Young adult males' experiences of relationships with older persons in an economically deprived community in the North West Province

P Monnapula-Mazabane

20155115

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Supervisor: Prof. V. Roos

April 2014

NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 1.Strategies and application

Table 2.Themes and subthemes that emerged from the data

Figure 1. A grindingstone

Figure 2. A three-legged pot with utensils that were used in the past

Figure 3. A kraal indicating awareness of the past

PREFACE

The candidate chose to write an article consequently that it can be submitted to the **Journal of Intergenerational Relationships** as the chosen research topic is in line with the aim and scope of the journal. The **Journal of Intergenerational Relationships (JIR)** acts as forum for scholars, practitioners, policy makers, educators, and advocates who aim to stay up-to-date of the latest research on intergenerational relationships, practice methods and policy initiatives

JIR typically publishes articles whose content addresses intergenerational relationships evidenced in intergenerational practice, policy and research. Intergenerational relationships occur in familial and non-familial settings and involve interaction that demonstrates positive and negative interactions. For this reason the journal was selected for publication as this article focuses on adults' and young adults' motivations to show respect in intergenerational relationships. In an attempt to get an in-depth understanding of interactions in intergenerational relationships the findings can be applied for the development of programs for practice purposes.

INTENDED JOURNAL AND GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

This dissertation will be submitted to the *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships* for possible publication.

Instruction to Authors

Research-Based Papers

- Include relevant literature, research question(s), methodology, and results.

- Discuss implications for practice, policy, and further research in an emerging multidisciplinary field of study.

- Include conceptual, theoretical, and/or empirical content.

Manuscript Length: The manuscript may be approximately **15-20 typed pages** double-spaced (approximately **5000 words including references and abstract**). Under special conditions, a paper with 6000 words could be considered.

Manuscript Style: References, citations, and general style of manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the APA Publication Manual, 6th ed. Cite in the text by author and date (Smith, 1983) and include an alphabetical list at the end of the article. (*www.apa.org*).

Manuscript Preparation: All parts of the manuscript should be typewritten, double-spaced, with margins of at least one inch on all sides. Number manuscript pages consecutively throughout the paper. Authors should also supply a shortened version of the title suitable for the running head, not exceeding 50 character spaces. Each article should be summarized in an abstract of not more than 100 words. Avoid abbreviations, diagrams, and reference to the text in the abstract.

Cover Page: *Important* - indicating the article title plus:

- an introductory footnote with authors' academic degrees, professional titles, affiliations, mailing addresses, and any desired acknowledgment of research support or other credit.

Second "title page": Enclose an additional title page. Include the title again plus:

- An ABSTRACT not longer than 100 words. Below the abstract, provide 3-5 key words for bibliographic access, indexing, and abstracting purposes.

Preparation of Tables, Figures, and Illustrations: Illustrations submitted (line drawings, halftones, photos, photomicrographs, etc.) should be clean originals or digital files. Digital files are recommended for highest quality reproduction and should follow these guidelines.

- 300 dpi or higher

- Sized to fit on journal page

- EPS, TIFF, or PSD format only

- Submitted as separate files

Tables and Figures: Tables and figures (illustrations) should not be embedded in the text, but should be included as separate sheets or files. A short descriptive title should appear above each table with a clear legend and any footnotes suitably identified below. All units must be included. Figures should be completely labeled, taking into account necessary size reduction. Captions should be typed, double-spaced, on a separate sheet.

More direct information concerning the proposed submission can be retrieved from the following website: http://jir.ucsur.pitt.edu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OPSOMMING

Manlike jong volwassenes se ervaring van verhoudings met ouer persone in 'n ekonomies minderbevoorregte gemeenskap in die Noordwes-provinsie.

In hierdie artikel word beskryf hoe jong volwasse mans verhoudings ervaar met ouer mense in 'n ekonomies minderbevoorregte gemeenskap. Tussengenerasie verhoudings verwys na die verhoudings tussen mense – hetsy deur familiebande verbind, al dan nie. Tussengenerasie verhoudings is belangrik vir gemeenskappe aangesien dit verbondenheid, nabyheid en samesyn bevorder – iets wat bydra tot die welstand van al die lede. Die waardes en sieninge onderlê verhoudings interaksies tussen. Waardes en sieninge wat in die verlede die tussengenerasie verhoudings gerig het in die gemeenskap waar hierdie ondersoek gedoen is, is dat ouer persone beskou is as die bewakers van erfenis, kennis en wysheid en dat van hulle verwag is om dit oor te dra aan die jonger generasies. In reaksie hierop is van die jonger generasie verwag om die ouer generasie te versorg wanneer hulle nie meer vir hulleself kan sorg nie. Dis is egter nie duidelik hoe jong volwasse mans in Afrika hulle verhouding tot ouer mense op die oomblik sien nie. 'n Induktiewe, ondersoekende benadering is gekies ten einde hierdie kwalitatiewe studie te onderneem. Die navorsing is uitgevoer in Khuma, 'n dorpsgebied (*township*) van Stilfontein in die Noordwes-provinsie, Suid-Afrika. Die gemeenskap word as 'n ekonomies kwesbare gemeenskap beskou. Elf manlike deelnemers tussen 18 en 35 jaar oud, het deelgeneem aan die navorsing. Data is ingesamel deur middel van die Mmogo®-metode (Roos, 2008; 2012) – 'n visuele data-insamelingsmetode, en deur middel van groepsbesprekings daaroor tot dataversadiging bereik is.

Die Mmogo®-metode is 'n projektiewe, kwalitatiewe instrument vir data-insameling waar deelnemers betrek word in die visuele konstruksie van hulle subjektiewe en dikwels ook onbewuste ervarings deur van verskillende soorte materiale gebruik te maak (Roos, 2012). Deelnemers aan hierdie navorsing is gevra om visuele voorstellings te maak wat op die volgende oop-einde instruksie gebaseer is: *"Gebruik die materiaal wat voorsien is om ons te vertel van jou ervarings of verhoudings met die ouer mense in jou gemeenskap."* Toe hulle klaar was, is deelnemers gevra om

te verduidelik wat hulle gedoen het en waarom hulle spesifieke voorwerpe gemaak het, sodat die dieper betekenis van hulle voorstellings na vore gebring kon word. Hulle reaksies hierop is opgeneem, verbatim getranskribeer en tematies geanaliseer.

Die oorheersende tema wat hieruit geblyk het, was ambivalensie. Ambivalensie verwys na gelyktydige, teenstellende emosies teenoor ouer mense en wat hulle verteenwoordig. Aan die een kant het die jong volwasse mans waardering uitgedruk vir die manier waarop ouer persone hulle fisies en emosioneel versorg het, maar aan die ander kant het hierdie jong volwasse mans gevoelens van ontevredenheid en gekrenktheid in verhouding tot ouer persone uitgedruk. Ambivalensie is ook uitgedruk oor tradisionele landbou praktyke. Hulle het die belang daarvan besef om ingelig te wees oor tradisionele landbou praktyke en gebruike as deel van hulle erfenis; maar hulle was ook negatief en het minagting getoon vir tradisionele gebruike in die lig van die realiteite van swak ekonomiese toestande, werkloosheid, HIV/VIGS en sosio-politieke veranderinge in terme van hulle ekonomiese realiteite. Amivalensie is ook uitgeruk in hoe tussengenerasie verhoudings gereël is. Aanvaarding bestaan daarvoor dat ouer persone 'n leidende posisie beklee, met die jonger mense in 'n posisie waar gevolg word, maar hulle het ook 'n behoefte uitgedruk om vir ander reëls waarvolgens die interaksie met ouer mense plaasvind, te onderhandel.

Die ervaring wat die jong manlike volwassenes van verhoudings met ouer persone het, is ingebed in hul finansiële situasie. Jong mans wat hulleself beleef as vasgevang in finansieel afhanklike verhoudings met ouer persone, het nie baie onderhandelingsmag nie. Hulle bevind hulleself in 'n posisie waar, selfs indien hulle die tradisionele reëling van tussengenerasie verhoudings wil bevraagteken, hulle gebind word deur norme en waarde wat met hulle verlede en erfenis geassosieer word. Die vraag moet beantwoord word: Wat is die ouer generasie se perspektief op die moontlikheid om opnuut te onderhandel oor die norme en waardes wat tussengenerasie verhoudings rig? Die vraag is belangrik daarvoor om sosiale kohesie te bevorder – veral in ekonomies minderbevoorregte gemeenskappe. Dit word aanbeveel dat 'n gemeenskap-gebaseerde intervensie ontwikkel word om bewustheid te skep van die sterkpunte waaroor beide

generasies beskik. Wanneer interpersoonlike ruimte moontlik gemaak word, kan dit verskillende generasies help om 'n aanpasbare houding in te neem oor die veranderende sienings oor verhoudings tussen generasies.

