



**Exploring meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha  
in the Eastern Cape, South Africa**

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Mini-dissertation accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Master of Arts in Positive Psychology* at the North-West University

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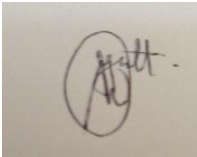


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### Declaration by Researcher

I, Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi, hereby declare that this research study: *Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape*, is my work and has not been submitted to any other institution for examination. Furthermore, I confirm that all sources have been fully referenced and acknowledged.

A small, square image showing a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi'.

## Declaration by the Language Editor

3 December 2020

Re: Editing of Master's thesis

This letter confirms that the Master's thesis **Exploring meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa** by Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi was edited.

Cordially

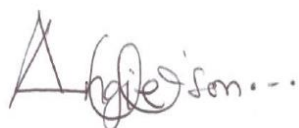
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Buckenham". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered on the page.

Dr Karen Buckenham (PhD)

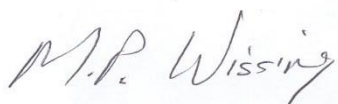
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## Letter of Permission

The co-authors hereby give permission to the first author to submit this mini-dissertation in article format in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Magister Artium in Positive Psychology. The first author contributed to theme development, did the major part of the literature review, handled logistics related to data gathering, gathered and transcribed the qualitative data, conducted the qualitative analyses and led the interpretation of the findings. She drafted the manuscript and incorporated suggestions and guidelines from the co-authors into the manuscript.



Dr. A. Wilson Fadiji (Supervisor)



Prof. M. P. Wissing (Co-supervisor)



Prof. L. Schutte (Co-supervisor)

## Acknowledgements

“All things are possible with God” (Amplified Version, Matthew 19:26). I thank God that I was able to finish this mini-dissertation. All glory and honour to my Father in Heaven for giving me strength, courage and perseverance when I needed it. Knowing and being in Christ is the only reason why I never gave up. I would also like to express my gratitude to the following persons who played a key role in my academic journey:

1. I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Angelina Wilson Fadiji who has supported me throughout this journey. She poured out her wisdom and took time from her family to guide me. Without her calm spirit, love, patience, and encouraging firmness, I would not have been able to complete my mini-dissertation as I was constantly facing challenges. Thank you for being a constant source of support.
2. I would also like to thank the AUTHeR staff of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, for the enlightening academic years that I shared with the institution. This was by far the most informative time of my life. I would like to thank Prof. Wissing, Prof. Schutte, Mrs. Liversage and Ms. Cromhout for making it possible to complete my Master’s degree. Your outstanding wisdom, compassion and guidance made it possible. Thank you for supporting me during the difficult times when I faced challenges with my health. I engaged with positive psychology on a personal level as it came to me at a time when I needed all forms of encouragement. Thank you for also living positive psychology through your actions and love.
3. I would like to thank my fellow MAPP students for their friendship and support. Thank you for being a family to me.
4. I would also like to thank my participants for sharing their views with me. Without your co-operation my research would not be possible. You made the journey one of adventure for me.
5. Finally, I want to thank my family for supporting me during this time. Thank you to my husband for driving me to my chemotherapy sessions during the first year of my MAPP-

studies. Thank you to my children for taking on all those chores when I was unwell and busy with my studies. Thank you for being a diligent team that was always loving, supportive and disciplined. Without your support I would not have been able to succeed.



## Preface

This mini-dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Positive Psychology, accounting for 60 credits of a 180 credits course. The qualification and programme codes are 8EY P01 and G801P, respectively. This mini-dissertation is submitted in article format as indicated in the 2020 General Academic Rules (A4.4.2 and A4.10.5) of the North-West University. The manuscript has been prepared in article format and according to the guidelines of the South African Journal of Psychology. For the sake of uniformity, all content of the manuscript has been prepared accordance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. The manuscript exceeds the word count of the intended journal and will be abbreviated before submission to the journal. Pages are numbered consecutively for purposes of the mini-dissertation but will start from one for submission purposes. The table is presented in-text to ease readability instead of at the end of the manuscript. The Results and Discussion sections are combined in one section. In addition, the editor of the intended journal will be approached to request permission to combine the Results and Discussion sections.

The body of the mini-dissertation consists of three sections. Section 1 reflects the first stage of the research process and serves as preparation for the main phase. It includes the research proposal, and the ethics application as approved by the Scientific Committee of the Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR) and the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC), respectively (without addenda). Section 2 contains the research report in article format. Section 3 contains a summary, reflections, and the conclusions of the study. All components of the manuscript form part of the same research project. As such, overlap of the contents of the research proposal, ethics application, and parts of the manuscript in Section 2 can be expected. The manuscript contained in Section 2 constitutes the final research report for examination.

## Summary

Meaning is viewed as a crucial resource for human functioning, striving, and flourishing. Meaning links objects and ideas to each other in a predictable and relatively stable manner from a language perspective, but also and foremost for purposes of this study, denotes values and what is most important to people in their lives. The aim of study was to explore meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. The research focused on how Xhosa-speaking adults understand meaning, their experiences of meaning, and what their sources of meaning in life were. A basic descriptive qualitative research design was applied. Eleven participants were recruited and a semi-structured open-ended interview schedule was used to collect data for the study. The interviews were conducted in Xhosa and translated into English during transcription. Data was analysed using thematic analysis.

In terms of the understanding of meaning in life, themes such as engaging with family, a sense of purpose and direction in life, spiritual activities, engaging livelihood, extending oneself and generativity, and values and morality surfaced. In terms of participants' experiences of a meaningful life, themes included critical self-knowledge and life pursuits, fulfilling societal expectations, and challenges and resources. With regard to sources of meaning in life, themes such as values and growth, religion, education, family (and faith community), and work were prominent. While the findings were consistent with existing theory and research on meaning in life, the study also highlighted contextual dynamics in what constitutes meaning in life and how this is experienced. The study contributes important insights regarding principles and values, acting morally and having a personalised existential relationship with God as key facets of meaning in this context. In addition, the emphasis on having critical self-knowledge adds to growing research on the need to understand the individual as a person while considering the context in well-being research in the African context. Meaning in life emerged as both an individualised and communal experience grounded in lifestyle choices, communal values, spirituality, and the individual's conception of who he or she is. These findings have implications

for well-being interventions in the community and clinical practice as meaning-making forms an integral part of such interventions.

## **Section 1**

### **Background Orientation**

This mini-dissertation is submitted in article format as indicated in the 2020 General Academic Rules (A4.4.2 and A4.10.5) of the North-West University. This section represents the first phase of the research process leading up to the manuscript as the primary research report, which will be presented in Section 2. Specifically, Section 1 presents the research proposal and the ethics application.

A problem statement was formulated, and a research proposal was developed that was first approved by a subject research group and second by the Scientific Committee of the Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research (AUTHeR). Thereafter, ethics approval was obtained from the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the North-West University. The research proposal and ethics application as approved by the relevant committees are included in this section, apart from language and technical editing which was done for the purpose of inclusion here. Note that the timeline indicated in the research proposal is according to the original project plan, therefore the final submission date may differ from the date indicated in the timeline. The appendices referred to in the proposal and the HREC application are not included in the mini-dissertation.

All components of the mini-dissertation form part of the same research project. Therefore, overlap of the contents of the research proposal, ethics application, parts of the manuscript in Section 2, and the Conclusions in Chapter 3 can be expected. The manuscript contained in Section 2 constitutes the final research report for examination.

## 1.1 Research Proposal



Cover Page for Research Proposal	
School	Health Sciences
Discipline	Positive Psychology
Student	
Surname	Wyatt-Mgobozi
Name/initials	Lynette
Cell phone number	0761641361
Skype address	N/A
Degree	Master of Arts in Positive Psychology

Date of first registration for <b>above mentioned degree</b>	2017
Student number	29181380
Title of thesis/dissertation/mini- dissertation	Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa
Study leader/promoter	Dr. A. Wilson Fadiji
Help-/co-leader/promoter	Prof. M. P Wissing & Dr. L. Schutte
Number of times of submission of this protocol  (Mark were applicable)	1 <sup>st</sup> √
	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Does this project fall under a greater umbrella project?	Yes
	No      √
<b>If yes</b> , Ethical number of the umbrella project	

Title of the umbrella project			
Leader of the umbrella project			
Specific aims of umbrella project <b>where by this study links</b>			
Will new data be collected?		Yes	√
		No	
Names of <b>small group panel</b> within the school/unit that approved this research protocol (before send to AUTHeR)	1	Prof. Lusilda Schutte	
	2	Dr. Amanda Cromhout	
	3	Prof. Marié Wissing	
	4	Dr. Angelina Wilson Fadji	
	5		

## **Executive Summary**

Meaning is viewed as a crucial resource for human functioning, striving, and flourishing. Meaning links objects and ideas to each other in a predictable and relatively stable manner. Meaning is an important component for a fulfilling and flourishing life. The aim of this study was to explore meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. This research explored how Xhosa-speaking adults understand meaning, their unique experiences of meaning and what the most important meaningful things are to Xhosa-speaking adults in the Eastern Cape. This was done based on qualitative research techniques and utilised a basic descriptive qualitative research design. Semi-structured open-ended questions were used to collect data during the individual interviews. The interviews were conducted in Xhosa. This study intends adding to existing research on meaning in life. This research also addressed the gap in knowledge about meaning in life within the Xhosa context using a bottom-up approach.



## 1. Title

Exploring meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape,  
South Africa

*Keywords:* Meaning in life, Xhosa-speaking adults, South Africa

## 2. Introduction and Problem Statement

Meaning is viewed as an important resource for human functioning, striving and flourishing. Meaning links objects and ideas to each other in a predictable and relatively stable manner (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Meaning is found to be an important component for living a fulfilling and flourishing life (Steger, Oishi, & Kashdan, 2009).

Martela and Steger (2016) state that individuals that view their lives as meaningful base it on their subjective experiences. Research revealed that the definition of meaning is centred on two aspects, namely coherence or an individual's ability to understand various aspects regarding their lives, and a person's main goals and aspirations for life. George and Park (2016) state that meaning is the ability to understand or the extent to which people perceive a sense of coherence and understanding regarding their lives. Meaning is the degree to which people personally view life as being directed and motivated by their purpose or main goals. Meaning is also the extent to which people feel their existence is important, significant, of value to humanity or how much they matter (George & Park, 2016).

Seligman (2011, p. 152) states that "meaning provides people with the sense that their lives are sensible and that their lives matter". Steger (2012) states that people find meaning in religion, spirituality or a deity; in serving something much bigger or higher than themselves. The cognitive component of meaning is based on our comprehension of who we are in life. This is the basic foundation where a person develops a direction in life, aspirations, and purpose (Steger, 2012). Batthyany and Russo-Netzer (2014) also state that meaning is an important intellectual resource and, to use an analogy, it is a lighthouse that helps to shed light on events of life.

Meaning in life allows individuals to find strength and insight from their bad and good experiences. It enables people to gain perspective from present situations, and to focus toward a worthwhile and valuable future (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Individuals feel the presence of meaning when an event makes sense because it fits into their pre-existing beliefs and expectations (King & Hicks, 2009; Van Zyl, 2013).

Naidu and Ramlall (2016) concur with Frankl (1984) when he states that no person can tell another individual what their purpose is. Every person must take the responsibility to find answers to this question for themselves. Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker, and Garbinsky (2013) state that experiences of meaning in life integrate the past, present and the future. Meaningfulness is associated with being a giver in social or interpersonal situations. The search for meaning is a common goal pursued by human beings, and it can be found through belonging to and serving or giving to others, serving for the greater good or serving something greater than the self (Baumeister et al., 2013).

Meaning is indicated to be present, awaiting detection. Meaning can also be constructed from the events that life presents to a person, which indicates that it can be shaped or moulded from experiencing these situations (King & Hicks, 2009). King and Hicks (2009) state that detection occurs when a person links an event to former beliefs and the construction occurs when an event fosters a sense of meaning to the person. These life events that contribute to meaning-making often require an interaction with others and the surrounding world.

Steger et al. (2009) propose that meaning in life consists of two dimensions, namely the presence of meaning and the search for meaning. Presence of meaning is linked to people displaying positive emotions like optimism, agreeableness, and extraversion as personality traits. He also states that the presence of meaning is evident when individuals adjust positively, display self-regulation, self-management, and cope constructively. Search for meaning refers to when

people pursue new opportunities and challenges while meeting their need to comprehend and organise their experiences.

Wissing, Potgieter, Guse, Khumalo, and Nel (2014) further state that finding meaning is a self-motivated process and there is not one specific route towards meaning as life challenges individuals at different stages. A sense of meaning can be found in traumatic situations, pain, suffering, relationships, achievements, accepting oneself, being a fair person, faith, through work, and pursuing one's goals. This is supported by Park and Folkman (1997) who state that meaning-making can help to reduce stressful situations in the case of traumatic situations, pain, and suffering. Machell, Kashdan, Short, and Nezlek (2014) state that people's daily experiences influence their perceived sense of meaning.

Although the research has widely explored meaning in life, there is a skewed focus towards quantitative top-down approaches to understanding meaning in life. There is also a lack of exploration of contextual factors that underlie how people experience meaning. The present study seeks to address some of these gaps using data from the South African context.

## **2.1 Importance of Experiencing Meaning**

Kin and Chen (2017) state that having a purpose in life refers to the degree to which individuals see their lives as having meaning, a sense of direction and goals. Purpose encourages healthier behaviours and protects against disease. The study further revealed that people with greater purpose in life are pro-active in taking care of their health, they engage in healthier activities and have better impulse control.

Seligman (2011) states that individuals who perceive their lives to be meaningful have considerably higher levels of well-being, resilience, eudaimonia, and happiness than those who do not perceive their lives as meaningful. It is the presence of meaning that leads humans to live purposeful lives. It motivates humans to achieve significant goals that are necessary for survival. Klinger (2012) states that meaning needs to originate from how humans are created. By nature,

humans are involved in goal-seeking behaviours, which in turn results in a sense of purpose. A lack of purpose leads to distress (Klinger, 2012).

Batthyany and Russo-Netzer (2014) suggest that there are significant links between lack of meaning and mental health problems. In their study, meaning was found to be associated with lower levels of hopelessness, depression, anxiety, and anger. Furthermore, engaging and completing meaning-oriented interventions brought about significant improvements among chronic pain clients (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Galek, Flannelly, Ellison, Silton, and Jankowski (2015) state that having meaning and purpose in life is linked with psychological well-being while mental health issues or psychiatric symptoms are associated with a lack of meaning and purpose. This was based on a study that focussed on the associations among religious commitment, meaning and purpose in life, and psychiatric symptoms amongst the adult participants. They found that those who believed their lives had meaning and purpose experienced psychological well-being and good mental health.

## **2.2 Sources of Meaning**

Schnell (2010) describes sources of meaning as established orientations that encourage commitment and give direction to an individual's life. These sources reflect basic requirements, corresponding life goals, and facets of the structure of meaning. Sources of meaning contribute to a sense of meaning as they are the basic foundations from which meaning originates. Leontiev (2007) identified a salient source of meaning, namely the true self. The true self is a set of attributes characterizing individual authenticity, which provides a person with the ability to identify meaningful domains to which they can invest their resources.

Galek et al. (2015) state that religion is a source of meaning and purpose in life. They found a positive connection between religion and the belief that there are meaning and purpose in life. In their study, congregants in a British Methodist Church that believed that a supernatural being (God) was involved in their lives, led lives that they believed to have meaning and

purpose. Peterson and Park (2012) also state that strength of religiousness has been associated with meaning in life amongst adults in the United States and English-speaking countries.

Researchers further state that the association between meaning in life and religion is because religious commitment fosters a logical set of goals that provide meaning and purpose. Religion is seen as providing meaning to the existential difficulties all people encounter. Belonging to a religious institution is belonging to a social structure with other individuals which reinforces meaning systems within individuals.

Stavrova and Luhmann (2016) discovered that joining voluntary associations and marriage (intimate connectedness) were associated with high levels of meaning in the lives of participants. These relationships and associations connect individuals to others as they join in together with shared attitudes, values and goals, resulting in meaningful experiences and acts that are satisfying to their own lives and that of others. Delle Fave, Brdar, Wissing, and Vella-Brodrick (2013) state that the core source of meaning is positive relationships and connections.

Delle Fave et al. (2013) indicate family as a source of meaning. Delle Fave et al. (2013) also state that harmony or balance (connectedness with the universe), and self-actualisation are sources of meaning. They further found that perceived meaning of family, interpersonal relations, community, and personal growth contribute to meaning in life across ages.

Lambert et al. (2013) also agree that family is an important source of meaning. Their participants reported on the closeness of family and its significance to the experience of meaning. Families share memories, positive and negative experiences, and have purpose and goals which bind them together and give them meaning as a unit within society. Lambert et al. (2013) state that social support can activate a heightened sense of belonging. Having relationships encourages individuals to perceive life as meaningful.

A study conducted by Stavrova and Luhman (2016) on sources of meaning showed that individuals need to interact with others to experience meaning in life. The evidence of the study

indicated that a sense of belonging and connectedness are contributors to the experience of meaning in life. This study investigated the reciprocal relationship between meaning and the different types of connectedness: collective, intimate, and relational. They found that collective connectedness was highly associated with meaning. A study done in New Zealand by Grouden and Jose (2014) on sources of meaning for individuals between 30 and 69 years of age revealed that family was the most reported source of meaning.

Using a qualitative research design, Nell (2014) found that South African University students derived their meaning in life from relationships, romantic partners, pets, religion, personal autonomy, and leisure. These students also derived their meaning in life from future-oriented sources, such as faith, learning, pursuit of goals, determination for personal growth and development (Nell, 2014). Mason (2013) revealed in his study amongst university students in South Africa that relationships, education, and religion were important sources of meaning in life. These students indicated that the support, courage, inspiration, and motivation that they receive from family is the reason why family is an important source of meaning for them. Education provided these students with an ability to improve their living standards, an opportunity to give back to their families and to show appreciation (Mason, 2013). Although this research on sources of meaning in the South African context is important, it was done among university students who have different demographics and contextual profiles compared to Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha community in the Eastern Cape.

### **2.3 Context and Meaning in Life**

Meaning is social and cultural. Meaning is attained through interactions and relationships with other people in the context of culture. Different contexts offer a variety of meanings of life from which individuals can choose (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Wissing, Khumalo, and Chigeza (2014) state that people's views about meaning are influenced by context and situation. Context and presenting life situation take into consideration time, place, language and histories.

These factors further influence how people comprehend themselves, the world, and how they fit into it. Wissing et al. (2014) noted that relationships were found to be of essential value in the experience of meaning in life within a Batswana context in South Africa. In this collectivistic context, an individual is expected to be in a relationship with extended family members and other members of the community. Greater value is placed on social unity than in individualistic contexts. Steger, Kwabata, Otake, and Shimai (2007) state that an individual's context provides theories about the world and how to achieve the state of flourishing. Context also shapes experiences of individuals in a way that they may regard them as meaningful and enriching.

Also, in the South African context, Coetzee, Wissing, and Temane (2010) conducted a study about meaningfulness amongst English and Afrikaans speaking South Africans. Amongst these adult South Africans, family and spirituality were the two most important domains that contributed to a meaningful life. Spirituality was viewed as a coping mechanism to deal with life difficulties in the South African context. Meaning in life was also found in personal growth, health, and work. English and Afrikaans speaking South Africans focused more on themselves and their families (individualistic Western approach).

De Klerk, Boshoff and Van Wyk (2009) conducted research amongst South African adults using the Life Regard Index (LRI). Meaning in life was found to be related to making time for oneself, having leisure time, living an active, a healthy lifestyle, and making time for family. Being involved in the community, contributing financially and volunteering was significantly associated with a meaningful life amongst this sample of South Africans.

Steger et al. (2007) explored cultural considerations for the levels of presence of and search for meaning given that culture shapes experiences of individuals and provides them with a basic understanding of the world. Culture teaches individuals how to achieve a state of flourishing. They state that the presence of meaning would be higher in self-governing cultures

and the search for meaning would be higher in interdependent cultures. The above statements reveal that individuals experience meaning in different ways and within their specific context.

