

# **Investigating moral identity in child-headed households**

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Promotor:

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I, Jacqueline Pretorius, declare that **Investigating moral identity in child-headed households** is my own work and that sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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# PREFACE

This thesis is submitted in article format as described in A rule A.7.5.7.4 and A.8.5.1 (d) of the North-West University.

The four manuscripts contained in this thesis were submitted for review to *Indilinga* (manuscript 1), *Journal of Adolescent Research* (manuscript 2), and *Journal of Psychology in Africa* (manuscripts 3 and 4).

The referencing style and editorial approach for this thesis correspond with the Harvard style of referencing, except where the requirements of the journals for the manuscripts differed and the reference styles of the manuscripts' were adapted to the requirements of the three journals respectively.

For the purposes of this thesis, the page numbering of the thesis as a whole is consecutive. However, for submission purposes, each individual manuscript was numbered from page 1.

Attached, please find the letter signed by the co-author authorising the use of these articles for purposes of submission for a PhD degree.

# ABSTRACT

The development of a moral identity has been closely linked with parental care. Within the HIV/Aids context, concern about the moral actions of South Africans inspired an investigation into the Gestalt field of Zulu child-headed households, as the lack of adequate parental care threatens the development of moral identity in these households. As substitute parents, the adolescents in the Zulu child-headed households are responsible for enhancing moral identity in their siblings while their own moral identity is still developing. Since moral identity development occurs within their field of living experience, an investigation of the field of Zulu child-headed households was conducted in order to identify the aspects that can be utilised to develop a model that will empower the heads of the Zulu child-headed households to enhance moral identity development within their households. This was based on the Gestalt theoretical paradigm.

The Gestalt theory accepts that people are part of their environments or “field”, and that the meaning of existence of the individuals in the Zulu child-headed households has no meaning outside the context of their environments with which they form a unified interactive whole through their mutually interactive forces. A mixed-methods approach was used to investigate the Gestalt field of 60 adolescents in Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area. The exploration of the Gestalt fields of the adolescents was described in four articles and the aspects that can be used to develop the model were identified in the conclusions and recommendations section of the manuscript.

The aim of the first article was to investigate the aspects of the field of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area relating to their subjective reality of the kinship support and associated needs they experienced within their dual roles as members of the Zulu child-headed households and substitute parents. Perceptions of what the adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households viewed as helping their siblings become ‘good people’ were investigated in the second article. The aim of the third article was to explore whether ethnic membership is one of the core constructs in moral identity development of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, as ethnic identity in the Zulu culture is strongly integrated with a moral identity. The fourth article investigated the figuration of moral identity in the field of these adolescents, by comparing moral variants to various other characteristics of their field.

The aspects of the Gestalt field that had been identified as useful for the development of the model revolved around three main themes, namely: associated with the usefulness of the school environment; overlapping Eurocentric and Afrocentric characteristics of identity;, and helper characteristics.

Recommendations were made about aspects that could enhance the practical value of policy decisions based on facilitating awareness of various aspects of moral identity development; adjustments in the life orientation curriculum; and expanding the role of support staff in schools.

**Key words:** Moral identity; Gestalt, field; Zulu child-headed households, adolescents

# OPSOMMING

Daar is 'n noue verband tussen die ontwikkeling van morele identiteit en ouerleiding. Binne die konteks van MIV/Vigs het kommer oor die morele gedrag/optrede van Suid-Afrikaners aanleiding gegee tot 'n ondersoek van die Gestalt-veld van Zulu kindergeleide huishoudings, aangesien die gebrek aan ouerleiding morele identiteitsontwikkeling in hierdie huishoudings bedreig. As substituutouers is dit die verantwoordelikheid van die adolessente as hoofde van die huishoudings om morele identiteitsvorming in hulle sibbe te bevorder, ten spyte daarvan dat hulle eie morele identiteit nog nie gevestig is nie. Die aanname word gemaak dat hulle hulp nodig het met hierdie taak.

Morele identiteitsontwikkeling vind plaas binne die veld van hulle lewenservaring. Hierdie studie het ten doel om dié veld te ondersoek, ten einde faktore te identifiseer wat hulle morele identiteitsvorming kan bevorder en aanbevelings te maak vir die ontwikkeling van 'n moontlike model wat die adolessente in hulle taak van hulp kan wees. Die vertrekpunt van die ondersoek was die Gestalt- teoretiese paradigma.

Die Gestalt-teorie aanvaar dat mense deel vorm van hulle omgewing of “veld” en dat die betekenis wat die individue in die Zulu kindergeleide huishoudings aan hulle bestaan toeken, geen betekenis het buite die interaktiewe konteks van hierdie veld nie. 'n Gemengdemetode-benadering is gevolg om die Gestalt in die veld van 60 adolessente in Zulu kindergeleide huishoudings in die Mkhondo munisipale gebied te verkry. Eksplorاسie van hierdie veld is beskryf in vier artikels, en die aspekte wat gebruik kan word om morele identiteitsvorming in hulle huishouding te fasiliteer, is geïdentifiseer. Vanuit hierdie identifisering is aanbevelings gemaak vir die moontlike ontwikkeling van 'n model wat die adolessente kan bystaan in hulle taak.

Die eerste artikel het 'n ondersoek behels van daardie aspekte van die Zulu huishoudings met kinders aan die hoof in die Mkhondo munisipale gebied wat in verband staan met die subjektiewe realiteit van die verwantskapondersteuning en gepaardgaande behoeftes wat hulle binne hulle tweeledige rolle as lede van die huishoudings en substituutouers ondervind.

Die persepsies van hoe die adolessente hoofde van die huishoudings hulle sibbe kan help om 'goeie mense' te word, is in die tweede artikel ondersoek. Die doelwit van die derde artikel was om die omvang van etniese identiteit as bydraende konstruk in morele identiteitsvorming in die studiepopulasie te ondersoek, aangesien etniese identiteit in die

Zulu kultuur sterk geïntegreerd is met die vorming van morele identiteit. Die vierde artikel het die figurering van morele identiteit in die veld van die Zulu kindergeleide huishoudings ondersoek deur dit met ander eienskappe van hulle lewensveld te korreleer.

Die aspekte van die lewensveld van die studiepopulasie wat as bruikbaar vir aanbevelings vir die moontlike model beskou word, word hoofsaaklik met drie temas geassosieer. Hierdie temas is die bruikbaarheid van die skoolomgewing, die oorvleuelende aspekte van die Eurosentriese en Afrosentriese identiteite en helpereienskappe.

Aanbevelings wat die praktiese waarde van beleidsbesluite affekteer, word gebaseer op fasilitering van bewusmaking van verskeie aspekte van morele identiteitsontwikkeling, aanpassings in die lewensoriënteringskurrikulum en uitbreiding van poste vir ondersteuningspersoneel.

**Sleutelwoorde:** Morele identiteit; Gestalt, veld; Zulu kindergeleide huishoudings, adolessente

# LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Aids</b>	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
<b>CALS</b>	Center for Applied Legal Studies
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
<b>HSRC</b>	Human Sciences Research Council
<b>JASA</b>	Junior Achievement South Africa
<b>WMA</b>	World Medical Association
<b>SAIRR</b>	South African Institute of Race Relations
<b>SAPA</b>	South African Press Association

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## LETTER OF PERMISSION

Permission is hereby granted by the co-authors that the articles included in this manuscript may be submitted by Jacqueline Pretorius for the purpose of obtaining a Ph.D. degree in Nursing:

The co-author, Dr. S Jacobs acted as promoter. The co-author Ms M. van Reenen did the statistical analysis of data.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "S. Jacobs". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "S". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

**Dr. S. Jacobs**

**Promotor**

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "M. van Reenen". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

**Ms M van Reenen**

**Subject specialist**

# Section A:

## Nature and scope of the study

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Moral degeneration and regeneration have been identified as challenges that truly cut across the whole spectrum of South African society. South Africa has even been described as being in a "... moral crisis. Questions of ethical behaviour and moral values have been identified as pertinent for national survival." (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2010; Rauch, 2005; Tshabalala-Msimang, 2009:iii). Crime statistics in South Africa are at alarmingly high levels (SAPS, 2012: 7-10). The South African public is bombarded daily with media reports related to murder, hijacks, rapes, domestic violence, violence against women and children, drug-related crimes and crimes related to and caused by corruption, avarice and greed. These deeds are reported to be committed not only by members of society known for criminal activity, such as gangs, but also by members of society who are supposed to reflect leadership, and institutions that represent the application of justice. Examples include traffic and other government officials accepting bribes (Victims of Crime survey, 2011:3), members of the police services committing domestic violence and murder, health professionals selling organs, magistrates driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and hijacking vehicles , teachers involved in incidents of sexual assault of children and politicians involved in incidents of self-enrichment through fraudulent means (Evans, 2010; Pauw, Basson, & Harper, 2012; SAPA, 2011). These crimes create a perception of general disrespect for law, authority and accountability, which exacerbates the situation and sets a poor example for our youth, whose involvement in crime adds to the concern about the moral future of South Africa.

In its annual report, the Department of Correctional Services (2010:28) supports the above concern as follows:

*The percentage of the inmate population who are youth is a cause of real concern in South Africa. We have a youth inmate population of 18-25 years of 56 520 as at 31 March 2010 against the total offender population of 164 793. Of this total approximately 58% were sentenced and 42% were un-sentenced. The largest number of youth offenders was between the ages of 22-25 and represented approximately 62% of the total number of youth offenders. Approximately 60% sentenced youth offenders were classified as mediums*

*and maximum youth offenders constituted about 21%. The majority of youth offenders were incarcerated for aggressive crimes, constituted about 50% of the total youth offender population.*

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### ***Moral identity development***

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### ***Child-headed households***

In the context of the South African HIV/Aids pandemic (Jacobs, Shung-King & Smith, 2005:3; Meintjes & Hall, 2009:72; Rosa, 2004:1) many children in child-headed households are left without adult guidance to facilitate the development of moral identity. South Africa has 118 500 children living in a total of 66 500 child-headed households across South Africa, where the definition of a child-headed household includes only households where all the members are under the age of 18 (CALs, 2008; Children's Institute, 2009; Desmond *et al.*, 2003:56; Rosa, 2004:1-4; SAIRR, 2009). Child-headed households may, however, also form because of other reasons, for example, where the caretaker is either too sick or too old to take care of the children, or works elsewhere or has abandoned the children.

The results of the South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence, Behaviour and Communication Survey, 2008 (Human Sciences Research Council, 2009) indicated that HIV prevalence peaked in females in the 25–29 age group at 32,7% and males peaked at 25,8% in the 30–34 age group. The survey of the HSRC (2009) revealed that African females in the 20–34 age group had the highest HIV prevalence, followed by African males in the 25–49 age group, and that some of the provinces had substantial increases in prevalence from 2002 to 2008. On comparing surveys conducted in 2002 with surveys conducted in 2008, it would appear that prevalence in KwaZulu Natal increased by 8,6%, from 14.9% to 23.5%, while it increased by 7.5% in the Eastern Cape, 3.5% in Mpumalanga and 2.7% in Limpopo. As a consequence of the increasing number of orphans in South Africa in the context of the HIV/Aids pandemic, Rosa (2004:1-4) predicted in 2004 that the number of child-headed households in South Africa would increase as the HIV/Aids pandemic progressed. In view of the complications of the disease, the assumption is made that parents are unlikely to be available to fulfil their parenting function of developing moral identity in their children.

The July 2009 issue of *Fast Facts*, published by the South African Institute of Race Relations, indicated that the number of child-headed households has grown by 25% – from 118 000 in 2002 to 148 000 in 2007, thus confirming Rosa’s prediction. Child-headed households are found mainly in three provinces: Limpopo (38%), the Eastern Cape (25%) and KwaZulu-Natal (16%) (Children’s Institute, 2009; Richter & Desmond, 2008; SAIRR, 2009).

Problems experienced by child-headed households include: poverty, discrimination, stunting and hunger, pressure to work, early marriage, difficulties accessing education, poor housing, exploitation, psychological problems, lack of adequate medical care, lack of supervision and care, disruption of normal childhood and adolescence, loss of financial support, lack of parental guidance, harassment, vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse, and poor health status. These factors force many to drop out of school in an effort to survive. Consequently, members of child-headed households require extra support to meet their various basic needs, which include financial, emotional, psychological, health and educational needs (CALSA, 2008; Children’s Institute, 2009; Desmond *et al.*, 2003:56-58; Meintjies *et al.*, 2009; Rosa, 2004:1-4; SAIRR, 2009). This puts them in a position of vulnerability to harassment, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation and psychological problems, among others, which will have a negative impact on their moral identity formation (Jacobs, Shung-King & Smith, 2005:50; Meece & Daniels, 2008:364-367; Pendlebury, Lake & Smith, 2008/2009:43; Rosa, 2004:4).

Given the link between the development of moral identity and parental guidance in children's lives, concern about the absence of parental guidance in vulnerable populations such as child-headed households provided a third reason for initiating this study. The fact that they live in poverty and lack parental support complicates moral identity development in this population even more (Oberwittler, 2007:782).

However, various studies have identified aspects that may contribute constructively to moral identity formation, despite the negative factors mentioned. The ability to play and the ability to form quality relationships inside and outside the family systems have been identified as aspects that promote resilience in vulnerable children, which in turn leads to a positive sense of self, associated with the development of a moral identity. In addition, good intellectual skills are viewed as an individual attribute contributing to resilience (Hoosain, 2007:14; Masten & Powell, 2003:13).

According to childrearing practices of African societies, communities are responsible for taking care of all children, as is encapsulated in the saying: "It takes a whole village to raise a child". The traditional view, based on this sense of responsibility and duty in the community, was that there is "no such thing as an orphan in Africa", as orphans were absorbed in the village when the extended family was not available (Desmond *et al.*, 2003:57; Germann 2005:55; Tsegaya, 2008:3), providing a protective factor for the development of moral identity, even in child-headed households. Thus, kinship support is regarded as an important protective factor in the moral identity development of the members of African child-headed households. The same applies to the Zulu culture.

However, provision of kinship support has changed. The rapid increase in the number of vulnerable children, combined with urbanisation and poverty, has stretched the kinship networks too far, causing them to become fragmented. According to Tsegaya (2008:16) about 30–70% of households in the sub-Saharan region are taking care of an orphan or two. In cases where kinship support is available, it appears to have changed from the traditional practice where support is given by the father's family towards help now being given by the family of the mother (Germann, 2005:46; Lombe & Ochumbo, 2008:689).

Some children in these child-headed households also experience no sense of *ubuntu* (an African term referring to humaneness), but rather that neighbours are distancing themselves and do not provide assistance. After the death of their parents, some children are cheated of their inheritance and property by unscrupulous neighbours and relatives, and girls, especially, suffer abuse by the same people (Forster, 2007:2; Mabala, 2006:416; Tsegaye, 2008:6). Meintjes *et al.* (2009) on the other hand, suggest that it is a myth that most orphans and vulnerable children lack family and social networks, and that

this myth has created a damaging legacy. In spite of these different views, the reality is still that adolescents are primarily responsible for developing moral identities in their siblings while they have yet to form their own moral identities.

### ***Adolescence***

In the developmental phase of adolescence the main psychosocial crisis they face, according to Erikson's psychosocial stage theory, is identity versus identity diffusion (Erikson, 1980:97). Forming a coherent sense of identity helps to maintain consistency in a person's sense of self across developmental transitions, and is predictive of subsequent developmental outcomes. During this stage the adolescent would normally struggle with the question of "Who am I?" and would experiment with different identities in order to find an answer to that question. Adolescence is also the stage where the reference frame of morality changes and shifts, and becomes a set of autonomous moral precepts. Furthermore, adolescents are cognitively capable of abstract reasoning. They can be flexible and are able to accommodate a variety of complicating factors in deciding moral issues (Fleish, Schindler & Perry, 2009:47; Meece & Daniels, 2008:365).

The moral identities of adolescents develop within the context of their field of lived experiences, which include their internal and external worlds, consisting of the genetic and physiological givens, the familial, social, cultural, political and geographical aspects of development, and the experiential domains of thought, need, fantasy and personality organisation. Adolescents exist in the sphere and fields of biology, emotion, cognition, interpersonal, social, education, law and culture simultaneously. The different aspects of adolescence are not neatly differentiated and separated, which demonstrates that adolescents do not only have a field, but are also *of* a field where everything affects everything else (O'Neill & Gaffney, 2005:229, Parlett & Lee, 2005:47; Resnick, 2009:2; Toman, Bauer, McConville & Robertson, 2005:183).

The challenge adolescents in child-headed households face in terms of their own identity development, together with the demands of taking care of their siblings influences the development of moral identity. In the process of these adolescents trying to provide for their own basic needs, their own development tasks are complicated, and thus the development of their siblings' moral identity may inevitably be neglected. Being responsible for the development of moral identity is thus viewed as a challenge that stretches beyond the identified developmental tasks adolescents already have to perform. Interventions that could be of assistance are obviously essential, therefore.

### ***Afrocentric perspective***

Moral identity in the Zulu culture is closely associated with the concept of *ubuntu*, an Afrocentric moral perspective that enhances a person's moral standing or prestige in the community, one's *isithunzi* (Wikipedia, 2012). *Ubuntu* is a word used by the Zulu people of South Africa, and is difficult to translate into English because it has many associated connotations. Roughly, it means "humanity", "humanness" or even "humaneness", and it often features in the maxim that "a person is a person through other persons." It signifies respect and compassion for others and serves both as a factual description and a rule of conduct or social ethic. In addition, *ubuntu* is associated with generosity, hospitality, sharing, and being friendly, caring and compassionate (Louw, n.d.:1; Metz, 2007:323; Tutu, 1999:31). It is seen as the acquired quality of humanity that is the characteristic of a fully developed person living the full range of values, attitudes, feelings, relationships and activities of the human spirit (Shutte, 2001:31).

From an *ubuntu* perspective, the most fundamental attitude towards other people is to see and treat them as "another self", making no distinction between the good of the self and the good of another person, regardless of whether the other person is known or not (Metz, 2007:338; Shutte, 2001:31). Each individual's humanity is expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs, in turn, through recognition of the individual's humanity. It reflects the principle of caring for each other's wellbeing in a spirit of mutual support, and acknowledges both the rights and responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being.

*Ubuntu* displays a range of virtues, some concerned with the relationship between people (Metz, 2007:333; Shutte, 2001:31) and others characterising a person's relationship with himself or herself (Shutte, 2001:31). The virtues associated with the relationships with others include reverence and respect that lead to loyalty, courtesy, tolerance, patience, generosity, hospitality, readiness to cooperate and willingness to sacrifice life for a just cause. As far as the characteristics of the relationship with the self are concerned, *ubuntu* is perceived as integrity, confidence, endurance, joyfulness and vitality. It also gives a general sense of one's own value and dignity (Collier, 2005:311; Shutte, 2001:32).