*Sleutelwoorde***:** gebruike, gemeenskap, jong volwasse mans, Mmogo®-metode,

tussengenerasie verhoudings, waardes

SUMMARY

Young adult males' experiences of relationships with older persons in an economically deprived community in the North West Province

This article describes how young adult males experience relationships with older people in an economically deprived community. Intergenerational relations refer to the relationship between people who are either familially or non-familially related. Intergenerational relationships are important for communities in promoting connectedness, closeness and togetherness, which contribute to the well-being of all members. The relationships between generations are informed by the values and beliefs that underpin their interactions. Values and beliefs that guided intergenerational relations in this community in the past were that older people were regarded as the custodians of heritage, knowledge and wisdom, which they are expected to pass down to younger generations. Reciprocally, the younger generation was expected to take care of the older generation when they could not care for themselves. It is not clear, however, how young adult males in Africa experience their relationships with older people at the moment. An inductive, explorative approach was adopted to conduct this qualitative study. The research was conducted in Khuma, a township of Stilfontein in the North West Province of South Africa. The community is regarded as economically vulnerable community. Eleven male participants, aged between 18 and 35 years, participated in the research. Data were obtained by means of the Mmogo-method® (Roos, 2008; 2012), a visual data gathering method and group discussions about themuntil data saturation was achieved.

The Mmogo-method® is a projective, qualitative data-gathering instrument which involves participants in the visual construction of their subjective and often subconscious experiences by using different materials (Roos, 2012). Participants in this research were asked to make visual representations based on the following open-ended instruction: "*Use the materials provided to tell us about your experiences of your relationships with the older people in your community*". On completion, participants were asked to explain what they had done and why they had made specific

objects so that the deeper meanings of their representations could be elicited. Their responses were recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically.

Ambivalence emerged as a predominant theme. Ambivalence refers to simultaneous, contradictory emotions towards older people and what they represent. One the one hand, the young people expressed appreciation for the way in which older persons cared for them physically and emotionally; and on the other hand, these young adults expressed feelings of dissatisfaction and hurt in relation to older persons. Ambivalence was also expressed in terms of traditional agriculatural practices. They realized the importance of being knowledgeable about traditional agricultural practices and customs as part of their heritage; but they were also negative and showed a disregard for traditional customs in the face of the realities of poor economic conditions, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and socio-political changes in? terms of their economic realities and they described conformity with traditional intergenerational arrangements of relationships. Ambivalence was also expressed in terms of terms of the way in which relationships were arranged. There as an acceptance of the leading position of older persons with the younger people in a following position, but they also expressed a need to negotiate different rules for engagement.

The relational experiences of the young adult males are embedded in their financial situation. Young males who find themselves trapped in financially dependent relationships with older persons do not have much bargaining power. They find themselves in a position where, even if they want to challenge the traditional arrangement of intergenerational relations, they are bound to norms and values associated with their past and heritage. The question needs to be answered: What is the older generation's perspective on the possibility of renegotiation of the norms and values that guide intergenerational relations? This question is important for promoting social cohesion, particularly in economically deprived communities. It is recommended that a community-based intervention be developed to create awareness of the strengths of both generations. Enabling interpersonal space can assist generations to adopt a flexible attitude in the face of changing views of intergenerational relationships.

PERMISSION TO SUBMIT ARTICLE FOR EXAMINATION PURPOSES

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

_____

Prof. V. Roos

DECLARATION BY RESEARCHER

I hereby declare that this research manuscript, **Young adult males' experiences of relationships with older persons in an economically deprived community in the North West Province ,** is my own effort. I also declare that all sources used have been referenced and acknowledged.

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

Finally I declare that this research was submitted to Turn-it-in an a satisfactory report was received in regards to no plagiarism committed.

_____

P Monnapula-Mazabane

LITERATURE REVIEW

Intergenerational Relationships

Intergenerational relationships can be described as   family and social relationships between different generations. According to Sánchez, Sáez and Pinazo (2010), generation is a cohort of young adults and older people who share a particular relationship in the social environment according to their "social age".   Generations are thus always affected by their surrounding social factors. A generation is defined as a birth cohort or a group defined by having been born in the same era (Thomson, 1992). In this research, the older generation refers to people older than 60 years of age and the younger generation refers to people aged between 18 to 35 years.

Intergenerational relationships are regarded as recurrent patterns of interaction between members of different generations (Vorster, Roos, & Beukes, 2013). These interactions are embedded in the broader socio-political, economic environment. These interactions are also in conjunction with the social ecological theory which explains the relationships between people and their interaction within different micro-, meso- and macro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Systems theory suggests that people influence the systems in which they function and are also simultaneously being influenced by these systems (Dalton, Elias, & Wandersman, 2001). This view is in line with Biggs,Hapaala & Lowenstein (2011), who holds a broader sociological view according to which generations are seen as cohorts of individuals sharing the same histories and adapting together to a changing social climate.

Intergenerational relationships with psychosocial development

Intergenerational relationships are also informed by the psychosocial development stages of the specific generational other. According to psychosocial developmental theory, human development takes place in eight stages (Erikson, 1968). Young adults, according to this theory, are expected to deal with psycho-social challenges to resolve issues of intimacy or isolation (Erikson,

1968). During this life phase young adults start forming affectionate relationships; they develop the capacity to reciprocate emotional and physical love; and they develop skills to relate to others socially and inter-personally. The psychosocial life task of intimacy is to form congruent relationships and to develop the capacity to bond and commit with others for mutual satisfaction. The establishment of relationships with others requires that young adults are able to form intimate, reciprocal relationships, which include a willingness to make sacrifices and compromises for the sake of the relationship. Isolation occurs when young adults fail to develop intimate relationships (Erikson, 1968). It is usually at this developmental phase that young people exercise their autonomy by living independently. This may entail moving out of the parents' home, finding employment or achieving any other form of social, emotional or financial independence.

Older people are described in terms of the seventh stage, that of generativity versus stagnation, which describes the significance of "mutuality" and "generativity". Mutuality concerns the effect generations have on each other, especially parents, children and grandchildren in families. Generativity denotes the importance of giving back to one's own children, and the following generations (Erikson, 1968). Stagnation co-occurs when older people fail to resolve this psycho-social developmental task, which in turn may lead to unmet expectations and tensions arising from both generations.

During the life course of both these generations and in their social interactions a form of shared expectations and obligations develops between older and younger people (Bengtson & Oyama, 2007). This contract across generations and age groups represents the norms operating at the micro- and macro-levels of social structure in a given socio-historical context. Bengtson and Oyama (2007) specify three sets of normative expectations and obligations that characterize the traditional contract across generations as follows: first, the biosocial generation and socialization norms that reflect the involvement of families and public education in the socialization of each generation; second, the norms of gerosocial succession that have to do with the availability of resources transferred by older generations to the younger generation in the form of financial and/or

emotional support; and third, the norms of geriatric dependencies, which reflect the expectation that family care-giving and public support from welfare programmes will be provided for the old. Intergenerational relationships can be described as functioning within these spheres and subsequently spreading out to communities and broader societies. People in communities are therefore guided by norms and values which in turn influence their social relationships and interactions with those within and outside their communities.

Intergenerational Relationships in an African Community

Relationships between people in African communities have always been functioning intergenerationally. According to Oduaran and Oduaran (2004), different cohorts of generations in Africa have been identified according to: those who are physically alive; those who have departed but whose spirits are alive; and those who have not yet been born but are present among those who are physically alive. Each cohort was arranged according to age-grade grouping, whereby older persons (even deceased) were the most respected of all. Respect and status were accorded to older persons, mainly because older people in South Africa and other African communities have been seen to be playing an important role in families and the community, as well as in politics. They were entrusted with looking after their children, grandchildren and unrelated children (Hoffman, 2012); presumed to be closer to ancestors; and they were respected as custodians of wisdom as well as spiritual and judicial systems (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2004). It is within this context that the roles of older people and younger people in their relationships are defined in terms of status and position.

To further emphasize intergenerational relations within this context, it is important to mention that intergenerational relationships have over the years been affected by various changing developmental factors, which may have resulted in a social gap and conflict. In Southern Africa, for instance, social, economic, political and other factors have affected and influenced perceptions within generations. Politically, Mattes (2012) identified five distinct political generations that exist within South African society. He states that within these generations there is a "struggle generation"

and the "born free generation". The "struggle generation" existed in the apartheid society before 1994, and included young people who were aged 16 years between 1976 and 1996 and whose political experiences were likely to have been undemocratic. The "born free generation" is characterized by young people who came of age after 1996 in the post-apartheid society. In 1997 these young people were 16, 17 or 18 and their first political experience was in 1999 when they were casting their votes, which for them was relatively normal in a more democratic political system. He further mentions that each generation is associated with an era characterized internally by continuity in social, economic and political trends, but which is demarcated by major historical disjuncture that distinguishes it from the surrounding era. These political and social developments are likely to have resulted in social distance within intergenerational relations. Social distance is referred to as a social gap that exists between older and younger generations (Bohman, Van Wyk & Eckman, 2009) and in South Africa the gap might be the result of parents who grew up in apartheid society now parenting children growing up in a liberated post-apartheid society.