## **2.4 The Present Study**

Given the importance of meaning for the experience of well-being and the need to understand how different contexts interact with the experiences and sources of meaning, the present study will explore the understanding, experiences, and sources of meaning in a specific context of Xhosa-speaking adults living in Mthatha. The findings of this study will demonstrate the importance of considering context and using bottom-up approaches in order to fully understand how meaning in life is engendered across different contexts. Although there is extensive theoretical and empirical work on meaning in life as a component of eudaimonic well-being, there is minimal evidence from African contexts, including the Xhosa context of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

## **3. Research Aims and Objectives**

### **Aim of the Study**

The study aims to explore meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

### **Objectives**

1. To explore the understanding of meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.
2. To explore experiences of a meaningful life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.
3. To explore the sources of meaning among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa and why these sources are important.

## **4. Method of Investigation**



This section provides a discussion of the research design, population, sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the proposed study.

#### **4.1. Research Design**

The strategy of inquiry will follow a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative methods focus on the qualitative facets of experience, understanding and meaning of people's experiences. Qualitative methods study human understandings from the perspective of the research participants and the setting in which the action takes place (Brink, Van der Walt, & Van Rensburg, 2012). Qualitative researchers seek to amplify the voices of the participants. Qualitative researchers focus on the context in which participants live (Brink et al., 2012). Descriptive research design describes a phenomenon as it is. Descriptive research is a comprehensive summary in everyday terms of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals (Sandelowski, 2000). This design was chosen as it fits the study because of the in-depth exploration into the understanding, experiences and sources of meaning for Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha.

#### **4.2 Participants**

The sample will include adults from the ages of 18 and above from Mthatha in a Xhosa-speaking community. Selection of participants will be based on the following inclusion criteria:

- They must be residents of Mthatha for the past five years.
- They must be adults from the ages of 18 and above.
- Can be male or female.
- They must be Xhosa-speaking from the Xhosa culture.

The size of the sample will be a minimum of 10 and sampling will continue until data saturation is reached.

#### **4.3 Procedure and Data Gathering**

Prior to the commencement of the research, permission will be obtained from the North-West University Health Research Ethics Committee (NWU-HREC). The researcher will then seek goodwill permission from the Speaker (head of ward councillors) at King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality in Mthatha (KSD), as well as from the community ward councillors who are the gatekeepers in order to conduct the research. Only after the permission is granted will recruitment of participants begin as described in section 4.5.6. The gatekeepers will be the Mthatha community ward councillors. Two will be approached to act as gatekeepers as each ward has its own councillor. They are well-respected in the communities and they can either be male or female. Gatekeepers of the community will be visited in order to tell them about the intended study. An advertisement (Addendum B) will be placed in schools, clinics, community halls, local shops and churches after permission has been granted by the authorities to conduct the study. The advertisement will be put on their notice boards after receiving permission from the relevant authorities in all these different places. Both the advertisement and the request letters (request for permission to conduct the study and permission to advertise the study) will be written in English and Xhosa languages to accommodate all participants or stakeholders involved in the study. Once the potential participants have shown interest, those meeting the selection criteria will be contacted by the independent person (Sibongile Gqamane) to explain the study and its aim together with the informed consent that will be obtained by the independent person. Informed consent will be obtained as outlined in section 4.5.4 and an arrangement on the time and place for data collection for the interviews will be arranged. Should the interested parties result in too large a sample, those that are not selected will be informed that they will not participate in the research, but they can be informed via email or telephonically on the outcomes of the research if they are interested. The student researcher will conduct in-depth individual interviews that will be 40 minutes long, based on the questions outlined in Addendum A in Xhosa. The student researcher is fluent in Xhosa and will be able to perform the interviews. The

interview schedule with the questions related to the objectives is attached (Addendum A). Data will be gathered in participants' homes. Permission will be requested to audio-record the interviews, as outlined in section 4.5.2. The student researcher will require a transcriber, who will also sign a confidentiality agreement, to transcribe in Xhosa and then translate the research data from Xhosa to English. A transcriber who is fluent in English and Xhosa will translate the transcripts. The student-researcher, who is fluent in both languages, will do a quality control check to make sure the data was correctly translated.

#### **4.4 Data Analysis**

The student researcher, with the assistance of the co-coder, will carry out the thematic analysis of the data. No computer programs will be used to analyse the data. The co-coder will sign a confidentiality agreement. The interviews will be translated into English by the student-researcher who is fluent in both Xhosa and English. The translated transcribed data will then be co-coded by a Master's research intern at North-West University who has been trained in co-coding. The transcribed data will be emailed to the co-coder who will sign a confidentiality agreement prior to accessing the data. The co-coder will then code and provide these codes to the student-researcher and study promoter to determine the level of similarity between the codes generated by the student and co-coder. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) will be used to analyse the data. Braun and Clarke (2013) describe six steps to analyse data, namely familiarisation with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing, defining and naming themes, and writing up a report. These steps will be followed in the analysis of the interview transcripts. In qualitative research, trustworthiness is essential, and the student researcher will show that she has complied with this requirement.

**4.4.1 Trustworthiness.** Trustworthiness entails the amount of confidence that can be given to the research process and the findings (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013).

Trustworthiness can be achieved through multiple strategies like member checking to determine the accurateness of findings. This is done by referring the report of the analysed data back to the participants. Trustworthiness can also be achieved by engaging lengthily in the research setting in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the investigated phenomenon (Bless et al., 2013). The researcher needs to ensure that they are honest, competent and accurate in all they do. They have a responsibility to protect the integrity of scientific knowledge and respect the scientific community. The researcher will not forge, fabricate, or falsify data. The researcher will also use a co-coder, and another person will check the translated data. Bless et al. (2013) further states that trustworthiness evaluates the quality of qualitative research based on four concepts: credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability.

**4.4.1.1 Credibility.** When the researcher has demonstrated the appropriateness and overall internal logic of the research questions, the study design, data collection method, and the data analysis approach, this signifies a high level of credibility (Bless et al., 2013). In this study, this internal logic will be checked by appropriate panels, such as the AUTHeR Scientific Panel and the Health Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University. Also, the researcher will be engaged in the field until data saturation is reached. Credibility will also be achieved by asking participants whether their views have been accurately captured using the process of member-checking. This will be done by providing participants with the data in order to check for accuracy about their experiences shared during the interviews. This will be done prior to the writing-up of the research report.

**4.4.1.2 Dependability.** Dependability obliges a researcher to describe and follow a clear research strategy. The research results are dependable when the researcher can methodically describe how the data was collected, recorded, coded, and analysed. For this study, the researcher will give proof that each step in the process was completed comprehensively and carefully (Bless et al., 2013).

**4.4.1.3 Transferability.** Transferability refers to the degree to which results apply to other similar situations. The researcher will provide detailed descriptions of the context where data was collected, and descriptions about the researcher as a person and her relationships with the participants. This information allows other researchers to compare and assess the similarities between the particular context and other contexts; hence the transferability of results (Bless et al., 2013).

**4.4.1.4 Confirmability.** Confirmability requires that researchers obtain similar findings by following a similar research process in a similar context. The researcher will present a critical evaluation of the methodology used, and should another researcher replicate the study in another context, they will be able to show how the results may be different and why.

**4.5 Ethical considerations.** This study will adhere to the ethical guidelines of the North-West University Health Research Ethics Committee (NWU-HREC). Ethical permission to conduct the study will be sought from the NWU-HREC. Goodwill permission to conduct the study will be sought from the Speaker's office in Mthatha at King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality (KSD). Different ethical aspects that will be attended to will now be discussed.

Participants will be given information about the study, such as objectives, role of the participant purpose, and the duration of the interviews, together with the venue where data collection will take place prior to the commencement of the study. When the participants grant their permission, their responses will be audio-recorded. Participants will be made aware that their participation is on a voluntary basis and they could withdraw anytime from the study for any reason. As a means of protecting the identities of the participants, numbers will be allocated for each participant. Transcribing will be done by the student researcher. When the study is completed, the raw data will be stored at NWU for a period of seven years and thereafter be destroyed. This research adheres to the ethical guidelines of the Health Research Ethics Committee of North-West University.

Risk level and protection from harm. Participants of the study will be adults and it is a minimal risk study. Participants will not be placed in situations where they might be at risk or subjected to any form of harm. Participants will be treated with respect. Participants will be allowed, when they require, some time to stretch their legs and utilise the bathroom. Prior to the interview, participants will be invited to alert the researcher should they feel a need to rest during the interview.

#### 4.5.1 Risks and benefits.

The following risks and benefits are identified:

<b>Dangers/risks and precautions</b>	<b>Benefits for participants</b>
<p>Psychological risk</p> <p>Individual and personal realities regarding meaning are explored and may elicit emotionality. A Clinical Psychologist (Chantal Goliath) has been approached and will be available in a situation where any of the participants may require psychological assistance as a result of their participation in the research process. Participants will be made aware that they can discontinue their participation any time they want to do so (Bless et al., 2013).</p> <p>Social risk</p> <p>May relate to the reputation of the community.</p> <p>Physical risk</p> <p>However, it is highly unlikely that this research will place participants at risk except for 40 minutes of their time that could make them tired physically. When the</p>	<p>There is no direct gain for the participants; however they will have an opportunity to contribute to scientific knowledge, and their contribution may benefit Mthatha community and society.</p>

<p>participants get tired during the interview, they will be given a break when required.</p>	
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The benefits outweigh the risk and this is considered a minimal-risk study.

**4.5.2 Facilities.** The individual interviews will be conducted in the homes of the participants. However, if the participants do not have sufficient privacy in their homes, an alternative venue will be arranged by the student researcher, and the participants will be transported by car from their different homes to the alternative venue. The alternative venue will be the Southernwood community hall in Mthatha. It is available upon booking and will be a private venue where there will be no disturbance. It has tables and chairs with smaller offices that can be utilised for interviews. The participants will sign an indemnity form. The indemnity form is applicable in this section as this form will be signed by participants who will be transported to the alternative venue for data gathering. The indemnity form has been attached in order to ensure that the researcher is not liable for any occurrence during transportation of participants. The student researcher will provide participants with transport and the indemnity form will protect the student researcher from any liability. However, if a participant transports themselves, the student researcher will reimburse the transport fare. Participants will not be remunerated for participating in the research but will receive a token of appreciation of washing powder worth R50.

**4.5.3 Goodwill permission/ consent/ legal authorisation.** After receiving permission to carry out the research from the North-West University's Health Research Ethical Committee (NWU-HREC), the researcher will request goodwill permission from the Speaker in Mthatha KSD Municipality to carry out the study in the participants' homes or a designated venue. Permission will also be sought from the Speaker to advertise the study through their mediums of



communication, namely shops, clinics, churches and office notice boards. The Speaker is the head of the ward councillors responsible for the wards surrounding Mthatha.

**4.5.4 Informed consent.** A person must choose whether to participate in the research voluntarily, based on information that allows one to make an informed choice, a principle of respect for others. This process will be conducted by an appropriately trained, independent, and objective person (Sibongile Gqamane). The independent person is not a potential participant. The independent person will not have undue influence on the participants. The participants interested in the study will indicate by registering their names and contact numbers using the details provided in the adverts. After receiving the confirmation from the interested participants, an independent person who is a well-respected community member from Mthatha KSD municipality area, who is eloquent in the Xhosa language, will contact participants about the informed consent that will also be obtained by the independent person, not the researcher. The independent person will travel to each participant's house to obtain the informed consent. The trained independent person (Sibongile Gqamane) and the participant will go through the informed consent to ensure that the participant understands what is written on the informed consent. Participants will be well informed of what is expected of them and the procedure before they give their consent. They will be given one week to go through the informed consent form with the assistance of the independent person to ensure that they receive enough time to consider their participation in the study. Contact information of the researcher, supervisor and the independent person obtaining informed consent will be provided on the informed consent form for participants that may have questions. After written informed consent is obtained, the researcher will contact the participants about when and where the interviews will be done. Participants who elect not to participate, or feel that they are no longer interested in continuing to participate in the study, will be allowed to withdraw from the study without any negative

consequence. The independent person will be trained in obtaining the informed consent and will provide the participants with a copy of the informed consent form in person.

**4.5.5 Inclusion and exclusion criteria.** The inclusion criteria need to be met by the participants. It states that they need to be residents of Mthatha for the past five years, and are adults that are 18 years or older. They need to speak Xhosa as their home language. They can be male or female. There are no specific exclusion criteria.

**4.5.6 Participant recruitment.** The potential number of participants that will be recruited is a minimum of 10 until data saturation is reached. Advertisements will be placed at the shops, clinics, churches, and office notice boards in Mthatha. The advertisement (see Addendum C) will be put on their notice boards for two weeks after receiving permission from the ward councillor. The advertisement (Addendum C) and request to place an advert (Addendum B) on the notice boards (see Addendum B) will be written in Xhosa and English to cater for participants that will be involved in the study. The recruitment of participants will be transparent, and no intimidation or force will be used. Interested participants will contact the independent person.

**4.5.7 Incentives and/or remuneration of participants.** There will be no incentives or remuneration offered to the participants of the study. The researcher will transport participants from their homes to the alternative venue if there is no privacy at their homes. However, participants will be provided with refreshments during the interview and will receive a thank-you gift (washing powder) as a token of appreciation.

**4.5.8 Dissemination of results.** The researcher will arrange an information session with the participants where the findings will be shared. The researcher will contact the participants telephonically to arrange a suitable time for the information session. The information will be disseminated in an ethical manner by avoiding the disclosure of any identifiable information. The

results will be submitted for publication to a scientific journal, the *South African Journal of Psychology*.

**4.5.9 Privacy and confidentiality.** The information provided by the participants will not be made available to any other persons other than the researchers, transcriber, and co-coder. Personal information will not be collected, but numbers will be allocated to the participants for identification purposes. The identities of the participants will be kept confidential, and the participants will remain anonymous when data are analysed and reported. The data of the participant will not be associated with their name or any other obvious means of being identified. A number will be assigned in place of the participant's name to ensure that they remain anonymous, and their data will not be associated with them (Bless et al., 2013). The data that will be collected will only be used for research purposes and will be accessed by the researcher, supervisors, transcriber, and co-coder. The recordings will be removed from the audio recorders directly after the interview and placed on the password-protected computer. A password-protected computer in a locked office (at NWU and student-researchers office) will be used to store the digital voice recorded interviews after the data collection. The data that will be sent to the co-coder for analysis will later be deleted by the co-coder as soon as they have completed the analysis. The informed consent forms and voice recordings will be kept safe in a locked NWU office, and the voice recordings will be kept in a password-protected computer in that office as well as the student-researcher's office. The data will be stored for seven years after publication and will later be destroyed from the password-protected computer. This will be done by a member of the research team, but the student-researcher will ultimately be responsible for ensuring this is done. The hard copies of the transcription will be kept in a locked office at NWU and the student-researcher's office. To ensure further confidentiality, the co-coder and transcriber will be requested to sign an agreement of confidentiality.

**4.5.10 Management, storage, and destruction of data.** The researcher will ensure that all research information is kept safe, and no unauthorised person will gain access. The voice recordings will also be stored in a password-protected virus-free computer. The recorded interviews will be removed from the recording device as soon as they are transferred to the researcher's computer to ensure the protection of the participants. The co-coder and transcriber require access to the research and will sign a confidentiality agreement. These individuals will ensure that the research material is locked inside locked offices at all times. When the student researcher is not working on the research, her computer will be in a locked room at all times in order to ensure safety.

The NWU will store away the signed informed consent, the electronic data, and hard copies for seven years in a locked office that will only be accessed by the research team. The research team (co-coder, transcriber, researcher, and supervisors) will have access to the electronic information as it safely remains in a computer in a locked office. The co-coder and transcriber will delete the information from their computers when they are done with their work.

**4.5.11 Monitoring of research.** The student researcher has been provided with the NWU manual for postgraduates and has read it. The supervisor will ensure that all documents given to participants in the form of informed consent forms and confidentiality agreements to the co-coder are checked before they are sent/given to the respective individuals. The supervisors will ensure that the researcher adheres to the procedures outlined by the HREC application. The supervisor will have supervision sessions with the student researcher regarding the data collection and data analysis before proceeding any further. Progress reports required by HREC will be submitted.

**4.5.12 Competence of researchers.** The researcher is working under the supervision of Dr. Angelina Wilson-Fadji, who has a PhD in psychology and is qualified to guide in aspects related to qualitative research and research in general. The co-supervisors Prof. M. Wissing and

Dr L. Schutte both have doctorates in psychology together with experience in study supervision. They are registered clinical psychologists with HPCSA and lecturers in the Positive Psychology discipline. The student researcher has obtained a Bachelor of Psychology from Walter Sisulu University. She is a counsellor registered with the HPCSA. The researcher is currently and has been working for the Department of Health in the Mental Health Unit for the past six years. She has also received training in research methods during the theoretical year of her current studies towards her Master of Arts in Positive Psychology. The researcher also attended an ethics 2-day training on the basics of health research ethics in May 2017.

### **5. Expected Contribution of the Study**

This study will add to scientific information about experiences, understanding, and sources of meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults. This will ensure that context-relevant information on meaning in life is provided, contributing to a theoretical understanding of meaning-making in South African samples and providing indigenous knowledge on positive psychological experiences.

### **6. Choice of Journal and Structure of Research Report**

The intention is to submit the manuscript to the *South African Journal of Psychology*. The structure will be as follows:

1. Title page
2. Acknowledgements
3. Summary (with keywords)
4. Preface
5. Letter of permission (from co-authors)
6. Author guidelines for the journal
7. Manuscript
8. Title page

9. Abstract

10. Introduction/problem statement and aim

11. Method

11.1. Research design

11.2. Participants

11.3. Procedure

11.4. Data analysis

11.5. Ethical considerations

12. Results

13. Discussion

## 7. Funding and Budget

The cost of the research outlined in the budget will be incurred by the researcher as she has received no funding for this study.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Transport costs locally and refreshments to participants	R800
Telephone costs	R800
Printing costs	R1200
Hard copies of the mini-dissertation	R500
Transcription	R9000
Co-coding	R3000
Language editing	R5000
Office supplies	R500
<b>Total</b>	<b>R14800</b>

## 8. Time Schedule

<b>Submission of research proposal to small group</b>	April 2019
<b>Submission of research proposal to AUTHeR scientific panel</b>	July 2019
<b>Title Registration</b>	August 2019
<b>Submission of research proposal to HREC</b>	October 2019
<b>Data gathering</b>	November 2019
<b>Data analysis completed</b>	December 2019
<b>First final draft completed</b>	August 2020
<b>Submission</b>	December 2020

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## 1.2. Ethics application

Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support  
[health-sciences.ac.za/healthethics](http://health-sciences.ac.za/healthethics)

**HREC** Health Research Ethics Committee (*REC-130913-037*)

**Standard Full Ethics Application Form**

to apply for the approval of **single** or **larger health** and **health-related** scientific projects involving **human participants** and **biological samples** of **human origin** for research or education/training

*HREC 01-01a, version Nov 2016*

**CONFIDENTIAL!** This document contains confidential information that is intended exclusively for the applicant(s), the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the North-West University and the designated reviewers. Should this document or parts thereof come into your possession in error, you are requested to return it to the HREC without delay or destroy it. Unauthorised possession, reading, studying, copying or distribution of this material, or any other form of abuse, is illegal and punishable.

**NWU Ethics Number:**  
*(issued upon 1<sup>st</sup> submission)*

NWU-00498-19-S1

### Instructions and recommended path for the completion of your application:

- a. The research proposal forms the base document that is evaluated in conjunction with this application form. This application form gives the researcher the opportunity to expand on specific ethical issues required for approval.
- b. All applicants complete § 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7.
- c. Select and complete the research-specific sub-sections from § 6 as applicable to the specific requirements of your study (utilise the table of contents).
- d. Ensure that a proposal that has been approved by an appropriate Scientific/Research Proposal Committee is attached to the application form as well as proof of its approval according to the standardised template (see § 4.1).
- e. Also attach an executive summary of the study (see § 4.1.1).
- f. The applicants should ensure that a copy of the informed consent form for approval, that has been compiled according to the informed consent template and checklist supplied by the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support, is submitted with the ethics application form.
- g. Any questionnaires or interview schedules that will be used in the completion of the study have to be attached
- h. Any advertisements that will be used in the study have to be attached
- i. Attach any permission letters received from governing bodies.
- j. Attach any contracts with collaborators/sponsors.

