\_02
- Oheneba-Sakyi, Y., & Takyi, B. K. (2006). *African families at the turn of the 21st century*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

- Okon, E. (2012). Towards defining the 'right to a family' for the African child. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 12, 373-393.
- Özler, B. (2007). Not separate, not equal: Poverty and inequality in post-apartheid South Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 55(3), 487-529.
- Rose, E. M., & Tudge, J. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Development: Its evolution from ecology to bioecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5(9), 243–258. doi:org/10.1111/jftr.12022.
- Sartorius, K., & Sartorius, B. (2016). Service delivery inequality in South African municipal areas: A new way to account for inter-jurisdictional differences. *Urban Studies*, 53(15), 3336-3355. doi: 10.1177/0042098015613001
- Seekings, J. (2007). The mutability of distributive justice beliefs in South Africa. *South African Journal of Sociology*, 38(1), 20-44.
- Seekings, J. (2010). Race, class and inequality in the South African city. In G. Bridge & S. Watson (Eds.), *The new Blackwell companion to the city* (pp. 532-546). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Seekings, J. (2011). Poverty and inequality in South Africa: 1994-2007. In I. Shapiro & K. Tebeau (Eds.), *After Apartheid: The second decade of democracy* (pp. 21-51). Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.
- Sheppard, Y.U., & Woodcock, M.J. (1999). Goal pursuits and human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227–268
- South Africa. Department of Social Development. (2012). *White Paper on families in South Africa*. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFggguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom\\_docman%26task%3D](https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFggguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom_docman%26task%3D)

doc\_view%26gid%3D370%26Itemid%3D3&usg=AOvVaw3ZrBDosqEvzSAysu0G0w  
pdf

Statistics South Africa. (2016). *Census 2016: Mid-year population estimates (P0302)*.

Pretoria: SSA. Retrieved from

<http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022011.pdf>

Steenekamp, T. (2012). *The South African economy*. Oxford University Press, Cape Town.

Tudge, J. R. H. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner. In Heather Montgomery (Ed.), Oxford

bibliographies on line: Childhood studies. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

doi:10.1093/OBO/9780199791231-0112

Triegaardt, J. D. (2006). *Poverty and inequality in South Africa: Policy considerations in an emerging democracy*. Retrieved from [http://www.dbsa.org/EN/About-](http://www.dbsa.org/EN/About-Us/Publications/Documents/Poverty%20and%20inequality%20in%20South%20Africa%20Policy%20considerations%20in%20an%20emerging%20democracy.pdf)

[Us/Publications/Documents/Poverty%20and%20inequality%20in%20South%20Africa%20Policy%20considerations%20in%20an%20emerging%20democracy.pdf](http://www.dbsa.org/EN/About-Us/Publications/Documents/Poverty%20and%20inequality%20in%20South%20Africa%20Policy%20considerations%20in%20an%20emerging%20democracy.pdf)

UNICEF. (2016). *Report on expert panel on intergenerational solidarity*. New York, NY:

United Nations Headquarters. Retrieved from

[https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

[pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

Walker, C. (2010). Restitution in default: Land claims and the redevelopment of Cato Manor,

Durban. In C. Walker, A. Bohlin, R. Hall, & T. Kepe (Eds.), *Land, memory,*

*reconstruction, and justice: Perspectives on land claims in South Africa* (pp. 255-272).

Athens, GA: Ohio University Press.

Walsh, F. (1996). The concept of family resilience: Crisis and challenge. *Family Process*, 35, 261-281.

Walsh, F. (2006). *Strengthening family resilience* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Walsh, F. (2007). *Using theory to support a family resilience framework in practice*.

Retrieved from [http://thehub.superu.govt.nz/sites/default/files/42802\\_social-work-now-39-apr08.7-16\\_0.pdf](http://thehub.superu.govt.nz/sites/default/files/42802_social-work-now-39-apr08.7-16_0.pdf)

Walsh, F. (2015). *Strengthening family resilience* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Ziehl, S. C. (2003). The family and social cohesion. In D. Chidester, P. Dexter & W. Jones (Eds.), *What holds us together: Social cohesion in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.



**Exploring Self-identified Needs of Setswana-speaking Families Living in a Resource-constrained Area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom**

O Khumalo

COMPRES

North-West University

Potchefstroom Campus

Email: ompuleleng@gmail.com

Ms JM Van Aardt

COMPRES

Faculty of Health Sciences

North-West University

Potchefstroom Campus

Potchefstroom

2520

Email: Janine.vanaardt@nwu.ac.za

### **Abstract**

Humans are relational beings and develop within a system of relationships. Families can be viewed as the first system of relationships where individual members embed socially and share space, time and resources. This study is affiliated to a larger research project that focused on strengthening compromised families in disadvantaged communities through a community engagement initiative. The aim of this particular qualitative study was to explore the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families in a resource-constrained area, specifically Ikageng in Potchefstroom. A qualitative descriptive research design was used and data were obtained through participatory learning action (PLA) techniques, followed by a thematic analysis. The findings revealed three core needs pertaining to relational needs, physical and environmental needs, and aspiring needs. All three of these needs are lacking in their family structure and general life in Ikageng. Findings may be used to develop intervention programmes for the promotion of family resilience.

**Keywords:** constraints, families, needs, resources.

## Research Context

This research study formed part of a larger research project titled: *Strengthening Compromised Families and Disadvantaged Communities Through a Community Engagement Initiative* that was approved by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, with the following ethics number: NWU-00329-15-A1. The overall aim of the larger research project was formulated as follows: To explore and describe how compromised families and disadvantaged communities can be strengthened through a community engagement initiative. This exploration was done in three different phases between years 2015-2017.

The present study is an affiliated study of the larger research project and endeavoured to only make use of data collected during phase one of the larger research study. Phase one of the larger research study was led by two aims formulated as follows:

- To explore and describe the needs of compromised families in disadvantaged communities.
- To explore and describe the strengths of compromised families in disadvantaged communities.

Phase one was done by employing a qualitative approach and a qualitative descriptive design. Data were collected by means of participation learning actions (PLA), which enabled the qualitative researcher to study a phenomenon embedded in the worldview of the participants. Data were collected in the South African provinces of the Western Cape, North West and Northern Cape.

The present research study aimed to explore the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families who live in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, and aligned with the aim of phase one of the larger research project. Phase one of the larger study

was done in 2015 and the affiliated study did not make use of secondary data analyses.

However, the data used in this study were already collected on 5 December, 2015.

## **Introduction**

South African families can be viewed as complex systems, constructed by members of different generations and racial groups, historically and/or biologically related (Babington, 2006; Koen, 2012; Neff, 2006; Ziehl, 2003). However, Amoateng and Richter (2007) together with Harvey (1994) are of the opinion that in the past, South African families were dualistically underpinned by segregation during the Apartheid era. Segregation led to a strong differentiation between white, black, coloured and Indian families in South Africa (Harvey, 1994; Seekings, 2010). Before 1994, white families in South Africa were treated as superior and viewed as a priority by the Apartheid regime, whereas black, coloured and Indian families had to survive with the little to no resources received from the government (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Amoateng & Richter, 2007; Harvey, 1994; Ziehl, 2003). After 1994, the dispensation of a democratic government ensured that an equal approach was followed with regard to all families in South Africa (Harvey, 1994; Holborn & Eddy, 2011; Hosegood, 2009). This approach changed the socioeconomic environment of some families with the provision of running water and sanitation (Seekings, 2010). However, minimal changes occurred in the demographic distribution of families in South Africa (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; Walker, 2010). After 1994, South African families continued to live in their designated areas; a phenomenon that is still visible in a contemporary South Africa (Christopher, 2002; Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016). South African families are still demographically divided by race albeit families can move and relocate to different areas in South Africa that support their socioeconomic status (Seekings, 2010; Statistics South Africa, 2016; UNICEF, 2016). South Africa's demographic dividend results in a rigid hierarchy of social classes where a notable separation is evident

between upper-class, middle-class, lower-class and under-class income families (Seekings, 2010). Lower-class and under-class income families live in underdeveloped areas characterised by informal settlements, poor sanitation, no running water and a general lack in resources (Christopher, 2002; Crankshaw, 2008; Statistics South Africa, 2016).