Other challenges that create a distance or gap between generations are social and economic. For example, the challenge of HIV/AIDS has had an impact on the status and role of grandparents. Grandparents are increasingly becoming care-givers of children orphaned by the HIV epidemic in South Africa (Bohman 2010; Hoffman,2003' 2012; Nyasani, Sternberg, & Smith, 2009; Oppong, 2006). Older people in general may now feel pressure because of their declining status which comes with loss of respect and relative deprivation of resources and relationships. Poor economic conditions within communities and lack of employment have affected the state of relations between the older and the younger generation. The younger generation is becoming a burden to the older generation, without the expectation of reciprocal services and support being met (Eke, 2003). Older people's expectations and ideas influence their relationships with younger people.

According to Oduaran and Oduaran (2004), these generational changes that occurred over historical time and space are characterized by a mixture of good and bad, the good being the

valuable interactions that have sustained intergenerational relationships, and the bad the altered African norms. However, these writers agree that deconstructualization, reconstruction and transformation are essential for development and change. This means that members of different generations should be able to engage in continuous processes of negotiating their relationship.

Intergenerational Theories

The following intergenerational theories and constructs are used to explain intergenerational relations. The theories of intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence, and the social exchange theory as well as generational intelligence as heuristic construct are used specifically.

Intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence. Bengtson's theory of intergenerational solidarity (Mangen, Bengtson & Landry, 1988) explains six conceptual dimensions in which generations relate to one another in terms of solidarity. These are *structural*, involving geographical living arrangements which may either promote or bring constraint in interaction between parents and their children, for example when they live far apart geographically and are thus unlikely to have frequent interaction, in contrast to those who live close to one another; *normative*, by which members of the families and society share values in terms of agreed norms and therefore have a sense of obligation to adhere to these norms; *consensual,* whereby family members agree in terms of the attitudes, values and beliefs, for example those based on religious or cultural beliefs they hold; *associational,* which involves interactions and types of activities they engage in, such as family outings or holidays; *affectual*, which involves closeness among family members, how they feel about each other and the level at which they reciprocate these sentiments; and *functional*, which involves mutual exchanges between parents and children represented by activities of providing or receiving help, such as household chores, gardening and grocery shopping. This theory further elaborates on the role and relationship between old and young people by stating that older generations are generally perceived to invest in younger generations.

Lüscher and Pillemer (1998) conceptualized the term intergenerational ambivalence to indicate how conflicting normative structures and social positions impact on the psychological reaction of the individual and lead to certain decisions being made to relieve or negotiate the ambivalence. They suggest that intergenerational ambivalence has two dimensions: the first is the contradictions that exist within social structures such as status, role and norms; and the second dimension is at the subjective level, manifested in terms of cognitions, emotions and motivations. This theory was proposed as an alternative to the initial solidarity-conflict approach because it emphasizes that negative perceptions alone do not constitute ambivalence. Ambivalence, they conclude, is made up of negative and positive perceptions present in an individual (Hogerbrugge & Komter, 2012). In terms of understanding conflicting intergenerational relationships that have been guided by social norms, Lüscher (2002) further points out that the intergenerational ambivalence approach encourages the investigation of conflict between norms, the way the conflict has been managed and the effect of ambivalence on individuals.

Social exchange theory. Intergenerational relationships are also explained according to the social exchange theory (Rank & Le Croy, 1983). According to the social exchange theory, relationships are interactional and interdependent. People evaluate their relationships on the basis of the compatibility of their support exchanges; they give support with the expectation of receiving something in return, thus bringing balance into the relationship. Older people pass down social and cultural norms and values and in turn the young people are expected to reciprocate by supporting and accommodating their elders' welfare and general needs (Makiwane, 2011). This implies that there is a form of exchange taking place between the older and the younger generation. In most communities, this exchange process is continuous and ever-changing. For example, where the grandparents' role is characterized by the provision of support, affection, love and wisdom in an (extended) family, they in turn receive respect from the other generation (Bohman, 2010; Oppong, 2006), and subsequently common perceptions from these two generations are created. .

During intergenerational interaction, both generations form certain expectations and in this way and a type of generational contract is created between the older and younger generations (Komp & Van Tilburg, 2010). When these expectations are frustrated, intergenerational conflict may occur (Mabaso, 2011). According to Lüscher (2011), the differences between the generations inevitably provoke conflict, and conflicts between young and old are seen as more or less intrinsic to the (social) nature of these relationships.

Generational Intelligence.   Generational intelligence as heuristic construct describes the ability of one generation to put itself in the position of another generation by reflecting on one's own and others' life-courses, family and social history (Biggs, Haapala, & Lowenstein, 2011). In their study of intergenerational intelligence, Biggs et al. (2011) propose a process to reach a high degree of intelligence, as follows: (a) Identifying different contributory factors expressed through generational identity. This means that there is awareness that a particular generation is affected by family dynamics and/or socio-historical occurrences that could impact on the generational other. (b) Understanding the relationship between generational positions whereby the key generational actors in a situation are identified and are seen through generational spectacles, thus making intergenerational relations explicit. This means that in the associations that each person brings about other generations; their internal and external sets of representations are organized generationally. The benefit is that it would be possible to see the age-other as a person with priorities, desires, fears and reflections that may or may not overlap with one's own, thus engaging with the difficult task of placing oneself in the position of that age-other. (c) Being aware of the value stance of different generational positions, which could be obtained by analysing the values associated with positions. (d) Once a value stance has been clarified, by aligning the actions with the intention (Biggs et al. 2011). In this research the emphasis is not only on social context but also on the historical in terms of past and present times in which each generation lived brings a useful contribution. Understanding intergenerational relationships from the contextual point at which they occur is essential not only for the benefit of the generations but also for the community at large and other

wider structures. Understanding the nature of intergenerational relationships within communities could bring mutual benefits both for young adults and older people because it promotes greater understanding between the generations and builds more cohesive communities.

Research into intergenerational relationships.

Most of the previous studies on intergenerational relations are based on a Western context, and generally concentrated on familial intergenerational relationships (Brannen, 2003; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998; Noller et al., 2001). Little research has focused on the social relationships between generations at community level in an African context. In this context, relationships are highly influenced and are based on values, belief systems and practices that encourage communalism and mutualism practices to benefit the whole community at large (Chilisa, 2012; Roos, Maine & Khumalo, 2008, Ouduran & Ouduran; 2004). More research therefore needs to be done with regard to intergenerational relationships within the African context. This research was thus motivated by the fact that there seems to be a gap in understanding intergenerational generational relationships within the African context. The research question that will be addressed in this research is: What are the experiences of younger people in relation to older people? In answering this question, deductions could be made about what transpires between the younger and older people in a particular context (Lazarus, 2006).

Article Proceedings

The conducted research will be presented in an article format. As a final point a critical reflection will explain on what terms the research contributed to the field of intergenerational research.

References

Bohman, D., van Wyk, N., & Ekman, S. (2009). Tradition in transition - intergenerational relations

with focus on the aged and their family members in a South African context. *Scandinavian*

Journal Of Caring Sciences, *23*(3), 446-455.

Bohman, D. M. (2010). South Africans' experience of being old and of care and caring in a

transitional period. *Journal of Older People Nursing,* 6(3), 187-195.doi:Q1111/j.1748-

3743.2010.0025x2788.

Biggs, S., Haapala, I., & Lowenstein, A. (2011). Exploring generational intelligence as a model for

examining the process of intergenerational relationships. *Ageing & Society*, *31*(7), 1107-

1124. doi:10.1017/S0144686X10000978.

Brannen, J. (2003). Towards a typology of intergenerational relationships: continuities and change

in families. *Sociological research online*, 8, 2, 123-125

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press.

Chilisa, B. (2012). *Indigenous research methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE

Dalton, J. H., Elias, M. J., & Wandersman, A. (2001). Community psychology:

Linking individual and communities. Stamford, CT: Wadsworth.

Eke, B. (2003). The impact of AIDS on intergenerational relationships in Africa.

Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 1(13), 9-23.

Erikson, E.H. (1968). Identity: Youth and Crisis. NewYork: Norton.

Ferreira, L. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relational experiences between*

grandmothers and their grandchildren in an African context. Unpublished Master's

thesis, Department of Psychology, North-West University: Potchefstroom.