- k. For applications of collaborative studies being conducted on more than one site, it is required that copies of the proposal and the informed consent forms from all centres involved in the study are included with the application.
- l. Attach a 2-page narrative CV for each of the researchers involved in the study.
- m. Liaise with the appropriate officials and colleagues mentioned in § 8, complete and sign a printed copy.
- n. Submit scanned copies of the signed pages.
- o. Include copies of proof of ethics training for all researchers involved in the study (not older than three years).
- p. Submit the completed Ethics Application Form (with all the required attachments) via e-mail to [Ethics-HRECApplied@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Ethics-HRECApplied@nwu.ac.za).
- q. All required documentation (as previously outlined) should be attached separately to the aforementioned e-mail as indicated in point p.
- r. Applicants must please ensure that all required finalised documents as indicated above are included with the application. **No additional attachments or version correction(s) will be accepted.** If this does occur and the application was incomplete then it will have to be resubmitted with the application form and all the required attachments which could mean that the application may miss the deadline for the closing of the agenda for the HREC meeting.

NWU Ethics Number NWU--00498-19-S1			
Campus	Potchefstroom	Faculty	Health Sciences
Principle Investigator/Study Leader	Angelina Wilson-Fadiji	Research entity	AUTHeR
Study Title	Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa		

## 1. SECTION 1: STUDY IDENTIFICATION

Provide the necessary descriptions below to identify this study application:

### 1.1 Full, descriptive title of the study

Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

### 1.2 Name of the Study Leader/Primary investigator **NB!** Not the student's name

Dr. Angelina Wilson- Fadji

### 1.3 Name and Surname of the Student (if applicable)

Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi

### 1.4 Student number

29181380

### 1.5 Discipline e.g. Consumer sciences

Health Sciences

### 1.6 Researcher involvement

Self-initiated research with no student involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-initiated research with student involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honours study for publication purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Masters degree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PhD degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Specify <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	

### 1.7 Type of study

Single study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Larger study	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single study affiliated to another study	<input type="checkbox"/>
Educational	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Specify <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	

### 1.8 In this study use is made of

Mark ALL options as “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box – more than one option may be marked as “Yes”.

Description		Yes	No
Human participants (subjects)	Qualitative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Quantitative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mixed method	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other e.g. program evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Filed privileged information (e.g. medical files) or stored biological samples of human origin (e.g. samples collected for another study or medical diagnosis)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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## 1.9 Envisaged commencement and completion date of the study

### *More information*

*Here you can indicate the expected commencement and ending dates of the study, which may be anything from a day to a few years. The full expected duration of the study must be filled in below. Even if the expected duration of the study is uncertain, you can still make an estimate here and report the progress with the annual report. Ensure that the commencement date is at least a few weeks after the date of the HREC meeting at which your application is to be reviewed. The HREC will only grant ethics approval for a one year period. If the study should take longer, a monitoring report requesting permission for continuation must be submitted to the HREC two months before the expiry of the study.*

Commencement Date	Completion Date
2018/01/01	2020/12/18

## 2. SECTION 2: STUDY CLASSIFICATION

Complete every option of all the questions in this section. This section is used to classify your study and select suitable reviewers.

### 2.1 Name of the Ethics Committee handling the application

HREC

### 2.2 Dates of applications

Fill in below the date of the first submission and revised submission (*of applicable*) of this ethics application

Date of first application	Date of revise application ( <i>if applicable</i> )
Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter a date.

### 2.3 Version number

Fill in the number of times this application has been submitted.

Version	Choose

## 2.4 Estimated risk level

Please indicate the estimated risk level of the research by using the two risk level tables indicated for adult human participants or children/incapacitated adults.

<b>Estimated risk level for adult human participants</b>	
Minimal risk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Medium risk	<input type="checkbox"/>
High risk	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Estimated risk level for children/incapacitated adults</b>	
No more than minimal risk of harm (negligible risk)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greater than minimal risk but provides the prospect of direct benefit for the child/incapacitated adult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greater than minimal risk with no prospect of direct benefit to the child/incapacitated adult, but a high probability of providing generalizable knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2.5 Context of the Study

Mark ALL options as “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box – more than one option may be “Yes”.

<b>Description</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Scientific Research	Study falls within a research entity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Study falls outside a research entity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Study includes postgraduate students (e.g. masters or doctorate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Study includes contract work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education and training (e.g. undergraduate practicals)	For staff of the North-West University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	For students (undergraduate or postgraduate learners)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	For other learners (not associated with University)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## 2.6 This study encompasses aspects that require additional ethical explanation

Mark ALL options as “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box – more than one option may be “Yes”. If a specific option is marked please complete the corresponding section in Section 6.



Description	Yes	No
Vulnerable participants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Infection, genetic modification and commercialisation of cell and tissue lines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of drugs / medicines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of drug delivery systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of food, fluids or nutrients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of radio-active substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of toxic substances or dangerous substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Measuring instruments and questionnaires that need psychometric interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Possible impact on the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Any other aspect of potentially ethically sensitive nature (specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other aspects (specify)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## 2.7 For this study the following persons will be included in the study team

Fill in the number concerned with ALL options. Ensure that the participant numbers in this table correspond with the individuals indicated in Section 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4.

### *More information*

*The **study leader** is generally viewed as the individual who takes the final responsibility for all aspects of the study e.g. study leader or principle investigator.*

*The **study supervisor** is generally the individual responsible for the day-to-day management of the study.*

Description		Number	
		Local	Foreign
Only for research studies	Study Leader (e.g. study leader/principle investigator)	1	0
	Study supervisor (day to day manager)	2	0
	Co-workers (researchers of the North-West University)	0	0
	Co-workers (researchers outside the North-West University)	0	0
	Co-workers (postgraduate students of the North-West University)	1	0
	Assistants/field workers	0	0

Only for education and training (e.g. undergraduate practicals)	Educator	0	0
	Co-workers (lecturers of the North-West University)	0	0
	Co-workers (lecturers outside the North-West University)	0	0
	Students (undergraduate learners of the North-West University)	0	0
	Students (postgraduate learners of the North-West University)	0	0
	Other learners (not associated with the North-West University)	0	0
	Assistants/field workers	0	0
Sponsors		0	0

Other members of the study team not mentioned above (specify)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

**2.8 The following professional supervisory persons are involved in this study (may in no way be directly part of the research team)**

*More information*

***Supervisor** indicates that the individual is an independent monitor involved during data gathering of the study and acts as an advocate for the participants/patients. (Fill in the number involved in ALL options.*

Researcher / Supervisor	Number	Researcher / Supervisor	Number
Supervisory Doctor	0	Supervisory Psychologist	0
Supervisory Nurse	0	Supervisory Pharmacist	0
Supervisory Psychiatrist	0	Supervisory Social worker	0

Other supervisory person (specify)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

I hereby declare that the above information in “Section 2: Study Classification” is complete and correct and that I did not withhold any information.

Yes	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

### 3. SECTION 3: DETAIL OF STUDY LEADER/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, CO-WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS

#### 3.1 Details of Study Leader/Principle investigator

*More information*

**NB!** Only NWU staff, or extraordinary professors in collaboration with staff of the North-West University, may register as Study Leaders/Principal Investigators. The Study Leader/Principal Investigator accepts final, overall responsibility for the total study.

Surname	Full Names	Title
Wilson- Fadiji	Angelina	Dr.

NWU Campus	Faculty	Research entity/School
Potchefstroom	Health Sciences	AUTHeR

Position	University No.	Professional Registration (body & category)
Senior Lecturer	29181380	Click here to enter text.

Telephone			NWU-box or Postal Address
Work	Home	Cell	
0182992603	Click here to enter text.	0604034832	Internal Box 500, AUTHeR,  North-West University: Potchefstroom Campus  Potchefstroom 2520  South Africa

E-mail Address

[wilson.angelina1311@gmail.com](mailto:wilson.angelina1311@gmail.com); [28380746@nwu.a.c.za](mailto:28380746@nwu.a.c.za)

[PLEASE ATTACH THE TWO-PAGE NARRATIVE CV OF THE STUDY LEADER]

*More information*

**NB!** A 2-page CV in a narrative format, giving a brief overview of:

- a researcher's qualifications
- career path to date
- specific research experience applicable to the present study (e.g. methodology or skills required)
- supervisory experience
- publication list (for the past 4 years)

### 3.2 Details of Study Supervisor

Is the Study Leader also the study supervisor?

(Please mark with X in the appropriate box.)

*More information*

*Where the Study Leader is not physically present or consistently available and where supervision of the research activities is necessary, a suitable researcher/lecturer may be designated as **study supervisor**. The study supervisor is part of the study team.*

Yes	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If “Yes”, this part can be left blank.

If “No” (i.e. if the Study Leader is not the Study Supervisor) give details below.

Surname	Full Names	Title
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

NWU Campus	Faculty	Research entity/School
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Position	University no.	Professional Registration (body & category)
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Telephone			NWU-box or Postal Address
Work	Home	Cell	
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

E-mail Address
Click here to enter text.

[PLEASE ATTACH THE TWO-PAGE NARRATIVE CV OF THE STUDY SUPERVISOR]

*More information*

**NB!** A 2-page CV in a narrative format, giving a brief overview of:

- a researcher’s qualifications
- career path to date
- specific research experience applicable to the present study (e.g. methodology or skills required)

- *supervisory experience*
- *publication list (for the past 4 years) (if applicable)*

### 3.3 Professional Supervisors

This section is completed if applicable and mentioned in Section 2.9.

*More information*

*Professional supervisor does not refer to the study leader or the study supervisor. In all cases where medical emergencies may possibly arise, the physical presence of a doctor and a registered nurse is required. For the drawing of blood samples (e.g. diet manipulation and similar studies) the presence of a registered nurse is sufficient.*

#### 3.3.1 Name and qualifications of all supervisory professional persons

Name	Qualifications	Professional Registration	Function
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

(Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there is no supervisory person. In last table cell, click on [tab] to add another row)

[PLEASE ATTACH THE TWO-PAGE NARRATIVE CV OF THE PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISOR/S]

*More information*

**NB!** *A 2-page CV in a narrative format, giving a brief overview of:*

- *a researcher’s qualifications*
- *career path to date*
- *specific research experience applicable to the present study (e.g. methodology or skills required)*
- *supervisory experience*
- *publication list (for the past 4 years) (if applicable)*

### 3.4 Other Members of the Study Team

Names, qualifications, professional registration and functions of all the other co-workers (researchers, postgraduate students in the case of a research study, or lecturers (in the case of training) and assistants/field workers who form part of the study team) should be indicated. The information given in this table should correspond with the number of team members given in Section 2.8 (Add extra rows to the table if required.)

Name	Qualifications	Professional Registration	Function
Prof. Marie Wissing	PhD Psychology	Clinical Psychologist	Co-Supervisor

Dr. Lusilda Schutte	MSc Statistics PhD Psychology	Clinical Psychologist	Co- Supervisor
Lynette Wyatt- Mgobozi	Bachelor of Psychology Honors	Registered Counsellor	Student researcher

Note: Type one name per row, or type “none” if there is no other team member.

[PLEASE ATTACH A TWO-PAGE NARRATIVE CV FOR ALL THE MENTIONED RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS IN THIS SECTION]

*More information*

**NB!** A 2-page CV in a narrative format, giving a brief overview of:

- a researcher’s qualifications
- career path to date
- specific research experience applicable to the present study (e.g. methodology or skills required)
- supervisory experience
- publication list (for the past 4 years)

### 3.5 Conflict of Interests and Sponsors (if applicable)

3.5.1 Declare with full details any conflict of interests that any member of the study team or professional supervisor (see § 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4) might have.

*More information*

*Examples of conflict of interest: financial, non-financial: intellectual, bias, overly optimistic promises of potential benefits, role of the researcher/s, desire of professional advancement, desire to make a scientific breakthrough, relationship with participants.*

Name of Researcher	Complete description of the conflict and how it will be managed
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there is no member of the study team or professional supervisor with a conflict of interest.

3.5.2 Give full details of all sponsors of the study.

Name of Sponsor	Contact Details	Affiliation & Contribution	Nature & Extent
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there are no sponsors. Add extra rows to the table if required.

3.5.3 Is any participant in the study directly or indirectly involved with one or more of the sponsors or the researchers? Give full details.

<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Association with Sponsor/Researcher</b>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there are no such participants. Add extra rows to the table, if required.

- 3.5.4 Does any member of the study team receive any form of remuneration or other benefits from the sponsor(s), either directly or indirectly? Give full details.

<b>Name of Team Member</b>	<b>Details</b>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there are no such team members. Add extra rows to the table if required.

### **3.6 Collaborations (if applicable)**

Declare with full details all collaboration agreements, e.g. with researchers or lecturers from another institution, national or international, who will be working on a defined section of the study.

*More information*

*Your local team may collaborate with a team from a different national institution in South Africa or internationally, and thereby incorporate and benefit from their expertise and/or facilities. Typically, in such cases, functions and responsibilities differ for certain parts of the study. These functions and responsibilities must be fully described.*

<b>Name of Collaborator</b>	<b>National/International (Indicate which)</b>	<b>Full Description of functions and responsibilities</b>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there are no contractors. Add extra rows to table, if required.

### **3.7 Contractual Agreements (if applicable)**

Declare with full details all contractual agreements (e.g. with team members, collaborators and sponsors) on the study. Please note: A copy of any contractual agreements must be submitted to the Health Research Ethics Committee, together with the submission of this application. Add extra rows to the table, if required.

*More information*

*Sometimes there are contractual obligations with co-workers or organisations outside the University. These contractual obligations may e.g. place restrictions on certain aspects on the availability of raw data i.t.o. intellectual right of ownership. Particularly where foreign*

*co-workers are involved, these contracts can get complex. Therefore you must indicate here what these contractual obligations encompass, whether the University approved and sanctioned it and declare and describe any other potential legal and ethical implications thereof.*

Name of Contractor	Full Description of the agreement
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Note: Type one name per row, or type “Not applicable” if there are no contractors. Add extra rows to the table, if required.

[PLEASE ATTACH ALL CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS]

### 3.8 Confidentiality

Note: Other people involved in the research that could pose a risk to confidentiality should sign confidentiality agreements e.g. transcribers and co-coder/s.

[PLEASE ATTACH ALL CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS (SEE CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS AS APPROVED BY THE LEGAL OFFICE OF THE NWU)]

### 3.9 Indemnity

Note: If people are involved in the research as part of the research team but are not as staff on the payroll of the university or by contract on the payroll of the university, they will not be covered by the insurance of the university and have to sign an indemnity form.

[PLEASE ATTACH ALL INDEMNITY FORMS (SEE INDEMNITY FORMS AS APPROVED BY THE LEGAL OFFICE)]

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 4. SECTION 4: RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE APPROVAL

### 4.1 Executive summary and research proposal

#### 4.1.1 Executive summary of the study

Provide an executive summary (maximum 150 words) of the study in the following format:

- brief problem statement (approx. 3 sentences)
- aims and objectives of the study
- study design and method

Meaning is viewed as a crucial resource for human functioning, striving and flourishing. Meaning links objects and ideas to each other in a predictable and relatively stable manner (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Meaning is an important component for a fulfilling and flourishing life (Steger, 2009). This study aims at exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-



speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. This research will explore how Xhosa-speaking adults understand meaning, their unique experiences of meaning and what the most important meaningful things are to Xhosa-speaking adults in the Eastern Cape. This will be done based on qualitative research techniques and will use a basic descriptive qualitative research design. Purposive sampling technique will be utilised. Semi-structured open-ended questions will be used to collect data during the individual interviews. The interviews will be conducted in Xhosa.

#### 4.1.2 Proposal

Note: For each study a descriptive proposal has to be submitted and is used as the main document for evaluation. The proposal should reflect the ethics of the research throughout. Attach a proposal approved by the Scientific/Proposal Committee of your research entity.

[ATTACH THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL]

#### 4.1.3 Scientific/Proposal Committee approval

This study should have been reviewed and approved by a Scientific/Proposal Committee.

*More information*

*The proposal needs to be approved by a Scientific/Proposal Committee before it will be reviewed by the HREC. The HREC relies on the scientific expertise of this committee regarding the evaluation of the scientific merit and design of the study.*

<b>Details</b>		
<b>Yes</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name of formal Scientific/Proposal Committee:	The proposal was approved by the African Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research scientific committee.
	Title, initials and surname of all of the members of Scientific/Proposal Committee present during the review.	Dr. C. Chidrawi Dr. C. Prinsloo
	Date of approval:	2019/08/01
<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Reason:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

#### 4.1.4 Letter confirming approval of protocol

The HREC has to have proof of confirmation of approval by the Scientific/Proposal Committee.

[ATTACH CONFIRMATION OF APPROVAL OF THE STUDY PROPOSAL BY THE SCIENTIFIC/PROPOSAL COMMITTEE ON THE MANDATED TEMPLATE.]

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 5. SECTION 5: ADDITIONALLY REQUIRED INFORMATION ABOUT ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH NOT PROVIDED IN THE PROPOSAL

Note: The information contained in this section is *additional* to what is contained in the proposal.

### 5.1 What will be expected of participants during data gathering?

What will be expected of participants during data gathering e.g. a one hour interview, venepuncture, needle prick, etc.

#### *More information*

*Highlight what participants will be expected to do and what will be done to them, and how long it will take? This includes aspects such as procedures, sample collections and methods of information gathering and what the probable associated experience of participants will be. Provide particular details on any step that might violate privacy e.g. having to undress. This section supports you in the completion of the section in the informed consent form entitled, "What will your responsibilities be?"*

Participants will participate in individual interviews which will take place at their respective homes. Community halls will be utilised as alternative venues. Small offices within the halls will be used. Arrangements will be made prior to the commencement of the interviews with the participants with regard to the nature of the interviews, what is expected from them, including the environment where the interviews will be taking place, since we need a place where there will not be any interruptions. The dates and time will also be communicated beforehand for participants to prepare themselves and make necessary arrangements. The research team has decided to use interviews as the technique to collect data. All the questions will be asked during one data collection session which is the one-to-one interview. Participants will be expected to participate in an approximately 40 minute interview. The whole activity will last about 3-7 days and will commence August 2019.

### 5.2 Risks and precautions

Name and explain *all the possible risks* for *all procedures* that the participants might experience during the research. Use the template at the back of the approved risk level descriptor document to guide you into identifying all the possible types of risk as well as the probability and magnitude of harm. Ensure that you also include reference to various biological sampling techniques e.g. venepuncture, buccal swabs etc. By completing this section it will help you to answer the two sections on "Are there risks involved in your taking part in research?" and "What will happen in

the unlikely event of some form of harm occurring as a direct result of your taking part in this research study?” in the informed consent form.

<b>Risks</b> (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal, economic, dignitary and community) Identify all the possible risks.	<b>Precautions</b> (When describing these precautions be clear on how they will mitigate all the identified risks)
<p><b>Psychological risk</b></p> <p>Individual and personal realities regarding meaning is explored and may elicit emotionality.</p> <p><b>Social risk</b></p> <p>May relate to the reputation of the community</p> <p><b>Physical risk.</b></p>	<p>A Clinical Psychologist (Chantal Goliath) has been approached and will be available in a situation where any of the participants may require psychological assistance as a result of their participation in the research process. Participants will be made aware that they can discontinue their participation any time they want to do so (Bless et al., 2013).</p> <p>It is highly unlikely that this research will place participants at risk except for 40 minutes of their time that could make them tired physically. When the participants get tired during the interview they will be given a break when required</p>

### 5.3 Benefits for participants

Describe 1) the potential *direct* benefits that the study might hold for the *individual participants*; or 2) the *indirect* benefits that the study holds for the *society at large* or for *the researchers and the organisations/institutions* they are working for, through the knowledge gained. By completing this section it will help you to answer the section on “Will you benefit from taking part in this research” in the informed consent form.

<b>Direct benefits</b> for participants	<b>Indirect benefits</b> for society at large or for the researchers/institution
<p>There will be no direct benefits for the participants.</p>	<p>Participants will be contributing toward scientific knowledge and their contribution might benefit the community and society at large.</p> <p>Expressing their experiences and understanding of meaning in life may also create an understanding of meaning and sources in their lives.</p> <p>Improved self-understanding based on the exploration of meaning in life.</p> <p>The community at large will benefit from the study, as the findings will give the younger</p>

generation an opportunity to know more about the unique cultural sources of meaning in life within the Xhosa-speaking context.