This study focuses specifically on the Zulu culture, as His Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini (2006), recognised that the moral crisis also affects the Zulu nation and expressed the desire that Zulus should go back to their roots to care for each other, and support those who are vulnerable. The researcher lives in a rural area bordering on KZN, which has been indicated as the province with the third largest number of child-headed households (Children's Institute, 2009; SAIRR, 2009), and where the main indigenous

culture of the area is that of the Zulu-speaking people. Her life as both community member and mental health practitioner is, therefore, directly and indirectly influenced by the status of moral identity in the community.

In order to understand moral identity development in child-headed households, a contextual investigation of their lived experience is called for. This study examined and identified aspects in the field of Zulu child-headed households that could be used to develop a model to enhance moral identity. This was done from a Gestalt perspective. The Gestalt theory accepts that people are part of their environments or “field”, with which they form a unified interactive whole through mutually interactive forces (Joyce & Sills, 2001:24; Perls, Hefferline & Goodman: 1951:xviii; Sills, Fish & Lapworth, 1995:77; Yontef, 1993:296-297; Yontef, 2002).

## **2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The research problem that directs the research is that the adolescents in charge of the Zulu child-headed households are not empowered to guide the development or enhancement of a moral identity in the children in their care, owing to a lack of guidance from parents or adult caregivers. Adolescents are in a developmental phase where they need to form their own identity, as forming a coherent sense of identity helps to maintain consistency in one’s sense of self across developmental transitions, and is predictive of subsequent developmental outcomes.

When adolescents have to take over parenthood responsibilities prematurely while they are not yet mature enough to take on the responsibilities of the adult world, their normal developmental process is disrupted. They are not in a position where they can gradually gain emotional independence from parents and other adults, learn social skills to form mature relationships, prepare for an economic career, and find their place in society in a way that gives meaning to their lives. Both the adolescents and their dependants are thus in an unenviable position. The dependants are in the care of adolescents who, while facing the challenge of fulfilling their own basic needs, are prematurely responsible for developing the moral identity of their siblings, while their own identity formation has not yet been completed.

No model exists within the context of the Zulu child-headed households that can assist the adolescents facing the challenge of enhancing moral identity in their siblings. The classic moral development theories have been criticised, on the one hand, in the sense that the development mainly occurred from a Eurocentric perspective that does not adequately reflect an African cultural identity (Metz, 2007:333; Verhoef & Michel, 1997). On the other

hand, the African perspective of *ubuntu* which is associated with being a moral person is not translated into a theory of development of moral identity, nor does it appear to take the influence of westernisation into account. As Reimer and Wade-Stein (2004:232) stated: “Although moral identity is potentially universal to all cultures, the language of social and moral influence may differ by context”.

Neither the Eurocentric perspective in moral identity development, nor the African perspective of *ubuntu* takes the changing family structures as influenced by the HIV/Aids pandemic sufficiently into consideration. Social mediation theories provide an alternative perspective to investigate development of various identities, such as moral identity, across cultures and contexts, but these models do not adequately reflect the internal fields of people. Currently, therefore, there is no model that addresses the external and internal fields of moral identity of child-headed households. The contexts in which moral identity is facilitated are not described from the perspective of the adolescents within these contexts either.

Identifying aspects in the field of the Zulu child-headed households that can enhance moral identity can facilitate the development of a model that will reflect the perspective of the Zulu culture. The application of such a model may then, in turn, empower the adolescents in the Zulu child-headed households to enhance moral identity in their siblings.

Based on the problem statement, the following research question directed the investigation: **Which aspects of the field may enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households?**

### **3. CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENT**

The ontological and epistemological positions that influence the research approach ( Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi & Wright, 2010:40) are based on the view of the researcher that people are seen as spiritual beings that live in a physical body with the ability of cognitive and emotional development and functioning, which are constantly in a reciprocal interactive relationship with an external field. This interactive relationship does not only assist people to make sense of their reality, but also to co-construct their contextual realities (Resnick, 2009:6; Reynolds & Mortola, 2005:167; Toman, et. al., 2005:182).

The researcher adopted a pragmatic approach, which focuses more on answering the research question than on a specific methodological perspective (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:32; Morgan & Sklar, 2012:76). This ontological and epistemological

position allows for the field of the Zulu child-headed households to be investigated from a holistic paradigm that can accommodate the notion of an internal field, an external field as well as the interaction between these fields.

### **3.1 Theoretical point of departure**

The objectives will be based on the Gestalt theoretical paradigm. The Gestalt paradigm sees the whole as more than the sum of its separate elements. Even though a certain degree of structure prevails in the elements, which are recognisable as a whole, a relationship between the parts remains (Lewin, 1952, 1952; Perls, Hefferline & Goodman, 1951:228). Based on the Gestalt paradigm, the participants in the research are thus viewed in the context of a greater field and not in isolation, supporting the notion that the self is continually formed in relation to the other. All events in the human field are a function of all of the participants and the interactions between them (Resnick, 2009:6; Reynolds & Mortola, 2005:167; Toman et. al, 2005:182).

From the Gestalt theoretical paradigm it is recognised that the members of the Zulu child-headed households are inherently self-regulating and oriented towards growth, and that they cannot be validly understood if isolated from their environment. The paradigm therefore considers any and all types of factors that significantly influence what happens in the events of their living (Bowman & Nevis, 2005:5; Crocker & Phillipson, 2005:67, Parlett & Lee, 2005:43; Yontef & Fuhr, 2005:84; Wulf, 1996:19). Their subjective perception of reality, or the “what is”, is based on their everyday lived experience, and as an individual whole of many dimensions that can, in principle, reciprocally influence and be influenced by nearly every other event (Crocker, 2005:128).

The Gestalt paradigm endorses change and creative adjustment to the conditions (Toman & Bauer, 2005:182) such as the circumstances and contexts of Zulu child-headed households. It believes in the ability of the self to regulate in order to find homeostasis and can thus allow the researcher to be both an admiring witness and influence these processes. What is of great value to the researcher is that the Gestalt paradigm does not focus on pathology but on self-regulating processes to attain homeostasis (Burley & Freier, 2009:38; Reynolds, 2005:155; Toman et. al, 2005:191).

The application of the Gestalt paradigm in the research process poses some challenges. As the ground may become figure at any given moment, one of the challenges is to keep focus on the figure, yet keeping an open mind towards continuous changes in the field of the participants that may influence the original figure. In this study, the figure is the identification of aspects that could be used for recommendations to develop a model to

enhance moral identity in child-headed households. This figure is a lived reality co-created through dialogue between the participants of the research and other members of their field. This dialogue may thus cause the figure to change while the research is still being conducted.

The Gestalt theoretical paradigm, however, does not teach what to see, but rather how to look (Resnick, 2009:8), which makes it appropriate for the research process. It is a non-judgemental and open-ended perspective, displaying a willingness to mutually construct the reality (Maurer, 2005:249; Reynolds, 2005:154; Toman et. al, 2005:191) of the Zulu child-headed households. This allows for discovering or revealing aspects useful for development of a model from the participants' context, rather than from what the researcher regards as appropriate. It takes the pressure off the researcher to come up with "clever solutions", without denying the contribution the researcher can make (Toman et. al, 2005:182).

The Gestalt paradigm originated from philosophical roots, which are field theory, existentialism and phenomenology (Resnick, 2009:2; Yontef & Fuhr, 2005:83), therefore it can integrate aspects of other therapeutic theories as lines that unfold in the field. Some of the other therapeutic theories that are in line with the Gestalt theoretical paradigm are modern forms of psycho-analysis, modern forms of systems theory and cognitive behavioural theories (Resnick, 2009:8; Toman et. al, 2005:183).

Consequently, the Gestalt theoretical paradigm is appropriate for this study as it allows for a wider assimilation of information than that which can be provided by any one other theory. Its flexible approach allows for experimenting in the research process (Reynolds & Mortola, 2005:153-178). Furthermore, it is not manipulative (Resnick, 2009:6). It differs from approaches like inter-subjective theories and postmodern theories in that it does not interpret, psycho-analyse or change, but rather focuses on facilitating awareness of the organising process of people (Resnick, 2009:11). It allows the inclusion of various childhood and moral development theories (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1932), on the basis of which the investigation can be conducted.

#### **4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

No hypothesis was formulated, as the research question did not predict a relationship between variables (Botma *et al.* 2010:100).

## **4.1 Primary objectives**

The academic goal of the study was to address gaps in knowledge on moral identity in the context of Zulu child-headed households from the lived experience of the adolescent heads of the households. The strategic goal of the study was to investigate the field of Zulu child-headed households in order to identify those aspects that can be used to enhance moral identity in these households. The aspects identified were used to make recommendations for the development of a model to enhance moral identity in child-headed households, thus applying the practical relevance of the study (Bak, 2004:16; Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95).

This research aimed to answer the “what” question as it is used in exploratory applied research (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:80; Lourens, 2007:35). The research also served as applied research, since it described those aspects of the field of the households that could be used to develop a model to enhance moral identity in the Zulu child-headed households, thus addressing a specific concern (Babbie, 2004:28; Botma *et al.*, 2010: 53; Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95; Neuman, 2003:22).

## **4.2 Secondary objectives**

The steps taken to achieve the research goals are set out as clear and achievable objectives in order to understand the study. The objectives are seen as the concrete, measurable and speedily attainable steps to be taken within a certain time frame, in order to attain the research goal (Bak, 2004:16; Fouché & De Vos 2011:94). The objectives of the research were the following:

- Investigate the field of Zulu child-headed households from a Gestalt perspective by
  - ✓ exploring kinship support in Zulu child-headed households;
  - ✓ exploring adolescents’ perceptions on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households;
  - ✓ exploring ethnic identification of the adolescent heads of the households;
- exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households;
- Identifying aspects in the field of Zulu child-headed households that can be utilised to develop a model to enhance moral identity in these households; and
- Making recommendations about which aspects should be considered in developing a model for enhancing moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology consisted of a literature study and an empirical study. The flow of the research is depicted in figure 1.



**FIGURE 1** Research process

## **5.1 Literature review**

As a starting point, a literature review on the Gestalt paradigm, adolescents and research on child-headed households was conducted. This was complemented by consultations with various research methodology and Zulu culture experts to form an idea of the field that needed to be investigated. From the background investigations, indicators for the development of moral identity from both a Eurocentric perspective and an Afro-centric perspective were identified. These indicators guided the development of a questionnaire that could explore the aspects of moral identity that were identified on the basis of the background investigation.

The following databases were consulted for the literature review:

- The library catalogues of UNISA and the North-West University
- Academic search lists
- Ebscohost
- Psynet
- Sabinet
- Sage Journals
- Google Scholar
- ERIC-Combined
- SAePublications
- Current & completed research
- Pub Med

## **5.2 Empirical study**

Phenomena that are investigated in the social sciences call for openness in the methodological approach, as both qualitative and quantitative approaches can assist in understanding human beings in their full complexity (Delpont & Fouché, 2011; Fouché & De Vos, 2011). The approach of this study thus focused on answering the research question rather than on methodological considerations as purported by Morgan & Sklar (2012).

### **5.2.1 Research design**

A descriptive survey design in the form of a semi-structured questionnaire was followed up with face to face interviews based on the results obtained from the questionnaires which informed the survey results and added rich description of lived experience, thereby achieving social validity (Perry, 2012:133). Field notes added the perspective of the researcher, contributing to the gestalt of the study.

### **5.2.2 The role of the researcher in this study**

The researcher initiated the research as part of her PhD studies with the Centre for Child, Youth and Family studies. She compiled the questionnaire and arranged for the translation, recruited and orientated the field workers, attended the different venues where data was collected and provided the meals, stationery and transport money. In addition, the researcher arranged with the various school counsellors to be available for participants should they need counselling or debriefing. At the different venues, she observed the process without participating directly in the data collection. She had informal conversations with some community members who accompanied participants or who approached her out of curiosity about what the “gathering” was about, debriefed the field workers after the data collection and kept field notes about her observations and self-reflections.

### **5.2.3 Method of data collection**

Data was collected at three different meeting points in the community. The meeting places were organised by the field workers who lived in the community and who administered semi-structured survey-type questionnaires with the adolescents. Face to face interviews were conducted with six participants by a field worker who was coached in interviewing techniques. The purpose was to elaborate on the data obtained from the questionnaires and generate additional qualitative data on experiences of raising their siblings to become moral persons with developed moral identities. The interviews were conducted and recorded by a Zulu-speaking field worker. Field notes were kept, based on what was experienced and observed during the empirical data collection, as well as from debriefing conversations with field workers.

## ***Research instrument***

The researcher found no instrument that measures moral identity within the South African context. Based on the literature review of other studies and the review of various psychometric instruments, a questionnaire was developed that explored the internal and external fields of the Zulu child-headed households, in order to help determine which aspects could be used to enhance moral development in Zulu child-headed households.

Aspects of the field of the participants that were explored included:

- Demographic information
- Social support
- Perceptions and experiences on various aspects related to moral identity
- Ethnic identification

The format of the questionnaire varied between open-ended and closed-ended questions which were alternated in order to prevent boredom. To create a sense of safety, the questionnaire started with closed-ended questions, then progressed to more personal, open-ended questions, and ended again with closed-ended questions. The random order of the questions aimed at making the respondents think more carefully about their answers and preventing them from falling into a rut, as suggested by Hofstee (2006:134).

Germann (2005) found that providing Likert-scale ratings were too complicated to be used by adolescents in the Zimbabwean child-headed households of his study, and advised easier options to be given. In the questionnaire used for the current study, therefore, forced-choice questions were used. The open-ended questions used in the research on the Zulu child-headed households, however, allowed the respondents to express themselves in their own words, which aimed to promote a sense of control (Hofstee, 2006:133).

### *Concept interpretation and translation*

Questions were scrutinised by an expert in qualitative research, an expert in African studies and *ubuntu*, the supervisor of the researcher, who is an expert on the Gestalt paradigm, and by staff of the NWU statistical department, who guided the layout of the questionnaire and ensured face validity of the questionnaire.

From a personal communication with Ms M. Rademeyer (2010), it was decided that it would be more valuable to have the questionnaire translated to the spoken idiom of the region than grammatically translated, as the respondents in her research did not

understand the correct use of the translated language. This confirms what Germann (2005:133) found in his research, namely that in the case of certain grammatically correct translated words, the words had to be adapted to “slang” words by the research assistants themselves, in order for the adolescents to understand their meaning.

The questionnaire was therefore translated by interpreters rather than translators. As the local spoken dialect of Zulu is not as pure as the Zulu spoken in KZN, a local court interpreter translated the questionnaire to the local dialect. A second critical reader was then asked to verify that the translation was done according to the instruction. The questionnaire was subsequently pilot tested with only five participants. After making the necessary possible adjustments identified from the pilot test, the questionnaires were used for the sample population.

Face validity was obtained through discussions with experts in order to ensure that the questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. Reliability, which reflects the stability or consistency of measurement, was pursued through the use of a pilot test of the questionnaire (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:173; Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2007:132; Pietersen & Maree, 2007:217).

#### **5.2.4 Population and sampling**

The members of the Zulu culture comprised the universe in this study, which refers to all potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher was interested (Arkava & Lane, in De Vos *et al.*, 2005:193). The population group, which includes the specific unit, the geographical location and temporal boundaries relevant to this research (Neuman, 2003:214), consisted of the heads of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area.

The sample population was recruited through snowball sampling (Maree, 2007:80, 177). Data was collected from participants who were recruited, starting with individuals the researcher knew (Sandlin & Walther, 2009:303; Strydom & Delpont, 2011:393) through involvement at the local high school and children’s home in Piet Retief. From there, recruitment expanded to the rest of the rural areas in the Mkhondo municipality district, based on referrals from the initial participants.

Sixty participants who represented both genders equally were recruited and filled in the questionnaire. According to Maree and Pietersen (2007:179), this number is more than sufficient to qualify as major research for a minor subgroup such as this population. Participants for the interviews were recruited through a convenience sample (Maree &

Pietersen, 2007:177). Participants who indicated on their questionnaires that they were willing to be interviewed were the potential candidates for the interviews, six of which who represented the different contexts were used. The number of interviews is viewed by Morgan and Sklar (2012:74) as sufficient. The criteria for inclusion were:

- The head of the household had to be 13 years or older, and younger than 18 years or still attending school if older than 18 years.
- The head of the household had to be able to fill in a questionnaire, with or without assistance.
- Participation was voluntary.
- Permission for the use of an interpreter had to be given.

### **5.3 Data analysis**

Quantitative data was obtained systematically in a standardised manner and analysed by means of a Kuder-Richardson, Spearman's correlations, cross-tabulation and clustering. Results were reported in numeric form using frequency tables and statistical language (Creswell, 2008:563; Fouché & Delpont, 2011:64).

Different scores were constructed to enable the researcher to draw comparisons and look for correlations between the various aspects explored in the questionnaire. These scores were:

- Count of number of perceived responsibilities for the head of the household
- Count of the number of helpers to fulfil the responsibilities
- Count of the number of income sources
- Count of exposure to Zulu traditions
- Count of Afrocentric responses

A Kuder-Richardson was calculated to test reliability in the Afrocentric construct and Spearman's correlations were done to test relationship/association between the various aspects of the field.

Cluster analysis seeks to identify homogeneous subgroups of cases in a population. That is, cluster analysis is used when the researcher does not know the number of groups in advance but wishes to establish groups and then analyse group membership. Cluster analysis implements this by seeking to identify a set of groups that both minimises within-

group variation and maximises between-group variation. Later, group id values may be saved as a case variable and used in other procedures such as cross-tabulation (SPSS, 2009)

A list of moral variables that overlapped between Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives was used to cluster the data to see if participants could be grouped together based on these variables. The method that was used to measure the binary data was Furthest Neighbor. The distance between the responses of the participants was measured by using Sokal and Sneath1 (SN1) (SPSS, 2009).

Based on these results Pearson chi-square and Phi tests were done, which aimed to detect significant associations between the two clusters, as well as a Phi test, which indicated the strength of practical significance (Field, 2005:691). An independent t-test with equal variances not assumed was done with a Mann-Whitney test to ensure accurate representation of findings.

Qualitative data analysis was performed by reading through the data (answers to the open-ended questions, transcriptions of the interviews and field notes) several times, to get an overall sense of the underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2007:378; Schurink *et al.*, 2011:402), which were then categorised into themes. This was done manually.