Hoffman, J. (2012, October). *Intergenerational relationships in the context of poverty and*

HIV/AIDS in South Africa: Differential gazes and negotiated spaces. Paper presented

at the International Association on Gerontology and Geriatrics, Africa Region

Congress, Cape Town, South Africa.

Hogerbrugge, M. A., & Komter, A. E. (2012). Solidarity and Ambivalence: Comparing Two

Perspectives on Intergenerational Relations Using Longitudinal Panel Data. *Journals*

of gerontology, (3), 372-383.

Komp, K., & Van Tilburg, T. (2010). Ageing societies and the welfare state: where the inter-

generational contract is not breached. *International journal of ageing & later life*,

5(1), 7-11.

Lazarus, R. S. (2006). Emotions and Interpersonal Relationships: Toward a person-centered

conceptualisation of emotions and coping. *Journal of personality, 74*(1), 9-46. doi.

10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00368.x

Lüscher, K., & Pillemer, K. (1998). A new approach to the study of the parent-child

relationship in later life. Journal of Marriage and the family, 60, 413-425.

Lüscher, K. (2002). Intergenerational ambivalence: Further steps in theory and research.

Journal of Marriage and Family, 64, 585-593.

Mabaso, T. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relationships between young adults and older people in the Khuma community.* Unpublished Master's thesis, Department of Psychology, North-West University, Potchefstroom.

Mangen, D. J., Bengtson, V. L., & Landry, P. H., Jr. (1988). *Measurement of Inter-generational Relations.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Makiwane, M. (2011). The changing patterns of intergenerational relations in South Africa. *Human Science Research Council*, Pretoria:South Africa.

Mattes, R. (2012). The 'Born Frees': The Prospects for Generational Change in Post apartheid South Africa. *Australian Journal Of Political Science*, 47(1),133-153 doi:10.1080/10361146.2011.643166.

Noller, P., Feeney, J. A., & Peterson C. (2001). *Personal relationships across the lifespan.* Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Nyasani, E., Sternberg, E. & Smith, H. (2009). Fostering children affected by AIDS in Richards Bay, South Africa: A qualitative study of grandparents'experiences. African Journal of AIDS Research, 8(2) 181-192.

Oduaran, C., & Oduaran, A. (2004). Transformations over time in generational relationships. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 2*(3), 171. doi:10.1300/J194v02n0312.

Oppong, C. (2006). Familial roles and social transformations: Older men and women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Research on Aging. 28 (6) 654-668.

Rank, M. R., & LeCroy, C. W. (1983). Toward a multiple perspective in family theory and practice: The case of social exchange theory, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory. *Family Relations*, *32*(3), 441-448.

Sánchez, M., Sáez, J., & Pinazo, S. (2010). Intergenerational solidarity. Programs and policy development. In M. A. Cruz-Saco, & S Zelenev (Eds.). *Intergenerational solidarity. Strengthening economic and social ties*, (pp.129-146). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thomson, D. (1992): Generations, Justice, and the Future of Collective Action. In Laslett, Peter / Fishkin, James S. (Eds.)., *Justice between Age Groups and Generations* (pp. 206-236). New Haven/London: Yale University Press.

Voster, C., Roos, V., & Beukes, M. (2013). Directions for the future training of psychotherapists: An interpersonal approach. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 2(4), 22-36.*

TITLE OF DISSERTATION, AUTHORS AND CONTACT DETAILS

Young adult males' experiences of relationships with older persons in an

economically deprived community in the North West Province.

P Monnapula-Mazabane

20155115

Email: 2015511@nwu.ac.za

Prof. V. Roos*

School for Psychosocial Behavioral Sciences

Subject group Psychology

Faculty of Health Sciences

North-West University

Potchefstroom Campus

Potchefstroom

2531

Email: Vera.Roos@nwu.ac.za

*To whom correspondence should be addressed

MANUSCRIPT FOR EXAMINATION

Abstract

Intergenerational relationships involve interactions between individuals or groups of different age groups, which may be familial or social. These relationships are not limited to immediate family, but spread across other social structures. The purpose of this study was to describe how young adult males experience their relationship with socially related older people. The study was conducted qualitatively following a phenomenological design for which 11 male participants between 18 and 35 years were selected according to their availability. Participants reside in an economically deprived community in the North West Province in South Africa. Data were obtained using the Mmogo-method®, a culturally sensitive, visual data-gathering tool, to gain deeper understanding and meaning of what young people experienced as recipients of norms and values within their community, and were analyzed thematically and visually. The results indicated that young people experience ambivalence in terms of conflicting emotions, sentiments about agricultural practices and customs; and in terms of their position in relation to older persons. One the one hand, young people expressed appreciation for how older persons cared for them physically and emotionally, but also how they experienced feelings of dissatisfaction and hurt. In terms of knowing about traditional agricultural practices and customs as part of their heritage, the younger people confirmed that the knowledge is valubale and applicable, but on the other hand they showed a disregard for traditional customs in the face of the realities of poor economic conditions, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and socio-political. In their relational arrangements with older persons, younger adults expressed confirmation of their submissive position in relation to older persons who always take the leading position, versus a need to negotiate different rules of engagement. A community-based intervention is therefore

recommended to facilitate better relations between the younger generation and older generation with the aim of promoting solidarity.

*Keywords***:** community, intergenerational relationships, renegotiations, values, younger people.

Introduction

Intergenerational relationships are important because they are embedded within familial and non-familial relationships. Intergenerational relations are shaped by cultural context, beliefs and values. These influence intergenerational interactions in terms of perceptions, expectations and interactions and the maintainance of intergenerational engagement. If the subjective experiences of the interactions are satisfying for both members, the relationships can create a sense of identity or familiarity and belonging both for the older generation and the younger generation. Intergenerational relationships in this particular research may be referred to as the ties between individuals or groups of individuals that are not necessarily limited to immediate family, but are spread to other social structures (Chilisa, 2012).

According to socio-ecological theory, human interaction should be studied in the context in which it functions (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Intergenerational relationships therefore do not exist in isolation but are better understood within the wider social and communal context in which they occur. Roos (2012) states that intergenerational relationships always take place in a particular interpersonal context, embedded in a socio-political and cultural environment. Changes in these environments impact on the relationships between members of different generations. In the South African context, for example, these changes include the political history; forced relocation, migration, HIV/AIDS, extreme poverty and the education gap (Hoffman,2003; 2012). Political changes that have affected perceptions and

interactions between generations may include the existence of a generation within a specified political era. According to Mattes (2011), there are five distinct political generations that exist within the South African society (Hodgson, 1998). Within these generations there is a "struggle generation" that existed during the apartheid society, and the "born free generation" that exists post-apartheid. He further states that each generation is characterized by major historical disjunctures that distinguish it from the surrounding years. These political and social developments are likely to have resulted in social distance within intergenerational relations. Social distance is referred to as a social gap that exists between older and younger generations and this may be as a result of parents who grew up within apartheid society now parenting children growing up in liberal post-apartheid society (Makiwane, 2011).

The social and economical contextual changes that have influenced intergenerational relationships include the challenges of HIV/AIDS, because of the impact they have on the roles and positions of the older generation. In this regard grandparents' role is shifting from receiving care from the younger generation to providing care for orphans and infected younger people. Nyasani, Sternberg and Smith (2009) assert that grandparents are increasingly becoming care-givers of children orphaned by the HIV epidemic in South Africa. Older persons' pensions for example become the main income for many multi-generational households not in the first instance because of young people's unwillingness to provide support but because of their incapacity to do so (Aboderin, 2004; Ferreira, 2011).

These changes together with a declining economy, lack of employment and poverty have affected the state of relations between the older and the younger generations (Newman, Ward, Smith, Wilson & McCrea, 1997). This skewed intergenerational expectations because older persons can no longer expect anticipated reciprocal services and support (Eke, 2003). This results in unmet the expectations of mutual support from the relationship. The usual norms and values that have guided these relationships are also affected. Furthermore, little

research has been done into intergenerational relations in African communities and into how these relationships are perceived by members of both generations.

Most theories that describe intergenerational relationships originated from a Westernized context (Monserud, 2008). The solidarity theory explains the potential causes and consequences of intergenerational relations (Antonucci, Jackson & Biggs 2007).The intergenerational ambivalence theory proposed by Lüscher and Pillemer (1998) introduced social ambivalence as a concept of understanding intergenerational relationships and the way in which family relationships are structured, while Biggs, Haapala and Lowenstein (2011) explored generational intelligence, which is the ability to reflect, draw on one's own and the other's life course, family and history within a social climate (Mabaso, 2011). The authors introduced this as a model for examining the process of intergenerational relationships (Biggs et al., 2011).