#### 5.4 Risk/benefit ratio analysis

The overall benefits should, in general, *always outweigh the risks*, for a study to be considered ethical. If this is not the case, there needs to be a *strong justification* for why research ethics approval should be given.

Benefit outweighs the risks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Risks outweigh the benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Justify: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

#### 5.5 Facilities

Describe the place(s) and facilities in detail where the study will be implemented. This description is applicable to both institutions and the community. Also describe the availability of measures to handle emergencies in an applicable manner and how this will be executed.

Participants will participate in individual interviews which will take place at their respective homes. The alternative venue will be the Southernwood community hall in Mthatha. It is available upon booking and will be a private venue where there will be no disturbance. It has tables and chairs with smaller offices that can be utilised for interviews. Arrangements will be made prior to the commencement of the interviews with the participants with regard to the nature of the interviews, what is expected from them, including the environment where the interviews will be taking place, since we need a place where there will not be any interruptions. The dates and time will also be communicated beforehand for participants to prepare themselves and make necessary arrangements. Participants will be transported to the alternative venue when necessary. However, if the participants do not have sufficient privacy in their homes, an alternative venue will be arranged by the student researcher and the participants will be transported by car from their different homes to the alternative venue. Participants will sign an indemnity form prior to participating in the research. Participants will also have the option of transporting themselves to venue and be further reimbursed for any costs incurred.

#### 5.6 Legal authorisation

Describe in detail *which bodies* must grant legal authorisation for this study (e.g. Department of Health, Medicine Control Council, etc.). Mention *whether authorisation has already been obtained*, with reference to attached proof, or *how you will go about* getting authorisation before the study commences.

Conditional approval will be granted to obtain this authorisation but the study cannot commence before the HREC has received the final documents.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

[PLEASE UPLOAD ALL DOCUMENTS INDICATING LEGAL AUTHORISATION]

## 5.7 Goodwill permission /consent

Describe in detail *what interest group representatives* must give permission for this study (e.g. community leaders, church leaders, tribal chiefs or other). Also mention *whether permission has already been obtained*, with reference to attached proof, or *how you will go about getting permission* before the study commences.

Conditional approval will be granted until proof of goodwill permission has been granted but the study cannot commence before the HREC has received the final documents.

The researcher will seek goodwill permission from the Speaker (head of ward councillors) at King Sabatha Dalindyebo Municipality in Mthatha (KSD), as well as from two community ward councillors who will act as gatekeepers in order to conduct the research. Only after the permission is granted will recruitment of participants proceed.

[PLEASE UPLOAD ALL LETTERS OF GOODWILL PERMISSION]

## 5.8 Criteria for participant selection and recruitment

Describe in full which inclusion and exclusion criteria will be used to select participants and justify each of your choices. If you include one of the following in your exclusion/inclusion criteria, the need for it in the research has to be justified i.e. *race or ethnic origin, person's health or sex life, a person's inherited characteristics or biometric information*. Ensure that your exclusion criteria are not merely the opposite of the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion criteria	Justification
They need to be residents of Mthatha for the past five years, adults that are 18 years and above of age. They need to speak Xhosa as their home language. They can be male or female.	The student researcher needs information about the understanding, experience and sources of meaning in life from the Xhosa-speaking people of Mthatha. In order to get this information, she must hold interviews with participants that are well-versed within the Xhosa culture. This will assist in addressing the aims of the study. The participants need to agree to be recorded as this will help the researcher with the required information.
Exclusion criteria	Justification
There is no specific exclusion criteria.	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

## 5.9 Participant recruitment

Recruitment of human participants must take place within a specified time frame/schedule (i.e. specified starting and ending date) and cannot continue indefinitely. Explain how you will go about recruiting the participants.

*More information*

*This process should take place in such a way that the participants do not feel intimidated by the process or implicitly “bribed”, but decide absolutely voluntarily to participate. It should be fair and equitable. Include aspects of community entry e.g. advertisements, community advisory boards and the use of gatekeepers and mediators etc.*

The potential participants that will be recruited are 10 until data saturation is reached. Advertisements will be placed at the shops, clinics, churches and office notice boards in Mthatha. The advertisement (see Addendum C) will be put on their notice boards for a period of two weeks after receiving permission from the ward councillor. The advertisement (Addendum C) and request to place an advert (Addendum B) on the notice boards (see Addendum B) will be written in Xhosa and English to cater for participants that will be involved in the study. The recruitment of participants will be transparent and no intimidation or force will be used. The participants interested in the study will indicate by contacting the independent person whose details will be provided on the consent form. The independent person will arrange with participants who indicated interest in the study to meet them and explain the study as well as provide consent forms for participant to give formal consent to participate in the study. The process of obtaining consent will be conducted by an appropriately trained, independent and objective person (Sibongile Gqamane). The independent person is not a potential participant. The independent person will not have undue influence on the participants. The participants will be given a week to read the consent forms. Contact information of the researcher, supervisor and the independent person obtaining informed consent will be provided on the informed consent form for participants that may have questions. After written informed consent is obtained, the researcher will contact the participants about when and where the interviews will be done.

**5.10 Informed consent (consent, permission, assent and dissent)**

The focus in this section is on a detailed informed consent *process description*. According to law all participants must be fully informed about the implications and risks associated with participation in the study.

*More information*

*How will you go about contacting them and explaining the study and accompanying implications to all participants? Ensure that participants are aware that participation in the research is voluntary and that they may withdraw from the study at any time. Where research is not carried out in participants’ mother tongue, explain how you will go about conveying the information in an understandable manner. Where participants are not literate, a witness should be involved in obtaining informed consent. Be clear on who will obtain the informed consent (independent person) and how the researcher will be included to explain the research and answer questions. Discuss the role of the independent person. For your convenience you can use the template for informed consent as well as the accompanying checklist. Be clear on your description of the use of consent, permission, assent and dissent. For minors ensure that parental permission and child assent or adolescent consent (where applicable) is obtained for all participants.*

Subsequent to receiving the confirmation from the interested participants, the independent person, who is a respected community member from Mthatha and fluent in speaking Xhosa, will telephonically call all the participants to make arrangements and agree on the suitable

dates to obtain the informed consent. The independent person will travel to each participant's house to obtain the informed consent document. The independent person together with the participants will go through the informed consent to ensure that the participants understand what is written on the informed consent. Participants will be fully informed of what is expected of them and the procedure before they give their consent. No participants will be required to make an immediate decision on whether to partake in the study or not, hence they will be given one week to go through the informed consent form with the assistance of the independent person to make enquiries and to make a decision whether they want to be part of the study. After the participants have given their consent in the presence of the independent person, the independent person will hand over the written informed consent forms to the student researcher. The researcher will contact them with regard to the whole process of data gathering. However, should participants feel that they are no longer interested to continue with the study, they are allowed to withdraw at any time without adverse consequences. Contact information of the student researcher, supervisors and the independent person will be provided in the informed consent in case participants have questions.

[PLEASE UPLOAD YOUR INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR APPROVAL AND THE INFORMED CONSENT CHECKLIST]

### 5.11 Incentives and/or remuneration of participants

Is any form of incentive and/or reimbursement offered to the participants?

If "Yes", describe it in full in terms of *what, how, where, when, how much, terms and conditions*, etc. Remember to work according to the TIE principle (time, inconvenience, expenses e.g. transport and meals).

If no remuneration is offered, *justify why this is not the case* (Please mark with X in the relevant block and provide details).

Yes	No	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participants will be interviewed within their own homes. If an alternative venue is utilised, they will be transported. <b>Participants will be provided with refreshments during the interviews.</b> They will be given washing powder worth R50 as a token of appreciation.

### 5.12 Announcement of study results to participants

Indicate *what, how, when and to whom* you will communicate the results of the study to the participants.

<b>What?</b>	Findings/ report
<b>How?</b>	The report will be placed at the Mthatha community library for future reference. Prior to that, a feedback session will be arranged with the gatekeepers and participants on the conclusions of the study. Interested participants will have the opportunity to hear about the outcome of the study. The student researcher will telephonically contact the participants and invite them to a feedback session where the findings will be shared. Numbers will

	be allocated in place of the names when providing feedback to the participants and gatekeepers.
<b>When?</b>	After completion of the study
<b>To whom?</b>	Participants

### 5.13 Privacy and Confidentiality

Explain how you will ensure both privacy and confidentiality throughout the research.

#### **Privacy**

Privacy is concerned with who has access to *personal information and records* about the participant as well as *privacy during physical measurements* e.g. anthropometric measures or *psychological procedures* e.g. interviews/focus groups. Explain how privacy will be ensured in your study.

The information provided by the participants will not be made available to any other persons other than the researchers, transcriber and co-coder. Personal information will not be collected but numbers will be allocated to the participants as identification. In order to ensure privacy at the participant's home, arrangements will be made prior to the commencement of the interviews with the participants with regard to the nature of the interviews, what is expected from them, including the environment where the interviews should take place, for example, a quiet place where there won't be any interruption. The dates and time will also be communicated beforehand for participants to prepare themselves and make necessary arrangements. If an alternative venue needs to be used, it will be booked in advance. To ensure privacy, notices of interviews in session or do not disturb signs will be placed in the venue.

#### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality ensures that *appropriate measures* will be implemented to *prevent disclosure of information* that might identify the participant either during the course of the research or afterwards e.g. anonymising data or pooling results. Explain how confidentiality will be ensured in your study.

The data that will be collected will only be used for research purposes and will be accessed by the researcher, supervisors, transcriber and co-coder. The recordings will be removed from the audio recorders directly after the interview and placed on the password-protected computer. A password-protected computer in a locked office (at NWU and student-researcher's office) will be used to store the digital voice recorded interviews after the data collection. The data that will be sent to the co-coder for analysis will later be deleted by the co-coder as soon as they have completed the analysis. The informed consent forms and voice recordings will be kept safe in a locked NWU office and the voice recordings will be kept in a password protected computer in that office as well as the student-researcher's office. The data will be stored for seven years after publication and will later be destroyed from the password-protected computer. This will be done by a member of the research team but the student-researcher will ultimately be responsible to ensure this is done. The hardcopies of the transcription will be kept in a locked office at NWU and the student-researcher's office.

### 5.14 Management, storage and destruction of data/biological samples



Describe how you will manage the collected data/biological samples as well as the storage thereof.

### **Data/biological samples management**

For management of data/biological samples, indicate:

- what data/biological samples will be stored
- how it will be stored
- how data in its various forms will be managed e.g. questionnaires, recorded interviews or biological samples
- who will manage the data/biological samples storage
- who will have access to the stored data/biological samples
- how will data be regained from other research team members
- and if data sharing is to occur, how will this be managed?

Ensure that you refer to both *electronic* and *hard copy versions* of data as well as *biological samples*.

During the process of data gathering and data analysis, hard copies of transcribed data, biographical data and signed consent forms will be stored in a lockable cabinet at the student's office. The electronic data will also be kept in a password-protected, virus free computer by the student-researcher and the study supervisors. The recorded data will be transferred to a password protected computer directly after the interviews and the student will immediately delete all the recordings from the recording device. The student researcher's laptop will be locked away for security reasons when the researcher is not working on the research. Collected data will be stored in this manner for the entire research process. The student researcher will be handling the information and will ensure that all biographical data, signed informed consent forms, transcribed data and electronic data are kept safe.

### **Storage and destruction of data/biological samples**

Describe:

- where and how data/biological samples will be stored
- for how long it will be stored
- who will be responsible for storage
- how it will be destroyed?

Ensure that you refer to both *electronic* and *hard copy versions* of data as well as *biological samples*

The raw data will be stored in the NWU storage in a locked office. The electronic data will be kept on a password-protected, virus free computer in a locked office at the NWU. Since the requirement is to keep the data safe for the period of seven years, all the collected data will be destroyed by a member of the research team after receiving a formal authorisation from records management at the NWU to destroy the data. The student researcher will ultimately be responsible to ensure that the electronic data will be deleted. The student-researcher's cloud facility (One Drive) at the Human Sciences Research Council will be used to store the data.

### 5.15 Monitoring of research

Describe how you as the researcher will monitor:

- both the *implementation and progress* of the research
- compliance with the approved protocol
- the management of ethics throughout the research process
- the management of amendments during the execution of the research study, should they be needed
- how *incidents and adverse events/serious adverse events* (if applicable) will be reported.

The monitoring of the research will be strictly done according to the steps outlined in the protocol. The progress will be monitored by the promoters, and regular progress reports submitted for HREC monitoring. If needed, amendments will be done only after consulting with the supervisors, and a letter of approval from the HREC. The student researcher has received some prior training in conducting qualitative interviews. In order to ensure quality of the research, participants will review the results prior to transcription and the co coder will work independently to minimize bias of the researcher.

### 5.16 Misleading of participants (if applicable)

Is use made of any form of misleading in the research, where the participants are not told the complete truth (e.g. placebo or psychotherapeutic interventions)?

*More information*

*In the case of using a placebo (e.g. drug or psychotherapeutic intervention), justification has to be provided that there is no alternative treatment with proven efficacy. When such an alternative treatment exists, the **standard of care** should be provided to both the experimental and control group.*

If “Yes”, in either case of using a placebo or during a psychotherapeutic intervention:

- justify in full why it is necessary
- describe how the participants will be protected against potential negative consequences of the placebo or misleading information/action.
- when you will disclose and debrief
- describe how you will disclose to them that they were misled.

Yes	No	Justification	Precautionary measures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
		Disclosure	
		When?	How?
		Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

### 5.17 Use of previously collected data/biological samples (if applicable)

When your research study is making use of previously collected data or biological samples, provide a comprehensive description of the following.

<b>What was the purpose of the original collection?</b>			
Click here to enter text.			
<b>What will your purpose be?</b>			
Click here to enter text.			
<b>Give a description of how research integrity was ensured in the original study by referring to:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>how informed consent was obtained from participants</b></li> <li>● <b>what they consented for</b></li> <li>● <b>the circumstances under which the data/biological samples were gathered</b></li> <li>● <b>how the ethics of data/biological sample collection was ensured?</b></li> </ul>			
Click here to enter text.			
<b>Give a detailed description of:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>how data/biological sample storage was managed</b></li> <li>● <b>where and how data/biological samples were stored</b></li> <li>● <b>for how long it was stored</b></li> <li>● <b>who was responsible for storage</b></li> <li>● <b>how it was ensured that no tampering occurred?</b></li> </ul>			
Click here to enter text.			
<b>Foreseeable risks for participants or researchers involved in using the previously collected data/biological samples?</b>			
<b>Risks</b>		<b>Precautions</b>	
Click here to enter text.		Click here to enter text.	
<b>Participants:</b>			
<b>Researchers:</b>			
<b>Will re-consent be necessary?</b>			
<b>If “Yes” motivate:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>why</b></li> <li>● <b>for what</b></li> <li>● <b>how this re-consent will be obtained.</b></li> </ul>			
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Why?</b>	Click here to enter text.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>For what?</b>	Click here to enter text.
		<b>How?</b>	Click here to enter text.

[ATTACH A LETTER FROM THE STUDY LEADER/PI GIVING PERMISSION FOR THE USE OF THE DATA/BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES]

[ATTACH THE ETHICAL APPROVAL OF THE ORIGINAL STUDY]

[ATTACH THE INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR RE-CONSENT (IF APPLICABLE)]

### 5.18 Use of filed privileged information (if applicable)

Filed privileged information may be used for research purposes with the research ethics committee *waiving informed consent*. Give a detailed description of the process under the following headings.

<b>The nature of the information to be used:</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>Process of obtaining permission/ethical approval for access:</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>Process of data collection:</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>Process of anonymization of the data:</b>	
Click here to enter text.	
<b>Foreseeable risks for participants whose filed privileged information is being accessed:</b>	
<b>Risks</b>	<b>Precautions</b>
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

### 5.19 Justifiability of statistical procedures

#### 5.19.1 Statistical consultation

Indicate how you ensured the suitability of the statistical procedures to be used in this study e.g. consultation or proof of expertise.

Click here to enter text.

#### 5.19.2 Justification of sample size

Indicate how the sample size was determined e.g. power calculation or previously reported study designs.

Click here to enter text.

#### 5.19.3 Method of randomisation (if applicable)

If randomisation is to be used in this study, please indicate the manner by which randomisation will be assured.

Click here to enter text.

#### 5.19.4 Statistical methodology

Describe the means by which the statistical analyses will be conducted i.e. descriptive statistics, comparisons to be made, specific statistical tests to be used and the manner in which co-variance will be corrected for.

Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6. SECTION 6: MATTERS THAT NECESSITATE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### 6.1 Sec 6a: Vulnerable participants

Please complete this section if your study includes *minors, adults with incapacities, persons in dependent relationships e.g. prisoners, students, persons with physical disabilities, collectivities and research-naïve communities*. (Mark ALL options as “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box – more than one option may be “Yes”).

Description	Yes	No
Minors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adults with incapacities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Persons in dependent relationships e.g. prisoners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Persons with physical disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Collectivities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Research-naïve communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specify: Click here to enter text.		

#### 6.1.1 Description

Give a detailed description of the vulnerable group by referring to:

- who they are
- where they come from
- what makes them vulnerable.

Click here to enter text.

#### 6.1.2 Justification for inclusion

Explain the necessity for including this specific group of vulnerable people as human participants (subjects) indicating the *direct benefit to the participants themselves* or the *indirect benefit of an improved scientific understanding*.

Click here to enter text.

### 6.1.3 Additional precautionary measures to reduce the risk of harm

Explain any additional precautionary measures you will take to reduce the possibility of harm.

Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.2 Sec 6b: Infection, genetic modification and commercialisation of cell and tissue lines

### 6.2.1 What will you be doing with the cell or tissue line?

Infection of the cell or tissue line	<input type="checkbox"/>
Genetic modification of the cell or tissue line	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commercialisation of the cell or tissue line	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 6.2.2 Number

How many cell and/or tissue lines will be used in the study?

Description	Number
Cell lines	0
Tissue lines	0

[OPEN UP THE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF SPACES IN SECTION 6.2.3 ACCORDING TO 6.2.2]

### 6.2.3 Product information

Provide detailed product information, so that the reviewers can evaluate the ethically justifiable use of the cell and tissue lines. Give the necessary details below.

*More information*

***Human origin and consent:***

*For standard cell and/or tissue cultures from banks such as the ATCC consent already exists for general, ethically justifiable and medically related research.*

***Potential dangers and risks:***

*Tissue banks such as the ATCC classify cell and/or tissue cultures as “bio safety level 1, 2 or 3”, depending on potential for infection with pathogens which may be harmful to man,*

*or cancerous characteristics that would make growth in a person possible after undesirable, accidental inoculation. **NB!** These cell cultures may never be used in people.*

### Cell Line or Tissue Line

Approved Name & Code	Description
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Source / Origin / Supplier	Catalogue No.	Biosafety level?	
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Level 1	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Method of Storage and Maintenance

Click here to enter text.

Potential Dangers	Precautionary measures
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

### Other Relevant Information

Click here to enter text.

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

6.2.4 What is the infectious agent to be used (if applicable)?

Click here to enter text.

6.2.5 Has the participant given informed consent for commercialisation of their cell line?

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If "Yes" attach a copy of the completed informed consent form
		If "No", justify why not:
		Click here to enter text.

6.2.6 Has a benefit sharing agreement been undertaken with the participant if commercialisation of their cell line is being undertaken?

If "Yes" attach the agreement. If "No" justify why this is the case.

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If "Yes" attach a copy of the completed benefit sharing document
		If "No", justify why not:

Click here to enter text.

### 6.2.7 Expertise and facilities

Do you have the necessary expertise to work with the cell and/or tissue cultures? Provide full details. Mark “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box. Provide additional details as requested.

Yes	Details	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Principal investigator</b>	<b>Researchers/Students/Fieldworkers</b>
	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

No	How do you plan to get the expertise required?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Principal investigator</b>	<b>Researchers/Students/Fieldworkers</b>
	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

### 6.2.8 Facilities

Describe the facilities that are in place to work with the cell and/or tissue line.

Click here to enter text.

### 6.2.9 Biosafety

Explain the measures you have in place to protect the safety of researchers/workers/the environment against the potential detrimental effects of the infection, genetic modification or commercialisation of the cell and/or tissue and waste. Also specify methods and safety measures for the disposal of cell and/or tissue cultures. If available, attach the standard operating procedures (SOPs) of these processes.

Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.3 Sec 6c: Use of Drugs/Medicines

Please complete this section if any drugs or medicines are used or administered in this study.

### 6.3.1 Number

How many types of drugs / medicines will be used in the study? If more than one dosage form or brand name of the same drug (active ingredient) is used, it must be counted and mentioned separately. Where applicable, placebos must also be mentioned and calculated.

Description of Drugs / medication	Dosage
-----------------------------------	--------



Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

[OPEN UP THE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF SPACES IN SECTION 6.3.2 ACCORDING TO 6.3.1]

### 6.3.2 Product information

Provide detailed product information as requested

Drug 1

Approved Pharmacological (Generic) Name

Brand Name(s) (if applicable)

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Registered at the MCC-SA?<sup>1</sup>

If "Yes", MCC-SA Registration Number<sup>2</sup>

If registered at the MCC-SA, is this for the indications, dosages and administrations as used in this study? Provide details where necessary.

**Yes**

**No**

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Accepted Dosage(s)

Accepted Administration Route(s)

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Pharmacological Action, Therapeutic Effects & Indications

Side-effects, Precautions & Contra-indications

Click here to enter text.

Click here to enter text.

Other Relevant Information

Click here to enter text.

Proof of preclinical approval of the product

Click here to enter text.

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

### 6.3.3 Special authorisation for use in humans:

<sup>1</sup> MCC-SA = Medicine Control Council of South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> The MCC-SA registration number can be found on medicine product leaflets.

If any of the medication is not registered with the Medicine Control Council or, if it is registered but the study deals with indications for which it is not specifically registered, or if other doses, dosages, dosage forms or administration routes are used than what is registered, special approval must be obtained for the clinical test from the Medicine Control Council.

Has such special authorisation been obtained? Please mark with X in the appropriate box and complete further as applicable.

Yes	No	Authorisation Number	Date of Authorisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>

If “Yes” please upload a copy of the approval letter. If “No” please explain the manner in which you plan to go about obtaining approval before the study begins.

**NB!** Final approval of the application by the HREC is dependent on the approval of the study by the Medicine Control Council. No study may continue before written approval is obtained.

If “No” type explanation here, or type “Not Applicable”.

[PLEASE UPLOAD MCC APPROVAL LETTER]

6.3.4 Explain the measures that will be in place to protect the workers, participants and the environment against the potential side-effects of the medicinal substances and waste (disposal).

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

#### 6.4 Sec 6d: Use of drug delivery systems

Please complete this section if any drug delivery systems are used or administered in this study.

##### 6.4.1 Number

How many types of drug delivery systems will be used in the study? If more than one dosage form of a drug delivery system is used, it must be counted and mentioned separately.

Description of drug delivery system	Dosage
<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

[OPEN UP THE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF SPACES IN SECTION 6.4.2 ACCORDING TO 6.4.1]

##### 6.4.2 Drug delivery system information

Provide detailed drug delivery system information as requested. ? If more than one drug delivery system is used, it must be counted and mentioned separately.

Drug delivery system 1

Approved Name

Click here to enter text.

Registered at the MCC-SA?		If “Yes”, MCC-SA Registration Number	If registered at the MCC-SA, is this for the indications, dosages and administrations as used in this study? Provide details where necessary.
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
No	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Accepted Dosage(s)	Proof of Accepted Administration Route(s)
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Side-effects	Contra-indications	Precautions
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Other Relevant Information

Click here to enter text.

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

#### 6.4.3 Special authorisation for use in humans

If any of the drug delivery systems are not registered with the Medicine Control Council or, if it is registered but the study deals with indications for which it is not specifically registered, or if other doses, dosages, dosage forms or administration routes are used than what is registered, special approval must be obtained for the clinical test from the Medicine Control Council. Has such special authorisation been obtained? Please mark with X in the appropriate box and complete further as applicable.

Yes	No	Authorisation Number	Date of Authorisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Type no. here, or type “Not Applicable”.	Click here to enter a date.

If “Yes” please upload a copy of the approval letter.

If “No” please explain the manner in which you plan to go about obtaining approval before the study begins.

**NB!** Final approval of the application by the HREC is dependent on the approval of the study by the Medicine Control Council. No study may continue before written approval is obtained.

If “No” type explanation here, or type “Not Applicable”.

[PLEASE UPLOAD MCC APPROVAL LETTER]

6.4.4 Explain the measures that will be in place to protect the workers, participants and the environment against the potential side-effects of the drug delivery system and waste (disposal).

Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.5 Sec 6e: Use of Food, Fluids or Nutrients

Please complete this section if any food, fluids or nutrients (alone or in combination) are used or administered in this study. This also applies to dangers with abuse, whether or not it holds any potential danger for people, animals or the environment.

Note: This does not include the provision of a regular plate of food for maintenance during residence.

### 6.5.1 Number

How many kinds of food, fluids or nutrients will be used in the study?

*More information*

*If more than one dosage form or brand name of the food, fluids or nutrient is used, it must be counted and mentioned separately. Placebos are also included, except if the placebo treatment includes no administration.*

Description	Number
Food	0
Fluids	0
Nutrients / nutrient combinations	0

[OPEN UP THE APPROPRIATE AMOUNT OF SPACES IN SECTION 6.5.2 ACCORDING TO 6.5.1]

### 6.5.2 Product information:

Provide detailed product information, so that the reviewers can evaluate the ethically justifiable use of the food, fluids and nutrients.

Food, Fluid or Nutrient		
Approved Name	Normal Quantities and Uses	
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	
Potential Dangers with Abuse	Contra-indications	Precautions
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Other Relevant Information & Literature References		
Click here to enter text.		

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

### 6.5.3 Explain the measures that will be in place to protect the workers, participants and the environment against the potential detrimental effects of the food, fluids or nutrients and waste.

Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.6 Sec 6f: Use of Radio-Active Substances

### 6.6.1 Description:

Where any radio-active substances are used in experiments or administered to participants, give full details thereof, including the isotopes and possible risks it may hold for the participants/researchers/workers/environment.

Click here to enter text.

### 6.6.2 Competence and licensing:

Do you have the necessary competence and licensing from the Department of Health at your disposal to work with radio-active substances? Mark “Yes” or “No” with X in the appropriate box. Provide the authorisation number if “Yes”.

Yes	Details	
	Study leader	Researchers/Students/ /Fieldworkers

<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text. <b>Authorisation number</b>	Click here to enter text. Click here to enter text.
<b>No</b>	<b>How do you plan to get the expertise required?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Study leader</b> Click here to enter text.	<b>Students/Researchers/Fieldworkers</b> Click here to enter text.

Attach a copy of the approval certificate from the Radiation Control Officer.

[PLEASE UPLOAD THE APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE RADIATION CONTROL OFFICER]

### 6.6.3 Facilities

Describe the facilities and procedures to ensure safe use and disposal of the radio-active substances? Explain the measures you have in place to protect the safety of participants/researchers/workers/environment against the potential detrimental effects of the radio-active substances and waste. If applicable, also specify methods and safety measures for the disposal of radio-active contaminated body fluids and tissue.

Type here

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.7 Sec 6g: Use of Toxic Substances or Dangerous Substances

Please complete this section if any toxic or dangerous substances are used or administered in this study. This also applies to dangers with abuse, whether or not it holds any potential danger for people, animals or the environment.

### 6.7.1 Number

How many toxic substances/dangerous substances will be used in the study?

Description	Number
Toxic substances	0
Other dangerous substances	0

### 6.7.2 Product information

Provide detailed product information, so that the reviewers can evaluate the ethically justifiable use of the toxic and dangerous substances.

**NB!** If more than one such substance is used, select and copy the whole table and paste as many tables underneath as is necessary.

Substance 1

Approved Name	Normal Uses & Dosages
Type here	Type here

Action & Toxic Effects/Dangers	Contra-indications	Precautions
Type here	Type here	Type here

Other Relevant Information
Type here

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

- 6.7.3 Explain the measures that will be in place to protect the workers, participants and the environment against the potential detrimental effects of the toxic or dangerous substances and waste

<b>Possible detrimental effects</b>	<b>Precautions</b>
Type here	Type here

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.8 Sec 6h: Measuring instruments and questionnaires that need psychometric interpretation

Please complete this section if any measuring instruments or validated questionnaires are used in this study that needs psychometric interpretation.

**NB!** Do not complete this section for any other types of questionnaires.

### 6.8.1 Name

Which psychometric measuring instruments and validated questionnaires will be used in the study?

<b>Description</b>
Click here to enter text.

### 6.8.2 Information about the measuring instrument/questionnaire

Provide detailed information on the psychometric measuring instrument/questionnaire, so that the reviewers can evaluate the ethically justifiable use thereof.

**NB!** If more than one psychometric measuring instrument/questionnaire is used, select and copy the whole table and paste as many tables underneath as is necessary.

Psychometric measuring instrument/questionnaire
---

Approved Name	Normal Application
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Reliability	Validity
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Other Relevant Information
Click here to enter text.

To add additional tables, copy the whole table above (select, then press Ctrl + C), click here, press enter and then paste (Ctrl + V).

### 6.8.3 Validation for target group:

Is the measuring instrument validated for the target group (e.g. for South African circumstances)? Provide full details. Please mark with X in the appropriate box and provide details.

Yes	No	Details
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 6.9 Sec 6i: Possible impact on the environment

Please complete this section if the study to be undertaken will have any impact on the environment as determined by evaluation of the study using the risk level descriptor for environmental impact. If this section is to be completed, please ensure that a completed copy of the risk level descriptor for environmental impact is attached to the application that is submitted.

### 6.9.1 Please indicate the risk level of the current study in terms of environmental impact.



Category	Description	Select
0	<p><b>None</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for incidental and/or transient changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> No legal implications. No need to apply for any environmental authorisations; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> No discernible impact on reputation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	<p><b>Mild</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for acceptable, short term changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> Complaints for the public and/or regulator. No need to apply for any environmental authorisations; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> Potential impact on reputation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<p><b>Medium</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for acceptable, longer term changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> Departmental enquiry and correspondence. Environmental authorisation may be required; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> Limited, reputation impacted with small number of people.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<p><b>Severe</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for <u>un</u>acceptable, short term changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> Notification of intent to issue a directive. Environmental authorisation required; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> Reputation impacted with some stakeholders.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<p><b>Very severe</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for <u>un</u>acceptable, longer term changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> Withdrawal of permit. Environmental authorisation required; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> Reputation impacted with significant number of key stakeholders.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>5</b>	<p><b>Intolerable</b></p> <p><b>Effect on the environment:</b> Potential for <u>irreversible</u> changes to valued flora and fauna, ecosystem processes and structure, including ecosystem services; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Legal implications:</b> Referral to the National Prosecuting Authority. Potential investigation by authority with prosecution and fines. Environmental authorisation required; <b>or</b></p> <p><b>Potential impact on reputation of the NWU:</b> Reputation impacted with majority of key stakeholders.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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6.9.2 Explain the type of environmental impact that the study will have.

Type here

6.9.3 Name and explain *all the possible risks* for the environment that may occur during the research. Use the template included in the approved risk level descriptor document for studies with environmental impact to guide you into identifying all the possible types of risk as well as the probability and magnitude of harm. Please also include *all the precautions* that will be taken in order to mitigate the risks to the environment.

<b>Risks</b> (e.g. effect on environment, legal implications, potential impact on the reputation of the NWU, etc.).	<b>Precautions</b> (When describing these precautions be clear on how they will mitigate all the identified risks)
Type here	Type here

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## 7. SECTION 7: OTHER ETHICS EVALUATIONS AND RISK INSURANCE

### 7.1 Sec 7a: Evaluation by other Research Ethics Committees

Please complete this section if this study has been or will be evaluated by any other research ethics committees, for example with multi-institutional studies. Provide information about all research ethics committees involved in the review and approval of this study.

Name of the Research Ethics Committee	Date of Approval/In Process	Contact Number or E-mail address of the research ethics committee	Approval no.
Type name here, or type "None"	Type details here	Type details here, or type "Not applicable"	Type details here, or type "Not applicable"

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## 7.2 Sec 7b: Risk Insurance

The North-West University has insurance at its disposal to cover the risk of claims against the University in case of damage to participants due to professional negligence – the maximum cover is currently R100 million per annum (all studies included). However, this is only available if studies are ethically approved and researchers have kept to the proposal.

7.2.1 Describe the potential risks to which the participants/researchers/assistants/field workers are going to be subject to in so far as complications may lead to summonses.

Type	Risks
Participants	Psychological and social
Researchers	L
Assistants and/or field workers	L
Others	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

7.2.2 These potential risks are covered by:

North-West University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sponsor/s	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Specify: <a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7.2.3 Is this insurance adequate (measured against the potential risks)?

Please mark with X in the appropriate box.

Yes	No	If “No”, indicate what will be done to ensure that there is sufficient coverage?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

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## 8. SECTION 8: DECLARATIONS

Applications and declaration are filled in and signed by:

Sec 8a: Study Leader

Sec 8b: Statistical Consultant

Sec 8c: Research Director

The pages with declarations and signatures must be **scanned** with this form.

[SCAN ALL SIGNED DECLARATIONS]

Health Research Ethics Application

<b>Study Leader</b> (Title, Initials and Surname)	<b>Study Title</b> (see § 1.1)
Dr. Wilson Fadji	Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa

**NWU Ethics Number**

NWU-00498-19-S1

### 8.1 Sec 8a: Study Leader

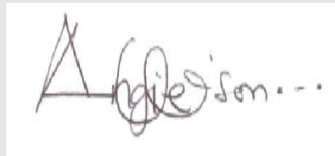
Application and Declarations by Study Leader

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for approval of the research study as described in the preceding proposal and declare that:

- 8.1.1 The information in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that no ethical codes will be violated with the study;
- 8.1.2 I will make sure that the study is managed ethically justifiably from start to finish;
- 8.1.3 In the case of human participants;
  - 8.1.3.1 I will put it clearly to all participants that participation (including assent) in any research study is absolutely voluntary and that no pressure, of whatever nature, will be placed on any potential participant to take part;
  - 8.1.3.2 I will put it clearly to all participants that any participant may withdraw from the study at any time and may ask that his/her data no longer be used in the study, without stating reasons and without fear of any form of prejudice;
  - 8.1.3.3 every participant who takes part in the study will receive the accompanying form for informed consent and it will be ensured that every participant understands the information (including the process and risks) fully;
  - 8.1.3.4 every participant will sign the informed consent in writing before the study commences, or a witness will stand in on behalf of the participant when the participant is illiterate;
  - 8.1.3.5 the written permission of the parent or legal guardians of all minor subjects will be obtained before the research commences;
  - 8.1.3.6 any foreseeable risk is restricted to the minimum, any permanent damage is avoided as far as possible and that appropriate precautions and safety measures are in place;

- 8.1.3.7 confidentiality of all the information of all participants will be respected and ensured;
- 8.1.4 I and all co-workers/assistants/field workers are appropriately qualified, capable and legally competent to implement the proposed studies/procedures/interventions;
- 8.1.5 I will not deviate from the approved proposal and that I understand approval for the study will be cancelled if I deviate from the proposal without the approval of the Health Research Ethics Committee;
- 8.1.6 the study is scientifically justifiable;
- 8.1.7 where necessary, all contracts, permits and the applicable documents of relevance will be obtained before the research commences;
- 8.1.8 I will ensure that all data/biological samples are stored safely and remain in the possession of the North-West University;
- 8.1.9 I will report in writing any incidents or adverse events/serious adverse events that occur during the study without delay to the Health Research Ethics Committee;
- 8.1.10 I undertake to respect intellectual property rights throughout and to avoid any form of plagiarism;
- 8.1.11 I will obtain permission for amendments to the protocol and report annually (or more often for medium and high risk studies) to the Health Research Ethics Committee on the prescribed monitoring report concerning progress of the study;
- 8.1.12 I will notify the Health Research Ethics Committee should the study be terminated.

Name (Title, Full Names & Surname)	Qualifications
Dr. Angelina Wilson Fadiji	PhD Psychology

	
	2019/08/08
Signature	Date

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## Health Research Ethics Application

<b>Study Leader</b> (Title, Initials and Surname)	<b>Study Title</b> (see § 1.1)
Dr. Wilson Fadiji	Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa

<b>NWU Ethics Number</b>
NWU-00498-19-S1

**8.2 Sec 8b: Statistical Consultant (If applicable)**

The statistician of the Statistical Consultation Service of the North-West University completes this section (where applicable).

8.2.1 Have you ascertained that the statistical analyses to be used in this study is justifiable according to your judgement?

Please mark with X in the appropriate box and provide details.

Yes	No	Remarks
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Click here to enter text.

Name (Title, Full Names & Surname)	Qualifications
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

Signature	Click here to enter a date. Date

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!

## Health Research Ethics Application

<b>Study Leader</b> (Title, Initials and Surname)	<b>Study Title</b> (see § 1.1)
Dr. Wilson Fadiji	Exploring meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa

<b>NWU Ethics Number</b>
NWU-00498-19-S1


**8.3 Sec 8c: Research Director (School director if Education request)**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the above study has been reviewed by a Scientific/Proposal Committee and may proceed to the Health Research Ethics Committee and that the Study Leader/Researcher has enough physical facilities, equipment and money at his/her disposal to implement and complete the study.

**8.3.1 Research Director:**

The director of the research entity signs here.

Name (Title, Full Names & Surname)	Capacity
Prof. Petra Bester	Research Director

	
	2019/08/10
Signature	Date

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## Credits

Compiled by the Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office for Research, Training and Support

## Section 2

### Manuscript for evaluation

#### 2.1 Orientation

This mini-dissertation is submitted in article format as indicated in the 2020 General Academic Rules (A4.4.2 and A4.10.5) of the North-West University. The manuscript has been prepared in article format according to the style guidelines of the *South African Journal of Psychology*. For the sake of uniformity all content of the manuscript has been prepared accordance with the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association. The manuscript exceeds the word count of the intended journal and will be abbreviated before submission to the journal. Pages are numbered consecutively for purposes of the mini-dissertation but will start from one for submission purposes. The table is presented in-text instead of at the end of the manuscript to ease readability. The Results and Discussion sections are combined in one section. Before submission to the intended journal, the editor of the journal will be approached to request permission to combine the Results and Discussion sections.



## **2.2 Manuscript Submission Guidelines: South African Journal of Psychology**

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The South African Journal of Psychology considers submissions addressing South African, African or international issues, including:

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Review articles focusing on significant issues in Psychology.

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All manuscripts should be written in English and include an abstract of not more than 250 words.

The writing must be of a high grammatical standard, and follow the technical guidelines stipulated below. The publication guidelines of the American Psychological Association 6th edition (APA 6th) must be followed in the preparation of the manuscript. Manuscripts of poor technical or language quality will be returned without review.

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#### *1 Make your article discoverable*

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#### **3.3 Acknowledgements**

All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be listed in an Acknowledgements section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, or a department chair who provided only general support. Any acknowledgements should appear first at the end of your article prior to your Declaration of Conflicting Interests (if applicable), any notes and your References.

#### **3.4 Funding**

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The “Ethical considerations” section must include the name of the institution that granted the ethical approval for the study (if applicable).

## **5.3 Keywords and abstracts**

Helping readers find your article online Authors should include (a) an Abstract of up to 250 words and (b) up to 6 alphabetised keywords the title, keywords and abstract are key to ensuring readers find your article online through online search engines such as Google. Please refer to the information and guidance on how best to title your article, write your abstract and select your keywords by visiting SAGE’s Journal Author Gateway Guidelines on How to Help Readers Find Your Article Online.

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The collection of ORCID iDs from corresponding authors is now part of the submission process of this journal. If you already have an ORCID iD you will be asked to associate that to your submission during the online submission process. We also strongly encourage all co-authors to link their ORCID ID to their accounts in our online peer review platforms. It takes seconds to do: click the link when prompted, sign into your ORCID account and our systems are automatically updated. Your ORCID iD will become part of your accepted publication's metadata, making your work attributable to you and only you. Your ORCID iD is published with your article so that fellow researchers reading your work can link to your ORCID profile and from there link to your other publications.