Trustworthiness and validation measures, as proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985, in Schurink *et al.*, 2011:419), were taken to ensure the truth value of the study. Credibility in the qualitative approach of the study was pursued by accurately describing and representing the participants' views. Detailed, rich descriptions of the data obtained were documented, showing the range of different realities that were represented, and ethical practices that were followed. Through the use of multiple perspectives in collecting and contemplating the data and establishing the parameters of the subject matter and population, the validity and transferability of the study were increased (Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2007:133-134; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:113; Schurink *et al.*, 2011:420). Dependability and conformability were pursued through discussions with experts and referring to the applicable theoretical frameworks. The combination of all the different data collection methods and various perspectives obtained provided crystallisation of the complexity of the study (Di Fabio & Maree, 2012:141).

## 6. ETHICS

Ethical clearance was obtained from the North-West University (NWU-00060-08-A1). Ethical guidelines, as proposed by The World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki (2008) for conducting research on vulnerable populations such as children, were considered. Due consideration was also given to the fact that the research should only be conducted if the importance of the objective outweighed the inherent risks and burdens to the research subjects. The best interests of the participants were the first priority.

Even if the participants had legal guardians, it was almost impossible to reach them. Based on the concept of emancipated minors (Richter, Groft & Prinsloo, 2007), the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Government Gazette, no. 28944 2006): recognising a child who is the head of a household as a caretaker, and research by Lebeso, Davhana-Maselesele and Obi (2011), where consent of teenagers aged 13 to 19 was also approved as ethically acceptable, the adolescents gave written or oral permission for the research.

The researcher considered the special vulnerability of this population, and took special care to explain the different aspects of the research to the individual participants through a field worker from the community in which they reside. Each questionnaire had a covering letter explaining the purpose of the research and the rights of the participants. The field worker read the covering letter to the participants and gave them the opportunity to ask questions, after which they signed the forms of consent. The form specified that they were willing to fill in the questionnaires, make use of an interpreter, if needed, and participate in recorded interviews, if requested. Participants who were willing to participate in the interviews could write their contact details on the back of the form, in the knowledge that their personal information would not be revealed in the research report. The consent form also indicated that personal information would be kept separate, under lock and key, where only the researcher would have access to it.

The researcher was committed to not harming the participants more than they were harmed through their daily experience as members of child-headed households, and endeavoured to make sure that the benefits that could result from the research for this vulnerable population outweighed any discomfort suffered by the participants (Elias & Theron, 2012:150). Possible discomfort that might be experienced was anticipated; the researcher arranged with school-based counsellors that their particulars would be given to the children in order for them to have access to counselling, should it be indicated.

Participants were informed that they would derive no direct benefit from participating in the study, and that no activity to induce harm to participants would be introduced. They were,

however, provided with a meal after they had filled in the questionnaires, and they were permitted to keep the stationery they had used. The participants in the interviews were provided with the taxi-fares they had spent in order to get to the meeting point and back home.

The researcher maintained confidentiality and restricted disclosures of confidential information within the practice of considering what was in the best interests of the participants as part of a vulnerable population. This was a very important aspect, as audio-tapes were used to generate information. The field workers who were involved in the research were also committed to confidentiality. Confidentiality was further ensured by coding data with numbers on questionnaires and interviews. No names appeared on the data used for reporting. Research data was captured and stored on a personal computer with access limited to the researcher. Audio-recordings were deleted after they had been transcribed and the transcriptions were stored on the computer. The computer was kept in a locked office. Participants were informed that they might have a copy of the report, should they require it. Shortcomings and errors were acknowledged in the report.

#### *Selection and training of field workers*

Three volunteers were used as field workers. Each of them is a resident in the community where they assisted to collect the data. The concept of moral identity, the rationale of the research and their role as field workers were discussed with them. It was explained to them that they had to read the consent form to every participant, to clarify, in Zulu, any misconceptions and answer their questions. They also had to make sure that the participants complied with the inclusion criteria before obtaining their permission to participate in the study. When asked, they needed to assist in filling in the questionnaire. One of the field workers was provided with the skills and requirements to conduct face to face interviews.

## **7. DEFINITIONS AND MAIN CONCEPTS**

### **7.1 Gestalt field**

According to Brownell (2001:2), the “field refers to the phenomenology of the participant”, that is everything that has an effect on the life of the child. Yontef (1993:130, 296), adds to this definition as he views the field as a phenomenologically defined concept to describe tangible and intangible environments and organisms, perceivable or unperceivable by the human senses. It is a whole in which the parts are in immediate relationship and

responsive to each other and no part is uninfluenced by what else goes on in the field. The field in Gestalt field refers to people in their life space.

The three areas of phenomenological investigation, the internal world of the client, the external world of the client, also seen as the environment, and the ever-changing relationship between them, are called the overall context or the “field” (Joyce & Sills, 2001:24). A field is the context in which everything is connected to everything else (Sills, Fish & Lapworth, 1995:77).

For the purpose of this study, Gestalt Field is defined as: the field is everything out there, everything that exists; and interaction in the field is with everything and everyone. It is a whole in which the parts are in immediate relationship and responsive to each other and no part is not influenced by whatever goes on somewhere else in the field. The field consists of all the complex interactive phenomena of individuals in the Zulu child-headed households and their environment.

## **7.2 Moral identity**

Moral identity is described by Moisaner and Pesonen (in Sandler & Walther, 2009:301) as the “self as an ethical subject”. Lapsley (2008:4) defines moral identity as “a deeply felt sense of fidelity to oneself in action”.

“A person’s moral identity is stored in memory as a complex knowledge structure consisting of moral values, goals, traits and behavioural scripts” (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim & Felps, 2009:124). “Moral identity entails the unity of self and moral systems and involves “[having] an explicit theory of oneself as a moral agent – as one who acts on the basis of respect and/or concern for the rights and/or welfare of others” (Hardy & Carlo, 2005:232).

A moral identity is a specific kind of identity that revolves around the moral aspects of one’s self and acts as a self-regulatory mechanism that sets parameters for individual behaviour and motivates specific action that is moral (Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007:1611).

For the purpose of this study, moral identity is defined as having achieved the cognitive ability to discern between right and wrong, harmful and beneficial; evolving into actions displayed in relationships that benefit the community without detriment to the sense of self. These actions are guided by internal conclusions that were formed through the dynamic interaction of the different contextual factors exposed to.

### **7.3 Child-headed household**

“Child headed households are commonly defined as households where all the members are under 18 years” (Meintjies *et al.*, 2009:1). It is also described as “one in which the oldest resident is 17 years old or younger” (SAIRR, 2009). Children remaining in households where there are no adult caregivers are referred to as child-headed households (Rosa, 2004:1).

For the purpose of this study the definition of a child-headed household, as proposed by Mogotlane *et al.* (2010:4), was adapted as follows:

A child-headed household is defined as a household where one of the children or the young in the house has assumed the principal responsibility for the household’s inhabitants because: a parent/s or primary caregiver/s was/were permanently or temporarily absent as a result of death, employment away from home (migratory work), abandonment or rejection of the children, a parent/s or primary caregiver was/were present, but abusing alcohol and/or drugs excessively, too ill, terminally ill or too old to provide the care required. The child with the principal responsibility may be older than 18 years, however, if still attending school.

### **7.4 Adolescent**

An adolescent is an individual in the development period of transition from childhood to early adulthood, entered at approximately 10 to 12 years of age, ending at 18 or 22 years of age (Santrock, 2006; G-1). The term adolescent refers to an individual in the developmental phase in the human life cycle that is situated between childhood and adulthood (Gouws *et al.*, 2000:2) and, according to Rice and Dolgin (2008:449), an adolescent is a person in the period of growth from childhood to maturity.

For the purpose of this study, an adolescent in a child-headed household is defined as an individual between 13 years and 18 years, but including individuals older than 18 years who are still attending school.

## **8. LAYOUT OF THE STUDY**

This study is presented in article format. The report consists of four sections. The first section provides the orientation to the study. The next section consists of four stand-alone scientific articles that focus on the investigation of aspects of the field of Zulu child-headed households. The articles are sectioned together with the author guidelines of each journal

to which the articles were submitted. The third section provides a summary of the study and the fourth section contains all the addenda.

Section A: *Nature and scope of the study*. This chapter introduced the background and rationale for the study and described the research problem. The research question and the goal and objectives of the study were formulated. The research methodology and ethical considerations were presented.

Section B:

- Article 1, presented to *Indilinga: Kinship support as perceived by adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households*. The aim of this study was to investigate kinship support in Zulu child-headed households from the perspective of the adolescent head of these households, in order to gain contextual insight into this aspect of the development of their moral identity.
- Article 2 presented to *Journal of Adolescent Research. Perceptions of adolescents on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households*. Perceptions of what the adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households viewed as helping their siblings become 'good people' were investigated in this article.
- Article 3 presented to *Journal of Psychology in Africa. Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households*. The aim of this study was to explore ethnic membership as possible core construct in the development of moral identity of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, as ethnic identity in the Zulu culture is strongly integrated with a moral identity.
- Article 4 presented to *Journal of Psychology in Africa. Exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households*. How moral identity featured in the field of child-headed households was explored in order to identify aspects that can be used to enhance the development of moral identity in these households. A list of variables that represented an overlap between Afrocentric and Eurocentric aspects associated with moral identity was used to cluster the data, which was then compared with other aspects of the participants' field.

Section C: *Conclusion*: This is the final chapter, which consists of the summary, evaluation, conclusion and recommendations of the study. It also identifies the possible shortcomings of the study.

Section D: *Addenda*: This section contains the informed consent form, the questionnaire, an excerpt from a transcription and an excerpt from the field notes. It concludes with the comprehensive reference list.

## **9. SUMMARY**

This section focused on the preliminary study and rationale in the choice of the research topic. The research problem and focus were described, and the goals and objectives set out. The research design that was followed and the ethical considerations associated with this study were described. Main concepts were described or defined and the layout of the report was presented. The next section contains the articles that represent the results of the empirical investigation.

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# SECTION B: ARTICLE

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## ARTICLE 1:

### KINSHIP SUPPORT AS PERCEIVED BY ADOLESCENT HEADS IN ZULU CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

Please note that this section is formatted according to the requirements of the various journals.

## ARTICLE 1

<b>Name</b>	Kinship support as perceived by adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households
<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this study was to investigate kinship support in Zulu child-headed households from the perspective of the adolescent head of these households, in order to gain contextual insight into this aspect of their moral identity development.
<b>Journal</b>	Indilinga
<b>Authors</b>	Pretorius, J; Jacobs, S.
<b>Proof of submission</b>	Reporting-MTA: dns; rrba-ip-smtp-2-3.saix.net X-Postfix-Queue-ID: 53CB62E91 X-Postfix-Sender: rfc822; jackypretorius@telkomsa.net Arrival-Date: Wed, 15 Aug 2012 13:05:12 +0200 (SAST)  Final-Recipient: rfc822; qmkabela@gmail.com Original-Recipient: rfc822;qmkabela@gmail.com
<b>Required length/word count</b>	Articles should not normally exceed 15 pages in length (4000–4500 words)
<b>Actual word count</b>	4 215 words

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English, or an African language. All articles will be submitted to referees. If an article is submitted in a language for which it is difficult to find suitable referees, the author may be requested to submit a translated version of the article (in English) for the purposes of refereeing.

**GENERAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES****Notes:**

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In the case of official reports and those of corporate authors, the references must be as detailed as possible, e.g. Department of National Education 1991. Report of Teacher Education. Pretoria: Government Printer. RP 173/1991: 122. For unpublished theses and dissertations, follow this example: Mtetwa, D. 2001. *From Policy to Practice: The South African Schools Act*. Med Dissertation. Durban: University of KwaZulu-Natal. South Africa.

Anonymous references from newspapers are indicated thus: Sunday Times, 25 March 2001: 11. Leadership in Education.

Personal communications are not included in the reference list as they are not retrievable.

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**Title: Kinship support as perceived by adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households**

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## ABSTRACT

In traditional African communities kinship support provided to children in their community is perceived as contributing to parental guidance. Parental guidance is strongly related to children's moral identity development. In the context of the South African HIV/Aids pandemic, children in child-headed households may be left without adult guidance to facilitate their moral identity development. Some research indicates that kinship networks continue to provide care for orphans and vulnerable children, whereas other research suggests that kinship networks appear to have been stretched too far and are fragmented, which may lead to inadequate support regarding moral identity development. The aim of this study was to investigate kinship support in Zulu child-headed households from the perspective of the adolescent head of these households, in order to gain contextual insight into this aspect of their moral identity development. Data obtained from a semi-structured questionnaire, filled out by 60 participants, was triangulated with field notes and face to face interviews. Participants perceived themselves as having a dual role in kinship support. Providing and receiving kinship support is not being perceived as adequate. This implies that the facilitation of moral identity through adult guidance is at risk.

**Key words:** moral identity, child-headed households, kinship support

## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, in difficult times African communities rely heavily on kinship support, that is, support from the extended family and neighbours. Communities, according to African societal childrearing practices, are responsible for all children. This belief is encapsulated in the saying: "It takes a whole village to raise a child". Owing to this sense of responsibility and duty in the community, the traditional view was that there is "no such thing as an orphan in Africa", as orphans were absorbed in the village when the extended family was not available (Desmond *et al.*, 2003: 57; Germann, 2005: 55; Tsegaya, 2008: 3).

Due to various factors, such as the complications resulting from the HIV/AIDS pandemic and migrant workers, adolescents or children often have to head households and take care of their siblings (Germann, 2005: 55; Mogotlane, Chauke, Human and Kganagkga, 2010: 25; Tsegaya, 2008: 3). The adolescent heads of child-headed households not only have to face the challenge of taking care of their own basic needs; as substitute parents they are also responsible for facilitating moral identity development in their siblings.

The adolescent heads of households are thus faced with the challenge to facilitate both the development of siblings' cognitive ability so that they can distinguish between right and wrong; and their awareness of what is harmful and beneficial so that the actions that they display in their relationships would benefit the community without detriment to their sense of self. The actions that flow from their cognitive ability and awareness, formed through the dynamic interaction of the different contextual factors or fields they have been exposed to, should develop to such an extent that they are guided by internal conclusions rather than by external circumstances (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps., 2009: 124; Hardy and Carlo, 2005:232; Reynolds and Ceranic, 2007: 1611).

Kinship support from adults in the community to child-headed households is thus relevant in the field of moral development, as the moral development of children is strongly related to the parental guidance they receive (Carlo, 2006: 560; Kuczynski and Navara, 2006: 302; Meece and Daniels, 2008: 421). Based on the African perspective that it takes "a whole village to raise a child", kinship support is viewed as support given by all people that contribute to harmony in, and the benefit, of the community. This includes people outside the biological family relationships of the Zulu child-headed households (Verhoef and Michel, 1997). The traditional view that it is the duty of the community to support the members of child-headed households should therefore boost moral identity development in these households.

However provision of kinship support has changed. The rapid increase in the number of vulnerable children, combined with urbanisation and poverty, have stretched the kinship networks too far and have caused them to become fragmented. According to Tsegaya (2008: 16), about 30–70 % of households in the Sub Sahara region are taking care of an orphan or two. In cases where kinship support is available it appears to have changed from the traditional practice where support was given by the father's family, to help now being given by the family of the mother (Germann, 2005: 46; Lombe and Ochumbo, 2008: 689).

Some children in child-headed households also experience no sense of *ubuntu* (an African term referring to humaneness). Instead, neighbours are distancing themselves from child-headed households and do not lend assistance. After the death of their parents, some children are cheated of their inheritance and property by unscrupulous neighbours and relatives. In addition, girls, especially, suffer abuse by the same people (Forster, 2007: 2; Mabala, 2006: 416; Tsegaye, 2008: 6). Meintjies, Hall, Marera, & Boule (2009), on the other hand, suggest that it is a myth that most orphans and vulnerable children lack family and social networks, and that this myth has created a damaging legacy.

The differences in perspectives related to kinship support for orphans and vulnerable children call for a contextual investigation of kinship support in Zulu child-headed households, as it can affect the moral identity development in these households. The perspectives of the adolescent heads of Zulu child-headed households on kinship support can create contextual insight into the circumstances in which the development of their moral identity is facilitated.

## **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Adolescents are in a developmental phase where they need to form their own self-identity, as forming a coherent sense of identity helps to maintain consistency in one's sense of self across developmental transitions, and is predictive of subsequent developmental outcomes. Children in child-headed households find themselves in a position where adolescents whose own identity-formation has not been completed not only have to face the challenges of taking care of their own basic needs, but are also responsible for facilitating the moral identity development of their siblings. In the absence of parents or adult caregivers, adolescents in charge of the Zulu child-headed households are not empowered to guide the development or enhancement of a moral identity in the children in their care.

## **OBJECTIVES**

This study examined kinship support as perceived by the adolescent heads of Zulu child-headed households. The aim of the study was to identify the status of parental and adult guidance provided to assist the adolescents in these households with the development of moral identity of siblings in their care.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Sample**

The universe in this study was the Zulu culture. The population group relevant to this research were the heads of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area. A snowball sample was used to recruit 60 participants who were 13 years or older, and younger than 18 years or still attending school, if older than 18 years. They had to be able to fill out a questionnaire, with or without assistance, and to participate voluntarily. Permission for the use of an interpreter had to be given.

## **Research approach and instrument**

To examine the status of kinship support in Zulu child-headed households as viewed by their adolescent heads, a methodological mixed-methods design was followed (Creswell, 2008: 565). The researcher developed a semi-structured questionnaire consisting of close-ended and open-ended items. The questionnaire was based on literature reviews of moral identity, measurement of support instruments, Gestalt theory, the Zulu culture and child-headed households. The literature review was supported with consultations with experts on the various aspects investigated in the literature review. The questionnaire was then pilot tested on five participants.

The questionnaire was filled out by 60 participants of both genders. This was followed up by face to face interviews starting with information obtained from the questionnaires and expanding into their lived experience, to obtain rich description of their context. The process was supported by the keeping of field notes.

Credibility in the qualitative approach of the study was pursued by accurately describing and representing the participants' views. Detailed, rich descriptions of the data obtained were documented, showing the range of different realities that were represented, and ethical practices that were followed. Through the use of multiple perspectives in collecting and contemplating the data, and establishing the parameters of the subject matter and population, the validity and transferability of the study was increased (Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2007: 133-134; Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 113; Schurink *et al.*, 2011: 420). Dependability and confirmability were pursued through discussions with experts and referring to the applicable theoretical frameworks.