The social exchange theory also explains these relationships within this context, by proposing that the relationships we choose to create and maintain are the ones that maximize our rewards and minimize our costs. In other words, people value and maintain the relationships that provide them with the most benefit for the least effort.

This research is thus important because little is known about the nature of the intergenerational relationship outside familial ties. This study focuses on socially-related generations in African communities. The question that needs to be answered is: What are the younger generation's experiences of their relationships with older persons? Accordingly, the aim of this study was to describe and gain better understanding of young adults' experiences of their relationships with older people. This research is well placed to contribute towards establishing interventions to promote better intergenerational relationships and to promote further studies of intergenerational relationships within the

African context.

Methodology

Research Method and Design

A qualitative research method was followed in an attempt to understand and explore the social dynamic between groups of people. Qualitative research provides a unique tool for studying experiences; it underpins meaning (Ritchie, 2009), that informs interactions. An interpretative approach was followed to gather enough evidence from this kind of study, since qualitative research is concerned with understanding the meaning that people attach to the phenomena within their social world (Snipe & Spencer, 2003)**.** This was applicable because of the naturalistic approach followed, whereby participants were able to express themselves freely and discuss aspects relating to what they thought was important in terms of their relationship with older people. A phenomenology design was followed to explore young adults' perceptions regarding their relationship with older people. Phenomenology is concerned with gaining a deep understanding of a particular phenomenon as experienced by individuals and serves as powerful tool for understanding subjective experience and gaining insights into people's motivations and actions (Creswell, 2007).

Research Context and Participants

The research was conducted at Khuma near Stilfontein and Klerksdorp City in the North Western Province. Khuma Community is a previously disadvantaged community that was established because of the forced removals of black South Africans that took place during the apartheid era (Chigeza, Roos & Puren, 2013). Even though Khuma is close to mining and other economic activities, the socio-economic conditions in the area seem to be

limited because of the challenges of unemployment, economic conditions and poverty the community faces. This medium-sized community consists of approximately 5 000 households. Khuma Community is thus a fairly poor community, with high levels of unemployment among the youth. According to the Statistics South Africa Report (2012), at least 43.10% of youth within the Klerksdorp area, under whose jurisdiction Khuma falls, are unemployed (Stats SA, 2012). Eleven participants were selected based on availability. They were all Tswana-speaking males aged between 18 and 35 years and unemployed. A local pastor, who is a community development leader with a good knowledge of the community, served as a mediator between the the participants.

Gathering and Procedure

Entry into the community was obtained through a local pastor, a community leader who informed the participants of the purpose and objective of the data collection. At the beginning of the contact session, the participants were informed of the purpose of the study and what was expected of them, and were told what the data would be used for. It was emphasized that their participation was voluntary. Those who agreed to participate in the research signed an informed consent form.

On the day the data gathering took place participants were grouped around a table and presented with the Mmogo-method® material, which consists of a lump of clay, grass, colourful beads and cloth. The Mmogo method® requires participants to construct their lived experiences in interaction with others, who make them aware of their own existence (Roos, 2008; 2012). The method is projective in nature and allows meanings to emerge from the participants' reflections on social structures and meaningful actions through visual representation. According to Roos (2008) the Mmogo-method® holds that people are rational beings and that their visual presentations project something of themselves and the socially constructed contexts in which they function. The Mmogo-method® uses visual projections of

personal and collective experiences embedded in social and cultural contexts to gain a deeper understanding of the relational dimensions (Roos, 2008; 2012).

In this particular research, participants were asked to make visual representations of their experiences of their relationships with older people. After 30 minutes, participants completed their visual representations. Each participant was asked to explain the objects he had made and how they related to the research question. The group members were invited to participate in the discussion to add information or provide their own interpretation. Tape recorders were used to record the discussions, and cameras were used to photograph the participants and the objects of the visual presentations. Audio recordings were used to capture the group discussions. All discussions were transcribed verbatim. Two types of data were therefore gathered: textual data and visual data obtained from the visual representations.

Data Analysis

Textual data. To broaden understanding of the data, the researcher examined the data many times by reading the text that had been transcribed from the data and by studying the visual representations made by the participants. A process of inductive analysis of textual data was used, which means that the themes identified were strongly linked to the data obtained, as opposed to using a pre-existing coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2013). According to Thomas (2003), this allows research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation. The guidelines suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) for analyzing qualitative data were followed. This process involves: (a) becoming familiar with the data by transcribing, reading and rereading and noting down initial ideas; (b) generating initial codes by coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set and collating data relevant to each code; (c) searching for themes by collating codes into potential themes and

gathering all data relevant to each potential theme; (d) reviewing themes by checking if they work in relation to the coded extracts (level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), and generating a thematic "map" of the analysis; (e) defining and naming themes (by continuous analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells; and by generating clear definitions and names for each theme); and (f) writing up the findings, which produces a final opportunity for analysis.

Visual analysis. The visual data were analyzed by using five steps suggested by Roos (2008; 2011(b)). At the first step, each participant was asked about what he had made in orderto determine the literal meaning of the object. At the second step, the researcher determined the relationship between the different objects shown in the visual presentations. The third step required the visual presentations to be applied to the specific research question asked in order to gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The fourth step explored the cultural meanings that were manifested in the symbolic use of the objects.

Trustworthiness

To ensure trustworthiness of the study, guidelines suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were followed. The table below illustrates this strategy and its application:

Strategy	Application to the study
Credibility confirms that findings are a true reflection of the research context.	This was ensured by spending sufficient time with the participants during data gathering and group discussions, followed by intense dialogue with the participants about their representations. Data were also verified and member checking was carried out as prescribed by Tracy (2010). Inclusion of verbatim quotes and photographing the

Transferability examines whether findings can be applied to other	To ensure that participants gave a rich description of their presentations, they were subsequently given time to engage and reflect in their description within the specific
Dependability refers to the extent to which the reader believes that the findings were obtained as the researcher says they were (Maree, 2007).	The researcher had ongoing discussions with the supervisor to verify and discussed all relevant data pertaining to the study. These included clarification of quotes and discussing the meaning in relation to the finding, and working and re-working all the available data and information. The discussions with the supervisor and colleagues were held to ensure dependability in conjunction with the findings and that there was no over-generalization or misinterpretation with regard to the data. Themes were coded according to Guba's (1981)
Conformability refers to the extent to which findings are neutral and objective.	To ensure trustworthiness within the research study and the process followed, the researcher applied methods of data analysis which included visual and textual analysis. Crystallization was followed, as described by Ellingson (2009). This is based on ontological assumptions and is an effective way to gain a deepened, multifaceted and thorough understanding of a person's lived experience. Different data (textual and visual) as well as analysis

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the research was obtained from the North-West University (Ethical number: NWU-00053-10-S1). Access to the community was obtained through a

local pastor, who informed the participants about the research and invited them to participate. Ethical considerations as stipulated in the consent forms, which were in Setswana and English, were explained and questions and clarification were dealt with before requesting their signatures. Participants were assured of partial confidentiality when they participated in the group discussions.

At the beginning of the contact session, the participants were informed of the purpose of the study and what was expected of them, as well as what the data would be used for. Participants were also told that they were free to withdraw at any time. Ethical approval from the participants was obtained by their written consent. They were informed that their names would not be revealed in the presentation of the findings and that their data would be held securely by the North-West University. Although it was made clear that counselling services were available for the participants, no participants expressed the need for it. The research was overseen by a participating clinical and a research psychologist.

Findings

The predominant theme that emerged from the study was ambivalence of young adult males in terms of emotions and position towards their relationship with older people. Ambivalence can be described as the simultaneous presence both of positive emotions associated with affection, attraction and warmth, and of negative conflicting emotions towards older people (Katz & Lowenstein, 2010). Ambivalence was experienced with regard to emotions, past practices and customs and relational arrangements; moreover, implications of ambivalence on intergenerational relations emerged as dominant themes.

Ambivalent emotions		
Appreciation and love	**vs.**	Emotions of hurt, anger and disappointment
Ambivalence in relation to past practices and current realities		
Appreciation for traditional practices and customs	**vs.**	Economic, health and socio-political realities
Implications of ambivalent intergenerational relations		
Conformity to relational arrangements	**vs.**	Challenging authority and proposing new rules of engagement

Ambivalent Emotions

Young adults expressed positive and negative emotions towards older people.