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## 2.2 Manuscript

### **Exploring Meaning in Life among Xhosa-Speaking Adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa**

Wyatt-Mgobozi, L.<sup>1</sup>, Wilson Fadiji, A.<sup>2\*</sup>, Wissing, M. P.<sup>3</sup>, & Schutte, L.<sup>4</sup>

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### Abstract

Meaning is an important component of a fulfilling and flourishing life and is central to how human beings understand and experience life. Meaning in life is also shaped by contextual factors such as culture and the historical peculiarities and opportunities of one's life situation. While meaning in life has been studied by many scholars, there is a dearth of literature using bottom-up contextual approaches in the South African context, particularly among the Xhosa-speaking people of the Eastern Cape. Therefore, using a basic descriptive qualitative research design, this study explored the understanding, experiences and sources of meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults from Mthatha in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

Thematically, the results show that meaning in life was understood in terms of engaging with family, having a sense of purpose and direction in life, spiritual activities, engaging livelihood, extending oneself and generativity, and values and morality. Meaning in life was experienced in situations and activities that related to critical self-knowledge and life pursuits, the fulfilment of societal expectations, and that elicited challenges and resources. This study found that sources of meaning included values and growth, religion, education, family (and faith communities) and work. While the findings were consistent with existing theory and research on meaning in life, the study also highlighted contextual dynamics to what constitute meaning in life and how this is experienced. It particularly contributes new insights on how Xhosa-speaking adults live a life that is meaningful. Some of these new insights include the emphasis in this group on principles and values, acting morally, and the importance of a personalised existential relationship with God as a source of meaning.

*Keywords:* Meaning in life, sources of meaning, South Africa, Xhosa-speaking adults

Meaning in life is important for living a fulfilling and flourishing life (Steger, Oishi, & Kashdan, 2009). It is defined as a process that involves people feeling that their lives matter, while making sense of life and determining a broader purpose for their lives (Steger, 2019). Steger (2019) also observed that interest in meaning in life has shifted from an existential curiosity to becoming an established area of inquiry in health and quality of life research. Three main dimensions of meaning in life are often distinguished, namely *coherence*, that is, the ways people make sense of life and make life understandable or comprehensible; *purpose*, which is the act of possessing an aspiration or a sense of direction in life; and *significance*, which refers to the belief that one's life is worthwhile and has intrinsic value (George & Park, 2016; Martela & Steger, 2016; Steger, 2019).

Meaning in life is subjective in nature in the sense that individuals who view their lives as meaningful base it on their subjective experiences (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer 2014; Martela & Steger, 2016). The subjective nature of meaning in life is further highlighted by George and Park (2016) who argued that meaning is the degree to which people personally view their lives as being directed and motivated by their purpose or main goals, and also the extent to which people feel their existence is important, significant, and substantial to humanity. Moreover, the responsibility to find answers to questions pertaining to purpose in life rests upon each individual. As Naidu and Ramlall (2016) assert, no person can tell another individual what their purpose is. Meaning is also informed by one's belief system, where individuals feel the presence of meaning when an event makes sense because it fits into their pre-existing beliefs and expectations (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014; Krok, 2018; Van Zyl, 2013). In this sense, meaning in life integrates the past, present, and the future (Baumeister, Vohs, Aaker & Garbinsky, 2013).

Meaning in life is an important construct in well-being research and practice, as meaning provides people with the sense that their lives are sensible and that their lives matter (Seligman,

2011). Such a sense of meaning is often found in religion, spirituality or a deity, or in serving something bigger or higher than oneself (Steger, 2012). Meaning is also an important intellectual resource that sheds light on events of life as it allows individuals to find strengths and insights from their bad and good experiences (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Viewed this way, meaning in life enables people to gain perspective on present situations, and focus on a worthwhile and valuable future. Meaning-making can help to reduce the impact of stressful situations in the case of traumatic experiences, pain, and suffering (Machell et al., 2014; Park & Folkman, 1997).

Although a great deal of literature exists on the topic of meaning in life, there is a need for more contextual empirical studies as well as bottom-up, qualitative studies of meaning in life to further enrich the field and develop a comprehensive, nuanced understanding of the topic. To contribute towards this outcome, this study examined meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa with a focus on people's understanding, experiences, and sources of meaning in life.

### **Meaning in Life and Well-being**

Meaning in life, and closely related constructs such as purpose in life, are related to a number of other well-being indicators. For example, Kin and Chen (2017) observed that purpose correlates positively with health and protects against disease. This is possibly because people with greater purpose in life are pro-active in taking care of their health, engage in healthier activities, and have better impulse control (Kim & Chen, 2017). Seligman (2011) noted that individuals who perceive their lives to be meaningful have considerably higher levels of well-being, resilience, and happiness than those who do not. By nature, humans are involved in goal-seeking behaviour and according to Klinger (2012), this creates a sense of purpose, while a lack of purpose leads to distress. Thus, meaning leads to a purposeful life and motivates the individual's achievement of goals.

Studies have further found significant links between meaning in life and mental health. Work done by Batthyany and Russo-Netzer (2014) found that the absence of meaning was associated with hopelessness, depression, anxiety and anger, while engaging in meaning-oriented interventions brought about significant improvements among patients with chronic pain. Galek, Flannelly, Ellison, Silton, and Jankowski (2015) found that a lack of meaning and purpose in life was associated with psychiatric symptoms. Their study focused on the link between meaning and purpose and psychiatric symptoms among adults, and found that those who believed that their lives had meaning and purpose experienced higher levels of psychological well-being and mental health. Several other studies demonstrate that meaning in life is associated with the levels of positive or negative affect, fulfilment of psychological needs, subjective well-being and satisfaction with life (Holford, Mellor, Cumins, & McCabe, 2018; Martela, Ryan, & Steger, 2018).

### **Sources of Meaning**

Schnell (2010) describes sources of meaning as established orientations that encourage commitment and give direction to an individual's life. Sources of meaning contribute to a sense of meaning as they are the basic foundations from which meaning originates. The literature shows that different people find meaning from different sources. For example, the Sources of Meaning and Meaning in Life Questionnaire identifies 26 sources of meaning and include sources such as religiosity, spirituality, morality, community, social commitment, achievement, and generativity (Schnell, 2010; Sørensen et al., 2019).

Religion is an important source of meaning and purpose in life, as found by Galek et al. (2015). In their study, congregants of a British Methodist Church believed that a supernatural being (God) was involved in their lives, resulting in the experience of meaning. Peterson and Park (2012) also found the strength of religiousness to be associated with meaning in life amongst adults in the United States and other English-speaking countries. The positive

association between meaning in life and religion is explained by the fact that religious commitment fosters a logical set of goals that provide meaning and purpose (Peterson & Park, 2012). Religion is seen as providing meaning to the existential difficulties that individuals encounter. Belonging to a religious institution implies that the individual forms part of a social structure with other individuals with similar values and beliefs, which reinforces meaning systems within individuals.

Other forms of belonging and affiliation also constitute sources of meaning in life. For example, in a study of a nationally representative sample in Germany, Stavrova and Luhmann (2016) discovered that joining voluntary associations and marriage (intimate connectedness) were associated with high levels of meaning. In these, relationships and connection with others with shared attitudes, values, and goals, produced meaningful experiences. This supports the findings from a study done among seven countries from around the world by Delle Fave, Brdar, Vella-Brodrick & Aaker (2013) that the core source of meaning is positive relationships and connections. Individuals need to interact with others on a collective, intimate and relational level, as a sense of belonging and connectedness leads to the experience of meaning in life (Stavrova & Luhman, 2016). Family is an important source of meaning in life as a study of adults in New Zealand shows (Grouden & Jose, 2014). Lambert et al. (2010) further demonstrate this by showing that families share memories, positive and negative experiences, and have a purpose and goals which bind them together and give them meaning as a unit within society. A sense of harmony or balance (connectedness with the universe) and self-actualisation also create meaning in life for many people (Delle Fave et al., 2013).

### **Meaning in Life Research in South Africa**

Meaning in life research has highlighted existential values that are core to many South African communities. For example, the importance of relationships in the experience of meaning in life was highlighted by Wissing, Potgieter, Guse, Khumalo, and Nel (2014). This is consistent

with a prevailing South African collectivist paradigm and worldview where the value and meaning of the individual rests in the collective (Kanyane, 2020; Molefe, 2017). Thus, an individual is expected to be in a relationship with extended family members and other members of the community, hence the placement of greater value on social unity than in individualistic contexts (Wissing et al., 2014).

Meaning in life has also been explored empirically in the South African context. For example, in a study among South African university students, Nell (2014) found that students derived their meaning in life from relationships, romantic partners, pets, religion, personal autonomy and leisure. These students also derived their meaning in life from future-oriented sources, such as faith, learning, pursuit of goals, personal growth and development (Nell, 2014). This was in line with findings from an earlier study by Mason (2013), which also showed that relationships, education, religion and family were important sources of meaning in life for university students in South Africa. Specifically, Mason (2013) observed that family was an important source of meaning because of the support, courage, inspiration and motivation that students received from their families. Education provided these students with an ability to improve their living standards and an opportunity to give back to their families and to show appreciation (Mason, 2013). In a study conducted by Coetzee, Wissing, and Temane (2010) on meaningfulness amongst English and Afrikaans speaking South Africans, family and spirituality were the two most important domains that contributed to a meaningful life, and spirituality was viewed as a coping mechanism to deal with life difficulties. Meaning in life was also found in personal growth, health, and work (Coetzee, Wissing, & Temane, 2010). In yet another study by De Klerk, Boshoff, and Van Wyk (2009) amongst South African adults using the Life Regard Index (LRI), findings indicated that meaning in life was related to making time for oneself, having leisure time, living an active, healthy lifestyle and making time for family. Furthermore,



being involved in the community, contributing financially and volunteering were also found to be significantly associated with a meaningful life amongst this sample of South Africans.

While these previous studies are insightful on meaning in life among the studied population groups, there are several other South African populations and cultural groups and contexts among whom views on meaning in life are yet to be explored. One such group is the amaXhosa, about whom no meaning in life research could be found. The current study addressed this gap.

### **The Context of the Study: The amaXhosa Culture and the Town of Mthatha**

Context and presenting life situation take into consideration time, place, language, and histories. These factors influence how people comprehend themselves and the world, and how they fit into and relate to it. An individual's standpoint is influenced by the contextual situatedness of the environment around them and this provides them with theories about the world and how to achieve a state of flourishing (Steger et al., 2007). Context also shapes experiences of individuals in a way that it influences what they may regard as meaningful and enriching; and different contexts offer a variety of meanings of life from which individuals can choose (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). In this sense, it is important to investigate meaning in life in different contexts. This study specifically explored meaning in life among people from the amaXhosa culture living in the town of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. According to the Eastern Cape Socio-economic Consultative Council (ECSECC), Mthatha, officially known as Umtata until 2004, is the main town in the King Sabata Dalindyebo (KSD) Local Municipality (Area: 3 027km<sup>2</sup>) and the capital of the OR Tambo District Municipality in the Eastern Cape (ECSECC, 2017). It is also referred to as a 'city' in some official and nonofficial documents, perhaps due to its historic significance in that region of the Eastern Cape. Since relevant data specific to Mthatha is limited, it needs to be understood within the broader demographics of the KSD municipality and beyond. In the 2011 census, the KSD municipality

had a population of 488 349, and 115 894 households, with 53.5% of the population being female and 46.5% male (Community Survey, 2016). Also, 55% of these households were female headed, 44% of the population were between the ages of 15 and 35, 15% between 35 and 64, and 34% under 15 (Community Survey, 2016). The percentage of people aged 20 or older with grade 12 education was relatively low (22%) and only about 9.5% had higher education.

Mthatha was established around 1879 along the Mthatha River from which it derives its name. It was the capital of the old Transkei homeland, became a major administrative center, and is associated with Black leaders such as Walter Sisulu, Bantu Holomisa, and Nelson Mandela (ECSECC, 2017). The importance of Mthatha also comes from the fact that it is influential beyond the geographical boundaries of the OR Tambo district as a major powerhouse and socio-economic hub of the region (Mashiri, Mokonyama, Mpondo, Chakwizira, & Mdunge, 2014). The central area of Mthatha is known for traffic congestion caused by poor road infrastructure and worsened by poor service delivery and the growth of informal settlements (Mashiri et al., 2014).

The population of Mthatha and the KSD municipality is predominantly Black African (99.1%), with other racial groups constituting less than 1% (ECSECC, 2017). Approximately 80% of the population speak isiXhosa while Afrikaans, English, IsiZulu and Sesotho speakers together constitute less than 2% of the population (ECSECC, 2017). Many amaXhosa today identify as Christians and Mthatha has had a strong and visible Christian presence for a long time. Nonetheless, aspects of traditional amaXhosa culture continue to thrive (ECSECC, 2017).

The amaXhosa are the second largest linguistic and cultural group in South Africa. They, like the amaZulu, belong to the Nguni group. The name Xhosa often includes a diversity of clans such as the Bomvana, Thembu, Pondo, and Xhosa (Nyanende, 1996). The amaXhosa traditionally hold a belief in a Supreme Being (*uThixo or uQamata*) who is not directly involved in the everyday mundane life of the people and is approached through the ancestors. Thus, the ancestors are an important part of the people's belief systems and daily life, and are engaged

through rituals and other activities to maintain household and communal harmony, promote well-being, and to resolve problems related to health, evil, and fortune, among other things (Cocks, Dold, & Vetter 2012).

The amaXhosa values family ties and family members live closely together, with friends sometimes considered a part of the family circle. Their sense of community is also traditionally very deep and includes mutual support and sharing as expressed in the structures of the homestead, cooking and how meals are shared (Masina, 2000). This is captured by the widely employed notion of ubuntu associated with the core of the ethics and worldview of several African cultures. According to Masina (2000) among the amaXhosa, ubuntu is an integrated philosophical system that embodies cultural, economic, and social dynamics. It encapsulates both the material and spiritual aspects of being human. Ubuntu presents a unified, integrated, and interconnected view of human existence and this underlies the fundamental ways in which individuals are viewed as essentially a part of a community, from which they also draw existential value and meaning (Masina, 2000 ; Metz, 2014). It can be inferred from this and the numerous works on ubuntu that meaning in life among the amaXhosa would likely be tied to this comprehensive philosophy and the several cultural activities and values that are shaped and inspired by it.

Clothes and adornments signal marital status, age, and other aspects of social status. Traditionally, cattle indicated wealth and responsibility for them rested with men and boys, while women worked in the fields, and had domestic duties, including caring for the home (Ainslie, 2002). As with many African cultures, rites of passage are central to the amaXhosa culture, especially the initiation of boys into men. The initiation often includes some form of traditional education and, more importantly, circumcision. Circumcision is traditionally a sacred religious ritual which imbues boys with manhood status, giving them authority and power over women, uncircumcised men, and within the community (Froneman & Kapp, 2017). Boys who do not go

through initiation are stigmatized and sanctioned in several ways, including them not being able to marry, participate in cultural or community activities, inherit property, use the family name in certain situations, or socialize in taverns with other men (Froneman & Kapp, 2017). While aspects highlighted in this brief summary of the amaXhosa culture are still being practiced today, they have also evolved, taking new forms, meanings, and purposes as they interact with modernity and contextual socio-economic issues.

### **The Present Study**

Although there is extensive theoretical and empirical work on meaning in life as a component of well-being, there is minimal research from African contexts, including the context of the amaXhosa in Mthatha. The contextual information in the preceding section suggests the potential for such a study to yield insights on meaning in life. Also, considering the need for more bottom-up studies to further ground knowledge on meaning in life in actual lived experiences of ordinary people, this study sought to explore the understanding, experiences, and sources of meaning among the Xhosa-speaking adults living in Mthatha. The findings of this study are expected to demonstrate the importance of considering context and using bottom-up approaches in order to better understand how meaning in life is engendered in this specific context. This may, in turn, feed into the development of interventions to promote meaning in life and well-being more generally.

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study used a qualitative descriptive research design. Qualitative methods study phenomena from the perspective of the research participant and take into consideration the context in which the phenomena occur (Brink, Van der Walt, & Van Rensburg, 2012). A qualitative descriptive design describes a phenomenon as it is; it provides a comprehensive summary in everyday terms of specific experiences of individuals or groups of individuals

(Sandelowski, 2000). This design was deemed suitable for this study because it allowed the researchers to describe the understanding, experiences and sources of meaning for Xhosa speaking adults in Mthatha.

### **Participants**

The sample included adults aged 18 and above from the Xhosa-speaking community of Mthatha. Selection of participants was based on the following inclusion criteria: that they had been residents of Mthatha for five years at the time of study, they were adults aged 18 years of age or older, they were male or female, and were Xhosa-speaking from the amaXhosa culture.

The size of the sample was 11 participants, which is the point where data saturation was reached. The sample consisted of five males and six females with ages ranging between 25 and 62 years. The majority of the participants (six) were between the ages of 25 and 30, two were 41 years of age, and the rest were 31, 52 and 62 years of age, respectively. Thus, data was collected across more than one generation of adults. Three of the participants who were also students at tertiary institutions were unemployed. One was a pensioner and seven were employed and had completed education and training in the fields in which they were employed. These included two nurses, one social worker, and three medical officers.

### **Procedure and Data Gathering**

Prior to the commencement of the research, ethical approval was obtained from the North-West University Health Research Ethics Committee (NWU-HREC). In order to obtain ethics approval, the first author also sought goodwill permission from the gatekeepers via a permission letter (written in Xhosa and English) and in-person visits to the Speaker (head of ward councillors) at the King Sabatha Dalindyebo (KSD) Municipality in Mthatha, as well as community ward councillors of the two wards where data was gathered. Ward councillors, who can be male or female, are well respected in the communities. After permission was granted, the recruitment of participants began.

An advertisement was placed in schools, clinics, community halls, local shops, and churches after receiving permission from the relevant authorities of these venues. The advertisement included a phone number through which prospective participants could show interest by calling or by sending an SMS or WhatsApp message. Both the advertisement and the request letters to advertise the study were written in English and Xhosa to accommodate all participants or stakeholders involved in the study. A total of 11 prospective participants registered their interest by the deadline, three by phone call and eight sent messages via WhatsApp. These potential participants were asked questions about their age, residency in Mthatha, gender, first language and culture, to determine whether they met the inclusion criteria, which were also included in the advertisement. Their responses showed that they all met the criteria and were therefore all recruited to participate in the study. They were contacted by an independent person who is a social worker and a respected community member of Mthatha. The independent person explained the study to them, its objectives, the nature of their expected participation and the measures that would be taken to protect them from any kind of harm. Once it was established that they understood these and were willing to participate, the independent person obtained informed consent and made arrangements for the time and place for interviews.

The first author, who is a first language Xhosa-speaker and also fluent in English, conducted and audio-recorded the in-depth individual interviews. Interviews were done in Xhosa at a private place at participants' homes and lasted about 40 minutes each. The first author then transcribed the data with translation done while transcribing. An independent person, who is also fluent in both languages and not involved in the research, did a quality control check to ensure that the first author accurately transcribed and translated the interview data.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Ethics approval was obtained for this study from the Health Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the North-West University with Ethics Approval Number: NWU-00498-19-A1.

Participants gave written informed consent prior to participating in the study. They also consented to having their responses audio recorded. Participants were made aware that their participation was on a voluntary basis and that they could withdraw from the study for any reason without any negative consequences until the point of data analysis. Prior to the interview, participants were invited to alert the researcher should they feel a need to rest during the interview. All efforts were made to treat participants with respect. As a means of protecting the identities of the participants, numbers were allocated for each participant in the transcriptions. Participants were also given powdered soap as a token of appreciation for their participation in the study. This study was deemed a minimal risk study by the ethics committee.

### **Data Analysis**

The first author analysed the data using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013), with the second author acting as co-coder. No computer programs were used to analyse the data. Data analysis was done on the English translations of the interview transcripts. The six steps of data analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2013) were used to analyse data, namely:

familiarisation with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing, defining and naming themes, and writing up the report. The analysis of data was structured using the research objectives. This is because there was a logical movement in the research objectives which address the understanding, experiences, and sources of meaning in life. Three key interview questions were asked to specifically produce data on each of the objectives, namely: “Describe your understanding of what it means to live a meaningful life”; “Describe your experiences of a meaningful life”; and “What are the most important meaningful things in life for you? Why are these meaningful?”.

**Trustworthiness.** Trustworthiness in qualitative research is the degree of confidence in the collected data and interpretation, and pertains to the ways in which study quality is established (Connelly, 2016). To achieve trustworthiness, the research team employed strategies

in accordance with the established components of trustworthiness developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). These include credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability.