Face and content validity was obtained through discussions with experts in order to ensure that the questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. Reliability, which reflects the stability or consistency of measurement, was pursued through the use of a pilot test of the questionnaire (Babbie, 2004: 143; Delport and Roestenburg, 2011: 173,179; Ebersöhn *et al.*, 2007: 132; Gravetter and Forzano, 2003: 87; Pietersen and Maree, 2007: 216).

## **Setting and data collection**

Ethical clearance was obtained through the ethics committee of the Huguenote College, UNISA and North-West University (NWU-00060-08-A1). Informed consent was explained to the individual participants by field workers from the community where they resided. School-based counsellors were alerted to the fact that their personal details would be

given to the participants to enable them to have access to counselling, should it be indicated. Although no payments were made to encourage participation in the study, they were provided with a meal after they had filled out the questionnaires, and they were permitted to keep the stationery they used. The interviewees received money for the taxi-fares to get to the meeting point and return home.

Participants were a convenience sample of 60 child heads of households who are of Zulu ethnic background (mean age =17.48), residing in the Mkhondo municipal area. Of the sixty participants who contributed to the study, 51 per cent were males and 49 per cent females. Age distribution varied from 13 years old (n=1) to 22 years old (n=2), with the greater number of participants being between 17 and 19 (n=32).

The questionnaires were filled out in the community at gathering points identified by the fieldworkers. Fieldworkers obtained consent from the participants after informing them, in isiZulu, of their rights, and answering questions related to the study. Subsequently, six face to face interviews were conducted with participants who were representative of the various types of Zulu child-headed households with which the participants could identify.

The principal researcher made field notes based on what was experienced and observed during the empirical data collection, and from debriefing conversations with fieldworkers. The field notes contributed to an understanding of the overall context of the research (Greeff, 2011: 359).

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Quantitative data was obtained systematically and analysed. Results were reported in numeric form using frequency tables and statistical language (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative data analysis was performed by reading through the data (answers to the open-ended questions, transcriptions of the interviews and the field notes) several times, to get an overall sense of underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2007; Schurink *et al.*, 2011). These were then used to identify themes that represented their views of kinship support.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Participants in the study have a dual role as far as kinship support roles are concerned. On the one hand, they form part of a group of siblings who need the help and guidance of adult kinship. On the other hand, to their siblings, they are part of the 'adult' kinship, since

they have to provide care like a substitute parent: “To them I’m a mother, father, grandmother, grandfather. I’m everything to them.” (Boy, 19)

Within the context of *providing* kinship support, the participants could identify with various caregiving responsibilities. On average, the participants were able to relate to almost nine responsibilities, ranging from physical, such as providing food, cooking and cleaning, to non-physical responsibilities, such as ensuring that their siblings attend school, and providing emotional support. Their perceptions of how they thought they were fulfilling these responsibilities indicated that only 34% believed that they did very well, while 38% rated themselves as average and 27% rated themselves as not fulfilling their responsibilities well at all.

Participants were also questioned on the kinship support and advice that they *received* with regard to their caregiving responsibilities. Half of the participants indicated that their legal guardians (the people who would receive the allocated grants) assisted them with their day-to-day responsibilities, when asked. They received advice mostly from family members (n=15).

In terms of normal life-span development, friends fulfil a very important role in the lives of adolescents (Eccles, Templeton, Barber. & Stone, 2003: 389; Robertson and Shepard, 2008: 13). However only eight participants in this study indicated that their friends helped them with their caregiving responsibilities and only three indicated that their friends were a source of advice. Qualitative responses on their perception of kinship support from friends varied widely: “They are good people (friends) and they help out where they can”; “I don’t have friends and my family doesn’t care” (Girl, 15); “I have friends (but) spend my leisure time alone” (Boy, 19). Despite all participants attending school, only one response indicated a teacher as a source of advice, and nobody listed a teacher as a source of other help. A high number of missing responses for sources of advice (n=24) was noticed, though. This raised the concern that the category of ‘No-one’ (n=4) might be much higher than reflected.

Answers were transformed into a helper-score, which indicated how many helpers were available to assist the adolescents with their caregiving responsibilities. According to the results of the helper-score, most of the participants had an average of two helpers (mean=1.88 and standard deviation=1.97).

However, the quality of the support is questionable, as reflected by the qualitative responses of the participants:

“I had my aunt. She helped me. Or rather, she tried to help me but she also has her problem ... so she can't pay attention to us, but she tried. We can see her (indicating that they can understand her situation). She can't because she has her own kids. She also had 5 kids. So it's too much. So she can't handle her problems and our problems. She has her family.” (Boy, 19)

“In my father's family, there is only two left. They are all dead. One stays in Johannesburg and the other one at the rural area.” (Girl, 17)

“She (mother working in another place) is a loving person, but because of our situation she is unable to give us everything we need.” (Boy,17)

Some ambivalence towards possible kin involvement was also found:

“My father used to support me when I was little and provide for me but then he left and he would give me money from time to time. He has now come back and wants to give money again, is it right for me to take that money? It hurts me because I want to know why he would just leave his son behind, but I am forgiving because he is my father and I accept what has happened.” (Boy, 17)

In some cases it was also difficult to ask for support:

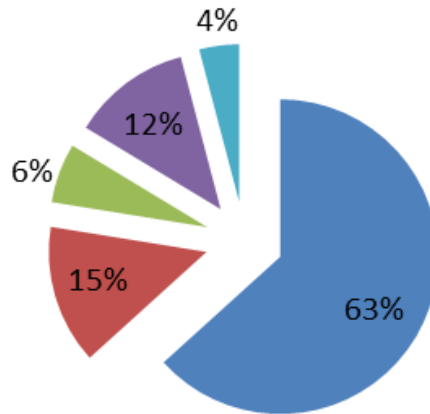
“The thing is, I am a very quiet person, I don't speak up much.” (Girl, 17)

“I used to be someone who speaks up for herself at school. So now I'm quiet.” (Girl, 17)

Themes that identified the *type* of kinship support participants received and appreciated were then explored. The themes are reflected in Figure 1.

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■ 1 Provided for physical needs    ■ 2 Emotional support  
■ 3 Providing employment        ■ 4 Nothing  
■ 5 Other




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**FIGURE 1      Types of kinship support provided that adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households appreciated**

The dominant theme was appreciation for support provided to meet physical needs such as food, clothing and school necessities. Food scheme programmes provide support at schools and seem to make a difference to school attendance, but school holidays still pose a threat regarding having enough to eat (field note). Participants reported that they asked food from family members or community members when they were hungry, leading to the assumption it was not provided on a continuous basis.

“We used to sleep without food, and we’d call my uncle and he would send us money (to buy food) when he gets paid.” (Girl, 17)

“If I needed to ask for anything I would ask my aunt, she is not my biological aunt, she’s just an older lady that took a liking to me, so I could go to her if I was hungry.” (Girl, 15)

They seem to be aware of programmes that provide food, but lack knowledge of how to access this kind of kinship support.

“There is a program where they get the food, but I don’t know what kind gets to get the food.” (Boy, 16)

The other themes of kinship support received that were appreciated represented much less than the 63 per cent for the appreciation of giving support to meet physical needs. Only 15% indicated emotional support and 12% that they were given employment. It was not clear from the data, however, whether only 15% received emotional support or only 15% appreciated the emotional support. The same applies to the appreciation of being given employment.

Financial support comes mainly from government grants (73.3 %), but is experienced as inadequate.

“The big problem ...eish... it’s when it comes to money. I am unable to buy them food. And the grant money that my grandparents get is too small.” (Boy, 15)

Even though eight participants identified parents as living or working in another place as a reason for being a Zulu child-headed household, only five indicated that parents sent money, thus, as far as kinship support is concerned, they are being deprived not only financially, but also morally, as there is no adult or other family member who can set an example.

The participants were struggling to cope with their own schoolwork in addition to their caregiving responsibilities, as indicated by the results that showed that, on average, they lagged three years behind. Kinship support in this area is provided through additional classes over weekends and school holidays, but it creates additional stress in terms of having to cope with domestic responsibilities. Despite their own academic challenges, the adolescents still tried to provide kinship support to their siblings by trying to assist them with their school work:

“I had to attend school and take care of my sisters at the same time. I didn’t have enough time to do school work. So, as a result, I failed at school at the end of the year. So even if I was ready to do the schoolwork, there was always something else in my home life to disturb me. It’s happened sometimes would I lose concentration on what I was doing at school. That’s why I’m still at school.” (Boy, 19)

The perceptions of the adolescents also indicate that teachers are not generally seen as a source of adult guidance, since only one participant indicated a teacher as such a source. The same applies to the church. Although the adolescents encourage their siblings to go to church meetings and 42 participants indicated that they attended church at least twice a month, only one participant indicated a church member as a source of advice.

Kinship support does not seem to provide adequately for shelter or a sense of home, as 26 participants indicated that they did not feel safe at home. Qualitative responses of the participants also create the impression that they are not looking towards next of kin to fulfil these needs:

“And I think the most important thing is to get a safe home... I think it’s the municipality and government, so that they can give us the right place to live.” (Boy, 19)

“Even if I could just find a safe place to live because the place that I live in is not safe, it’s just a roof over my head.” (Girl, 15)

## **CONCLUSION**

In general the adolescents in the Zulu child-headed households recognise the fact that they are the ones who have to provide kinship support to their siblings, and are able to identify the various responsibilities they are called upon to fulfil. Despite their willingness to provide kinship support, they experience a lack of physical and emotional means to adequately provide such support.

The government, in giving grants and making available food schemes, is the main source of physical support provided to the Zulu child-headed households. Other support is given in the form of additional educational programmes. Although the family and community members provide a certain measure of physical support, their support does not seem to be consistent and sustainable, as it is apparently only provided when asked for. The participants may give up this kind of support because although they sometimes receive it, they find it difficult to ask for it. Moreover, the true state of affairs is sometimes concealed, with the result that the child-headed household does not receive the support it really needs. The high number of missing responses for sources of kinship support in terms of giving advice (n=24) is also a concern, since lack of adult guidance, in the context of facilitating moral identity in these households, may be indicated.

Whereas some physical support is present, emotional support appears to be a need that is not met adequately through kinship sources either. In terms of providing kinship support, the adolescents cannot meet the needs of their siblings. They identified that they did not have adequate knowledge to provide such support to their siblings. They expressed the need for guidance, not only in terms of the needs of their siblings, but also in terms of advice to address their own emotional needs.

Support that is consistently provided is mostly at a non-personal level, such as grants and educational support. Institutions that could generally be expected to provide a moral compass do not feature adequately at a personal level in these households. Personal-level support appears to be available from community or family members, but only when asked for, thus leaving gaps in the consistent adult guidance necessary for facilitating moral identity.

Results of this study accordingly confirm studies that indicate that kinship support is fragmented and does not support the notion of “no such thing as an orphan in Africa”. Consequently, the inadequate kinship support experienced by the participants is a cause of concern because of the lack of the necessary adult guidance to encourage and facilitate the moral identity development in this vulnerable population.

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## ARTICLE 2

### PERCEPTIONS OF ADOLESCENTS ON FACILITATING MORAL IDENTITY IN ZULU CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS.

<b>Name</b>	Perceptions of adolescents on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.
<b>Aim</b>	Perceptions of what the adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households viewed as helping their siblings become 'good people' were investigated.
<b>Journal</b>	<i>JOURNAL OF ADOLESCENT RESEARCH</i>
<b>Authors</b>	Pretorius, J; Jacobs, S.
<b>Manuscript ID</b>	JAR-12-155
<b>Required length/word count</b>	Manuscripts should not exceed 30 typed, double-spaced pages, including references, tables, and figures
<b>Actual length</b>	25 pages

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## **Perceptions of adolescents on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.**

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### **Abstract**

Development of moral identity is closely associated with parental guidance. In child-headed households, adolescents have to fulfil that parental role. In this study, moral identity is associated with being a good person. Perceptions of what the adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households viewed as helping their siblings become 'good people' were investigated. A mixed method approach was followed to obtain data from sixty participants that were recruited through the snowball method. Provision, protection, pursuing and people are identified as four elements to facilitate moral identity in these households.

**Key words:** Moral identity, adolescents, child-headed households

## Introduction

Moral development is strongly related to parental guidance in a child's life (Carlo, 2006; Kuczynski & Navara, 2006; Meece & Daniels, 2008; Smetana, 2011). According to Blasi (in Jimenez et al., 2008), a central moral identity is the internal factor that will cause people to behave morally, because they are committed to a sense of personal integrity. The extent to which individuals develop an integrated sense of self regarding cognitions, emotions and behaviour, is seen to be a strong predictor of morality, that is to act in a moral manner or not (Côté & Levine, 2002; Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Carlo, 2006; Jimenez, Nawrocki, Hill, & Lapsley 2008; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007).

A person is viewed as having developed a moral identity when he or she has the cognitive ability to discern between right and wrong, harmful and beneficial and whether the actions carried out in the relationship between him or her and others benefit the community without detriment to the person's sense of self. These actions are guided by internal conclusions that were formed through the dynamic interaction of the different contextual factors or fields to which he or she has been exposed (Hart, Atkins, & Donnelly, 2006; Johansson, 2007; Moshman, 2005; Smetana, 2011; Swartz, 2008; Tappan, 2006; Wainryb, 2006).

Many children in child-headed households are left without adequate adult guidance (Jacobs, Shung-King, & Smith, 2005; Meintjes, Hall, Marera, & Boulle, 2009; Rosa, 2004) to facilitate the development of moral identity. Children or young people in the house have assumed the principal responsibility for the household inhabitants because: a parent/s or primary caregiver/s was/were permanently or temporarily absent as a result of death or employment away from home (migratory work); abandonment or rejection of the children; a parent/s or primary caregiver/s was/were present but was/were abusing alcohol and/or drugs; or they were either too ill, terminally ill or too old to provide the care required (Mogatlane et al., 2010). The child with the principal responsibility may be older than 18 years, however, if still attending school.

Modelling moral behaviour is described as one of the ways in which developing a moral identity can be facilitated (Hart, Atkins & Ford, 1999; Reimer, 2005; Rice & Dolgin, 2008), but adolescents are not able to provide such an example consistently. Even though they can distinguish between right and wrong, their moral actions may contradict their beliefs. This can partly be ascribed to the constantly changing normative values and challenges of society, influenced by historical and social change, and partly to the normal adolescent

development processes (cf. Gouws, Kruger, & Burger, 2000; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998; Meece & Daniels, 2008; Rice & Dolgin, 2008).

The challenges that face adolescents in Zulu child-headed households in terms of their own identity development and the demands of taking care of their siblings influence the development of moral identity in their siblings. While these adolescents are trying to provide for the basic needs of their households, their own development tasks are complicated, and thus the development of their siblings' moral identity may inevitably be neglected. The need for advisors to assist the adolescent heads of child-headed households has been identified (Pretorius, in press; Mogatlane, 2010) because traditional kinship support networks are also fragmented (Pretorius, in press; Tsegaya, 2008). This is a cause of concern for the future development of moral identities in South African people, given the current circumstances surrounding the moral actions of South Africans in general.

No model exists within the context of Zulu child-headed households that can assist the adolescents facing the challenge of enhancing moral identity in their siblings. The classic moral development theories have been criticized in the sense that they developed mainly from a Eurocentric perspective and do not adequately reflect an African cultural identity (Metz, 2007; Verhoef & Michel, 1997). The African perspective of *ubuntu* associated with being a moral person is, on the other hand, not translated into a theory of development of moral identity, nor does it appear to take the influence of westernization into account. As Reimer and Wade-Stein (2004) stated: "Although moral identity is potentially universal to all cultures, the language of social and moral influence may differ by context".

Neither the Eurocentric perspective in moral identity development, nor the African perspective of *ubuntu* takes the changing family structures as influenced by the HIV/Aids pandemic into consideration. Social mediation theories provide an alternative perspective to investigate the development of various identities such as moral identity across cultures and contexts, but these models do not adequately reflect the internal fields of people. Thus, there is currently no model that addresses both the external and the internal fields of moral identity of child-headed households. Furthermore, the contexts in which moral identity is facilitated are not described from the perspective of the adolescents within these contexts.

Identifying aspects in the field of the Zulu child-headed households that can enhance moral identity can facilitate the development of a model that will reflect the perspective of the Zulu culture. The application of such a model may then, in turn, empower the

adolescents in Zulu child-headed households to enhance moral identity in their siblings in the absence of guidance from parents or adult care-givers. Investigating the field of Zulu child-headed households to identify the aspects that can assist with the development of such a model, will be the focus of the research goals, objectives, and the theoretical point of departure in this study.

From the problem statement, the following research question that will direct the investigation is identified as: Which aspects of the field of Zulu child-headed households may enhance moral identity?

This study aimed to investigate and identify aspects in the field of Zulu child-headed households that could be used to develop a model to enhance their moral identity. Since there is no Zulu translation for the concept of 'morality' (JASA, 2007), the concept of a 'good person' was used instead. By investigating the perceptions of what the adolescents viewed as the best advice given to them on how to raise their siblings to become 'good people', their perceptions of what is needed to become a 'good person', will be highlighted and it will become clear whether this aspect can be used in the recommendations for the development of a model.

## **Literature background**

Tappan (2005) describes moral identity as an important dimension of identity that develops from ongoing dialogue with others in the adolescents' social world. It is shaped and mediated by specific cultural tools and ideological resources and therefore does not only develop from gaining access to, or reflecting on, the adolescent's 'true' or 'essential' moral self. As such, the development of moral identity entails a process of 'ideological becoming' whereby the adolescent appropriates the words, language and forms of discourse of others with whom the adolescent is in dialogue, and, in so doing, struggles to strike a balance between 'authoritative' discourse of others and 'internally persuasive' forms of discourse of the adolescents. This is often represented by adolescent risk-taking behaviour, which Lightfoot (1997) views as trying to differentiate themselves from their parents and to forge a distinct, autonomous moral identity. During this process of moral identity formation, the dialogue is not only conducted with others, but it also occurs through "inner dialogue" (Tappan, 2005).

According to Hart (2005), moral identity is linked to contexts, social relationships, and opportunities in ways not fully evident in the individual differences approach. It is only through understanding the connections between moral identity and the social world that it will be possible to understand the specificity of the motivation and the collapses in moral

life. The complex combination of traits, motives, beliefs, and values associated with moral identity, according to Reimer and Weide-Stein (2004), most likely reflects parental and peer influences, thereby pointing out the importance of social context in moral identity development. Deeb-Sossa, (2007) and Lapsley (2008), concur that a person's sense of identification with the group and its communal norms will generate a "moral atmosphere" that either conduces to moral formation or undermines it.