Smith, Cowie and Blades (2003) refer to environments in which families have access to minimal resources and public services, as resource-constrained communities. Resource-constrained communities offer reduced opportunities, underdeveloped social capital and poor networks that do not provide the necessary resources for action plans (Coleman, 1988; Smith et al., 2003). These definitions resonate with the description of Seekings (2010) concerning South African families in lower-class and under-class income groups. Families in the lower-class and under-class income groups suffer high rates of unemployment, lack in social capital and have access to little or no resources in their immediate environment (Seekings, 2010). Families in lower-class and under-class income groups find themselves in a closed system characterised by extreme poverty and an inability to adequately satisfy basic needs (Crankshaw, 2008; Seekings, 2010). Munsamy, Parrish and Steel (2014) suggest that poverty is not the cause of families or communities in resource-constrained environments to be classified as disadvantaged but rather the stress associated with poverty. Associated stress implicates low levels of optimal functioning amongst family members in general (Munsamy et al., 2014). This viewpoint supports the argument of Patterson (2012), families can overcome adversities more efficiently when they have access to adequate social and economic resources. When the basic needs of families, such as access to water, sanitation and cohesion, are not fulfilled, they struggle to overcome daily challenges (Munsamy et al., 2014; Patterson, 2012). In light of this argument and the response strategies of the White Paper on families (Department of Social Development, 2012), it is of paramount importance to explore and conceptualise the current needs of South African families.

Human and family needs are contextualised by Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954). According to Maslow's theory, basic human needs can be explained according to five different levels, namely: Basic physiological needs (level one) that include oxygen, food and shelter; safety needs (level two) that include structure, order as well as physical and emotional security; belonging (level three) that comprises the need for affection and a sense of community; self-esteem (level four) focuses on the need for mutual respect, competence and worthiness; level four underpins self-actualisation (level five) and Maslow (1998) described this level as the epitome of well-being, balance and homeostasis. According to Maslow's theory, individuals must adequately satisfy their first-level needs before they can move on to the next level (Maslow, 1943). This implies, therefore, that a lack in food, shelter and security (basic needs) can affect the personal growth of individuals and the way in which their interpersonal relations with others are formed (Maslow, 1943; 1954). The assumption is, therefore, that without basic needs being met, it is extremely difficult for individuals to focus on more complex needs, such as caring for members of nuclear or extended families. In disparity of Maslow's theory, Walsh (2003) suggests that family process determines family functioning regardless of available social or economic resources and highlights the role of family relationships. According to Walsh (2003), all families have needs that can be translated into strengths that can contribute significantly to family resilience.

Past empirical work only describes the needs of South African families in terms of typological clustering (Budlender, 1999; Ross, 1995; Saff, 1998; Seekings, 2010; Tsheola; 2002). Little is, therefore, known with regard to the nature of needs shared in the relational context of family structures. Basic needs certainly have different meanings for different generational members in families. The need for provision of nutrition may be primary for care providers (mother or father figures) in a family structure but may not be a priority for the

third and fourth generations present in the same family structure. It was, therefore, important to explore needs in contemporary South-African families, as needs are time-specific, context-specific and connected to personal motivation (Maslow, 1998; Venter, 2012; Walsh, 2015).

In light of this argument and the socioeconomic reality of resource-constrained communities in South Africa where families still live without the provision of basic services, the following research question was formulated: What are the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in Ikageng, Potchefstroom?

In an effort to explore this research question, South African families had to be defined and understood with regard to the unique taxonomy of their connections and interactions. Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1986) described these layers of connections and interactions according to the third phase of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013). The third phase highlights the idea of a proximal process that refers to complex connections between individuals and their environment where families are described as a microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001). A family constitutes individual members who find themselves interconnected within a specific time and context who share reciprocal relations with other individual members belonging to the same family (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). As a microsystem, families are made up of interrelated elements or objectives and exhibit coherent behaviours; they have regular interactions and they are dependent on one another (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001). Family members have unique characteristics and needs that are entrenched and influenced by available resources in a microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Setswana-speaking families living in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, share reciprocal relations with family members in their microsystem. However, these relations are shared across system boundaries with individuals in their mesosystem, such as neighbours and community members (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013). This extension needed to be contextualised in the cultural context of South African families

underpinned by *Ubuntu* principles applied by Setswana communities (Doerr, 2009; Metz, 2011). Setswana communities can be described as nuanced groups where resources are shared and where cohesion is emphasised rather than individualism (Doerr, 2009; Metz, 2011). Family crises and needs are translated into community needs, as community members actively help each other (Doerr, 2009; Metz, 2011). The Setswana-speaking families should also be contextualised in their mesosystem that consists of networks of microsystems, such as churches, community groups and their local government (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). Families have direct contact with structures in their mesosystem and these structures have a direct influence on family members, for example poor service delivery from municipalities. The exosystem follows a mesosystem and integrates different social settings that have an indirect impact on families (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001), such as school governing bodies, municipal managers and working bodies that exclude direct contact. A macrosystem includes societal factors that have a direct influence on families on a micro-level (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; 2001), which may include government policies regarding service delivery, legislative support in communities, such as the White Paper on families. The government and the Department of Social Development who drafted the White Paper on families form part of a macrosystem that has a direct impact and effect on an exosystem, mesosystem and microsystem.

According to the Bill of Human Rights (a macrosystem), every South African has the right to clean water and a habitable living environment. This right is translated into legislation (exosystem) and is then funnelled to municipalities (mesosystems) that have to deliver services, such as the provision of clean water and housing schemes. In turn, the quality of life of families is improved (microsystem). Yet this is not the reality of all South African families, embedded in economic climate and vast growth of informal settlements in all nine provinces of the country (Metz, 2011). This affiliated study aims to explore and



describe self-identified needs of families who lives in communities in South Africa where the mesosystems fails to provide what is a basic right to all South Africans. This study endeavours to produce findings that not only capture needs by means of typological clustering, but to rather describe the nuances of family needs entrenched in a complex web of systems.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Approach and Design**

The present study applied a qualitative research approach aligned with the larger research project. Qualitative research delivers rich data that can be collected by a written or spoken language (Durrheim, 2006).

A qualitative descriptive design (as described by Sandelowski, 2000) was applied to explore the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained environment. A qualitative descriptive research design enabled the qualitative researcher to describe the self-identified needs of families entrenched in the social existence of the individual family members and the broader Ikageng community (Sandelowski, 2000). This design directed the researcher to explore the self-identified needs of the families by means of a critical discovery concerning the *who* (families as units) (Sandelowski, 2000). The researcher focused on the contribution of each participant and included family members of different ages. By focusing on families as units, the researcher was able to explore the *what* (self-identified needs) within the unique context, experiences and perceptions of each family member (Sandelowski, 2000). To fully understand and explore the *what*, the researcher had to unpack the *where* (a resource-constrained environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom). Sandelowski (2000) urges researchers to make use of *who*, *what* and *where* aspects to understand and interpret the basic nature of a phenomenon shaped by the experiences of

participants. These aspects enabled the researcher to obtain a broad range of information regarding the self-identified needs from the perspective of individual family members (Sandelowski, 2000).