**Credibility.** Credibility addresses the level of confidence in the truth of the research findings, establishing whether they represent plausible information from the original data and correctly interpret the original views of participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The first author engaged with participants in the field until data saturation was reached. Familiarity with the research setting and context, fluency in Xhosa and English, and the time invested in building trust with participants further enhanced the ability to accurately capture participants' views. This, together with the time spent in the early stages of analysis familiarizing the coder with the data through reading and re-reading, enhanced the ability to interpret and make conclusions that are consistent with participants' original views. Additionally, coherence was checked by the appropriate panels, such as the Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Sciences (AUTHeR) Scientific Panel and the Health Research Ethics Committee of the North-West University.

Investigator triangulation is another strategy used in the present study to ensure credibility. This was achieved through coding and theme verification, whereby these and the data were sent to the second author who verified the work done by the first author.

**Dependability.** Result stability over time is central to dependability. One way to ensure dependability is through member-checking, where participants evaluate research findings, interpretations and conclusions to ensure that they are aligned with the data provided by the participants (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study, member-checking was used to receive feedback on themes, interpretation, and conclusions. These were checked with participants prior to writing up the research report to ensure that all relevant research findings accurately followed from the original information.

**Transferability.** This refers to the degree to which research results can be transferred to other settings and contexts with different respondents (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Thick



description is a key strategy for facilitating transferability judgement to potential users of the research. This allows other researchers to make comparisons and determine the extent to which findings are transferable across contexts (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013). Transferability in the present study was achieved through a detailed description of the participant profile, methodological processes, as well as the study context. These include a description of the study location (Mthatha, the KSD municipality) and key aspects of the amaXhosa culture.

***Confirmability.*** Confirmability refers to the extent to which the interpretations and conclusions of a study clearly derive from the data and are not figments of the researchers' imagination (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This requires an audit trail and transparency in reporting. In the present study, the authors made efforts to describe the steps taken, from the development to the reporting of this study, transparently and clearly. All documents and records from the beginning of the study have been safely kept throughout the period of study. These include initial drafts of the research proposal, communication with gatekeepers and research participants, advertisement of the research, field notes, data collected, data analysis, and interpretation of the findings. This allows for any aspects of the study and the report to be confirmed by other researchers.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The presentation of findings in this section follows the structure used during data gathering and data analysis. Thus, it is divided into three sections consistent with the three research objectives. These are understanding of meaning in life, experiences of meaning in life and sources of meaning in life. The themes that emerged pertaining to each objective are presented in the relevant sections with illustrative excerpts from the research data. These are then followed by discussions of the findings. Table 1 below shows each of the research objectives, the main interview question used to collect data relevant to the objective, and the themes that emerged from the data collected.

Table 1

*Research Objectives, Interview Questions, and Themes*

<b>Research Objective</b>	<b>Interview Question</b>	<b>Emerging Themes</b>
To explore the understanding of meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa	“Describe your understanding of what it means to live a meaningful life.”	Engaging with family; Sense of purpose and direction in life; Spiritual activities; Engaging livelihood; Extending oneself and generativity; Values and morality
To explore experiences of a meaningful life among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa	“Describe your experiences of a meaningful life.”	Critical self-knowledge and life pursuits; Fulfilling societal expectations; Challenges and resources
To explore the sources of meaning among Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, South Africa and why these sources are important	“What are the most meaningful things in life for you? Why are these meaningful?”	Values and growth; Religion; Education; Family (and faith community); Work

**Understanding Meaning in Life**

Participants were asked to describe their understanding of a meaningful life. The results are presented below.

**Engaging with family.** Family emerged as an important context and relationship underlying participants’ understanding of living a meaningful life. Some participants had relatively strong and explicit comments about family in their response to the question on their

understanding of meaning in life. For participants, having a family that is supportive, loving and offers moral guidance underlies their understanding of meaning in life. Moreover, being able to provide for one's family was also integral. This is illustrated in the following responses: *"To live with a loving family, who supports your decisions, able to tell you when you do wrong and right"* (Participant 1, 25-year old female). (Participant 2 31-year old female) said: *"Having family and providing for it"*. Like Participant 2, other participants also emphasized being able to provide for their children, siblings, and parents as indicating a meaningful life. As Participant 10 (28-year old male) puts it, *"...be able to send money home"*. Beyond support, spending time with family and the awareness of the position one occupies in the life of one's children was viewed as defining a meaningful life. This was more clearly expressed by Participant 2 who, in response to what she understood meaningful life to be, said: *"knowing that your child is looking up to you, this makes you grounded..., spend enough time with family - brothers and sisters"*.

**Discussion.** This theme suggests that participants make sense of their lives and define it in terms of, and in relation to, the entities and experiences that are important and central to their lives such as family. Particularly, the type of relationship they have with the family, the positions they occupy within the family, and their exchanges with the family, such as giving and receiving support and love, providing for one's family, and being role models, emerged in their responses. This is consistent with the observation by Van Tongeren et al. (2018) that cultural expressions of meaning in life are evident in daily human interactions which occur in varying social settings. These may include exchanges of services, goods, or marriages accompanied by the specific meanings that these exchanges bring to relationships (Van Tongeren et al., 2018). The present theme suggests that family is one such cultural expression of meaning within which human interaction and exchanges that shape the conception of meaning in life occur. Lambert et al. (2010) also identified family as an important facet of meaning in life. In the African context, the family is a very important unit. Makiwane, Gumede, Makoae, and Vawda (2017) argue that the

family has remained a fundamental well-being support unit in South African society despite changes in family structure. They observe that while new forms of support such as churches have diminished the support role of some extended families, the role of care remains critical in intergenerational families. Etieyibo (2020) extends this observation to suggest that in Africa, unlike in the West, family in both the traditional and modern sense is mostly extended as a network of relationships of both living and living-dead relatives who all have support obligations to ensure the well-being of the family (Etieyibo, 2020).

**Sense of purpose and direction in life.** The next theme that emerged for participants' understanding of a meaningful life was a sense of purpose and direction, clarity of pursuits, knowing what they want and who they are, and some sense of motivation. The following excerpts illustrate this theme: *"To wake up daily knowing what you will do for the day, a life with purpose"* (Participant 9, 52-year old male). *"To know where you are going, what you are, what will you do on a daily basis"* (Participant 3, 41-year old female, nurse). *"To know what you want in life, when you work you know what you are working for"* (Participant 8, 27-year old male). *"To live a life with direction, knowing what you will do from the morning"* (Participant 2, 31-year old female).

For some participants, knowing who you are constitutes meaning in life. For example, Participant 3's response cited above (*"what you are"*) was echoed by Participant 8, *"to know who you are"*. Participant 7 (41-year old female) added the realization of one's dreams to her response when she said that to her a meaningful life is to *"fulfil my dreams, do all I should for this to happen"*.

**Discussion.** Existential questions like "who am I?" and "where am I going?" are familiar to many people. These questions help people to discern the meaning and purpose of life in efforts towards self-actualization (Cavanaugh, 2017). It links to the element "purpose" in Martela and Steger's (2016) understanding of meaning in life, where purpose involves a sense of having core

goals, aims, and direction in life. Klinger (2012) supports this view by further stating that humans are involved in goal-seeking behaviour which creates a sense of purpose. Steger (2019) also observed that purpose is the act of possessing an inspiration or a sense of direction.

**Spiritual activities.** Some participants particularly referred to worshipping and praising God when describing their understanding of what a meaningful life means to them. Participant 4 (30-year old male), for example, noted that a meaningful life is to “*worship God as I believe all I have is because of God*”. Participant 6, a 30-year old female, said, “*praising God for the life that he gave me*”. Thus, worship of God both in itself and as an act of gratitude for God’s gifts were perceived by these participants as being a meaningful life.

One participant highlighted participating in church and community as part of her understanding of a meaningful life. She said, “*involve yourself in community matters and associate oneself to church*” (Participant 5, 62-year old female).

**Discussion.** African people often share a spirituality centered on God and this helps them to find meaning and provides them with coping mechanisms that help them to withstand and overcome adversities. African culture looks at everything as having a spiritual explanation (Mdimbo, 2016). Both the spiritual practice associated with religion, and the faith community where one can build relationships with like-minded individuals, emerged as important to participants’ understanding of meaning in life. Literature more often associate these with the sources and experiences of meaning in life. Steger and Frazier (2005), for example, showed that religion often creates a sense of meaning in life and consequently well-being. Krause (2018) found that those who participate in worship services enjoy spiritual support, resulting in more humility and higher likelihood of forgiving others, and a greater sense of meaning in life. Thus, worship and participation in a worship community does seem to underlie meaning in life for many people. Moreover, it is consistent with the cultural value placed on community among the amaXhosa cultural group and other South African cultures. In this regard, community can be

manifested in different ways. While community is often associated with a more literal meaning in terms of the bond among people located in the same geographical space and sharing a specific culture, it could also manifest in affiliations such as Christian churches or other religious gatherings, particularly in towns and cities where people are likely to be away from their kinship and other communities. In their study of subjective well-being in South Africa, for example, Blaauw and Pretorius (2013) found religion to be a key determinant of happiness and a sense of life satisfaction, which is linked to meaning in life. Nell (2014) also found religion to be among the important variables that university students in South Africa associate with meaning in life.

**Engaging livelihood.** Participants associated work and earning a living with their understanding of a meaningful life. This is, for example, reflected in the response, *“to wake up and go to work and earn money”* (Participant 3, 41-year old female). Another participant said, *“to be able to afford living on my own, working and... being able to send money home”* (Participant 10, 28-year old). This theme overlaps with the sense of purpose and direction where participants drew a connection between purpose and work, for example: *“To know what you want in life, when you work you know what you are working for”* (Participant 8, 27-year old male). The theme also intersected with the theme on family for some participants, as earning an income allowed participants to support their loved ones.

**Discussion.** The results show that the ability to work and earn money – whether to achieve independence and autonomy or for other reasons – shaped the understanding of meaning in life for some participants. This resonates with studies such as those conducted by Steger and Dik (2009) and Zhang et al. (2019) which showed that work or career is often fundamental to a sense of meaning in life. Further support for this finding comes from Dzokoto et al. (2019) who found that work-related meaning was an important aspect of a life well-lived or the “good life” among Ghanaian adults. Delle Fave et al. (2013) also found that work is an integral domain of meaning in life across samples from different countries, including South Africa.

**Extending oneself and generativity.** While this theme frames a desire and willingness to give and receive support similar to that discussed in relation to family, this theme particularly addresses participants' understanding of a meaningful life as one which allows an individual to reach out to others beyond family. Participant 4, for example, views a meaningful life as one in which he is able to *“go help people those that need help... help where I can with those that are poor or in need”* (30-year old male). Another participant observed, *“To not just live for yourself but also for others, help those in need, don't be happy alone ... live a positive life and have a positive impact on others”* (Participant 6, 30-year old female). A life that is selfless, generous and of positive impact is considered meaningful by participants.

**Discussion.** Being selfless and able to assist those in need can be a fulfilling experience. As Baumeister et al. (2013) observed, meaning can be found through giving to others, serving a greater good or something greater than oneself. This theme also may make better sense when understood contextually. As Wissing et al. (2014) argued, people's views about meaning are influenced by their context and the situation. It is a common practice within the amaXhosa culture for the one who is working or educated to assist with the burden of financial constraints at home and provide for those in a lesser position. Notably, this does not end with the family. *Ubuntu* is naturally practiced based on the understanding that a person cannot only live for him- or herself but should contribute to the success of others as it was done for them. *Ubuntu* means that people are people through other people (Mugumbathe & Nyaguru, 2013). Thus, being able to give and support others is not simply a matter of external acts of kindness but a deeper matter of identity, relationship, individual and communal well-being and sustenance. This is also captured in the meaning and relatedness well-being model of Wissing, Schutte and Wilson Fadji (2019), where the authors posit that meaning and relatedness are inextricably interwoven as core facets of well-being.

**Values and morality.** In participants' responses, a meaningful life also involved one where family is able to "*tell you when you do wrong and right*" (Participant 1, 25-year old female). This moral dimension to participants' understanding of meaning in life is further extended by their suggestion that a meaningful life is one where they act morally. This is exemplified in the following excerpts: "*To be able to do things according to the right way or as expected*" (Participant 5, 62-year old female) and "*To do things that you should be doing*" (Participant 11, 24-year old male). These show that doing the right or expected thing, what one ought to do, is important to a meaningful life for participants.

**Discussion.** To act morally is to act in accordance with acceptable or prescribed norms and standards of right and wrong, good and bad (Sverdlik & Rechter, 2020). The sense that one is on the right path or that one is taking the right action or living the right way, despite challenges, underscores the idea of meaning in life for these participants. Metz (2016) argued that the search for meaning in life can promote moral action. However, not much work has been done on the connection between meaning and morality, as stated by Kipke and R  ther (2019) who observed that while scholars assume a relationship between morality and meaning, not much work has been done to fully understand this relationship and whether or not it exists.

### **Experiences of a Meaningful Life**

Participants were asked to describe their experiences of a meaningful life. Three themes emerged from their responses.

**Critical self-knowledge and life pursuits.** Participants expressed that they experienced their lives as meaningful at times when they were aware of who they really are and what their purpose in life is, and when they engaged in life pursuits that were deeply meaningful to them. This emerged in different contexts and situations, such as living for God, helping others, self-knowledge/identity, doing God's will, and doing the right thing.



For example, Participant 2 suggests that living for God created a meaningful life, perhaps, because of how this experience benefitted her, such as in saving her from peer pressure and disease: *“Living for God, this helped me get grounded, saved me from peer pressure, saved me from diseases”* (Participant 2, 31-year old female). Participant 9 appears to find purpose in obedience to God’s will, serving others but also in ensuring that the dreams of one’s parents or ancestors are achieved. He said, *“doing Gods will, live for others... fulfilling dreams of your parents and or ancestors, depends on what God wants a person to do: like being healthy....”* (Participant 9, 52-year old male). As the excerpt below suggests, for another participant identity or the experience of knowing who she is, her background and direction in life made life meaningful. She said, *“Knowing who you are....., knowing where you come from and are going”* (Participant 7, 41-years old female).

An age dimension was highlighted by one participant, he noted that, *“In the past it was to pass at school, it differs based on age, do the right things within the appropriate age”* (Participant 10, 28-year old male). This participant suggests that there are moral expectations associated with age and that his experiences of meaning in life occurred while acting in accordance to this. Thus, meaning in life was experienced differently at different stages.

**Discussion.** Again, the sense of purpose is shown to be central to experiences of meaning in life, while being accompanied by critical self-knowledge and awareness. Irrespective of the details provided, when participants felt that they were living a purposeful life through doing God’s will, living for God, serving others or doing the right thing, the experience was described as meaningful.

**Fulfilling societal expectations.** Participants’ description of their experiences of meaningful life also pointed to lifestyle and relationships as markers of these experiences. Participant 2 (31-year old female), for example, responded, *“behaving as expected and being a good mother and a role model to my son, also enabled me to be a role model in my community*

*that showed how a single person behaves who is not yet married*". Here lifestyle as a single mother, including her ability to behave in a manner that is consistent with expectations, made life meaningful and positioned her as a role model for her children and community.

For another participant, meaning was experienced when living peacefully and in community with others by joining imibutho or stokvels. Stokvels are savings or investment societies or groups where members contribute an agreed-upon amount on a regular basis and receive a lump sum later or other goods and benefits that come from their contributions. The 62-year old female, Participant 5, said, *"To be able to live peacefully with others, so you can be able impact in society, keep yourself with societies (imibutho or stokvels) and church so you can communicate and have fellowship with people"*. Participant 5 indicated that being part of such associations and the church community as well as living a life in peace with others resulted in the experience of a meaningful life. For Participant 11, this further requires that one lives rightly and associates only to good people. He said, *"Live according to the right way, surround yourself with good people, take yourself away from those that are bad influences..., do things according to the right law of society"* (Participant 11, 24-year old male).

For Participant 8, the meaningful life is experienced in attending to the emotional and material needs of others as indicated in the following excerpt: *"Help others or those that are in need, friends and family, children in orphanages, abandoned children.... Helping friends or family when they have emotional problems"* (Participant 6, 30-year old female).

**Discussion.** This theme, with its emphasis on community and moral responsibility, further brings the importance of context to light. Participants' responses emphasized the importance of contributing to others in the wider community. It shows that it is not enough for one to be a part of a community or a group, it is important to also act in accordance with the expectations of the community with regard to one's social status or role and position, such as being a mother and being unmarried. The *Ubuntu* philosophy among the Xhosas is not only

about communal support, it also has implications for how one exists and behaves within the social relations that make up one's community (Mangena, 2016). Also, this theme further highlights the link between morality and meaning in life. Social expectations on individual or group behaviour and choices are important, especially in a communal context where specific norms have evolved (Sverdlik & Rechter, 2020).

**Challenges and resources.** Some participants viewed life as having several challenges and, in their experience, a meaningful life is not exempt from such challenges. This is exemplified in the following responses: *“a meaningful life has ups and downs but family support is what helps me together with sacrifice and patience”* (Participant 4, 30-year old male). *“When you get married you get children, a husband and a home, this also comes with challenges posed by the husband and you experience life in marriage, death in family exposes you to big challenges”* (Participant 3, 41-year old female). *“At school I was experiencing challenges that I did not expect and my family gave me full support at times when I was not able to go to school”* (Participant 1, 25-year old female).

**Discussion.** While previous themes illustrated that meaningful life experiences often came from generally pleasant experiences or desirable outcomes, this theme shows that challenges and difficulties may also contribute to meaningful experiences. Machell, Kashdan, Short and Nezelek (2014) note that people's daily experiences influence their perceived sense of meaning. Some of these experiences can be challenging or painful. Moreover, as Park and Folkman (1997) highlighted, meaning-making can also assist in dealing with stressful and painful situations. This is also supported by Batthyany and Russo-Netzer (2014) who view meaning as an important intellectual resource that can shed light on events of life. Meaning in life may allow people to find strength and insights in both bad and good experiences. It enables people to gain perspectives from present situations, and focus on worthwhile and valuable

futures (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). Individuals need the support of others to weather the storms of life and this can instil experiences of meaning in their lives (Agulana, 2010).

### **Sources of Meaning in Life**

The results generally show a connection between participants' stated sources of meaning and their descriptions of their understanding and experiences of meaning in life. Themes that emerged on sources of meaning in life will now be described and discussed.

**Values and growth.** For some participants, meaning in life comes from the principles and values they hold. For Participant 1, for example, meaning in life comes from being "*honest to oneself, loving others, honest to others ...don't look down on people...*" (25-year old female). For this participant, treating others with dignity and esteem were principles that created meaning in life.

For another participant, advancement in life is a value that makes life meaningful. Referring to the achievement of goals, he said, "*these help show progress in a person's life or are significant of progress which makes life meaningful*" (Participant 10, 28-year old male).

Another example of values and principles as sources of meaning in life is in the response of Participant 11, "*belief and abiding by your belief because most beliefs guide you to do good, have good relationships with others*" (24-year old male). This excerpt points to the importance of living a principled life, one that is grounded in personal beliefs and moral expectations.

**Discussion.** Principles and values are found within African communities or societies and contribute to making life meaningful. Dolamo (2013) touches on these values and principles and states that they are embedded within the concept of Ubuntu. He states that African communities and societies living in accordance with traditional values and principles adhere to the dictates of Ubuntu which is considered the core of human existence. Ubuntu entails core values and principles namely understanding, forgiveness, helpfulness, compassion, caring (*ukukhathala*), respect (*ukuhlonipha*), and sharing. It is associated with characteristics such as wisdom, hard

work, fidelity, humility and Godliness (Dolamo, 2013). Meaning not only involves values, but also expressing the values in interaction with others (Persson & Savulescu, 2019). Research shows that people feel the presence of meaning when an event makes sense because it fits into their preconceived beliefs and expectations (King & Hicks, 2009; Van Zyl, 2013). Moreover, these beliefs and values shape the way an individual sees the world and their general orientations towards life. According to Idang (2015), values in African culture are seen as convictions to live with or at times die for. He further states that values have a way of permeating every aspect of human life. Values of one individual might differ from another since people's conception of reality are not the same. People make choices in life and society forces values on individuals about what is good, right, and acceptable. When a person does not conform to the values within that society, they are called to order by the members of society or community. The amaXhosa society is governed by a set of values such as honesty, honouring others, spirituality (knowing God), and giving back (Idang, 2015). These values are passed on from generation to generation, creating order and harmony (Idang, 2015). The importance of values, especially in the African context, explains its associations with meaning in life.