Moral identity can be formed more easily if the adolescents can explore lines of moral actions while being supported by people that they respect and with whom they have formed a relationship. Moreover, it will happen more easily if they feel that their actions will genuinely contribute to the welfare of others. This requires support from adults who will make available opportunities for them to connect with their community, by taking part in activities such as school and church activities, during the performance of which they can explore their moral identity (Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998).

Weaver (2006) agrees that the development of moral identity, like identity in general, is influenced by both a) interactions with other persons (especially deeper and more frequent involvements), and b) the behaviour of the person in question. However, he states that the self-importance and salience of that identity will affect the degree to which that identity is manifested in behaviour.

## **Objectives**

The objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of the adolescents in Zulu child-headed households of the best advice given to them to help raise their siblings to develop moral identities. The investigation was conducted from the phenomenological perspective of the adolescent head of these households.

## **Research methodology**

Phenomena that are investigated in the social services call for openness in methodological approach, as both qualitative and quantitative approaches can assist in understanding human beings in their full complexity (Delpont & Fouché, 2011; Fouché & De Vos, 2011; Henning, 2004:47).

## **Research design**

For this research, a mixed methods approach, based on both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, was decided on. A mix of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis was used to provide a better understanding of the research

question than could be gained by using either method on its own (cf. Creswell, 2008; Delpont & Fouché, 2011; D'Cruz & Jones, 2004).

## **Research method**

Enquiry revealed that no instrument is available for measuring moral identity within the South African context. Based on a literature review on the Gestalt paradigm, adolescents and research on child-headed households, as well as the review of various psychometric instruments, a sense of the field that needed to be investigated was obtained. From the background investigations, indicators for the development of moral identity from a Eurocentric as well as an Afrocentric perspective were identified. These indicators guided the development of a questionnaire that could explore the aspects of moral identity.

The questionnaire enabled the researcher to identify the demographic characteristics, social circumstances and trends (Creswell, 2008; Delpont, 2005) surrounding the formation of moral identities in Zulu child-headed households. Thus, the survey method was appropriate in addressing the quantitative component of the questionnaire. Closed-ended questions and forced choice statements were used for this part of the questionnaire. The qualitative component of the questionnaire was addressed by means of open-ended questions, allowing the participants to contribute their own perceptions in order to add richness and context to their answers. The questionnaire was then pilot tested and reviewed. The qualitative component of the questionnaire was supplemented with 6 face to face interviews.

## **Sample**

The universe in this study was the Zulu culture. The population group consisted of the heads of Zulu child-headed households from the Mkhondo municipal area. The criteria for inclusion were:

- The head of the household had to be 13 years or older, and younger than 18 years or still attending school if older than 18 years.
- The head of the household had to be able to fill out a questionnaire, with or without assistance.
- Participation was voluntary.
- Permission for the use of an interpreter had to be given.

The researcher had access to at least one child-headed household through her community involvement. Sixty Zulu child-headed households were identified through the snowball sampling method (Maree, 2007). "Snowball sampling involves approaching a single case that is involved in the phenomenon to be investigated in order to gain information on another similar person. That person is then requested to identify further people who could make up the sample. In this way the researcher proceeded until a sufficient number of cases to make up his sample had been identified" (Baker, 1988, in Strydom, 2005).

### **Physical setting**

Various settings were used to collect the data in order to make it as accessible as possible to participants. In one of the areas, Iswepe, the community hall was used, but in the Ethandakukuyanda and Rustplaas areas the homes of the volunteers were used. Although no monetary rewards were given for participation, participants were provided with a meal and, where indicated, with public transport fees. At the request of the participants, they were also allowed to keep the stationery provided.

### **Data collection**

Volunteer field workers from the community assisted participants to complete the questionnaire. This was followed up with 6 face to face interviews that were conducted in the home-language of the participants, isiZulu.

In the questionnaire, participants were asked the following questions, relating to guidance received to assist them in helping their siblings become 'good people'.

- I have someone who gives me advice: yes/no.
- Who gives you advice on how to raise the younger children in your home?
- What is the best advice someone gave you about how to raise your brothers and sisters?
- What else do you need to be advised on, so that you can help the children in your home to become good people?

Interviews started with the request to: 'Please tell me about your experience of trying to raise your brothers and sisters to become good people'. Based on the background information of the research question, the phenomenological experiences were then further explored (Botma, Greeff, Mulaudzi, & Wright, 2010). Audio recordings were made of the

interviews and field notes, based on the observations made at the sites, were recorded, as well as personal reflections (Botma et al., 2010).

## **Data analysis**

Quantitative data was statistically analyzed through parametric and non-parametric methods by the North-West University statistical consultation services department. Data was reported by means of statistical and frequency tables.

For the purpose of data analysis, the interviews were transcribed and translated into English. Themes emerging from the qualitative data were analyzed by hand. Themes and categories were identified and presented by making use of pie-diagrams. Richness of data was added through the use of excerpts from the transcribed interviews. The results from the qualitative data collection were compared with the results of the quantitative data collection.

### **1.11 Trustworthiness and validation**

Lincoln and Guba (1985, in Schurink et al., 2011) proposed that trustworthiness in qualitative paradigms is referred to by the constructs “credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability”. The trustworthiness of all research must be measured against standing criteria. These criteria, that can be in the form of questions, establish the “truth value” of the study, its applicability, consistency and neutrality. In quantitative research, this refers to internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (De Vos, 2005).

Credibility in the qualitative approach of the study was attained by accurately describing and representing the participants' views. Detailed rich descriptions of the data obtained were documented, showing the range of different realities that were represented, and ethical practices that were followed. Through the use of multiple perspectives in collecting and contemplating the data and establishing the parameters of the subject matter and population, the validity and transferability of the study was increased (Ebersöhn et al., 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Schurink et al., 2011). Dependability and conformability, which can be contentious in qualitative research designs, was pursued through discussions with experts and referring to the applicable theoretical frameworks.

Face and content validity was obtained through discussions with experts in order to ensure that the questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. Reliability, which reflects the stability or consistency of measurement, was pursued through the use

of a pilot test of the questionnaire (Babbie 2007; Delport & Roestenburg, 2011; Ebersöhn et al., 2007; Gravetter & Forzano, 2003; Pietersen & Maree, 2007).

## **1.12 Ethical aspects**

The World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki (2008) provides ethical guidelines on research that is conducted on vulnerable populations such as children. In terms of the Helsinki Declaration (2008) and the South African National Health Act 61 of 2003, section 71, “research involving a disadvantaged or vulnerable population or community is only justified if the research is responsive to the health needs and priorities of this population or community and if there is a reasonable likelihood that this population or community stands to benefit from the results of the research.” These individuals must not be included in a research study that has no likelihood of benefit for them unless it is intended to promote the health of the population represented by the potential subject; the research cannot, instead, be performed with competent persons; and the research entails only minimal risk and minimal burden.

Care should also be taken that the research is only conducted if the importance of the objective outweighs the risks and burdens inherent to the research subjects. The best interest of the participants should always be the first priority. The Declaration recognizes the fact that it may, in certain cases, be impractical to obtain consent. It states that in situations of that nature the research may be undertaken only after consideration by and approval of a research ethics committee. In this study, ethical clearance was obtained through the ethics committees of the Hugonote College, UNISA and North-West-University (NWU-00060-08-A1).

### **Informed consent**

The South African Children’s Act 38 of 2005 (Government Gazette, no. 28944, 2006) recognizes a child who is the head of a household as a caretaker, and it was thus accepted that the adolescents were in the position to give permission for the research. In their research on street children aged 9-13, Richter, Groft and Prinsloo (2007:121) refer to these types of participants as mature or emancipated minors. Consent of teenagers aged 13-19 was also deemed ethically acceptable for the research by Lebesse, Davhana-Maselesele and Obi (2011). The population group was thus considered to be capable of giving consent, especially as only voluntary information and perceptions obtained in the research were to be used, medical experiments or procedures being excluded.

However, it was still important for participants to be able to understand the research process and the implications of participation. Special care was taken to explain the different aspects of the research to the individual participants through a field worker from the community in which they reside.

### **Prevention of harm**

Participants may be physically or emotionally harmed by or through research and the researcher was therefore ethically obliged to protect the participants (Strydom, 2011) and to make sure that the benefits that could result from the research for this vulnerable population outweighed any discomfort suffered by the participants. The researcher was committed to taking care that participants would not be harmed; however, as nobody can provide the contexts and perceptions of the participants better than the participants themselves (Richter et al., 2007) it was decided to use this population rather than adults. Arrangements were made with school counsellors at the various schools the children attend that their particulars would be given to the children in order for them to have access to counselling, should they require it.

The researcher respected the clients' relationships and ensured that, where possible, those in significant relationships with the Zulu child-headed households were included in the decision-making processes. As the proposed research included a culture different from that of the researcher, cultural practices were taken into consideration.

### **Ethical principles of confidentiality**

The researcher and the interpreter maintained confidentiality and restricted disclosures of confidential information within the practice of considering what is in the best interest of the participants as part of a vulnerable population. This was a very important aspect, as audio-recordings were used to collect information. Confidentiality was ensured by coding data with numbers on questionnaires and interviews. No names appeared on the data, and data was captured and stored on a personal computer with access limited to the researcher, and kept in a locked office.

### **Results**

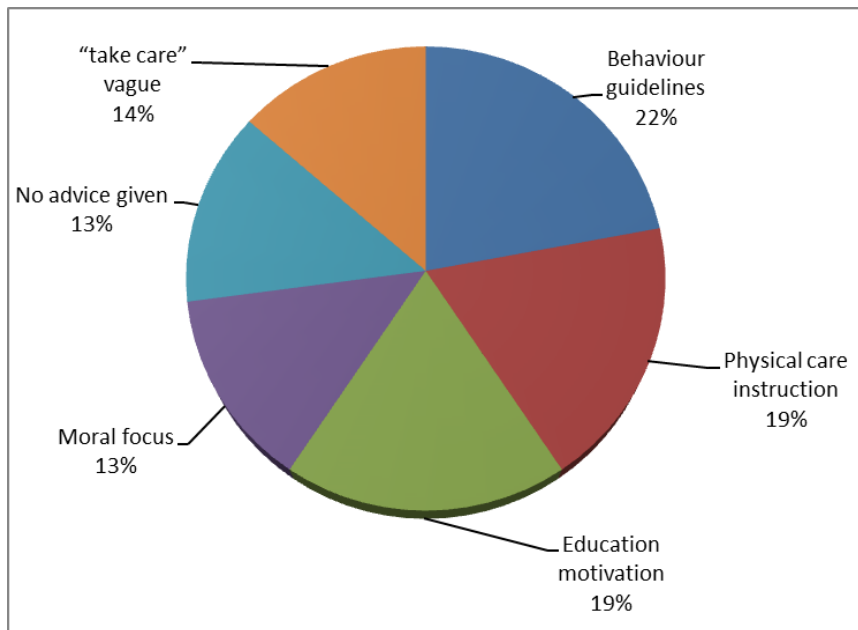
Participants were a convenience sample of 60 child heads of households who are of Zulu ethnic background (mean age =17.48), residing in the Mkhondo municipal area. Of the sixty participants who contributed to the study, 51 per cent were males and 49 per cent

females. Age distribution varied from 13 years old (n=1) to 22 years old (n=2), with the greater number of participants being between 17 and 19 (n=32).

Seventy five per cent of the participants indicated that they do have someone that gives them advice, when requested. The most frequent source of advice was identified as being family members (n=15). Some of the participants indicated that they had received advice on how to take on the role as head of the household before they lost the parent, but these participants still listed those family members as a source.

According to normal life-span development, friends fulfil a very important role in the lives of adolescents (Eccles, Templeton, Barber. & Stone, 2003; Robertson & Shepard 2008). However, in this instance, only three indicated that their friends gave them advice. What was noteworthy was that, despite the finding that all the participants attended school, only one response indicated that a teacher gave them advice. Although only three participants indicated that there was no one that gave them advice, a high number of missing responses (n=24) posed a concern and it is tempting to conclude that the number falling under the category of 'No one' could be much higher than reflected.

On the question of the best advice received about how to raise brothers and sisters to become good people, 13 per cent could not identify such advice. Most participants could, however, identify some sort of advice they received. Some focused on guidance as far as parental responsibilities were concerned, but other advice focused on the adolescents themselves. The best advice perceived by the participants is reflected in Figure 1 according to the themes identified.



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**FIGURE 1** Best advice received on how to raise siblings to become 'good people',

Themes of general vague advice, behavioural guidelines, physical care instructions, educational motivation, and a moral focus, were indicated, but a theme indicating that no advice was received also emerged. The nature of the advice given in the different themes is summarized in Table 2.

**TABLE 1: Categories of advice regarded as most valuable by adolescents in Zulu child-headed households to raise their siblings to become good people**

CATEGORY	ADVICE
<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feed the siblings</li> <li>• physical hygiene</li> <li>• ensure physical safety</li> </ul>
<b>Educational</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• finish school</li> <li>• ensure that the siblings also attend school</li> </ul>
<b>Behavioural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ getting a boyfriend</li> <li>○ taking drugs of various kinds</li> <li>○ beating their siblings in anger</li> <li>○ punishing siblings if they did something wrong</li> <li>○ abandoning siblings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Behaviour to pursue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ listen to each other</li> <li>○ share ideas</li> <li>○ attend school and church.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Moral</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• honour family ties</li> <li>• respect themselves, others and authority</li> <li>• be patient, grateful and helpful</li> <li>• do not to give up</li> <li>• carefully consider the effect of own behaviour on siblings</li> <li>• carefully consider the spiritual consequences of behaviour</li> </ul>

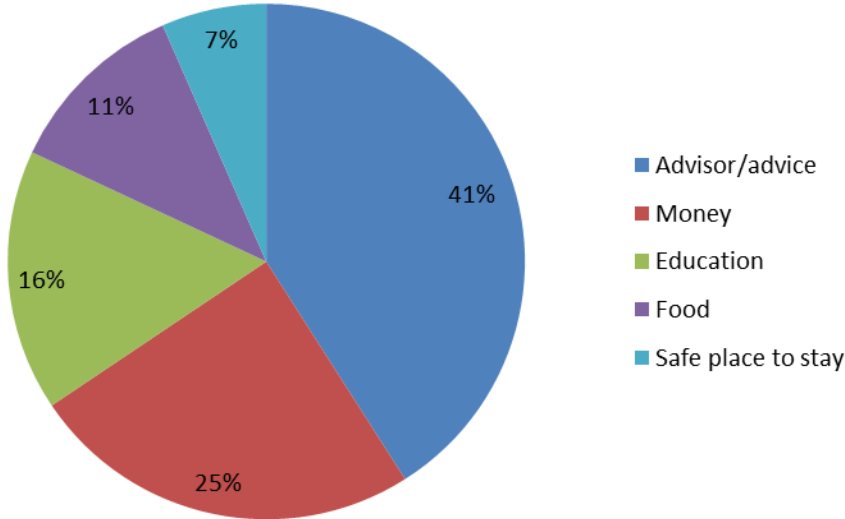
General vague advice entailed ‘to take care of your siblings (and self)’. Although the ‘physical’ category was dominated by a reminder to feed the siblings, attention to physical hygiene and safety were also mentioned. The adolescents were also informed that contacting social workers and teachers were possible avenues to explore in order to find resources to provide for physical needs. The ‘educational’ category was dominated by the reminder to the adolescent to finish school and ensure that the siblings also attend school. Whether they do finish school or not was also linked to the prediction of a successful life.

The emphasis in the ‘behaviour’ category was placed on behaviour to avoid, rather than what to apply. The perception was that no guidelines were given on how to hold siblings accountable for ‘wrong’ behaviour. Positive behavioural guidelines indicated

encouragement for a sense of community through listening to each other and sharing ideas, as well as continuing to attend school and church.

The sense of community was also repeated in the 'moral' category. This was indicated through the encouragement of honouring family ties, and the importance of their role in the lives of their siblings. The advice in terms of behaviour towards the siblings was also associated with a spiritual component, as in the following perception: 'If I abandon my siblings I will commit sin in God's eyes, because no one will look after them if I don't'.

The high number of missing responses (n=24) on the question about who provided the advice they were given again raised the suspicion that there was a possible lack of advisors when they were questioned on what they thought they needed in order to follow the advice they were given. On this question the largest theme identified was the need for an advisor (41%).



**FIGURE 2** What participants need to help them follow the advice they were given

Advice/advisors was/were identified as needed for guidance on making it easier to raise the children by speaking to them so that they would be more obedient. Having an advisor would also assist the siblings to know what the 'right' behaviour should be that was expected of them in terms of responsibilities towards the home, their gender and education. The participants also expressed the need to have somebody available to tend to their own emotional needs.

The need for someone to advise the participants indicated that their current support did not sufficiently meet their need for an adult advisor in their lives. The identification of the need for an advisor lead to the question on what the participants felt that they needed advice on. They indicated that they needed advice on how to provide for basic needs (32 per cent), how to motivate/encourage siblings (25 per cent), house rules/discipline (20 per cent), gender-appropriate guidelines for siblings (13 per cent), schoolwork to be done at home (two per cent) and housekeeping (one per cent). Seven per cent indicated that they needed advice, but did not know on what. The following quotes from the transcripts provided richness and contexts to their need of an advisor

'If only I could get a comfortable place to live where I could feel at home and find someone who can advise me about life and teach me how to face that challenge? I still have to face in life as I am still young and just give me love, the love and comfort that my father tried to give me, someone to close that gap that my father left. I wish the same for my brother.'(Girl, 17).

I think if they can help me with someone that is a girl like them, who can manage to motivate them, and tell them if you are a girl, you have to take care of yourself like this and that. And you don't do this and that. (Boy,19)

The thing I need is to get someone who could advise me and how to raise child. And [to advise that] when life is like this, you have to do that. (Girl, 15).

If it could happen that I could get a person who can tell me how to treat them to become good people and how to raise them' (Boy,16).

## **Conclusion**

Adolescents in Zulu child-headed households indicated that they usually had some source from which they received valuable advice on how to raise their siblings to become good people. The source might not necessarily still be available, such as advice received from a deceased parent, but it was still regarded as valuable.

Advice that was regarded as helpful by the adolescents seemed to be at a motivational level, promoting a sense of community. Participants, however, indicated that they needed the physical presence of an advisor to assist them with the practical application of the advice.

The needs identified about what they needed advice on, correspond with the themes identified on the advice that was given to them, which they perceived as valuable

guidance. However, what was also confirmed was the need for acquiring skills from a physically present adult advisor to assist with specific challenges facing them. These include challenges associated with basic needs provision, motivational skills, discipline skills, gender-appropriate guidelines for siblings, providing schoolwork support and general housekeeping.