Emotions of appreciation and love. Young males expressed love in relation to significant older persons and particularly in terms of being cared for physically. Participant 2 said: "I like them; I love them so much...my granny...this is why I think of them...and his [sic] grinding stone." Furthermore, this positive emotion felt for one older person is transferred to others. "That is what reminds me of the elderly people. When I think of elderly people, I think of that kind of corn; when I used to eat it, made by the grandmother, who is here." This participant expressed his fondness of his grandmother and other older persons by making a grinding stone.
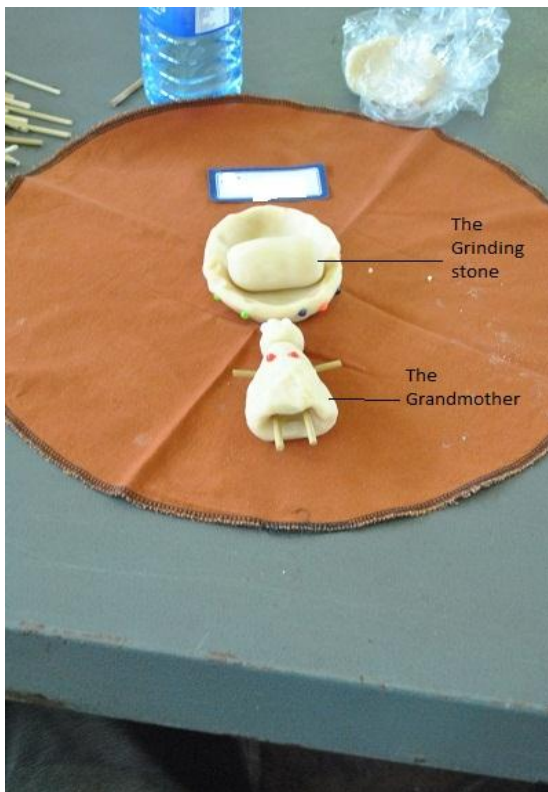
Figure 1. Representation of a grinding stone and an older person (Participant's grandmother

Another young adult confirmed his positive emotions, which originated from being cared for emotionally by an older person in his community. He said: "The mother, she is my neighbour, she is my friend and everything" (Participant 7).

Emotions of anger, hurt and disappointment. Negative feelings were also expressed towards the older people who. The participants expressed anger, hurt and disapppointment in relation to older persons because they said the older persons did not engage in an open and honest relationship with the younger ones: "The thing here is we want our parents to be open to us, they shouldn't keep secrets from us. It is a hurting thing to hear from the next door neighbour that your father is so and so. Why doesn't your parent tell you about your biological father*?"* (Participant 5).

Ambivalence in Relation to Past Practices and Current Realities

Ambivalence in terms of traditional practices and customs was also displayed through embracing knowledge relating older people's lifestyle while at the same time rejecting this knowledge as invaluable with regards to their current economic realities.

Appreciation for traditional practices and customs. Some participants expressed their appreciation for traditional practices and customs. One of the participants displayed his knowledge of the past by making a kraal, animals and an elder watching over the animals.
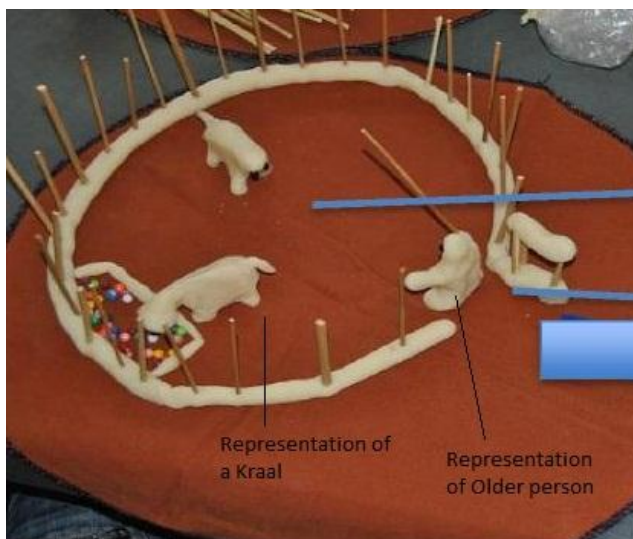

Figure 2. Representation of a Kraal and an older person

Another participant illustrated his acceptance of traditional customs by saying: "These things should go on because at the end of the day they will help us. In olden days they used to take a three-legged pot and use pots, because there was no electricity, even today that is what we have to do – seeing ourselves using those three-legged pots. It should not just be baking on electricity and other things" (Participant 7). One of the young men made items and utensils used in the past.
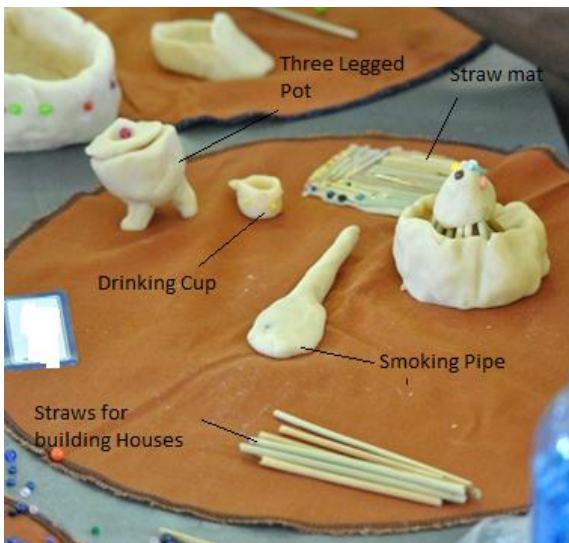
Figure 3. A three-legged pot with utensils that were used in the past.

Economic, health and socio-political realities. In contrast, another young adult rejected the traditional customs and practices when he said: "We aren't interested in agricultural things, considering the way they lived...We wouldn't have the jobs then like we have nowadays. If we grew up like them, we wouldn't create jobs for ourselves" (Participant 8). Another emphasized the same sentiments when he said: "If you were to look at our lives, we are no longer focused on the agricultural things. We are thinking of going to school, pursuing positive careers. Forgetting about our roots, you know, that is the motivation for this" (Participant 7).

Ambivalence in relational arrangements

Ambivalence was also displayed in terms of the relational arrangements between older people and young adults. The ambivalence was characterised by previous acceptance of older people role's leading and guidance, and in contrast by challenging these roles and rules of engagement.

Conformity to relational arrangements. Conformity to the current relational arrangements was displayed when a young man said, "some of us who stay at our grannies, they listen to them and the grandparents always correct them where they go wrong" (Participant 9).

Challenging authority and proposing new rules of engagement. Young adults also challenged the relational arrangements with respect to the older people by wanting to negotiate new rules for engagement: "I want to express myself towards my parents" but "whenever I speak my mind, they feel I am being disrespectful [to them]. It doesn't matter how I feel as an individual, in most cases it is about parents being right and you being wrong" (Participant 11).

Another participant reiterated to this by stating that "What he is saying is true...I get this because I am part of the young people...but the fact here is...if you are a parent and you have a child who doesn't want to listen...it is up to you to stand firm and say to this child. I am your parent. I came first I know what I am teaching you...and how you should live, we don't just have to leave them and say we cannot control them. I have the right to control the child...because the child doesn't have the right to control me."

Discussion

In this black African context, in which socially related intergenerational relations were investigated, young people displayed ambivalence in terms of emotions and position towards their older people. Ambivalence refers to tension between opposing thoughts, feelings or behaviour (Corradi, 2013). Research investigating the relation between emotion and values has indicated that there is an association between these types of emotions because they are considered to be part of social cohesion. For example, they found that negative emotions such as disgust and contempt are associated with conformity values and that feelings of affection and concern for others were closely related to value types of benevolence and universalism. This is because both emotions and values in a sense are pro-social tendencies that involve people interactions and the way people perceive themselves and others (Nelissen, Dijker & Vries, 2007).

Young people were also in conflict because of having to accept what is passed down to them, and to learn and practise old agricultural ways of life, even though these are irrelevant to

their current economic realities. Consequently, the older agricultural practices are seen to be opposed to technology and current developments.

In terms of relational arrangements, young people on the one hand understood the position of the older people as respected elders within the community. They did not oppose them because it could be regarded as disrespectful, but on the other hand they had to deal with the emotional frustration of being unable to express themselves.

Poor economic conditions, unemployment, HIV/AIDS and other socio-political dynamics impacted on intergenerational relationships. The fact that as young adult males they were unemployed and still financially dependent on older adults placed them in a disadvantaged position with reduced social bargaining power in terms of their relationships. Social exchange theory typically conceptualizes power in terms of (material) resources and their exchanges (Zafirovski, 2005). Power in this context is thus treated as a by-product of unreciprocated exchange transactions in respect of "resources" and the assumption is that social bonds result from reciprocated benefactions. This simultaneous generation of social bonds and power differentiation is called the paradox of social exchange (Zafirovski, 2005).

It seemed that these conditions placed young people at disadvantaged positions where they had to accept or conform with what was passed down to them. The reality of their situation, however, also placed them in another predicament: although young people learned about the past ways of life as part of their culture, they also came to the realization that agricultural practices and old ways of doing things were no longer sufficient for economic survival. Observing the current economic state within the community, they believed these practices were no longer any use to them even though they acknowledged the importance of the past which they had learned from older people and accepted as part of their heritage.