**Religion.** The naming of God as a source of meaning for the majority of participants was unequivocal. Participants also went ahead to state why they considered God a source of meaning in their lives. To illustrate, consider the following excerpts: *"It is God.... Because God means the world to me, because of his love, He is the source of my energy and inspiration"* (Participant 2, 31-year old female). *"am where I am because of God"* (Participant 4, 30-year old male). *"Firstly, God placed me where I am and had a reason and I should fulfil what he created me for so I use the talents he gave me to do so.... what is important is to fulfil Gods will"* (Participant 9, 52-year old male).

The reasons why God is a source of meaning include God being the source of other realities such as one's existence, energy, inspiration, one's position in life and a sense of

purpose. (Participant 1 25-year old female) expressed that she cares deeply about God and God is seemingly the most important aspect in her life. It should be noted that none of these participants in their responses couched God in any particular religious or spiritual tradition, they simply referred to God. However, the religion most commonly practiced in the specific community is Christianity. Christianity was also suggested by reference to “church” in participants’ responses.

**Discussion.** The specificity of the majority of the references to God rather than faith, church or a specific religion as a source of meaning in life is interesting. While some studies make reference to religion as an institution or community or to spiritual practices such as worship (Krause, 2018), participants in this study viewed religion as a source of meaning more in terms of an individual and personal relationship with God. A positive association between religion and meaning and purpose in life has been demonstrated by Galek, et al. (2015). Their study showed that Christian believers in Britain believed that a supernatural being (God) was involved in their lives, which contributed to their experiences of meaning and purpose in life. Mdimbo (2016) further explains the connection between meaning and God by stating that African people view God as the source and sustainer of life. African people share a spirituality centered on God and this helps them find meaning and provides them with coping mechanisms that help them withstand and overcome adversities. African society looks at everything as having a spiritual explanation (Mdimbo, 2016).

**Education.** Several participants mentioned education as a source of meaning in life and went on to give specific reasons why this was the case. For Participant 2, it was about knowledge and the ability to provide: *“Education.... education broadens my knowledge and helps me progress at work and provide for my children”* (Participant 2, 31-year old female). For Participant 5, education was named as a source of meaning because it empowers one to do what one wants in life. She said, *“Education, because you cannot do what you want in life without an education”* (62-year old female).

Similarly, Participant 11 believes education to be a source of meaning because it makes it easier to navigate life in the world today: *“Education because where we live in this world you need an education or life will be difficult”* (Participant 11, 24-year old male). Education is a source of meaning seemingly because it facilitates some of the aspects that previously emerged as meaningful to participants, such as the ability to provide and achieve one’s goals, purpose and a sense of advancement in life.

**Discussion.** Education is generally a highly prized asset in which families and governments invest much. This is because the nature of modern society makes it difficult to rise, and for many people, to earn a living and alleviate family poverty without some level of education or formal training. In light of this, it makes sense that education is perceived as a source of meaning by participants – it empowers them or enables them to achieve their dreams or purposes in life. This can be related to the social context of the amaXhosa who believe that to move up in life, education is needed. Mason (2013) also found that education was a source of meaning in a study among South African students from different backgrounds who identified education as a source of meaning in life because it enables them to improve their living standards, give back to their families and to show appreciation (Mason, 2013). Nell (2014) also found that students derived meaning in life from future-oriented sources, such as learning, faith, pursuit of goals, determination for personal growth and development.

**Family (and faith community).** Family emerged as generally important to most participants and as a source of meaning in life for some. Some participants also mentioned church alongside family. Some examples include: *“My family... because this is my future, I work for them so I can provide for them”* (Participant 3, 41-year old female). *“Relationships with family, spending time with family”* (Participant 10, 28-year old male). Participant 10 particularly identified the relationship and time spent with family as being a source of meaning. Participant 3

named family as source of meaning because it is what defines her future and gives purpose or motivation to her work.

In other responses, consistent support and the role of family in shaping character, growth and being hopeful were cited as reasons why family is a source of meaning in life. This is shown in the following responses: *“Family, my parents, church, because my family has always been there for me and were supportive”* (Participant 4, 30-year old male). *“Family, church, being in Christ, because they keep me grounded and make me not to be selfish to others, encourage me to improve myself and always have hope”* (Participant 6, 30-year old female). These responses also mentioned church and spirituality as playing the same role as family, especially for Participant 6, in creating a meaningful life.

**Discussion.** The centrality of family to meaning in life is evidenced in every section of the results of this study. As discussed previously, at the heart of the role of family is its relationship character, how it shapes the individual and the exchanges of support and values that occur within it. Additionally, other networks or affiliations such as church also seem to play similar roles to family. Part of the value of family and religious communities to meaning in life is shared values, goals, attitudes, and satisfaction that produce meaning in life (Stavrova & Luhmann, 2016). Wissing and Delle Fave (2013) observed that the core source of meaning is positive relationships and connections. This is often experienced within family and the wider community. Family as a source of meaning in life is strongly supported by literature (Delle Fave et al., 2013; Lambert et al., 2010). The family is a very important unit in the African context. Makiwane, Gumede, Makoe, and Vawda (2017) argue that the family has remained a fundamental well-being support unit in South African society despite changes in family structure. They observe that while new forms of support such as churches have diminished the support role of some extended families, the role of care remains critical even in intergenerational families.



**Work.** Only a few participants referred to work as a source of meaning. For example, Participant 3 mentioned work in a list of sources that included education and family, and mentioned that work was a source of meaning because it enables her to provide for family. Participant 8, on the other hand, said, “*where you work gives you a meaningful life*” (27-year old male). This suggests that one’s place of work or maybe the type of work one does can be a source of meaning in life. Despite not being a strongly supported theme in the present data on sources of meaning, it is significant because of the ways in which work and earning a living has appeared in previously discussed sections.

**Discussion.** While work did not emerge strongly as a source of meaning in the current study, it does show work to be associated to meaning in life in very significant ways, including how people experience and understand a meaningful life. Studies tend to approach work in relation to meaning in life through a focus on meaning in work. Allan, Douglass, Duffy and McCarty (2016) and Ward and King (2017), for example, show that meaningful work can reduce stress and contribute to the sense of meaning in life. Zhang, Chen, Chen and Schlegel (2019) also found that meaning in work predicted meaning in life in a Chinese context. However, Steger (2019, p. 169-181) indicates the lack of sufficient and significantly scoped empirical work that offer more nuanced and dynamic understanding of the relationship between meaning at work and meaning in life, despite the fact that there is a clear connection between the two. Steger (2019, p. 169-181) further argues that we can, currently, only rely on theory to understand this relationship. Meaning in life scholars contend that people need to be able to see their work as worthwhile or having fundamental value to experience it as meaningful (Steger, 2019). Steger (2019) further notes that work is a way through which people understand themselves and their lives, and thus is linked to meaning in life.

### **Limitations and Recommendations**

This study which explores meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape of South Africa contributes to research within the field of Positive Psychology. However, it is important to note that it is not without limitations. This research is based on the views of 11 participants and one cannot assume that all Xhosa-speaking adults understand and experience meaning in the very same way. The participants' ages ranged from 18 years to 62 years, of which some were students, employed, about to start a family, retired, and all residents of Mthatha. This may be different for individuals in the rural areas surrounding Mthatha. Therefore, while the study is informative, the findings cannot be generalised to all Xhosa-speaking adults. Future researchers should investigate the same topic in other Xhosa-speaking samples, bringing in both rural- and urban-based adults in order to develop a more in-depth understanding.

Semi-structured open-ended questions were used to collect data during the individual interviews. Future studies may also apply other qualitative techniques, such as focused group discussions (FGDs) to further elicit dynamics that one-on-one interviews did not show. A mixed methods approach, such as a sequential exploratory mixed method design (Creswell, 2014), is further recommended for future research, as it will allow qualitative findings on meaning in life among the sampled population to be tested against a wider Xhosa-speaking population using quantitative techniques.

### **Conclusion**

The understanding, experiences and sources of meaning amongst Xhosa-speaking adults was explored with the aim of finding out what constitutes a meaningful life in this group. It is clear from the findings that the cognitive and experiential aspects as well as sources of meaning in life are linked. This can be seen in overlapping themes such as family, God/religion, relationships, earning an income/work, and purpose. Engaging with the family, having a sense of

purpose and direction, spiritual activities, working, extending oneself/generativity, and values and morality were found to shape how participants understood meaning in life. Meaningful life was experienced in situations that allowed for self-awareness, in lifestyle choices and relationships that met societal expectations, and in the experiences of challenges and resources adopted when faced with difficult situations. Related to these were important sources of meaning in life such as values and growth, religion, education, family, and work. While the findings were consistent with existing theory and research on meaning in life, the study also highlighted contextual dynamics to what constitutes meaning in life and how this is experienced. Some universal themes emerged, such as the importance of family, generativity, work/earning a living, education, having a sense of purpose, and values for meaning in life. The importance of religion and faith communities are not commonly found in Western literature, but echoes other research on meaning in life and other facets of well-being in African contexts. The current study did not really elicit facets that are unique to the amaXhosa culture when compared to other indigenous African cultures. These have implications for psychological interventions targeted at enhancing meaning in life and well-being more generally. Specifically, these findings show that a cultural and contextual understanding combined with an individual's personalised world view must form the basis of such interventions. The study reinforces that the individual should be understood in context, taking aspects such as culture and sociodemographic factors into consideration (Appiah, Wilson Fadji, Wissing, & Schutte, 2020).

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### Section 3

#### Summary, Reflection, and Conclusions

##### Summary

Meaning is viewed as a crucial resource for human functioning, striving, and flourishing. Meaning links objects and ideas to each other in a predictable and relatively stable manner from a language perspective, but also and foremost for purposes of this study, denotes values and what is most important to people in their lives (Batthyany & Russo-Netzer, 2014). The aim of study was to explore meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. The research focused on how Xhosa-speaking adults understand meaning, their experiences of meaning and their sources of meaning in life. This study utilized a basic descriptive qualitative research design. Eleven participants were recruited and a semi-structured open-ended interview schedule was used to collect data for the study. The interviews were conducted in Xhosa and translated into English during transcription. Data was analysed using thematic analysis.

The results were presented in themes. In terms of participants' understanding of meaning in life, themes included family, a sense of purpose and direction, spiritual activities, engaging livelihood, extending oneself and generativity, and values and morality. In terms of participants' experiences of a meaningful life, themes included critical self-knowledge and life pursuits, fulfilling societal expectations, and challenges and resources. Themes related to sources of meaning in life included values and growth, religion, education, family (and faith community) and work. Most of these findings were consistent with or supported by literature in varying degrees. It is interesting that the results dovetail to a great extent with what is found in western and multi-country studies (e.g., Delle Fave, Brdar, Freire, Vella-Brodrick, & Wissing, 2011). This may show the more universal aspects of experienced meaning and its sources. It may also be that these similarities are more typical in urban areas. However, the spiritual connectedness

that was highlighted in the present study as a quality linked to meaningful experiences, is more typical in the African context than in Western studies. It is recommended that the values and beliefs of a cultural group need to be considered by researchers and practitioners.

### **Reflection on the Relevance of the Study**

The findings of the present study are useful since there is limited research that explores meaning in life within the black South African context. Existing research is often based on a top-down approach influenced by Western cultural views. Given that previous research discovered that the African cultural context is characterised by valuing social harmony, related values need to be taken into account in understanding how specific groups in this context make meaning of their lives (Wissing, Potgieter, Guse, Khumalo, & Nel, 2014).

The sparsity of bottom-up inductive studies on meaning in suggests that further exploration on this topic needs to be conducted amongst African cultures. This is particularly important since there is evidence that culture, context, and situations influence people's understanding and experiences of meaning in life (Wissing, Khumalo, & Chigeza, 2014). Context and the presenting life situation (such as time, place, language and histories as situational factors) influence how people understand themselves, the world and how they fit into it, what gives meaning to their lives and the purposes and goals they strive for. The current study addressed the existing gap by exploring the cognitive and experiential components of meaning in life among Xhosa-speaking adults.

### **Personal Reflection**

This journey has been long since the day I started in 2017 to do a Master of Arts in Positive Psychology degree. When I made my plans, I was under the impression that I would have completed my studies by now. I started this journey 13 days after I had a mastectomy done. I took the courage and decided not to give up and to go ahead with my plans to understand more about Positive Psychology. I learned very soon in class that life is a dance between the positives

and the negatives. This meant a lot to me on a personal level, and became my other life support in a very challenging time, after God and my family.

As I went through my study program, I looked forward to learning more about what makes people and communities thrive amidst difficulty. This gave my life more meaning as it made me understand that it was not about me – these incidents of life occur without a warning and that life goes on. I learned along the way to count my blessings every day and name them one by one, and it became clear to me in this journey that my positives outweighed my negatives. I got the feeling that I was as normal a human being as I could possibly be.

This research was a personal interest to me as I wanted to also know and understand what gives life meaning to people in the amaXhosa-context, as this is the culture that I grew up and live in. In this challenging time of my life, I was also trying to understand meaning in life on a personal level. I found that participants did not find it easy to talk about the topics. This could be because it is not always considered appropriate to share private matters more openly in this cultural context.

The various steps I needed to take in order to get permission to collect data was a task that was challenging and daunting at times. However, I experienced these processes to be constructive, as it helped me to plan the study in detail, making sure that ethics standards are met.

The data collection process was strenuous and time sensitive. Coding the data, identifying patterns, and developing themes was interesting for me and developed my analytical abilities. Streamlining the data into only a few themes was challenging since the data gathered was so insightful that I wanted to include the complete narratives of each participant. Discussing the potential themes with my study leader helped me tremendously to focus on the essential findings and rework the themes accordingly.

Finally, this journey has improved my learning and developed my personal capacities as a researcher. I am grateful towards my participants for the enlightening information. They awarded me an opportunity to contribute to scientific research that will inform researchers and practitioners, and in that way benefit others.

### **Conclusion**

The understanding, experiences, and sources of meaning amongst Xhosa-speaking adults was explored with the aim of finding what constitutes a meaningful life for participants from this cultural group. It was evident that for most participants, spirituality played an important role in living a meaningful life. This was evident when asked about understanding, experiences, and what the sources were. God was found to be a constant component in living a meaningful life.

It was also evident that family or family support was an important component of a meaningful life in this context. Providing for others was another aspect that came out strongly in this group. The content of participants' responses often reflected an ultimate goal of either supporting the needs of others, or living a life of value while maintaining healthy relationships amongst family members and upholding community expectations. Relatedly, purpose also came out as a key facet of meaning, as it enabled participants to fulfil their dreams and live a life that impacts the lives of others. A sense of purpose was often derived from work-related pursuits and education because they provided an avenue to extend oneself and provide support to significant others. Surprisingly considering the collectivistic cultural orientation of this group, self-awareness and critical self-knowledge were identified as important in participants' experiences of meaning, indicating the importance of understanding the individual in context in well-being research.

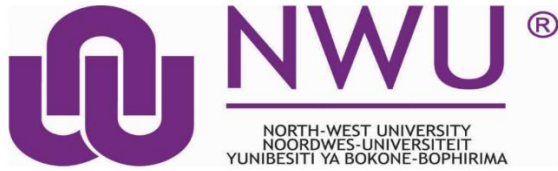
This research adds to the various studies available about meaning in life, with a specific focus on the understudied amaXhosa-context. More research is needed in the Xhosa-speaking



community and in other African communities to gain a nuanced understanding of meaning in life that is culturally and contextually sensitive.

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## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE Addendum A**

I am Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi a student at North-West University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for me to complete my Master of Arts in Positive Psychology. The research aims at exploring the experience, understanding and sources of meaning in life amongst Xhosa speaking adults in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape. The interview will take about 40 minutes of your time. Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

### **Instructions:**

1. Kindly respond to all questions
2. The interview schedule consists of 3 sections.
3. Mark with an “X” where relevant

NB: All information gathered will be kept confidential.

### **Section 1: Demographical information**

#### **1.1 Age**

Please indicate your present age

#### **1.2 Gender**

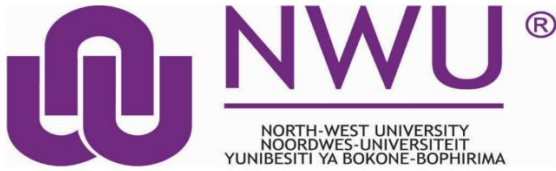
Male	
Female	

### **Interview questions**

- 1. Describe your understanding of what it means to live a meaningful life.**
- 2. Describe your experiences of a meaningful life.**
- 3. What are the most important and meaningful things in life for you. Why are these meaningful?**

It has been a pleasure interviewing you. I am willing to answer any questions that you might have for me.

Thank-you.



## **Ishedyuli yodliwano-ndlebe**

## **Isihlomelo A**

Igama lam ngu Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi umfundi kwi Yunivesithi yase North-West. Ndenza uphando olunejongo yokuhlola amava, indlela yokuqonda kwaye nezinto ezibalulekileyo ezenza ubomi bubenentsingiselo phakathi kwabantu abadala abathetha ulwimi lwesixhosa base Mthatha Empuma Koloni. Oluphande liyinxalenye yezinto ezifunekayo ukuze ndigqibe izifundo zam kwisi Danga se Masters kwi Positive Psychology.

Oludliwano ndlebe lizakuthatha imizuzu egama shumi amane exesha lakho.

Ndiyabulela ngoncedo lwakho.

## **Imiyalelo**

1. Ndicela uphendule yonke imibuzo
2. Ishedyuli yodliwano-ndlebe inamacandelo amabini
3. Phawula ngo ‘x’ apho kufanelekileyo

NB: Olulwazi lonke lakugcinwa liyimfihlelo.

## **Icandelo1: Ulwazi ngokwabantu**

### **1.1 Iminyaka**

**Chaza iminyaka yakho**

### **1.2 Isini**

Ndoda	
Mfazi	

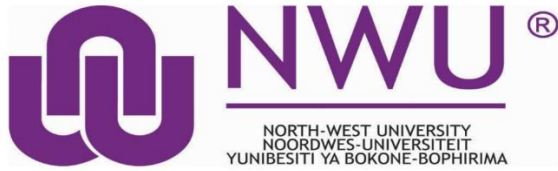
**Icandelo 2:****Imibuzo yodliwani-ndlebe**

- 1. Ndicela ucacise ngokwakho ukuqonda ukuba kuthetha ukuthini ukuphila ubomi obunentsingiselo?**
- 2. Ndicela ucacise awakho amava ngobomi obunentsingiselo.**
- 3. Ingaba zeziphi ezona zinto ezibalulekileyo ezinentsingiselo ebomini bakho? Kutheni ezizinto zinentsingiselo ebomini bakho?**

Kubeyinyweba ukudlanindlebe nawe.

Ndikulungele ukuphendula nayiphi na imibuzo osenokubanayo.

Enkosi.



## **Addendum B**

18 Sabelo Pama Qgwetha Crescent

Kuyasa

Mthatha

5100

Dear Sir/Madam

### **RE: REQUEST TO PLACE A RESEARCH ADVERTISEMENT ON YOUR NOTICE BOARD**

My name is Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi, I am doing a Master's degree in Positive Psychology at the North-West University-Potchefstroom campus. I am required to conduct a research study as a requirement to obtain the degree.

The aim of the study is to explore experiences of meaning in life amongst Xhosa-speaking adults in Mthatha.

I hereby request the permission to place a research advertisement on your notice board.

Kind regards

Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi

0761641361





### **Addendum C: RESEARCH STUDY ADVERTISEMENT**



## **PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR A RESEARCH STUDY**

My name is Lynette Wyatt-Mgobozi. I am doing a Master's degree in Positive Psychology at the North-West University- Potchefstroom Campus. I humbly request your assistance as a participant. I am conducting a research study as part of my degree. The aim of the present study is to explore how Xhosa-speaking adults, in Mthatha Eastern Cape, understand and experience meaning in life.

Participants must:

- Be residents of Mthatha for past 5 years
- Be 18 years and older
- Home language must be isiXhosa
- Both genders allowed

If you are interested to participate in the study, please call or text Ms on Sibongile Gqamane on 0721997795.