## **Population**

Aligned with phase one of the larger research project, the population of interest for the purpose of the present study was compromised families in South Africa. However, this affiliated study only made use of a proportion of the total population of the larger research project. The population of interest for this affiliated study was Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, in the North West. The choice of site (Ikageng, Potchefstroom) was informed by the interest of the researcher to understand and interpret the self-identified needs of families and to interpret their responses within the unique context of a Setswana culture as it is the researcher's home language.

The researcher was interested in families as units that include individual family members. Individual family members range from very young to older cohorts, including females and males ranging from 12-65 years of age.

**Sample Size and Sampling method.** For the purpose of the larger research project (phase one), purposive sampling was used where the characteristics of specific participants were identified as inclusive criteria in the study (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi, & Wright, 2010; Wilson & MacLean, 2011). This affiliated study deemed purposive sampling as appropriate, as the researcher aimed to make use of families who share physical space in a resource-constrained area and who belong to the same sub-group (Setswana-speaking participants) (Botma et al., 2010). According to Sandelowski (2000), purposive sampling is appropriate for a qualitative descriptive research design. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to obtain rich information. In the case of the present study, the researcher was specifically interested in

Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained environment in Ikageng, Potchefstroom.

**Inclusion criteria.** Inclusion criteria of the affiliated study were as follows:

- Families living in a resource-constrained environment, as defined and outlined in the literature orientation.
- Families residing in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, the North West Province.
- Participants forming part of a family structure not limited to biologically related family members. Historically related and adoptive families were also included. According to literature, different types of families exist and the researcher endeavoured to include members of different types of families.
- Participants with living family members, as the emphasis was on families as units.
- Participants speaking Setswana, English, Afrikaans or Xhosa, as the researcher can comfortably understand and communicate in all four of these languages and was able to translate transcriptions.

**Exclusion criteria.** Exclusion criteria of the affiliated study included the following:

- Single-headed families or where family members passed away and only one member is still alive.
- Families living outside of Ikageng, Potchefstroom.
- Families who cannot speak Setswana, Afrikaans, English or Xhosa.
- Families working for the Department of Social Development or with connections to the Department.
- Family members intoxicated or drugged, ill or frail making it impossible for positive contributions or giving consent.

- Young children with developmental backlogs preventing them from contributing to the group or giving assent/consent.

### **Data Collection Method**

Data collection was done by means of PLA that represent different methods or approaches when active engagement with communities is needed (Thomas, 2004). PLA combine an ever-growing toolkit of participatory and visual methods that researchers can use as a stimulant for group discussions or interviews (Thomas, 2004). Thomas (2004) suggests that researchers who are specifically interested in identifying, assessing, planning, monitoring or evaluating should make use of PLA as these techniques facilitate a process of collective data collection and learning. PLA include a wide range of visual methods, such as diagrams, drawings, paintings, sculpting, mapping and timelines to engage actively with communities (Bozalek & Biersteke, 2010). For the purpose of phase one of the larger research project, researchers made use of Venn diagrams and free drawings to stimulate a group discussion with each family.

During the data collection that took place on 5 December 2015, the following occurred:

- The participants were supplied with A3 blank pages, colourful pens and crayons. After the technicalities were explained, the researcher asked the families whether all of the family members agreed to participate. The researcher continued by making use of Venn diagrams and free drawings and discussed the use thereof in research. Venn diagrams capture shared information that is transferred within families and a very effective tool when the researcher wanted to include all of the family members (Appel, Buckingham, Jodoin & Roth, 2012).

- The researcher asked the participants to draw a representation of their needs and strengths as a family living in Ikageng by means of Venn diagrams on two separate A3 pages. Every family member contributed to the drawings, and the family discussed the hierarchy of needs and strengths before older members of the families (mothers or fathers) wrote the needs and strengths down in a Venn diagram. Families had about 20-30 minutes to complete each page.
- After completion of both A3 pages (Venn diagrams), the researcher asked the participants to explain the needs and strengths and their significance. The visual Venn diagrams served as a focus point for both the researcher and the participants, as the families had the opportunity to discuss each need and strength and the significance thereof to the family as a unit or to the individual members. Each family member contributed to the discussion, in most cases the family members corrected and supported each other when they discussed their needs and strengths.
- After the discussion, the participants were asked to draw their family within the context of Ikageng by means of the free drawing technique. Of interest was the younger generation who did not wait for the older generations to assist them – they immediately started with their drawings after the instructions were given. Family members drew themselves and added aspects of their lived experiences in Ikageng. Some of the members of the younger generation drew a school and members of the older generation drew taxis and/or plants. The drawings took approximately 20-30 minutes. After completion of the free drawings, the researcher asked the participants to discuss their free drawings. The visuals served as a focus point to both the researcher and the participants. The family members had the opportunity to add information or support the discussion of other family members.

- This session took approximately 90-120 minutes per family.

### **Trustworthiness**

The affiliated study aimed to ensure trustworthiness by means of the application of Tracy's (2010) model of trustworthiness. Tracy (2010) suggests that qualitative researchers assess their research by means of the following eight aspects: 1) a worthy topic; 2) rich rigour; 3) sincerity; 4) credibility; 5) resonance; 6) significant contribution; 7) ethics; and 8) meaningful coherence.

A *worthy topic* refers to bringing forth a subject that will be found compelling in the relevant discipline. Little is known of families in a South African context and this scarcity stimulated the focus of the larger research study and this affiliated study. Research on this topic is current with the interest to discover the nuances of families living in resource-constrained environments.

*Rich rigour* in qualitative research entails an intense task that takes into consideration the proactive role researcher play, especially during data collection and analyses. It is important for researchers to be well invested in their researched topic, because they need to be conscious of the amount and quality of data they collect and whether the data collected were appropriate and sufficient to serve the purpose of the study. For the purpose of the present study, the researcher was well immersed in the research topic that was done by means of a literature review and rigorous methods were used to analyse the data.

*Sincerity* addresses the reason of researchers for undertaking research and can include self-reflexivity, honesty and transparency. The researcher received training in fieldwork and the dissemination of research findings and understands the sensitivity of all the data sets. Nothing was added or subtracted from what was found during the data collection.

***Credibility*** focuses on how real and truthful presented information is. A thick description, triangulation/crystallisation and multi-vocality are of importance researchers refer to credibility.

***Resonance*** addresses issues where researchers have the responsibility to meaningfully resonates with their audience. The aims of this study were to shed light on the nature of the needs of South African families and to assist researchers and policy makers in identifying aspects that need to be explored for intervention.

***A significant contribution*** refers to the purpose of the research study, why it was conducted and the contributions to its discipline. It was important to determine whether the contribution of this study focused on theoretical knowledge or is it also going to inspire researchers to develop the findings of this study.

***Ethics*** refers to the assessment of the actions of researchers in relation to the participants, colleagues and funders. The researcher adhered to the ethical considerations prescribed by Health research ethics committee (HREC) of the North-West University: No participant or a family member was harmed in any way. This study was ethically approved by HREC with ethics number - NWU-00045-17-S1.

***Meaningful coherence*** addresses the golden thread that flows throughout a research process. There should be a clear link between the intended purpose of a study, the procedures that were carried out, the paradigm used, the literature review and the outcomes of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

For the purpose of this affiliated study, the researcher analysed the transcribed data by means of a thematic analysis, as described by Clarke and Braun (2013). A thematic analysis can be defined as a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within

data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) identify six phases of a thematic analysis that were applied in the analysis of the data of this study.