As a result they were trapped in a position of wanting to do something, but being unable to do it. They found themselves torn between doing what was expected in terms of social norms and

values that provided predictability, and venturing into uncharted terrain without support from the older people if they chose not to comply with norms that prescribe intergenerational relationships as reciprocal sharing and caring for one another. Bardi and Schwartz (2003) contends that the simultaneous pursuit of values is likely to give rise to strong psychological or social conflict. According to the study of intergenerational relationships by Costanzo and Hoy (2007), disparities in norms and values of old and younger generation are likely to cause conflict between generations and complicate their interaction in the process of transmitting these values.

The implications for intergenerational relations are pointed out by Nathan (2012) and (Barnett, Scarmella, Neppl, Ontai & Conger, 2010), who indicates that when the relationship between the older people and young adults weakens, the support they would provide to one another in the community also weakens. Further implications are that compliance with group norms may demand an oppressive conformity and loyalty to the group. The rigid application of norms guiding intergenerational relationships could increase unsatisfied needs, because of expectations which each generation has about another. Louw (1998) concludes that failure to conform may result in harsh punitive measures. Intergenerational theories seem to agree that ambivalence as a theory is suitable for in-depth understanding of how families, in spite of affection and closeness, negotiate conflict and tensions with each other and in their social roles and obligations (Bengston, 2011; Biggs et al 2011).

Furthermore, this ambivalence on the part of the young adults may hold negative implications for the wider community. Should the older people react to these emotions of rejection, tension and conflict may result which are the opposite of interconnectedness, common humanity and the responsibility which members of a community feel for one another (Nussbaum, 2003). Literature on community cohesion and the interactions this involves states that young adults tend to achieve their independence and autonomy at the cost of their relationships with older people, which is in contradiction to the principles of collectivism African communities are based on (Silverstein &

Bengston, 1997; Roos, Mabaso, De Lange, 2011). Renegotiation of principles and terms guiding interactions and intergenerational relationships therefore seems to be in a state of flux, because young people want to conform but they have difficulty in manoeuvring their way through the turbulence and doing what they want. Previous studies agree that future research must recognize the relationship between cultural belief systems and individual understanding of roles and obligations (Bengtson & Putney, 2000) as being essential for understanding intergenerational relationships on a more specific contextual basis.

Limitations and Recommendations

A single group of young males, who are mostly dependent on and supported by older people, could be very context-specific. Young females and other cultural groups would also have been valuable in presenting a broader view by providing more insight and diversity in terms of culture and the norms underpinning the generations. Community-based intervention which would include strategies and tools to promote interaction and communication is therefore recommended to facilitate better relations between the young generation and older generation.

Conclusion

Intergenerational relationships are strongly influenced by values and norms which guide interactions. Ambivalence in terms of emotions and position towards traditional agricultural practices and customsas well as the relational arrangement of positions of older and younger people emerged. Intergenerational relationships are embedded in these interactions which subsequently affect the community at large.

References

Aboderin, I. (2004). Modernisation and ageing theory revisited: current explanations of recent

    developing world and historical Western shifts in material family support for older people.

    Ageing & Society, *24*(1), 29-50. doi:10.1017/S0144686X0300152

Antonucci, T.C., Jackson, J.S. & Biggs, S. (2007). Intergenerational relations: Theory, research, and

    policy. *Journal of Social Issues, 63*(4), 679-693.

Bardi, A., & Schwartz, S. (2003). Values and Behavior: Strength and Structure of Relations.

    Personality And Social Psychology Bulletin, *29*(10), 1207-1220.

    doi:10.1177/0146167203254602.

Barnett, M.A., Scaramella, L.V., Neppl, T.K., Ontai, L. & Conger, R.D. (2010). Intergenerational

    relationships: Quality, gender, and grandparents involvement. *Family Relations*, *59,* 2844.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in*

    Psychology, 3(1), 77-101.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A Practical guide for*

    beginners. Sage Publications.

Bengtson, V.L. (2001). Beyond the nuclear family: The increasing importance of

    multigenerational bonds. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63,* 1-16.

Biggs, S., Haapala, I., & Lowenstein, A. (2011). Exploring generational intelligence as a model for

    examining the process of intergenerational relationships. *Ageing & Society*, *31*(7), 1107-

    1124. doi:10.1017/S0144686X10000978

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological model of human development. *International Encyclopedia*

    of Education, 3, 11-34.

Chigeza, S., Roos, V., & Puren, K. (2013). "...Here We Help Each Other": Sense of Community of

    People Subjected to Forced Removals. *Journal Of Psychology*, *23*(1), 97-100.

Chilisa, B. (2012). *Indigenous research methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Corradi, R. B. (2013). Ambivalence: Its development, mastery, and role in psychopathology. *Bulletin Of The Menninger Clinic*, *77*(1), 41-69.

Costanzo, P. R., & Hoy, M. B. (2007). Intergenerational Relations: Themes, Prospects, and Possibilities. *Journal Of Social Issues*, *63*(4), 885-902. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2007.00542.x

Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Eke, B. (2003). The impact of AIDS on intergenerational relationships in Africa. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 1*(3), 9-24.

Ellingson, L. L. (2009). Engaging Crystallization in qualitative research: An introduction. California, CA: Sage.

Erikson, E.H. (1963). *Childhood and society*. Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books Ltd.

Ferreira, L. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relational experiences between grandmothers and their grandchildren in an African context.* Master's thesis. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Guba, E.G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Resources Information Center Annual Review Paper, 29*, 75-91.

Hodgson, L.G. (1998). Grandparents and older grandchildren. In M. Szinovacz (Ed.), *Handbook on grandparenthood.* (pp. 170-183). Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Hoffman, J. (2003). What motivates intergenerational practices in South Africa? *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, *1*(1), 173.

Hoffman, J. (2012, October). *Intergenerational relationships in the context of poverty and HIV/AIDS in South Africa: Differential gazes and negotiated spaces.* Paper presented at the International Association on Gerontology and Geriatrics, Africa Region Congress, Cape Town, South Africa.

Katz, R., & Lowenstein, A. (2010). Theoretical perspectives on intergenerational solidarity, conflict and ambivalence. In M Izuhara (Ed). *Aging and intergenerational relations,* (pp. 29-56). Bristol, England: the policy Press.

Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lüscher, K. (2005). Looking at ambivalences: The contribution of a "new old" view of intergenerational relations to the study of the Life Course. *Towards an Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Life Course Advances in Life Course Research*, *10*, 93-128.

Lüscher, K. (2011). Ambivalence: A "sensitizing construct" for the study and practice of intergenerational relationships. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships, 9*(2), 191- 206. doi:10.1080/15350770.2011.568338

Mabaso, T. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relationships between young adults and older people in the Khuma community.* Master's thesis. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Makiwane, M. (2011). The changing patterns of intergenerational relations in South Africa. *Human Science Research Council*, Pretoria:South Africa.

Monserud, M.A. (2008). Intergenerational relationships and affectual solidarity between grandparents and young adults. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *70*, 182195.

Mattes, R. (2012). The 'Born Frees': The Prospects for Generational Change in Post apartheid South Africa. *Australian Journal Of Political Science*, 47(1),133-153 doi:10.1080/10361146.2011.643166.

Naythan, R. (2012). *An exploration of older people's perceptions of young adults in a township in the North West Province.* Master's thesis. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Newman, S., Ward, C.R., Smith, T.B., Wilson, J.O. & McCrea, J.M. (1997). *Intergenerational programs: Past, present and future*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.

Nelissen, R. A., Dijker, A. M., & de Vries, N. K. (2007). Emotions and goals: Assessing relations between values and emotions. *Cognition And Emotion*, *21*(4), 902-911. doi:10.1080/02699930600861330

Nyasani, E., Sternberg, E. & Smith, H. (2009). Fostering children affected by AIDS in Richards Bay, South Africa: A qualitative study of grandparents'experiences. African Journal of AIDS Research, 8(2) 181-192.

Ritchie, J. (2009). The application of qualitative methods to social research. In J. Ritchie, & J. Lewis (Eds.), Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers (pp. 26-34). London, England: SAGE.

Roos, V. (2008). The Mmogo^{TM}-method: Discovering symbolic community interactions. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 18*(4), 659-668.

Roos, V. (2011a). The generational other: The cultural appropriateness of an intergenerational group reflecting technique. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, *9*(1), 90-98.

Roos, V. (2011b). The Mmogo-Method^{TM}: An exploration of experiences through visual projections. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 10*(4).

Roos, V. (2012). *A relational theory applied to intergenerational relationships in South Africa*. Unpublished manuscripts, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.