The conclusion is that although the adolescents do have a basis of valuable knowledge of what is needed to raise their siblings to become good people, they yet lack practical application skills that must be learnt through precept and example by having adult advisors physically present.

A synthesis of these aspects provides the perspective that the participants perceive the way to become a 'good person' (having moral identity) as requiring four elements, which are: provision, protection, pursuing and people.

The element of provision includes the basic requirements of having food and shelter, but also includes health factors like hygiene. The element of protection requires certain behaviours to avoid, such as abuse and neglect, but also certain behaviours to uphold, like maintaining family ties. Motivation to pursue educational requirements serves as the third element in becoming a good person. In order to fulfil these elements, people who can serve as advisors are seen as the final element in order to facilitate the development of a good person.

The connections between moral identity and the social worlds of the participants became apparent by analyzing the advice they received. Even though normative values change in society, the participants displayed the cognitive ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and between beneficial and harmful, not only to themselves, but also to their communities. Even though they recognized their own inability to provide the conditions needed for facilitating moral identity in their siblings, as well as their need for assistance, it appears that they have a good idea of what they are aiming at.

The recognition of which advice was perceived as being the most helpful to facilitate moral identity in their siblings mediates the formation of internal conclusions within the participants, assisting in facilitating the moral identity within the participants themselves.

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### ARTICLE 3:

## ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION AS CONTRIBUTOR TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL IDENTITY IN CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLD

<b>Name</b>	Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households
<b>Aim</b>	The aim of this study was to explore whether ethnic membership is one of the core constructs in moral identity development of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, as ethnic identity in the Zulu culture is strongly integrated with a moral identity.
<b>Journal</b>	Journal of Psychology in Africa
<b>Authors</b>	Pretorius, J; Jacobs, S.
<b>Proof of submission</b>	See included letter
<b>Required length/word count</b>	The Journal does not place restriction on manuscript length
<b>Actual length</b>	30 pages



**Journal Of Psychology In Africa**  
*South of the Sahara, the Caribbean and Afro-Latin America*

November 5, 2012

Jacqueline Pretorius  
Center for Child, Youth and Family Studies Wellington  
AUTHER: Africa Unit for Transdisciplinary Health Research  
North-West University-Potchefstroom  
South Africa

Dear Jacqueline Pretorius:

I write to acknowledge receipt of your 2 manuscripts for publication review by Journal of Psychology in Africa this November the 5<sup>th</sup> as follows:

- 1. Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households**
- 2. Exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households**

Expect reviews within 8 weeks for March 2013 publication if accepted. Thank you for submitting your research for publication review by the Journal of Psychology in Africa.

Sincerely,

Professor Elias Mpofu, PhD, DEd

Email: [mpofu@wisc.edu](mailto:mpofu@wisc.edu)/[elias.mpofu@sydney.edu.au](mailto:elias.mpofu@sydney.edu.au)

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## **Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this study was to explore whether ethnic membership is one of the core constructs in moral identity development of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, as ethnic identity in the Zulu culture is strongly integrated with a moral identity. Sixty participants of both genders (31 male and 29 female) were recruited in the Mkhondo municipal area through the snowball method. Results obtained from semi-structured questionnaires, face to face interviews and field notes were triangulated. Quantitative data was analysed by determining an Afrocentric score and performing a Kuder-Richardson. Transcripts were analysed by hand to get a sense of the lived experiences of the participants, which were then incorporated with the data obtained from the questionnaires and field notes. Results indicate that although most participants still describe themselves as Zulus, the importance of the traditional beliefs and practices has been significantly diluted by a Eurocentric perspective. The conclusion is that ethnic membership of the Zulu culture is not regarded as a core construct for participants' moral identity development. The overlap between Afrocentric and Eurocentric moral variables is more suitable for developing a model to enhance moral identity in child-headed households.

**Key words:** Ethnic identity, moral identity, Zulu child-headed households, Eurocentric, Afrocentric

## **Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households**

Concern over the state of decline in moral behaviour in South Africa served as motivation to explore ways to enhance moral identity development in vulnerable populations such as child-headed households. Drawn from various studies (Aquino *et al.*, 2009; Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007), moral identity is viewed in this study as having achieved the cognitive ability to discern between right and wrong, harmful and beneficial; evolving into actions displayed in relationships that benefit the community without detriment to the sense of self. These actions are guided by internal conclusions that were formed through the dynamic interaction of the different contextual factors exposed to.

Various aspects of the field of Zulu child-headed households were explored in order to determine the aspects that can be recommended to enhance moral identity in these households. Child-headed households are viewed as households where one of the children, or the youth in the house has assumed the principal responsibility for the household inhabitants because: a parent/s or primary caregiver/s was/were permanently or temporarily absent as a result of death, employment away from home (migratory work), abandonment, or rejection of the children, a parent/s or primary caregiver was/were present but abusing alcohol and/or drugs excessively, too ill, terminally ill, or too old to provide the care required. The child who has to take the principal responsibility may be older than 18 years, but is still attending school (adapted from Mogotlane *et al.*, 2010).

This study examines the extent to which adolescents in Zulu child-headed households identify with the Zulu culture, as this can influence recommendations to enhance moral identity in these households.

### *Contextualizing the study*

Identity formation is a developmental life task that is largely associated with the adolescent phase, but the way identity is constructed is not always obvious. It is necessary to construe people's core constructs (Stojnov, 2003) in order to understand identity, which the researcher regards as a lifelong, unconscious process of attaching meaning to oneself by using continuous social mediation to create a sense of consistent belonging and purpose. This view is also in line with the Gestalt paradigm that includes everything in the field of people as contributing to creating meaning in their lives, which leads to the notion that identity is continually formed in relation to the other (Resnick, 2009; Reynolds, 2005; Toman & Bauer, 2005).

There is the danger that a person's identity may be construed in terms of peripheral or even irrelevant constructs. The perception may be that nationality is the key to people's collective identity, whereas they actually attach their identity to religion, family, or talents. Schmidt (2003) points out that marginalized communities, such as street children, have challenged the hierarchies of family, age, community, and school, normally closely associated with ethnic identity formation. They have formed alternative social networks and communities, critical to their survival, that influence their ethnic identity. What seems to be of importance, therefore, is that people must make choices about the relative importance to attach to different loyalties in particular contexts (Stojnov, 2003; Turiel, 2007). This may very well be true for Zulu child-headed households as well, since their family structures have changed dramatically, and adolescents in child-headed households form identities within very challenging contexts (Germann, 2005; Tsegaya, 2008).

A coherent approach to identity formation should integrate individual functioning and socio-cultural processes (Penuel & Wertsch, 1995). By seeking to maintain the dynamic tension between the individual, on the one hand, and society, on the other, an understanding of the role that social, cultural and historical processes play in the formation and transformation of individual identities becomes possible (Tappan, 2005).

**Moral identity.** Moral identity is an important dimension of identity that develops from ongoing dialogue with others in the adolescents' social world. It is shaped and mediated by specific cultural tools and ideological resources, and therefore does not only develop from gaining access to, or reflecting on, the adolescent's 'true' or 'essential' moral self, but entails a process of 'ideological becoming' whereby adolescents appropriate the words, language and forms of discourse of others with whom they are in dialogue. In so doing, they struggle to strike a balance between 'authoritative' discourse of others and 'internally persuasive' forms, which represent their own conclusions (Tappan, 2005).

As moral identity is linked to contexts, social relationships, and opportunities in ways not fully evident in the individual differences approach, the specificity of the motivation and the collapses in moral life can thus only be understood through understanding the connections between moral identity and the field in which people live. Various authors (Deeb-Sossa, 2007; Hart, 2005; Lapsley, 2008) concur that peoples' sense of identification with the group and its communal norms will generate a 'moral atmosphere' that either conduces to moral identity formation, or undermines it.

Hendry, Mayer and Kloep (2007) hypothesize that while initially feeling embedded in a local and national community adds to the resources and security of the developing adolescents such as Zulu adolescents in child-headed households, those with a wide range of psychosocial resources will be able to eventually find other sources of security and to extend their sense of belonging to a wider, international context. Hendry *et al.* (2007) also perceives that adolescents in general thus seem reasonably adaptable in utilizing dimensions of identity dependent upon different contexts within various societal levels. Cultural identifications are thus not constructed in isolation but are produced within and across dynamic contexts (Collier, 2005; Hendry *et al.*, 2007) which in turn influence moral identity development.

Evidence from the studies of Hendry *et al.* (2007) showed that relationships and 'embeddedness' in the family and local community act as the central core of the adolescents' cultural identity

development. This is viewed as having a vital and direct influence on and being inter-mingled with feelings of pride of and belonging to their national culture. This, in turn, remains fairly well defined and stable until the adolescents are exposed to a wider socio-cultural setting, for example where Zulu adolescents in a rural area are exposed to urban influences, or are culturally challenged, for example where traditional cultural kinship structures fail them (Tsegaya, 2008). Identity may then suitably, and necessarily, be adjusted to act in combination with a broader social context, while still possessing an identity in keeping with their self-image (Henry *et al.*, 2007; Robertson & Shepard, 2008)

***Linking moral and ethnic identity.*** According to the research of Quintana and others (cited in Phinney, Jacoby & Silva , 2007), adolescents' ethnic identification will progress from seeing ethnicity in concrete, physical, and literal terms, to a social perspective of ethnicity, allowing them to see ethnicity in a wider context. It includes an awareness of the social implications of ethnicity, such as prejudice. According to the results of Quintana's research, ethnic perspective is thus significantly positively related to ethnic identity achievement.

The Afrocentric perspective of *ubuntu* is encapsulated in the maxim that “a person is a person through other persons” and links moral and ethnic identity. People with *ubuntu* are seen as having the acquired quality of humanity that is the characteristic of a fully developed person, living the full range of values, attitudes, feelings, relationships and activities of the human spirit; not as individual, but as part of a larger community (Shutte, 2001).

The *ubuntu* perspective, which is a moral perspective, forms an integral part of the Zulu cultural perspective, and thus cultural identity, and is demonstrated in the words of King Goodwill Zwelithini (2006), King of the Zulu nation:

Morality forms the basis of our culture as the Zulu nation. Our culture dictates that we value life, respect our elders and care for each other, which includes supporting those who are vulnerable. Every man should prove his manhood through the level of respect and care that he accords to his family. Zulu culture does not allow any man to beat his wife, rape or abuse children. All this

violence against women and children is foreign to us as a nation. We have to go back to our roots of respect for the rule of law and tolerance.

Although there are overlapping beliefs between Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives about what is moral there are also some prominent differences. In the African context, based on *ubuntu*, but not necessarily the Western context, it would, for example, be immoral to:

- a) Make policy decisions in the face of dissent, as opposed to seeking consensus.
- b) Make retribution a fundamental and central aim of criminal justice, as opposed to seeking reconciliation.
- c) Create wealth largely on a competitive basis, as opposed to a cooperative one.
- d) Distribute wealth largely on the basis of individual rights, as opposed to need.
- e) Fail to marry and procreate, as opposed to creating a family (Metz, 2007).

According to John Mbiti's classic study of African worldviews (1989), it is not the act in itself that would be 'wrong', but the relationships involved in the act if relationships are not hurt or damaged. If there is no discovery of the break of custom or regulation, then the act is not 'evil', or 'wicked', or 'bad.' Moral identity in the African context, therefore, revolves heavily around the social relations within the group, whereby the creation of a holistic perspective is opposed to a more individualistic perspective in European context.

Cultural identifications that emerge in the discourses are expected to be contextually and situationally constrained and sometimes contradictory (Nakayama, cited in Collier, 2002). The value placed on the "worth" of the culture may, therefore, influence cultural identification (Wickrama, Noh & Bryant, 2005). As mentioned earlier, to understand someone's identity it is necessary to construe their core constructs. It is thus important to understand whether adolescents in Zulu child-headed households identify with the Zulu culture, in order to gain a sense of whether their ethnic membership is one of the core constructs in the development of their moral identity.

### ***Problem statement***

No model exists within the context of the Zulu child-headed households that can assist the Zulu adolescents facing the challenge of enhancing moral identity in their siblings. Classic moral development theories have been criticized in the sense that they developed mainly from a Eurocentric perspective and do not adequately reflect an African cultural identity (Verhoef & Michel,1997). In contrast, the African perspective of *ubuntu*, which is associated with being a moral person, is not translated into a theory of development of moral identity, nor does it appear to take the influence of westernization into account. As Reimer and Wade-Stein (2004) stated: “Although moral identity is potentially universal to all cultures, the language of social and moral influence may differ by context” (p. 232).

Neither the Eurocentric perspective on moral identity development, nor the African *ubuntu* perspective takes the changing family structures, as influenced by the HIV/Aids pandemic, into consideration. Social mediation theories provide an alternative perspective to examine the development of various identities, such as moral identity, across cultures and contexts, but these models do not adequately reflect the internal fields of people. Thus, currently there is no model that addresses the external and internal fields of moral identity of child-headed households. The contexts in which moral identity is facilitated are also not described from the perspective of the adolescents within these contexts.

### ***Research objectives***

From the problem statement the following research question that directed the overall investigation into the field of the participants was identified: Which aspects of the field of Zulu child-headed households may enhance moral identity? The subquestion, which is the focus of this manuscript, is: Which aspects of ethnic identity can be utilized to enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households?

The two objectives of the research are: firstly, to investigate whether the Zulu culture is regarded as a core construct in the moral identity development of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, and secondly, to identify aspects of ethnic identity that can be considered when making recommendations for developing a model to enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.

### ***Contribution to the field***

Identifying aspects in the field of Zulu child-headed households that can enhance moral identity, can contribute to the body of knowledge in terms of moral identity development that reflects their contexts and perspectives. This may be used to develop a model that can guide health and social development professionals when they assist this particular population. This study will indicate if and how aspects of ethnic identification may contribute to recommendations for the development of such a model.

## ***METHOD***

### ***Research method and design***

Phenomena that are investigated in the social sciences call for openness in methodological approach, as both qualitative and quantitative approaches can assist in understanding human beings in their full complexity (Delport & Fouché, 2011; Fouché & De Vos, 2011). The approach focuses on answering the research question rather than on methodological considerations (Morgan & Sklar, 2012). This study followed a mixed methodological approach by conducting a descriptive survey design in the form of a semi-structured questionnaire, and followed up with face to face interviews that added rich description of their lived experience. Field notes added to illuminating the context of the study.

### ***Population and sample***

The members of the Zulu culture were the universe in this study. The population group consisted of the adolescent heads of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area.

The sample population was recruited through the snowball sampling method (Maree, 2007). Data was collected from recruited participants, starting with individuals the researcher knew (Sandlin & Walther, 2009; Strydom & Delpont, 2011) through involvement at the local high school and children's home in Piet Retief. From there, recruitment expanded to the rest of the rural areas in the Mkhondo municipality district, based on referrals from the initial participants. Sixty participants, who represented both genders equally, were recruited and filled out the questionnaire, which is, according to Maree and Pietersen (2007), more than sufficient to qualify as major research for a minor subgroup such as this population. Participants for the interviews were recruited through convenience sample (Maree & Pietersen, 2007). Participants who indicated on their questionnaires that they were willing to be interviewed were the potential candidates for the interviews. Six of these participants, who represented the different contexts, were selected. In Morgan and Sklar's view, this number (2012) is sufficient.

The criteria for inclusion were that participation was voluntary for the heads of the household, who had to be 13 years or older and younger than 18 years, unless they were still attending school. They had to be able to fill out a questionnaire, with or without assistance, and had to give permission for the use of an interpreter.

### ***Procedure***

Ethical clearance was obtained through the ethics committee of the Hugenote College, UNISA and North-West University (NWU-00060-08-A1). Ethical guidelines, as proposed by The World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki (2008) for conducting research on vulnerable populations such as children, were taken into account. Another consideration was that the research

should only be conducted if the importance of the objective outweighed the inherent risks and burdens to the research subjects. The best interests of the participants were the first priority.

Even if the participants had legal guardians, it was nearly impossible to reach them. The participants gave written or oral permission for the research. The concept of emancipated minors (Richter, Groft & Prinsloo, 2007); recognizing a child who is the head of a household as a caretaker (Children's Act no. 38 of 2005) and research by Lebeso, Davhana-Maselesele and Obi (2011), where consent of teenagers aged 13 to 19 was approved as ethically acceptable, were considered when weighing the participants' ability to give consent.

The special vulnerability of the population was considered, taking care not to add to the harm they already experienced through being responsible for child-headed households. Informed consent was explained to the individual participants by field workers from the community where they resided. School-based counsellors were alerted to the fact that their personal details would be given to the participants to enable them to have access to counselling, should it be indicated. Although no payments were made to encourage participation in the study, they were provided with a meal after they had filled out the questionnaires, and they were permitted to keep the stationery they used. The interviewees received money for the taxi-fares to get to the meeting point and return home.

### ***Data collection***

Data was collected by means of a semi-structured survey-type questionnaire, followed up with face to face interviews, to elaborate on the data obtained from the questionnaires, and to generate qualitative data on their experience of raising their siblings to adhere to accepted moral norms. Face validity was obtained through discussions with experts, in order to ensure that the questionnaire measured what it was supposed to measure. Reliability, which reflects the stability or consistency of measurement, was ensured through the use of a pilot test of the questionnaire (Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011; Ebersohn *et al.*, 2007; Pietersen & Maree, 2007). Field notes were kept to support the process (Strydom, 2011).

Identification with the Zulu culture was studied by asking how they referred ethnically to their household, their opinion on what a traditional Zulu was and which traditions they still practice. Identification with the Afrocentric perspective of *ubuntu* was explored by asking them about their perceptions of *ubuntu*. They were then presented with Afrocentric and Eurocentric statements and asked to choose options according to their personal preferences.

Richness of context was provided through responses in face to face interviews conducted and recorded by a Zulu-speaking field worker. Detailed rich descriptions of the data obtained, showing the range of different realities that were represented, were documented. By accurately describing and representing participants' views the credibility of the study was enhanced (Ebersohn *et al.*, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Schurink *et al.*, 2011).

Field notes assisted to understand the overall context of the research by adding to multiple perspectives in collecting and contemplating the data, thus increasing the validity and transferability of the study (Ebersohn *et al.*, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Schurink *et al.*, 2011). Field notes were based on what was experienced and observed during the empirical data collection, and from debriefing conversations with field workers. The notes also assisted in detecting possible bias in the researcher (Seabi, 2012; Strydom, 2011).

### ***Data analysis***

Quantitative data was obtained systematically and analysed, to determine an Afrocentric score and perform a Kuder-Richardson. Results were reported in numeric form using frequency tables and statistical language (Creswell, 2008).