The first phase focuses on familiarisation with the data. Researchers have to read and reread data, and listen to audio recordings thoroughly to familiarise themselves with the data (Braun & Clarke; 2006). The second phase is coding, and involves the creation of labels for important characteristics found in the data. In this case, the nature of the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained area was explored. Researchers code every item of data and end this phase by “collating” all codes and data extracts of relevance (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The third phase is characterised by searching for themes. This phase entailed the construction of themes rather than the discovery of existing themes in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As advised by Braun and Clarke (2006), researchers construct themes and link coded data to these themes. After researchers have constructed themes and categorised coded data according to themes, the fourth phase takes place: The reviewing of themes. This phase enables researchers to review constructed themes described by the data and to determine the relationships between the themes and the nature of the themes. By reviewing the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), researchers are able to integrate themes, split themes or remove themes. This process may also lead to the development of new themes. The fifth phase occurs when researchers name and describe the themes and when researchers construct a detailed analysis of each theme. During the sixth phase, the writing up of the thematic analysis takes place (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It involves a nuanced process in which researchers the analytical narrative and the vivid data extracts combine to tell readers a coherent and persuasive story about the data. This phase allows researchers to effectively contextualise and analyse data and to bring their findings into perspective regarding their broad research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).



## Findings

Three themes and several subthemes emerged from the data and are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1.

The Self-identified Needs of Families Who Live in a Resource-constrained Area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom.

Main Theme	Subtheme
Relational needs	Need to spend more time together
	Social support systems
	Reciprocal respect
Physical and Environmental needs	Basic needs
	Service delivery
Aspiring needs	Educational needs

### Relational Needs

Relational needs refer to the desire to connect, to form affiliations and ultimately, to share relationships. Relational needs manifest very differently than basic needs of survival, but both are necessary for survival. The relational needs of families living in Ikageng, Extension 12 emerged during discussions. The families emphasised the limited time they

have for social contact, their need for social support systems and their need for reciprocal respect. The families in Ikageng expressed their relational needs embedded in the roles and responsibilities of each family member shaped by their physical and financial position.

**The need to spend more time with each other** emerged as a theme. One of the fathers made the following comment: *I can spend more time with them [sons], but also I need to work, if I don't show up for work, tomorrow I don't have work. You don't have a choice, it's for them [sons] you see.* This comment links to the opinion of one of the single mothers: *Now it's summer so when I get home I can see my children, but in winter it's dark when I leave [for work], and it's dark when I come back, even sometimes they sleep, but what can we do? We need to earn money.* These two comments clearly illustrate the need to spend more time with each other from the perspective of caregivers in the families. The same need emerged from discussions with younger members of the families. A young girl shared the following during their PLA group: *... when I get out of school, I have to walk fast, fast to get my sister eh, or we will miss the bus, if you miss the bus you have to walk home and it's far. When we get home I need to tidy and do homework and help my sister, no time to play, no time to have fun with my friends or neighbours. We want to, but cant.* One of the young girls of a similar age in a different family said the following: *... we only see Ma [grandmother] when my dad comes on Saturdays, I like to go there after school, but mom say it's too far and I cannot walk there alone. Since we moved to this extension, we don't have fun anymore everything is too far, and you don't see your cousins.* These four quotes capture the nuances of this need across the generations within the families.

**The need for a social support system** emerged almost simultaneously with the need of family members to spend more time with each other. The need for a social support system refers to the need to have a system in place where one can turn to in times of need for care, support and assistance. Some of the family members explained their need for a social support

system underpinned by the time they have available to spend with family members. Other family members described their need embedded in the physical context of the informal community they live in. The need for a social support system emerged during the PLA groups where both younger and older generations mentioned their need to have some form of social support.

One of the young female participants mentioned the following: *We were living in Promosa first with my granny, she cooked every day, when we got home food was ready. Now we moved to this extension, my mother work [and] I have to cook. When we get home there is no one to wait for us or give us cooked food. I miss my granny.* One of the older male participant added the following: *I work during the days, at work you don't talk you clean. When I get home I have to cook, no one waits for me or prepare my dinner. Sometimes I need that person I am at work.* A single mother of two daughters said the following: *... you know what in this area, people don't help us, when we moved we had nothing, eh ah I mean nothing, but it's always a competition people talk, they look at you and see you don't have sink for a house, it's bad, but no one help. I don't have friends here, people don't help you.* The need for social support emerged on a tangible level and also on an emotional level. The family members described their need rooted in physical contact and interpersonal spaces. A young married female contributed: *My husband work outside of Potch, and I told you my mother in law stays far. So some days the only person I can talk to is my eldest daughter. My son is too small, he don't understand. Here in this extension I sometimes feel alone.* A single mother of two daughters added the following: *I only have my two daughters. At home I ask my daughters how was school? What did you do at school? No one ask me how was my day.* These quotes resonate with a contribution made by one of the fathers: *I am alone with the two boys, most days I work till pass five. When I get home I still need to call the wife, ask how she is doing. Sometimes I cannot call. She's also busy. We need the money, but I can see the boys*

*need her here. I also need her here, I am alone. In my culture you marry the whole family, but in our case we are too far from them.*

**The need for reciprocal respect** refers to the need of family members for a shared regard, appreciation and consideration. The need for reciprocal respect emerged mostly from the narratives of older people in the families, although the younger generations also mentioned issues of respect from their perspective. The need for reciprocal respect provided insights with regard to the normative beliefs of the families and dynamics within these families and their community in Ikageng, Potchefstroom. One of the fathers mentioned: *I want my kids to respect the elders. Kids of today show no respect, you bring them up, but they forget that you helped them, they talk too rough and have no respect here in this extension.* This father's contribution links to an older females who is a single mother: *You know you work hard for your money, and the children don't give you respect for that. They want this and that, and sometimes you can't even buy yourself roll-on. They talk to us so never-mind, mine and the Youngers here ... They don't see you, they just talk, no respect for you.* These two participants are both the heads of their households and primary caretakers of their family members. They expressed their need for respect embedded in their interpersonal relationships with younger generations in their families and their community. One of the young married females shared the following: *My eldest daughter is not my husband's child, and I can see that they don't have respect for each other. I am in the middle. I teach her respect my husband, he provides for us. Respect me I am your mom, but often the respect is not there.* Respect shared amongst community members also came to the fore when younger generations reflected on issues in their community. One of the young females added: *When we moved to this extension things change. So here people wants you to call them Ma, I had a grandma she died, so how can I call you Ma? Then they call my mother to tell her I am not showing respect. But they should give me respect too.* One of the young females reflected on

respect within her school community: *At school the teachers wants respect, but they don't give us respect. You see them drunk at the bar, and they swear too. Monday they smell funny and you saw them there at the bar.*

### **Physical and Environmental Needs**

Physical and environmental needs refer to necessities that these families in Extension 7 have to survive without. The families mentioned necessities pertaining to their personal everyday physical setting and those in their broader environment.