Roos, V., Mabaso, T. & De Lange, E. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relationships between young adults and older people in the Khuma community.* Master's thesis. Potchefstroom: North-West University.

Snape, D., & Spencer, L. (2003). The foundations of qualitative research. In J. Ritchie and

Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers* (1-23). London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Silverstein, M. & Bengtson, V.L. (1997). Intergenerational solidarity and the structure of adult child-parent relationships in American families. *American Journal of Sociology, 103*, 429-460.

Statistics South Africa Living Conditions Survey: *Poverty Profile of South Africa; Application of the poverty lines on the LCS; 2010/2011.* Accessed from http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0310/P03102008.pdf.

Statistics South Africa. (2011). *Census 2011.* Pretoria, South Africa.

Thomas, D.R. (2003). *A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis.* School of Population Health. University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Tracy, S. J. (2010) Qualitative Quality: Eight "Big"-Tent Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research. Qualitative Inquiry 16(10) 836-851.

Zafirovski, M. (2005). Social Exchange Theory under Scrutiny: A Positive Critique of its Economic-Behaviorist Formulations.Journal of Sociology, 2(3). 36-55.

CRITICAL REFLECTION

Previous studies on intergenerational relationships have noted that these relationships within the African context are under-researched (Mabaso, 2011; Kolobe, 2011; Roos, 2012). Literature in the field of intergenerational relationships thus highlights what intergenerational relationships are, their patterns and as well as their importance (Eke, 2003; Lüscher 2005; Roos, 2012). Most of these studies focused and dealt mainly with familial relations in intergenerational relations and conducted these studies in a Western context. The implication is that there may not have been enough research done into intergenerational relations with regard to African communities and the way in which these relationships are perceived by members of both generations. This study therefore aimed to describe and gain a better understanding of the experiences of young adults in terms of their relationships with older people within their life context. The realization that a gap existed in this field motivated an investigation of intergenerational relationships within an African context. This was done by attempting to understand how young adult males perceive, and relate and attempt to negotiate new terms that guide and influence their relationship with older adults. The study followed a qualitative research design and adopted a phenomenological approach.

Intergenerational relationships always form an integral part of communities, they are embedded in community interactions and members' day-to-day relational exchanges. People in communities are involved in a continuous dynamic process and the predicament of the particular group of young people in this study is that they find themselves being trapped in an economic environment which threatens their relationships with older people.This is because individuals or groups of people cannot separate themselves from the environment in which they function. According to socio-ecological systems theories, individuals or micro-systems influence several environmental systems, and this theory identifies five environmental systems with which an individual interacts with and which will lead and support the person's growth process

(Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The micro-system which is the closest to the individual consists of people and objects that are in direct contact with the individual. Included here are relationships and interactions such as family, peers, school and the neighbourhood where intergenerational relationships occur (Bronfenbrenner, 1994).

These are important because they influence an individual's values, beliefs and how each in turn deals with the world. The theory explains that what happens at the micro-level is likely to influence other levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The ecosystem is a larger social system which is linked to the society at large and carries implications of how people – individually or in groups – interact and influence one another. The macro-system is an overall system overaching the patterns meso- and exo-characteristics, wherein cultures and sub-cultures of belief systems, knowledge, resources, hazards and life courses are embedded in (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). It thus becomes imperative that intergenerational relationships and related theories should take note of the broader environment of these relationships.

Most intergenerational relationships theories (solidarity, conflict, ambivalence) discussed above provide an explanation of the intergenerational relationships that take place in a particular context. It is important to note that existing intergenerational relationship theories assist in broadening our understanding of intergenerational relationships. These theories should not, however, be used as a general lens through which to view all types of intergenerational relationships because there might be over-generalization or over-simplification of concepts. For instance, in a community in which an older person is treated with respect and a reciprocal process is involved in terms of generational interaction or relationships, but in an African context this respect attached to the elderly goes far beyond age. The status and position given to the elder in an African context encompasses much more than age level and role. The roles and position of an elderly person may contribute much more to their status if they are associated with their ancestral beliefs, which are part of the African tradition.

In some South African and African countries in which ancestral worship is practised, the position and role of an elder person may be highly valued, as they are associated with spiritual and ancestral worship. People in these communities believe that an older person is closer to God and the ancestor, and therefore the elder's standing and relationships will also depend on these African beliefs (Oduaran & Oduaran, 2004). Intergenerational relationships cannot be separated from the particular beliefs and norms in which intergenerational relationships are embedded. According to Oduaran and Oduaran (2004), generational relationships in Africa may be firmly rooted in spiritual, philosophical and socio-cultural practices and these play a role in the way adults and the young people have related and interacted with one another. These specific values and norms whereby cultural beliefs are embedded can be difficult to conceptualize within intergenerational relationships without a deep understanding of some of the above-mentioned beliefs, practices or norms that guide the communities within which they are practised. According to Mabaso (2011), cultural attitudes and values provide the foundation for the social norms by which people live. He believes that through internalizing and sharing these cultural attitudes and values with fellow community members, and by handing them down to future generations, societies can and do in fact reconstruct themselves on the basis of a particular image.

This may not be a simple appendage and may carry negative implications to intergenerational relationships because, as seen in the study, when generations engage in the process of regeneration of their beliefs and norms, they engage in a form of renegotiation of these norms. Damage to the relationship between the givers and the recipients may be hard to repair, as was the case in this community: young people had difficulty setting new terms and rules to guide their relationships and consequently felt entrapped by the very norms and beliefs which are supposed to encourage inclusion, solidarity and cohesion. This conflict could hold negative implications for the way intergenerational relationships operate.

Intergenerational relationships are important for families, communities, and in all societies globally, and are key to the human socialization processes (Lüscher, 2005). Intergenerational relations are vital for the transmission of values and norms that enable social cohesion and it is through this transmission process that differences between generations have been noted. The importance of heritage and culture as a value system is seen as a backbone of many African societies and most importantly as the fountain from which many actions and attitudes flow (Mabaso, 2011). Ubuntu can be cited as one example which these value systems is embedded in, where emphasis is on keeping community's together, is something that has been practised by generations through the years . It is a principle that seems to hold great value among the members of society and within this particular communityThis explains why it was deemed such an important philosophy within the community studied. The present study therefore confirms previous literature on closed communities that emphasis is on interconnectedness and one would say that in this community studied these principles and practices somehow influenced relationships between the older and the younger generation. It became apparent that, in this community, the people's values and norms influenced their way of life to the extent that the older generation interacted with and judged the younger generations' behaviour in the light of their past beliefs.

Previous research suggests that young adults are prepared to achieve their autonomy even at the cost of their relationships with older people, which would contradict values of collectivism within the African context .Young generations displayed ambivalence towards the older people because the latter are the custodians of social norms and values in which their past and daily practices are embedded, but which are no longer applicable. Nyasani et al., (2009) in their note on intergenerational relationships and transmission of values, state that ambivalence is likely to occur within intergenerational relationships when younger generations view the older people's beliefs and perspectives as not being in keeping with current social values. The process of transmitting familial values thus becomes more difficult.

Conclusion

Intergenerational relationships cannot be de-contextualized; we need to understand them in the context in which they take place. Social norms, beliefs and values are guiding principles in all communities that influence relationships and the way people view themselves and others. Continued study of these relationships within their context could eventually lead to an improvement social interactions and serve foster sound intergenerational relationships and better communities.

References

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological model of human development. In *International*

    Encyclopedia of Education, 3

Eke, B. (2003). The impact of AIDS on intergenerational relationships in Africa. *Journal of*

    Intergenerational Relationships, 1(3), 9-24.

Kolobe, P.S. (2011). *Exploring the sense of belonging of Setswana-speaking older women in*

    Ikageng who were forcibly relocated during apartheid. Master's thesis. Potchefstroom:

    North-West University.

Lüscher, K. (2005). Looking at ambivalences: The contribution of a "new old" view of

    intergenerational relations to the study of the Life Course. *Towards an Interdisciplinary*

    Perspective on the Life Course Advances in Life Course Research, *10*, 93-128

Mabaso, T. (2011). *An exploration of the intergenerational relationships between young*

    adults and older people in the Khuma community. Master's thesis. Potchefstroom:

    North-West University.

Nyasani, E., Sternberg, E. & Smith, H. (2009). Fostering children affected by AIDS in

    Richards Bay, South Africa: A qualitative study of grandparents'experiences.

    African Journal of AIDS Research, 8(2) 181-192.

Oduaran, C., & Oduaran, A. (2004). Transformations over time in generational

    relationships. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, *2*(3/4), 171.

    doi:10.1300/J194v02n0312.

Roos, V. (2012). The Mmogo-Method®: An exploration of experiences through visual projections.

    Qualitative Research in Psychology, 9(3), 249-261.