Qualitative data analysis was performed by reading through the data (answers to the open-ended questions, transcriptions of the interviews and the field notes) several times, to get an overall sense of underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2007; Schurink *et al.*, 2011), which were then described according to identified themes.

## ***Results***

Of the sixty participants who contributed to the study, 51 per cent were males and 49 per cent females. Age distribution varied from 13 years old (n=1) to 22 years old (n=2), with the greater number of participants being between 17 and 19 (n=32).

The participants were asked to mark only one of four options to describe their household. They were given the options of Zulu, African, South African and other languages. If they chose 'other', they were asked to specify their choice. When asked about ethnic identification, 69.2 % identified themselves as being a Zulu as opposed to being an African (13.5%) or a South African (17.3%). No-one identified with the option of 'other'.

The second question was open-ended in which they were asked what they thought a traditional Zulu was. Most participants described their perceptions of a traditional Zulu in vague terms as "someone with a belief in the traditions of the Zulu culture" or in concrete, physical and literal terms, such as "someone who practices traditional dancing, wear [sic] traditional clothes and does virginity testing". The most prominent beliefs they linked to being a traditional Zulu were characterized by the respect they showed others and themselves and the practice of ancestor worship.

In the third question the participants were given the names of seven well-known traditional Zulu practices and asked to mark the ones that they still practiced. An eighth option of 'other: please mention what they are' was also provided. Despite the high percentage of participants indicating that their households were to be described as Zulu, only two of the traditions were still practised by more than half of the participants (53.7%), namely the payment of *lobola* and ancestor worship.

The participants' knowledge about *ubuntu* was explored through an open-ended question on what they thought *ubuntu* was. Eleven of the respondents either said that they did not know what it was, or did not answer the question. From the remaining answers relating to participants' views of what *ubuntu* was, a contextual definition could be formulated.

Eight *ubuntu* statements regarded as Afrocentric were juxtaposed with Eurocentric statements that were, according to the *ubuntu* perspective, regarded as immoral. The participants had to choose between the perspectives according to their personal values. An Afrocentric score was then calculated to establish to what extent participants identified with *ubuntu*. As Afrocentric thinking implies a latent construct, a Kuder-Richardson was calculated and a score of 0.546 was obtained, which reflected a weaker than preferred reliability in the construct. The researcher was, however, only interested in the number of Afrocentric responses. As the questionnaire aimed to explore different aspects, the researcher felt that the score was valid and could be used as such. The results are displayed in Table 4.

**TABLE 1 Preference for Eurocentric or Afrocentric statements**

	<b>EUROCENTRIC STATEMENTS</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>AFROCENTRIC (<i>UBUNTU</i>) STATEMENTS</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Killing a person is wrong because people have the right to live.</b>	<b>71.7</b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>Killing a person is wrong because he is part of the community.</b>	<b>28.3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>It is wrong to take something from someone even if they won't miss it.</b>	<b>73.3</b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>It can be all right to take from someone, if they have much more than they need.</b>	<b>26.7</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Traditions should be discarded whenever they fail to improve people's quality of life.</b>		<b>OR</b>	<b>There is often good reason to act according to tradition, even when it is inconvenient.</b>	
	<b>EUROCENTRIC STATEMENTS</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>AFROCENTRIC (<i>UBUNTU</i>) STATEMENTS</b>	<b>%</b>

4	Make a decision when you are under pressure, even if not everybody agrees with your decision.		OR	See that everybody agrees before you make a decision when you are under pressure.	
5	People deserve to be punished for their wrongs.	40.0	OR	People deserve to make peace when they have done something wrong.	60.0
6	Compete with others to create wealth.	20.0	OR	People should work together to create wealth.	80.0
7	My money is my own because I worked for it.	33.3	OR	I must share my money with those in need.	66.7
8	It's up to me to get married and have children.	61.7	OR	I have a duty to get married and have children.	38.3

### ***Discussion***

The fields of the participants form a web of relations that are reciprocally interconnected, thus contributing to the *gestalt* of the participants. Although the ethnic identification of the participants was explored as a separate field aspect contributing to moral identity development, it is influenced by and, in turn, influences other aspects of the holistic field related to moral identity development.

**Preference for description of households** The majority of participants described their households as being Zulu. A field note indicated that the category “African” was interpreted by some as being black, as opposed to being from Africa. Nevertheless, identification was based on ethnic membership and not on race.

According to Forster (2007), identity is no longer an easily verifiable matter. A Zulu identity would, for example, not exclude other identities, so that an identity description may state: “I am Zulu, but I am also...”. The subjective description of being a member of the Zulu culture does not, however, guarantee being a Zulu, as, according to Fleming and Englar-Carlson (2008), it is not enough for adolescents to conceive of themselves as part of a group in order to attain cultural identity. The group of which adolescents consider themselves to be a member also needs to regard the adolescents as members. Other self-described Zulus must, therefore, also consider the adolescents to be Zulu. Consequently, the definition of what a Zulu is becomes important but, within the subjective definition of the participants, they predominantly perceived themselves as being part of Zulu households.

**Description of a traditional Zulu and traditions still practiced.** Most participants describe their perceptions of a traditional Zulu in concrete, physical and literal terms, indicating that it is not an identity they have explored well (Quitana et al., cited in Collier, 2007). An integral part of being a traditional Zulu involves being one with the community (Forster, 2007), and displaying the spirituality characteristic of the Zulu, that reflects an interconnectedness across space and time, as also described in the field theory (Fairfield, 2004; Parlett, 2005). The Zulu perception of death is, for example, that a person has passed on to another stage of life, and not, as it is often viewed, as the final end to a person’s life (Forster, 2007).

From a traditional Zulu perspective, there is also no distinction between body, mind and spirit; they form a holistic entity. According to the view of a traditional healer: ‘When a Zulu is sick it is the whole man that is sick, his physical as well as his spiritual being that is affected’ (Berglund, 1976:82).

Although these aspects were not explicitly mentioned or indirectly suggested in the descriptions of a traditional Zulu, when asked which traditions they still practiced, ancestor worship was indicated by 64 per cent of the participants. This was one of only two traditions that were reported as still practiced by more than half of the participants. Ejizu (n.d) observed that although traditional

religion still has considerable influence in the lives and cultures of many African peoples, it no longer enjoys exclusive dominance and control over the life of the vast majority of the population. Ntshangaze (personal communication, 2009) also viewed the influence of Christianity as eroding the ethnic moral values of the Zulu culture.

The other tradition that was still mentioned as practiced by more than half of the participants (77 per cent,) was paying lobola. It is a marriage transaction that secures identity and belonging to the father's kin unit. Lobola entails paying the future father in law with cattle, for a wife. If the wife is deficient in any way, the father in law is expected to make a replacement available or refund some or all of the cattle. The cattle are used to recompense the father in law for the expense of her upbringing and the loss of her services (Roalkvam, 2005). Kinship support studies, however, suggest that kinship support to child-headed households is not provided as much by the father's family as it was the custom before they became such households, but that they are often abandoned by the father's family and are supported by the mother's family (Germann, 2005; Lombe & Ochumbo, 2008). Being in a subculture of poverty, paying lobola is most probably out of reach of the male participants, making it most likely a wish, rather than a practiced tradition. However, it does suggest a measure of respect for the tradition and an element of an inferred code of conduct that emerged, which indicated that a certain degree of a social perspective of ethnicity was displayed by many of the participants.

***Perception of ubuntu.*** A synthesis of the perception of *ubuntu* obtained from the questionnaires, interviews and field notes provides a contextual definition of the concept as the selfless, respectful giving or attempts to give to the wider community, from what you have and who you are as a person, even if it is inadequate, as well as respecting the inadequate efforts of another.

The participants indicated that their perception of *ubuntu* was that it focused more on giving or contributing than on receiving. The participants' perceptions of what *ubuntu* entailed were thus in line with the general philosophy of being more community-orientated than focused on the rights of individuals, as found in the Eurocentric perspective (Mbiti, 1989; Metz, 2007; Shutte, 2001).

**Personal preference between Afrocentric ubuntu statements juxtaposed with Eurocentric statements.** According to the Afrocentric score, results indicated that 45% of the participants preferred more than half of the Afrocentric statements to the Eurocentric statements, indicating that less than half the participants had a stronger identification with Afrocentric values. When taking into account the fact that the Eurocentric statements used in the item are viewed as being immoral from an *ubuntu* perspective (Metz, 2007), it appears that the majority of the participants would be viewed as choosing immoral values as their personal values if viewed from the Afrocentric perspective. Fifty three of the participants, however, regarded themselves as good people, indicating that they did not view their choices as immoral, thus aligning more to the Eurocentric perspective.

The way the individual questions were answered was, however, very interesting. Responses to statements one, two and eight showed a decided preference for the Eurocentric perspective, which focuses more on individualism, as opposed to maintaining relationships, a key component of *ubuntu* (Verhoef & Michel, 1997). The individual's right of choice of procreation was also preferred to the Afrocentric perspective of duty to procreate (Metz, 2007). The social context of the HIV/Aids pandemic and high numbers of teenage pregnancy which elicited a big drive towards educating youth of their right to personal choice in terms of sexual behaviour (Insideout, 2010), may also be a contributing factor to the strong Eurocentric preference in statement eight.

Statements five, six and seven displayed a strong preference for the Afrocentric perspective. On the one hand, it appeared to focus on sharing and maintaining the relationship components of *ubuntu*, but on the other hand, being embedded in a subculture of poverty may also have influenced the way these items were answered. The question arises whether some ambivalence exists between Eurocentric and Afrocentric preferences, based on the poverty they experience on the one hand, indicating a desire that 'those who have' will share it with them, or whether it is a true Afrocentric perspective. Even in the item where seeking peace were chosen instead of punishment, reconciliation is also associated with paying damages when someone has been wronged (Verhoef

& Michel, 1997). Consequently, the position of need may possibly hide a stronger preference for a Eurocentric perspective in these items as well, although this is a hypothesis that needs to be tested.

Statements three and four also showed preference for an Afrocentric perspective, but the preference was less pronounced. The answers on the item related to the value of tradition align with the findings that only 53 per cent still practice traditions, and then mostly only two of the traditions, which are paying lobola and ancestor worship. This suggests a dilution of the 'worth' of cultural practices for the participants, which negatively influences cultural identification, as warned by Wickrama et al. (2005). This was also supported by the field notes on the comments of an elderly community member who observed that schools teach children according to Eurocentric perspectives, and that children should rather be taught according to traditions in order to become respectful again, thus linking the Eurocentric perspective to immorality. What is of additional interest is that a cluster analysis of moral variables shared by both the Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives revealed that participants who had higher Afrocentric and tradition scores associated more with the cluster that were closer to the definition of a moral identity (Pretorius, 2012).

Participants showed mixed preference for the Afrocentric and the Eurocentric perspectives. In general terms, participants thus still have knowledge of and accept the Afrocentric perspective, but the specific cultural identification with being a Zulu appears to have become shallow and diluted owing to Eurocentric influence.

### ***Limitations of the study***

The scope of the research was explorative and descriptive. Due to financial and time constraints, the distribution of Afrocentric and Eurocentric responses could not be compared with that of more affluent Zulu adolescents from the same area, which could explore the emerging questions on the relationship between socio-economic status and the Afrocentric responses.

## **Recommendations**

It is recommended that an overlap in the Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives should be used for the development of a model to enhance moral identity in child-headed households, in order to anticipate and address possible ambivalence in the population.

In addition, the researcher recommends a more in-depth study of the effect of affluence on the *ubuntu* perspective, as it could provide further insight into the core constructs of the participants' identity. Research to identify other core constructs of the identity of the Zulu child-headed households is recommended to contribute to the body of knowledge on their identity development.

## ***Conclusion***

This study aimed to examine ethnic identity as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households. This formed part of a more comprehensive study to identify aspects in the field of these households that can be recommended for a model to develop their moral identity.

The core constructs of the collective identity of the participants could not be identified as being predominantly traditionally Zulu, Afrocentric or even Eurocentric. Consequently, as Turiel (2007) suggested, their core identity is possibly embedded in other constructs. The context of poverty and fragmented kinship support in the field of Zulu child-headed households may provide core constructs in their identity rather than identifying with the Zulu culture.

In terms of ethnic identification in the development of moral identity, recommendations for the development of moral identity in Zulu child-headed households thus need to consider both the Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives.

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## ARTICLE 4

# EXPLORING MORAL IDENTITY IN ZULU CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

(Instructions to authors:p 83)

<b>Name</b>	Exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households
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# EXPLORING MORAL IDENTITY IN ZULU CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

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## *Abstract*

Moral identity and how it featured in the field of child-headed households was explored in order to identify aspects that can be used to enhance the development of moral identity in these households. Sixty participants (31 male and 29 female) in the Mkhondo municipal area were recruited through a snowball method. Data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire and face to face interviews, and was supported by field notes. A list of variables which represented an overlap between Afrocentric and Eurocentric aspects associated with moral identity was used to cluster the data. Binary data of 44 of the participants could be used for clustering and was split into two clusters. Cluster 1 (CMI) demonstrated more characteristics of being closer to moral identity than did Cluster 2 (FMI). The clusters were then compared to other aspects of the field of the participants through a t-test, a Mann-Whitney test and point biserial correlation. Clustering was compared to age, gender, reason for being a child-headed household, number of helpers available, educational characteristics and ethnic characteristics. Association emerged between both clusters and educational characteristics, and cultural characteristics. These aspects of the field are useful in the recommendations for the development of a model to enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.

**Key words:** Moral identity; field; child-headed households; cluster

## *Exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households*

Moral degeneration and regeneration have been identified as a challenge that truly cuts across the whole spectrum of South African society. South Africa has even been described as being in a 'moral crisis' (Moral Generation Movement, 2010; Rauch, 2005; Tshabalala-Msimang, 2009). The issue of development of a moral identity among youth is thus of the utmost importance for the moral future of South Africa. Concern over moral development in South Africans motivated the investigation of the field of the lived experience of child-headed households in order to determine which factors can be utilised to enhance development of moral identity in these vulnerable populations. The field in which moral identity of the child-headed households develops is perceived as all the complex interactive phenomena of individuals in the child-headed households and their environment. It includes everything out there, everything that exists; and it is accepted that interaction in the field occurs with everything and everyone. It is a whole in which the parts are in immediate relationship and responsive to each other and there is not a part that is not influenced by whatever goes on somewhere else in the field (Yontef & Bar-Yosef, 2008).

In the context of the South African HIV/Aids pandemic, many children in child-headed households are left without adult guidance to facilitate moral identity development. These are households where one of the children or the youth in the house has assumed the principal responsibility for the household inhabitants because a parent/s or primary caregiver/s was/were permanently or temporarily absent as a result of death, employment away from home (migratory work), abandonment or rejection of the children, a parent/s or primary caregiver was/were present but abusing alcohol and/or drugs excessively, too ill, terminally ill or too old to provide the care required (Meintjes & Hall Marera & Boule *et al.*, 2009; Mogotlane, 2010; Rosa, 2004). The child who has to take the principal responsibility may, however, be older than 18 years of age, if attending school.

Within this reality, the responsibility to help develop moral identities in their siblings rests on the adolescents in the child-headed households, while they themselves are still in the process of

forming their own moral identities. In this process of trying to provide for the basic needs of child-headed households, the adolescents' own developmental tasks are complicated. Therefore, the development of the moral identity of their siblings may be neglected.

## **Moral Identity**

According to Blasi (cited in Jimenez, Nawrocki, Hill, & Lapsley, 2008), a central moral identity is the internal factor that will cause people to behave morally, because they are committed to a sense of personal integrity. The extent to which individuals develop an integrated sense of self with regard to cognitions, emotions and behaviour, is seen to be a strong predictor of morality; that is, to act in a moral manner or not (Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Carlo, 2006; Jimenez *et al.*, 2008; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007).

People are viewed as having developed a moral identity when they have the cognitive ability to discern between right and wrong, harmful and beneficial. The actions they display in relationships benefit the community without detriment to their sense of self. These actions are guided by internal conclusions that have been formed through the dynamic interaction of the different contextual factors or fields to which they have been exposed (Hart, Atkins & Donnely, 2006; Johansson, 2007; Moshman, 2005; Swartz, 2008; Tappan, 2006; Wainryb, 2006).

Identity formation, including the formation of moral identity, is an integral part of the developmental phase of adolescence (Bergevin, Bukowski & Miners, 2003; Fleish, Schindler & Perry, 2009). Moral identity, according to Tappan (2005) is an important dimension of identity that develops from ongoing dialogue with others in the adolescent's social world. It is shaped and mediated by specific cultural tools and ideological resources and therefore does not only develop from gaining access to or reflecting on the adolescent's 'true' or 'essential' moral self. In this process of 'ideological becoming', adolescents struggle to strike a balance between 'authoritative' discourse of others and 'internally persuasive' forms of their own discourse. The sociopolitical changes that occurred in South Africa over the last decade have specifically produced many discourses that may influence moral identity development.

As with other domains of identity, when entering adolescence, any of two moral identity statuses may be present, described as “identity foreclosed” or “identity diffused”. The moral identity-foreclosed adolescents do have commitments but they have not been significantly explored. Rather, they have been internalized from parents and other agents of culture, and are therefore not self-chosen. These commitments that are not significantly explored are also referred to as “introjects” from the Gestalt perspective. The adolescents who enter the stage as moral identity-diffused, on the other hand, have no commitments and also no desire to seek any (Blom, 2006; Hendry, Mayer, & Kloep, 2007; Kroger, 2007; Moshman, 2005). In the ideal trajectory, the introjects of the identity-foreclosed adolescents and the noncommitment of the identity-diffused adolescents are challenged through an identity crisis, which Marcia (1966) referred to as a state of “moratorium”, the outcome of which leads to the status known as “identity achieved”. Identity-achieved individuals have gone through a period of exploration and have made identity-defining commitments. They are assumed to have successfully resolved the psychosocial task of adolescence (Bergh & Erling, 2007; Moshman, 2005; Mullis, Graf, & Mullis, 2009).

### **An Afrocentric perspective of moral identity**

From an Afrocentric perspective, moral identity in Zulu child-headed households would be closely associated with the achievement of the concept of *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* is a word used by the Zulu people of South Africa, and is difficult to translate into English because it has many different associated connotations. Roughly, it means “humanity”, “humanness” or even “humaneness”, and it often features in the maxim that “a person is a person through other persons”. *Ubuntu* signifies respect and compassion for others and serves as both a factual description and a rule of conduct or social ethic. It is also associated with generosity, hospitality, sharing, being friendly, caring and compassion (Louw, n.d.; Metz, 2007; Tutu, 1999). It is seen as the acquired quality of humanity that is the characteristic of a fully developed person, living the full range of values, attitudes, feelings, relationships and activities of the human spirit (Shutte, 2001).