**Basic needs** refer to necessities these families to sustain life and include food, running water and safe toilets. One of the young mothers explained: *We use outside toilets, we cannot go there in the dark it's not safe. My daughter cry, she feels shy to use the bucket, but you cannot go out there in the night my husband works in Rustenburg we are alone and there is no lights outside.* Another young female added the following: *Sometime you wish the toilet was inside. It's dark outside. You hear stories people wait for you outside. We don't have nice toilets.* Food or the lack thereof also emerged as a basic need. One of the fathers mentioned: *When I had no work, we go to bed hungry. You have nothing what can you do? And you have to go look for work tomorrow. Tired you go and beg for a job. You want to work to earn money. Now, that I work, you pray for enough food. I don't want my kids to have scraps, just enough.* One of the mothers added the following: *... when we don't have enough I let me kids eat first, but I know if I don't eat enough I will be tired tomorrow, we go to sleep I pray the misses will give me something tomorrow.* One of the young girls added: *I don't want that expensive food from the mall, just enough. I want to have to take to school, sometimes it's not enough. If you take to school you don't have anything when you come back from school.*

**The need for service delivery** refers to the lack of services in Extension 12. The family members spoke passionately about their need for better services in their environment. One of the fathers said: *There are no roads where we stay, you see so when you call the police they don't come because they there's no roads or house numbers.* One of the single fathers who lives in the same area made the following comment: *... when it rains I am so worried about my kids, they have to walk far because we don't have roads, so you can see the mud up to the knees to get the bus. Busses don't stop where we live it's not a location it's just a place we stay, where else can we move? We asked the municipality to help, they chase us away, and it's not our land.* One of the young married female participants added: *... we don't have a clinic here, we have to walk far and when you get there they tell you go to town, you cannot even call the ambulance. No one come because they know they can't drive here.* This comment resonates with the input of one of the single mothers: *... the municipality don't care. They told us they will help, nothing. We stay close to each other if there can be a fire everything is gone, I don't know if we have a fire brigade, do we have one? We don't even have water taps we share one with everyone.*

### **Aspiring Needs**

Aspiring needs refer to the hopes of these families for a better future and life – a need for education.

**Education aspirations** were highlighted in most of the narratives of the families. This need was not only present within parents, but the younger generations also have a need to educate themselves. The discussion between one of the interviewers and a young girl highlighted the aspiring need for education in these families in Ikageng. The need expressed by these families is demonstrated with a dialogue between the interviewer and a young participant who explained her Venn diagrams:

Interviewer: *So I see in this circle you wrote school, who wrote school?*

Participant 2 family 1 [Young female participant]: *It's me, I need school so much.*

Interviewer: *Tell me more about this circle and your school.*

Participant 2 family 1: *I made the circle big, because school give you things. See my mother can't write so well and I want to finish school and go to Pukke [University]. I want to go to school and be a social worker. I want a good job. If you learn hard you will be a success. I believe. See when you have school you have to get a good job. I don't want to clean houses (laugh), it's hard every day cleaning (chuckles, whole family laugh).*

Interviewer: *'aah so how would you describe school in this circle? Or tell us a bit more about school in this circle'*

Participant 2 family 1: *'It's on this page, with the needs. It is my need to finish school, where we live people don't finish school. They have to help out or work I see a lot of my friends they don't come back to school. And if you cannot finish school you can't go to Pukke [University], and you can do nothing. I want to be a social worker, and when im done , you see to be a social worker you need school and the teacher said social workers always have work. I don't want to sit at home, I want to work to help my mother. She need glasses, but you need money. I will work for money and then she can come to stay with me and we can buy glasses that's it. I need school. All of us need school. Maybe if ma have those glasses she can read you see'*

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this affiliated study was to explore the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families who live in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, with an emphasis on their own self-reported needs. The overriding need of families living in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, was found to be relational needs. In addition, the themes were found to interrelate and some of the themes emerged almost simultaneously. This study was done as an affiliated study of a larger research project in an effort to contribute to the body of knowledge on South African families in response to the White Paper on families of 2012 (Department of Social Development, 2012). The White Paper on families (Department of Social Development, 2012), encourages researchers to strengthen South African families by means of research in an effort to enhance family solidarity and in turn, to create safe and effective communities. The White Paper focuses on the position that the needs of South African families are self-evident and underpinned by the socioeconomic reality of the country and the impact of Apartheid. However, the most recent research done on families suggests that researchers should move beyond a deficit view and to rather view families as structures with the potential to grow and to even function effectively (Becvar, 2013; Caldwell & Senter, 2013; Tanyi, 2006; Van Hook, 2013; Walsh, 2012; 2015).

In this study, the importance of an empirical inquiry of South African families became clear. The findings should, however, be contextualised with a focus on the diversity and unique contributions of a Setswana-speaking community. South Africa is home to many different racial and cultural groups with eleven official languages. The needs of families do not necessarily mean the same thing for all South African families when their socioeconomic means, educational background, family ties and available resources are taken into account (Ajuruchukwu, 2018; World Bank, 2015). The researcher analysed and discussed the findings



by employing a constructivist-interpretivist worldview and by doing so, recognised the needs identified and defined by each individual family member. These needs were all viewed as equally important with regard to the personal experiences and reality of the family members. The themes that emerged from the data not only highlighted the importance of an inductive inquiry, but also shed light on the significance of self-identified needs.

Relational needs emerged as the most pressing need and literature suggests that needs on a relational level take precedence over self-evident needs, such as basic and biological needs (Hooper, 2009; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Oh & Chang, 2014; Walsh, 2003). However, the relational needs of these families should be carefully contextualised due to their unique circumstances and principles of *Ubuntu* that are sometimes referred to as *Motho* in the Setswana culture (Broodryk, 2005). *Ubuntu* is core to a South African culture and emphasises human relationships, community and shared commitment (Kamwangamalu, 2007; Ngunjiri, 2010). Within the *Ubuntu* philosophy, the importance and value of human beings (*munthu*) and the community are pivotal, where *us* receives precedence over *I*. Togetherness and commitment to the closeness in Setswana families as a consequence of Ubuntu are evident in literature (Kamwangamalu, 2007; Ngunjiri, 2010). Thus it is no surprise that families in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, highlighted their need to spend more time with their family members.

Family time, as suggested by these families, gives credence to the suggestions that South African families value time spent together, but their time together is influenced by economic changes and modernisation (Becker, 1994; Daly, 2001; Graig, 2006). Most of the participating families want to spend more time with their family members and this need comes from the amount of time they have to spend at work and due to commuting. Research was done that examines family time linked to employment responsibility and a hegemonic view on family time was reported (Bianchi, 2000; Bittman, Graig & Folbre, 2004; Daly,

2000; Milkie, Bianchi, Mattingly & Robinson, 2002; Sullivan, 1997). A hegemonic view on family time suggests that families as institutions idealise family time too much by focusing more on activities done than social interaction and connectedness amongst family members (Bittman et al., 2004). Most of the primary care givers in this study reflected on the limited time they had to spend with their children and spouses due to employment obligations. This viewpoint resonates with research done by Becker (1994), Daly (2001) and Roxburg (2004) who reported an absent parent phenomenon in families due to employment responsibilities. Families are exposed to higher rates of dysfunction and a lower collective well-being when parents work longer hours or when they do not live with their nuclear family, irrespective of the income generated by absent parents (Bittman et al., 2004; Daly, 2000; Walsh, 2012; 2015). In this study, the parents and primary care givers form part of the unskilled and semi-skilled labour market that results in meagre wages and little opportunities for promotion (Seekings, 2010). Irrespective of their wage level, these participants have acknowledged in their PLA groups that no income (unemployment) is a particular concern but employment gives them very little time to spend with each other. It can, therefore, be postulated that the ability to provide for their families gives these parents and primary care givers peace of mind. However, their values are rooted in *Ubuntu* and they are reminded on a continual basis that togetherness and connectedness are important, placing these participants in a state of ambivalence. On a relational level, these families expressed their need to spend more time with each other. The support available within their nuclear families suffers due to the amount of time they spent working and this challenge is applicable to the larger Ikageng community.

The need for a social support system came to the fore as a result of the minimum time these families spend with each other. Robertson, Elder, Skinner and Conger (1991) suggest that the impact on the solidarity of family structures will increase along with the economic pressures and resource constraints that are currently a huge challenge for families. It is,

therefore, not surprising that the multi-generational members within these participating families experience less support in their nuclear, extended and community families. These families live in extreme poverty and underdeveloped environments that have a negative effect on their connectedness and capacity to support their close relatives – let alone members in their broader community. One of the participants captured the issue of social support in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, succinctly: *Everyone struggle, you look for sink to build a house, even the person next to you look for sink. You cannot give sink if you don't have sink for yourself.* This quote highlights the need for a social support system in extreme cases of poverty and when little to no resources are available. Families are struggling with their own socioeconomic position and that of the larger community – they simply cannot give what they do not have. Social support can definitely relieve the negative effects of stressful situations, such as poverty and no resources, but the beneficial effects of social support in family structures are rooted in their connectedness and solidarity (Daly, 2000; Robertson et al., 1991; Walsh, 2012; 2015). The less time families have to connect, the less support is available within these family structures and this dilemma has far reaching effects on various levels of family structures as a system.

The need for reciprocal respect expressed by these Setswana family members resonates with research done by Makoni (1996) and Van der Geest (1997) who describe respect as a core value shared between individuals within microsystems, mesosystems and exosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1995). Participating families described their need for reciprocal respect and this need is embedded in their interpersonal context pertaining to members of their nuclear family and moves beyond the boundaries of nuclear structures to position itself on a mesosystem level (Bronfenbrenner, 1989; 1995). Older generations in the participating families expressed their need for respect and their need can either be embedded in their age or in their contributions to younger generations. Literature confirms that respect

can be viewed as a normative value (Van Der Geest, 1997). Older generations in families or communities demand respect from younger generations due to their position in their social system and their provision to younger generations (Van Der Geest, 1997). However, the younger generations also make contributions in these families, suggesting that the younger generations only respect family members and community members who respect them in return. This finding resonates with Van Aardt and Roos (2016) who highlight the role of contributions with regard to reciprocal respect amongst members of different generations.

The roots of the relational needs of these families stem from a microlevel – the inter-personal and intra-personal spaces between family members with prominent branches on both the meso-level and exso-level. The physical and environmental needs of these families were discussed on a meso-level, exso-level and macro-level with a direct impact on the micro-level of each family (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; 2001; Rose & Tudge, 2013). The families expressed physical needs regarding proper sanitation facilities at home and enough food for their families. These needs must be contextualised within their specific environmental context and the resources available to them within this environment. The need for proper and effective sanitation facilities emerged from narratives of all the family members with an emphasis on the safety and proximity of facilities. The White Paper on basic household sanitation (Department of Water and Sanitation, 2016) emphasises the provision of basic level household sanitation. However, a large number of South African families live without access to safe and healthy facilities (Statistics South Africa, 2017). This problem is more prevalent in underdeveloped and rural areas in South Africa where the growing need for formal and informal housing services is not met (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Maslow (1943) describes access to sanitation facilities as one of the basic physiological needs of human beings. Undoubtedly, physiological needs are the most potent of all needs, resulting in changes on a

psychological level. The need for food was highlighted by the families living in Ikageng, Potchefstroom. Most of the family members viewed food as a necessity and a basic need.

The need to aspire was emphasised when the younger generations reflected on their need for not only a better education, but also their need to complete formal education. The need for a better education as an aspirational need creates alternative pathways to overcome adversities in their physical environment, particularly poverty and domestic work. This finding confirms empirical work that highlights the importance of educational aspirations of poor families (Berzin, 2010; De Civita, Pagani, Vitaro & Tremblay, 2004; Marjaribanks, 2005). Children who grow up in environments with multiple stressors and high levels of basic needs are greatly limited with regard to opportunities in life (Berzin, 2010). Walsh (2015) suggests that high levels of basic needs can be translated into strengths when children are internally motivated to excel academically.

It is recommended to obtain the perspectives of different communities and cultural groups in order to formulate a broad perspective of the self-identified needs of families in a South African context. Furthermore, the findings of this study are based on the data collected in one of the locations of a larger study. This has implications for the generalisation of the findings to other contexts or areas. A more comprehensive understanding of the strengths of families living in resource-constrained environments could have been captured if more locations were included in the study.

It is also acknowledged that a greater involvement by participants in a research process – during the planning, writing, and developing stages – may be helpful in an effort to help influence policies that can change their lives. Participants must be given a voice. It is recommended that the findings of this study are used in the development of intervention

strategies and to change and improve policies concerning families who live in resource-constrained environments.

### **Conclusion**

The needs of families in South Africa are context-specific and are embedded in the social, financial and environmental capital available to families. Needs within families are changing on a continual basis and the nuances thereof is not generalizable. What is important to one member of a family is not necessarily important to all of the family members. Families who live in resource-constrained areas in South Africa lack the provision of basic needs and services from the government, yet they use their strength as a unit to redefine their needs as collective units. Families in Ikageng, Potchefstroom, have identified their needs as central to families as social structures in which they share reciprocal connections. These social connections extend to the broader community of Ikageng and even to the larger community in Potchefstroom that influence the importance and position of needs.

## References

- Ajuruchukwu, O.B.I. (2018). The determinants of household poverty in South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(13), 112-118.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Heaton, T. B. (2007). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa: Socio-demographic perspectives*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Richter, L. M. (2007). Social and economic context of families and households in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng and T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 1-26). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Appel, K., Buckingham, E., Jodoin, K., & Roth, D. (2012). *Participatory learning and action toolkit: For application in BSR's global programs*. Retrieved from <https://herproject.org/downloads/curriculum-resources/herproject-pla-toolkit.pdf>
- Babington, B. (2006). (2017, June 20). Family well-being in Australia: A Families Australia version. Families Australia Inc. Retrieved from <http://www.familiesaustralia.org.au>
- Becker, V. K. (1994). *Time for life: The surprising ways how people use their time*. Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Becvar, D. S. (2013). *Handbook of family resilience*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Bianchi, S.M. (2000). Maternal employment and time with children: Dramatic change or surprising continuity? *Demography* 37(4), 401-14.
- Bittman, M, Craig, L., & Folbre, N. (2004). Packaging care: What happens when parents utilize non-parental child care? In *Family time: The social organization of care*, edited by M. Bittman and N. Folbre. London: Routledge.
- Botma, Y., Greeff, M., Mulaudzi, F. M., & Wright, S. C. D. (2010). *Research in health sciences*. Cape Town: Heinemann.

- Bozalek, V., & Biersteker, L. (2010). Exploring power and privilege using participatory learning action techniques. *Social Work Education*, 29(5), 551-572.  
doi:10.1080/02615470903193785
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Broodryk, J. (2005). *Ubuntu management philosophy*. Knowres Publishing, Randburg. South Africa.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspectives. *Developmental Psychology*, 22, 723–742.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). *Ecological models of human development*. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 1643–1647). Oxford, UK: Pergamon Press and Elsevier Science.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1995b). Developmental ecology through space and time: a future perspective. In P. Moen, G. H. Elder, & K. Lüscher (Eds.), *Examining lives in context: Perspectives on the ecology of human development* (pp. 599–618). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2001). *The bioecological theory of human development*. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopaedia of the social and behavioural sciences* (pp. 6963–6970). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Budlender, D. (1999). Patterns of Poverty in South Africa. *Development Southern Africa*, 16(2) 212-222.
- Caldwell, K., & Senter, K. (2013). Strengthening family resilience through



- spiritual and religious resources. In D. S. Becvar (Ed.), *Handbook of family resilience* (pp. 441-458). New York, NY: Springer.
- Christopher, A. J. (2001). Urban segregation in post-apartheid South Africa. *Urban Studies*, 38(3), 449-466. doi:10.1080/00420980120027447
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning. *The Psychologist*, 26(2), 120-123.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120.
- Crankshaw, O. (2008). Race, space and the post-Fordist spatial order of Johannesburg. *Urban Studies*, 45(8), 1692-1711. doi:org/10.1177/0042098008091497
- Daly, K (2001). Deconstructing the time for families. *American Psychologist* 54, 397-407.
- Daly, K. (2000). *Families and time*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Doerr, N. M. (2009). *The native speaker concept: Ethnographic investigations of native speaker effects*. Berlin: Mouton de Gryter.
- Durrheim, K. (2006). Research design. In M. Terreblanche, K. Durrheim, & D. Painter (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 33-54). Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Graig, L. (2006). Does father care and mean share? A comparison of how mothers and fathers in intact families spend time with children. *Gender and society*, 20(2), 259-281. doi: 10.1177/0891243205285212
- Harvey, E. D. (1994). *Social change and family policy in South Africa, 1930 to 1986*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- Holborn, L., & Eddy, G. (2011). *First steps to healing the South African family*. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations. Retrieved from

<https://irr.org.za/reports/occasional-reports/files/first-steps-to-healing-the-south-african-family-final-report-mar-2011.pdf>

- Hooper, L. M. (2009). Individual and family resilience: Definitions, research, and frameworks relevant for all counselors. *The Alabama Counseling Association Journal*, 35(1), 19-26.
- Hosegood, V. (2009). The demographic impact of HIV and AIDS across the family and household life-cycle: Implications for efforts to strength families in Sub-Saharan Africa. *AIDS Care*, 21(1), 13-21. doi:org/10.1080/09540120902923063
- Kamwangamalu, N. (2007). Social change and language shift: South Africa. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 23. 225–242.
- Koen, V. (2012). *Family psychosocial well-being in a South African context*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation North-West University, Potchefstroom South Africa). Retrieved from [https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen\\_V\\_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://dspace.nwu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10394/10451/Koen_V_TOC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development*, 71(3), 543-562.
- Makoni, S.B. (1996). ‘They talk to us like children’: Language and intergenerational discourse among African women in first encounters in an African township. *Southern African Journal of Gerontology*, 5(1), 6-13.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. doi:10.1037/h0054346
- Maslow, A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper and Row.

Retrieved from

[http://pages.ucsd.edu/~nchristenfeld/Happiness\\_Readings\\_files/Class%207%20-%20Maslow%201954.pdf](http://pages.ucsd.edu/~nchristenfeld/Happiness_Readings_files/Class%207%20-%20Maslow%201954.pdf)

Maslow, A. H. (1998). A Theory of Meta-motivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value-Life. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 7(2), 93–126.

doi:10.1177/002216786700700201

Metz, T. (2011). Ubuntu as a moral theory and human rights in South Africa. *African human rights law journal*, 11(2), 532-559.

Milkie, M., Bianchi, S., Mattingly, M., & Robinson, J. (2002). Gendered division of childrearing: Ideals, realities, and the relationship to parental wellbeing. *Sex Roles* 47(5), 21-38.

Munsamy, J. I., Parrish, A., & Steel, G. (2014). Conducting research in a resource-constrained environment: avoiding the pitfalls. *Healthcare in Low-resource Settings*, 2(1009), 14-15. doi:org/10.4081/hls.2014.1009

Neff, D. F. (2006). Subjective well-being, poverty and ethnicity in South Africa: Insights from an exploratory analysis. *Social Indicators Research*, 80, 313-341. doi: 10.1007/s11205-005-5920-x

Ngunjiri, F.W. (2010). I am because we Are: Exploring women's leadership under Ubuntu worldview. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 18(2) 223 –242. doi:10.1177/1523422316641416

Oh, S., & Chang, S. J. (2014). Concept analysis: Family resilience. *Open Journal of Nursing*, 4(13), 980-990. doi:10.4236/ojn.2014.413105

- Patterson, J. M. (2012). Integrating family resilience and family stress theory. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 64, 349-361.
- Robertson, V., Elder, G. H., Skinner, R., & Conger, R. D. (1991). Church, family, and friends. In G. H. Elder & R. D. Conger (Eds.), *Children of the land: Adversity and success in rural America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Rose, E. M., & Tudge, J. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's theory of Human development: Its evolution from ecology to bio ecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5, 243-258.
- Ross, F. (1995). *Houses with doors: Diffusing domesticity*. Pretoria: Human Research Council press.
- Roxburgh, S. (2004). There just aren't enough hours in the day: The mental health consequences of time pressures. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 32, 115-131.
- Saff, G. (1998). *Changing Cape Town: Urban dynamics, policy and planning during the political transition in South Africa*. Washington DC: University Press of America
- Sandelowski, M. (2000). Focus on research methods: Whatever happened to qualitative description? *Research in Nursing & Health*, 23, 334-340.
- Seekings, J. (2010). Race, class and inequality in the South African city. In G. Bridge & S. Watson (Eds.), *The new Blackwell companion to the city* (pp. 532-546). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- South Africa. Department of Social Development. (2012). *White paper on families in South Africa*. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFgguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom\\_docman%26task%3D](https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiB87Wc8ZzXAhWJBcAKHV5XBFYQFgguMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dsd.gov.za%2Findex2.php%3Foption%3Dcom_docman%26task%3D)

doc\_view%26gid%3D370%26Itemid%3D3&usg=AOvVaw3ZrBDosqEvzSAysu0G0w  
pdf

South Africa. Department of Water and Sanitation. (2014). *Monitoring and evaluation framework for services to families*. Pretoria: Department of Social Development.

Statistics South Africa. (2017). Mid-year population estimates 2017. Online. Available:

<https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022017.pdf>

Sullivan, O. (1997). Time waits for no wo(man): An investigation of the gendered experience of domestic time. *Sociology* 31(2), 221-39.

Smith, P., Cowie, K., & Blades, H. M. (2003). *Understanding children's development* (5th ed.). West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons.

Statistics South Africa. (2016). *Census 2016: Mid-year population estimates (P0302)*.

Pretoria: SSA. Retrieved from

<http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022011.pdf>

Tanyi, R. A. (2006). Spirituality and family nursing: Spiritual assessment and interventions for families. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 53(3), 287-294.

Thomas. S. (2004). What is Participatory Learning and Action (PLA): An introduction.

*Centre for International Development and Training (CIDT)*, London.

Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight “Big-Tent” criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837-851. doi: 10.1177/1077800410383121

Tsheola, J. (2002). Basic Needs in the Northern Province and South Africa's Globalization Agenda. African development bank. Oxford, UK:Blackwell publishers.

UNICEF. (2016). *Report on expert panel on intergenerational solidarity*. New York, NY:

United Nations Headquarters. Retrieved from

[https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

[pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf](https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA%20UNICEF%20FINAL%20EGM%20Report.pdf)

- Van Aardt, J.M., & Roos, V. (2016). Young adults experiences of respect in their relations with older people. *International journal of psychology*, 51(S1), 49-51. doi: 10.1002/ijop.12295
- Van der Geest, S. (1997). Between respect and reciprocity: Managing old age in rural Ghana. *Southern Journal of Gerontology*, 6(2), 20-25.
- Van Hook, M. (2013). *Resiliency and spirituality: A framework for assessing and helping*. Retrieved from <http://www.nacsw.org/Publications/Proceedings2013/VanHookMResiliencyFINAL.pdf>
- Venter, H. J. (2012). Maslows' self-transcendence: How it can enrich organizational culture and leadership. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology*, 2(7), 64-71.
- Walker, C. (2010). Restitution in default: Land claims and the redevelopment of Cato Manor, Durban. In C. Walker, A. Bohlin, R. Hall, & T. Kepe (Eds.), *Land, memory, reconstruction, and justice: Perspectives on land claims in South Africa* (pp. 255-272). Athens, GA: Ohio University Press.
- Walsh, F. (2003). Family resilience: A framework for clinical practice. *Family Process*, 42(1), 1-18.
- Walsh, F. (2012). *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Walsh, F. (2015). *Strengthening family resilience* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Wilson, S., & MacLean, R. (2011). *Research methods and data analysis for psychology*. London: McGraw Hill.
- World Bank. (2015). *World development report 2015: Mind, society, and behavior*. doi: 10.1596/978-1-4648-0342-0

Ziehl, S. C. (2003). The family and social cohesion. In D. Chidester, P. Dexter & W. Jones (Eds.), *What holds us together: Social cohesion in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

## CHAPTER 4

### Critical Reflection

The study has contributed to an understanding of the self-identified needs of Setswana-speaking families living in a resource-constrained area in Ikageng, Potchestroom. These needs are unique when the vastness of family structures in South Africa is taken into consideration and the context of the environment in which these families survive. Three major needs were identified from the data despite the constraints of resources experienced by the families. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory highlights aspects of connections and interactions in human development (Rose & Tudge, 2013). There is not much empirical evidence available on needs in the context of families, especially in resource-constrained areas. It was, therefore, of paramount importance to acknowledge and understand the importance of identifying the needs of families in South Africa. The majority of South African families have been severely influenced by Apartheid and this plays an important role when the needs of families in resource-constrained areas are investigated (Amoateng, & Richter 2007; Crankshaw, 2008).

This study contributed to knowledge with regard to an understanding of how families in resource-constrained environments identify and define their needs while taking into account how family structures have changed over time (Casale & Desmond, 2007). The study assisted in broadening the researcher's understanding of relational needs. Relational needs highlighted the need of these families for social support systems. Families still embrace the closeness they share with their family members, however, access to family members is severely affected and influenced by their physical and financial position. Reciprocal respect is a shared sentiment across generations. However, this is an interesting need when the cultural aspects of Setswana-speaking families are considered with regard to individualism that is currently favoured in social structures (Metz, 2011). The notion of respect is still dear



to family structures despite all of the radical changes that have occurred and respect is not only important to the elders but to the younger generations as well (Walker, 2010; Zeihl, 2003).

Aspiring needs were highlighted in the study by various family members, indicating that the need for equity and transformation is not only an adult issue or need but the children also want to be treated equally and would like to see positive changes in their lives (Neff, 2006; Metz, 2011). A communal need was highlighted as well and shed further light on what families in resource-constrained areas and their communities hope for. In the midst of their hope for equality and transformation, the study assisted the researcher in understanding that the families view education as very important and this was also identified as a need. The family members need their education to take them beyond a mere high school education in order to secure a better life for themselves and their families, affording them the means to assist their family members. Regardless of the constraints these families are experiencing, they still have hope for a better life and have greater prospects for their families (Amoateng & Heaton, 2007; Amoateng & Ritcher, 2007; Metz, 2011; Neff, 2008; Walker, 2010).

The physical and environmental needs of the families align with what the local government ought to provide to these communities, and they consider these needs as essential for their own well-being and the well-being of families. Resources are constrained in these communities and the needs of the families range from basic needs, such as food, to services, such as having access to the police and the fire brigade.

The study also contributed to the understanding of the researcher that the families are not only limited to blood relations but also exist in relationships in the broader community of Ikageng. The collective and communal aspect of the African culture is reflected in the needs of these families – their needs are not only based on the needs of individual family members

but also on the needs of their community (Metz, 2011; Venter, 2012; Zeihl, 2003). This research study also contributes to informing service delivery and policy development in the South African government. This highlights that a blanket approach cannot be used to address the needs of the community, they communities all differ but families in the same community tend to share the same needs.

### **Participatory Learning Action Techniques**

These techniques provided an array of visual responses from the participants, particularly with regard to what they considered as pressing needs (Bozalek & Biersteke, 2010).

Families had the opportunity to express their needs visually, specifically in the form of free drawings – they were able to draw what they viewed as needs and they substantiated their drawings and their comments. This allowed the participants the liberty to express themselves in drawings and provided a canvas of expressions. The **Venn diagrams** highlighted and captured what can be considered as shared information in the families (60). Every family member had the opportunity to contribute to the drawing and to discuss their drawings. The **free drawings** captured the associations the families identified with regard to the various family members. This was of interest when other additions made by the family members were considered and how these additions added to the insight gained regarding family dynamics and how they were able to articulate the meaning of their drawings (Bozalek & Biersteke, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

This research study highlights the current gap concerning the needs of families with a specific focus on a South African context and resource-constrained areas. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was developed for a Western context, and this study assisted the researcher in gaining valuable insight in a South African context.

The researcher was able to understand the various needs expressed by the family members and how their role in their family also influenced their needs. This study also contributed to the reassessment of government policies on families and what is considered to be needs and how these needs must be addressed. The various needs identified by the families range from individual needs, what they hope for, to what their community needs from the South African government.

## References

- Amoateng, A. Y., & Heaton, T. B. (2007). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa: Socio-demographic perspectives*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Amoateng, A. Y., & Richter, L. M. (2007). Social and economic context of families and households in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng & T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 1-26). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Bozalek, V., & Biersteker, L. (2010). Exploring power and privilege using participatory learning action techniques. *Social Work Education*, 29(5), 551-572. doi:10.1080/02615470903193785
- Casale, D., & Desmond, C. (2007). The economic well-being of the family: Households' access to resources in South Africa. In A. Y. Amoateng & T. B. Heaton (Eds.). *Families and households in post-apartheid South Africa* (pp. 61-88). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Crankshaw, O. (2008). Race, space and the post-Fordist spatial order of Johannesburg. *Urban Studies*, 45(8), 1692-1711. doi:org/10.1177/0042098008091497
- Metz, T. (2011). Ubuntu as a moral theory and human rights in South Africa. *African human rights law journal*, 11(2), 532-559.
- Neff, K. D. (2008). The development and validation of a scale to measure self-compassion. *Self and Identity*, 2, 223–250. doi:10.1080/15298860390209035
- Rose, E. M., & Tudge, J. (2013). Urie Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Development: Its evolution from ecology to bioecology. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 5(9), 243–258. doi:org/10.1111/jftr.12022.

- Venter, H. J. (2012). Maslows' self-transcendence: How it can enrich organizational culture and leadership. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology*, 2(7), 64-71.
- Walker, C. (2010). Restitution in default: Land claims and the redevelopment of Cato Manor, Durban. In C. Walker, A. Bohlin, R. Hall, & T. Kepe (Eds.), *Land, memory, reconstruction, and justice: Perspectives on land claims in South Africa* (pp. 255-272). Athens, GA: Ohio University Press.
- Ziehl, S. C. (2003). The family and social cohesion. In D. Chidester, P. Dexter & W. Jones (Eds.), *What holds us together: Social cohesion in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.