In the *ubuntu* perspective, the most fundamental attitude towards other people is to see and treat them as “another self”, making no distinction between the good of the self and the good of another person, regardless of whether the other person is known or not (Metz, 2007; Shutte, 2001). Each individual’s humanity is expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs, in turn, through recognition of the individual’s humanity. *Ubuntu* reflects the principle of caring for each other’s well-being in a spirit of mutual support and also acknowledges both the rights and responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being (South African Government, 2000).

*Ubuntu* displays a range of virtues, some concerned with the relationship between people and others characterizing a person’s relationship with him- or herself (Metz, 2007; Shutte, 2001). The virtues associated with the relationships with others include reverence and respect, that lead to loyalty, courtesy, tolerance, patience, generosity, hospitality, readiness to cooperate, and willingness to sacrifice life for a just cause. As far as the characteristics of the relationship with the self are concerned, *ubuntu* is perceived as integrity, confidence, endurance, joyfulness and vitality. It also gives a general sense of one’s own value and dignity (Collier, 2005; Shutte, 2001).

The basis for right action, rooted in African culture, appears to be the requirement to produce harmony and reduce discord, where harmony is a matter of identity and solidarity. Actions that do not involve goodwill are seen as reducing people’s quality of life (Metz, 2007) and describe many aspects of a moral identity.

As in the Western moral development theory of Kohlberg (1981), judgment is exercised before engaging in moral actions. Both Westerners and friends of *ubuntu* equally hold the following to be wrong: killing, raping, lying, stealing, breaking promises and discriminating, which are seen as unloving actions (Metz, 2007). More specifically, these actions do not involve the shared identity of “treating you as if we are one” which, in the African context, would reflect the image of a moral identity.

The African perspective differs from the Eurocentric perspective, however, in the interpretation of these immoral actions. There are, for example, aspects that are seen as immoral from both Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives, but the emphasis differs, creating the impression, from a Eurocentric perspective, that the Afrocentric perspective justifies unjustifiable actions. Metz (2007) describes examples of these differences in perspectives (*emphasis added by author*) as follows:

- a) Kill innocent people for money.
- b) Deceive people, at least when not done in self- or other defence.
- c) Steal (that is, to take from their rightful owner) unnecessary goods.
- d) Violate trust, for example, break a promise, for marginal personal gain.
- e) Discriminate on a racial basis when allocating opportunities (Metz, 2007).

From the Afrocentric perspective, but not necessarily the Eurocentric perspective, it would, on the other hand, be immoral to:

- a) Make policy decisions in the face of dissent, as opposed to seeking consensus.
- b) Make retribution a fundamental and central aim of criminal justice, as opposed to seeking reconciliation.
- c) Create wealth largely on a competitive basis, as opposed to a cooperative one.
- d) Distribute wealth largely on the basis of individual rights, as opposed to need.
- e) Fail to marry and procreate, as opposed to creating a family (Metz, 2007).

According to Mbiti's classic study of African world views (1989) it is not the act in itself that would be 'wrong' as such, but the relationships involved in the act: if relationships are not hurt or damaged, and if there is no discovery of the break of custom or regulation, then the act is not 'evil' or 'wicked' or 'bad'. From the Afrocentric perspective, it would thus seem justifiable for participants to steal from someone they do not regard as the rightful owner, or to steal what they

deem necessary. Moral identity, in the African context, therefore revolves heavily around the social relations within the group, whereby a holistic perspective is created.

Even when not perceived from an Afrocentric perspective, similar themes of the importance of contexts and relationships are noted in other studies on moral identity development. The complex combination of traits, motives, beliefs and values associated with moral identity, according to Reimer and Weide-Stein (2004), most likely reflects parental and peer influences, thereby pointing out the importance of social context in moral identity development. Hart (2005) agrees that it is only through understanding the connections between moral identity and the social world that it will be possible to understand the specificity of the motivation and the collapses in moral life.

Deeb-Sossa (2007) and Lapsley (2008) concur that a person's sense of identification with the group and its communal norms will generate a "moral atmosphere" that either conduces to moral formation or undermines it. It therefore implies that identification with other identity domains will affect the development of moral identity, for example, identification with the Afrocentric perspective, gender, religion and role identification (Ejizu, n.d.; Ferns & Thom, 2001; Forster, 2007).

Other authors (Weaver, 2006; Sandlin & Walther, 2009) agree that the development of moral identity, like identity in general, is influenced by both a) interactions with other persons (especially deeper and more frequent involvements), and b) the behaviour of the person in question. Weaver, however, states that the self-importance and salience of that identity will affect the degree to which that identity is manifested in behaviour.

There are both similarities and different perspectives regarding moral identity and morality between the African collectivistic and the Western individualistic perspective. In a country such as South Africa, with its multi-cultural society, mixed perspectives will undoubtedly be found, but even where similarities exist, there may be a different accent. In the sociopolitical-historical context of South Africa, for example, both white and black South Africans may regard stealing from the rightful owner as wrong, but the definition of 'the rightful owner' may differ and produce

conflict. Both the Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives thus need to be taken into consideration when studying the field aspects of moral identity of Zulu child-headed households.

According to Hart's (2005) view of moral identity development, there is plasticity in moral identity development and, as social context changes, so can moral identity. Moral identity is, therefore, open to revision across the life-course, particularly when one is given opportunities for moral action (Hart, 2005; Lapsley, 2008.). According to Hart (2005), five factors influence moral identity formation. These factors can be assigned to two columns of influence, presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1 Factors that influence moral identity formation**

INFLUENCES MOST LIKELY BEYOND THE VOLITIONAL CONTROL OF THE CHILD	INFLUENCES CLOSER TO THE VOLITIONAL CONTROL OF THE CHILD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enduring dispositional characteristics</li> <li>• Social (including family, culture, social class) characteristics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moral judgment and attitudes</li> <li>• The sense of self (including commitment to ideals)</li> <li>• Opportunities for moral action</li> </ul>

Hart, 2005:260

Although there is disagreement as to the exact motivations involved in moral behaviour (Borders, Earleywine & Huey, 2004; Feather, 2005; Nunner-Winkler, Meyer-Nikele & Wohlrab, 2007), De Mott (n.d.) argues that the internal processes that motivate someone remain the same. These internal processes are seen as:

- 1) Having moral sensitivity when a person has empathy (can identify with another's experience) and cognition of the effect of various possible actions on others.
- 2) Moral judgment, which means that a person has the ability to choose the most moral action.
- 3) Moral motivation, which implies deciding to behave in the moral way, as opposed to other options.
- 4) Implementation of the chosen moral action (De Mott, n.d.).

**Problem statement**

No model to enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households is available to guide health and social science professionals working with this vulnerable population. Available literature on moral identity development does not reflect the context of this population from the perspective of the adolescent heads of these households.

**Goal of the study**

The goal of this study is to contribute towards answering the research question: Which aspects of the field of the Zulu child-headed households can enhance their moral identity?

## *Methodology*

### **Research method and design**

Phenomena that are studied in the social sciences call for openness in methodological approach, as both qualitative and quantitative approaches can assist in understanding human beings in their full complexity (Delpont & Fouché, 2011; Fouché & De Vos, 2011). The approach focuses on answering the research question rather than on methodological considerations (Morgan & Sklar, 2012).

A mix of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis was used to provide a better understanding of the research question than would have been possible through either method on its own (Creswell 2008; Delpont & Fouché 2011). This study followed a mixed methodological approach by conducting a descriptive survey design in the form of a semi-structured questionnaire, followed up with face to face interviews that added rich descriptions of their lived experience. Field notes illuminated the context of the study.

### **Population and sample**

The sample population, constituted of the adolescent heads of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area, was recruited through snowball sampling (Maree, 2007), starting with a pilot test with individuals the researcher knew (Sandlin & Walther, 2009; Strydom & Delpont, 2011) through involvement at the local high school and children's home in Piet Retief. From there, recruitment expanded into the rest of the rural areas in the Mkhondo municipality district, based on referrals from the initial participants.

Sixty participants, who equally represented both genders, were recruited and filled out the questionnaire, thus qualifying, according to Pietersen and Maree (2007), as major research for a minor subgroup such as this population. Participants for the interviews were recruited through convenience sampling (Pietersen & Maree, 2007). Participants who indicated on their

questionnaires that they were willing to be interviewed were the potential candidates for the interviews. Six of these, who represented the different contexts, were selected. Morgan and Sklar (2012) consider this number as sufficient to represent a qualitative perspective.

The criteria for inclusion were that participation was voluntary for the heads of the household, who had to be 13 years or older and younger than 18 years, unless they were still attending school. They had to be able to fill out a questionnaire, with or without assistance, and to give permission for the use of an interpreter.

## **Procedure**

Ethical clearance was obtained through the ethics committee of the North-West University (NWU-00060-08-A1). Ethical guidelines, as proposed by The World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki (2008) for conducting research on vulnerable populations such as children, were considered. What was also taken into consideration was that the research should only be conducted if the importance of the objective outweighed the inherent risks and burdens to the research subjects. The best interests of the participants were the first priority. Participants were informed about their rights to withdraw without fear of punishment and of the confidentiality of the data. They were also provided with the names of counsellors should they experience any discomfort as a result of the study. Written consent, in their capacity as emancipated minors, was obtained after verbal explanation in isiZulu of the informed consent content (Richter, Groft & Prinsloo, 2007).

The field of the 60 participants related to moral identity was explored through a semi-structured questionnaire, based on a literature study of the characteristics and development of moral identity from both a Eurocentric and an Afrocentric perspective. Although the limitations of the study did not allow for examining every virtue, the overlap between the African and European moral characteristics enabled the researcher to conduct a holistic study in order to get a sense of moral identity in the participants.

The characteristics were then themed together and used as the basis for a cluster analysis in order to identify homogeneous subgroups of cases in the population. Group membership was then analysed to minimize within-group variation and maximize between-group variation. The group id values were then saved as a case variable, and the results of the cluster analysis were used to link the results to other aspects of the Gestalt field of the participants.

A list of statements from the questionnaire made up the variables that were used to cluster the data to see if participants could be grouped together based on these variables. The method used to measure the binary data was Furthest Neighbor, and the distance between the responses of the participants were measured through Sokal and Sneath1 (SN1) (SPSS, 2009). The list of statements that made up the variables used to cluster is reflected in Table 2.

**TABLE 2 Moral variables used to cluster**

<b>Variable: Statement description</b>	Association with moral identity integrating Eurocentric and <i>ubuntu</i> perspectives
<b>Teach them (siblings) what is right and wrong.</b>	Transference of values relates to enhancing the ability for moral judgment; demonstrates cognitive ability to distinguish between perceived right and wrong.
<b>Punish them (siblings) if they do wrong things.</b>	Parental involvement in developing discipline relates to moral development by translating moral values into moral actions.
<b>Take them (siblings) to church.</b>	Pro-social behaviour relates to the development of moral identity through belonging to a group/community, social integration and social contribution.
<b>I do things without expecting money.</b>	Volunteerism is associated with moral identity as it reflects a greater social well-being and a smaller tendency to act pro-socially for self-interest; <i>ubuntu</i> principle of generosity, being willing to cooperate, generosity.
<b>I get along well with people staying in my house.</b>	Pro-social behaviour is closely associated with moral identity development through belonging to a group/community, social integration and social contribution; <i>ubuntu</i> principles of being willing to cooperate.
<b>I get along well with people not staying in my house.</b>	Pro-social behaviour is closely related to the development of moral identity through belonging to a group/community, social integration and social contribution; <i>ubuntu</i> principles of being willing to cooperate.
<b>I go to church/prayer meetings at least twice a month.</b>	Pro-social behaviour is closely related to moral identity development through belonging to a group/community, social integration and social contribution.

<b>I make sure that my brothers and sisters go to church/prayer meetings.</b>	Pro-social behaviour is closely related to moral identity development and reflects a greater social well-being and a smaller tendency to act pro-socially for self-interest, moral values translated into action.
<b>I feel positive about my life.</b>	Positive sense of self: <i>ubuntu</i> association of confidence, endurance, joyfulness and vitality.
<b>It is easy for me to ask for help.</b>	Positive sense of self: association of belonging to a group/community, social integration associated with both Eurocentric and <i>ubuntu</i> perspectives; also <i>ubuntu</i> association of confidence.
<b>The other people in my life follow my advice.</b>	Positive sense of self; belonging to a group/community, social integration and social contribution associated with both Eurocentric and <i>ubuntu</i> perspectives; <i>ubuntu</i> association of confidence.
<b>I don't think about what other people feel.</b>	Lack of empathy is negatively associated with developing a moral identity in both Eurocentric and <i>ubuntu</i> perspectives.
<b>It hurts to see another person in pain.</b>	Presence of empathy is positively related to enhancing moral identity; associated with <i>ubuntu</i> principles of compassion.
<b>I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated in a mean way.</b>	Empathy is positively associated with developing moral identity; associated with <i>ubuntu</i> principles of compassion.
<b>What I have is mine and I won't share it.</b>	Self-centeredness and lack of altruism is negatively associated with developing a moral identity; harming relationships is negatively associated with <i>ubuntu</i> principles.
<b>If people won't do things my way, I will force them.</b>	Self-centeredness and lack of altruism is negatively associated with enhancing moral identity; harming relationships, creating disharmony and lack of tolerance is negatively associated with <i>ubuntu</i> principles.

<b>I always tell the truth even if it gets me into trouble.</b>	Pro-social behaviour positively associated with developing and enhancing moral identity; reverence and respect that lead to loyalty, courtesy, readiness to cooperate, willingness to sacrifice life for a just cause. As far as the characteristics of the relationship with the self are concerned, <i>ubuntu</i> principles of integrity, confidence, endurance, joyfulness and vitality.
<b>I am a good person.</b>	Positive sense of self; <i>ubuntu</i> principles of integrity, confidence, endurance, joyfulness and vitality.
<b>I feel bad if I take something without asking.</b>	Presence of conscience is positively related to moral identity; <i>ubuntu</i> principles of integrity, realizing the importance of community, relationships and harmony.
<b>There are things I have done I feel bad about.</b>	Presence of conscience is positively related to moral identity; <i>ubuntu</i> principles of integrity, realizing the importance of community relationships and harmony.

Owing to missing responses, some participants could not be clustered on these variables, and a new sample of 44 respondents emerged, which still qualifies as major research on a minor subgroup (Maree, 2007). They were divided into two groups, based on those whose responses clustered together as seen in Table 3. The groups were then named according to the characteristics of the group. Cluster 1 was called ‘Closer to moral identity’ (CMI) as it demonstrated a stronger affiliation to the definition of moral identity than the other cluster. Cluster 2 was thus named ‘Further from moral identity’ (FMI).

### **Results of clustering**

From these results, Pearson chi-square and Phi tests were done, which detected significant associations between the two clusters in nine of the variables. The Pearson chi-square indicated that the variables were in some way related, as the p-values were less than 0.05 (Field, 2005). The Phi test, which is an indication of the strength of the practical significance, indicated that a practically visible effect was indeed noticeable between the two groups in these nine variables. According to

Pietersen and Maree (2007), the effect size ( $d$ ) may be interpreted that  $d > 0.2$  denotes a small effect,  $d > 0.5$  denotes a medium effect and  $d > 0.8$  denotes a large effect size. Thus, these questions impacted significantly on the cluster formation, and were subsequently used to name and describe the clusters formed.

**TABLE 3** Frequency table for number of "yes" answers to moral variables

STATEMENT DESCRIPTION	YES			
	Cluster 1 (CMI)		Cluster 2 (FMI)	
I feel bad if I take something without asking.	30	94%	3	25%
I am a good person.	32	100%	6	50%
I get along well with people staying in my house.	30	94%	5	42%
I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated in a mean way.	31	97%	7	58%
I always tell the truth even if it gets me in trouble.	25	78%	3	25%
I make sure that my brothers and sisters go to church/prayer meetings.	28	88%	5	42%
It hurts to see another person in pain.	30	94%	7	58%
It is easy for me to ask for help.	27	84%	6	50%
The other people in my life follow my advice.	28	88%	7	58%
I do things without expecting money.	27	84%	7	58%
If people won't do things my way, I will force them.	7	22%	0	0%
What I have is mine and I won't share it.	11	34%	1	8%

I go to church/prayer meetings at least twice a month.	24	75%	6	50%
I get along well with people not staying in my house.	19	59%	4	33%
I don't think about what other people feel.	15	47%	3	25%
I take them to church.	22	69%	6	50%
I punish them if they do wrong things.	6	19%	4	33%
I feel positive about my life.	27	84%	9	75%
There are things I have done I feel bad about.	20	63%	8	67%
Teach them what is right and wrong.	18	56%	7	58%

Table 4 indicates that when exploring and integrating the Eurocentric and *ubuntu* perspectives of moral identity on the nine variables that were visible practically, two general themes emerged as being stronger in the CMI group than in the FMI group.

**TABLE 4** Statistical significance and effect sizes between CMI and FMI clusters

QUESTION DESCRIPTION	PEARSON CHI-SQUARE	ABSOLUTE PHI
I feel bad if I take something without asking.	.000	.707
I'm a good person.	.000	.649
I get along well with people staying in my house.	.000	.575
I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated in a mean way.	.001	.500
I always tell the truth even if it gets me in trouble.	.001	.492
I make sure that my brothers and sisters go to church/prayer meetings.	.002	.471
It hurts to see another person in pain.	.004	.431
It is easy for me to ask for help.	.019	.354
The other people in my life follow my advice.	.033	.322

The first theme reflected a stronger sense of group belonging, social contribution and cooperation and a willingness to sacrifice individual preferences for the sake of the greater social well-being. The second theme reflected a positive sense of self, which is characterized by confidence, joyfulness and vitality, evidence of a conscience and the ability to feel compassion/empathy.

## Comparisons with other aspects

After obtaining the descriptions of the two clusters (CMI) and (FMI), the people in the clusters were compared. First, the clusters were compared in terms of age and grade as presented in Table 5.

**TABLE 5 Cluster comparison with age and grade**

	COMPLETE LINKAGE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	STD. ERROR MEAN	EFFECT SIZE
<b>Highest grade completed</b>	1	9.75	1.295	.229	0.58
	2	8.91	1.446	.436	
<b>Age</b>	1	18.0000	1.95101	.34489	0.44
	2	17.0000	2.25630	.65134	

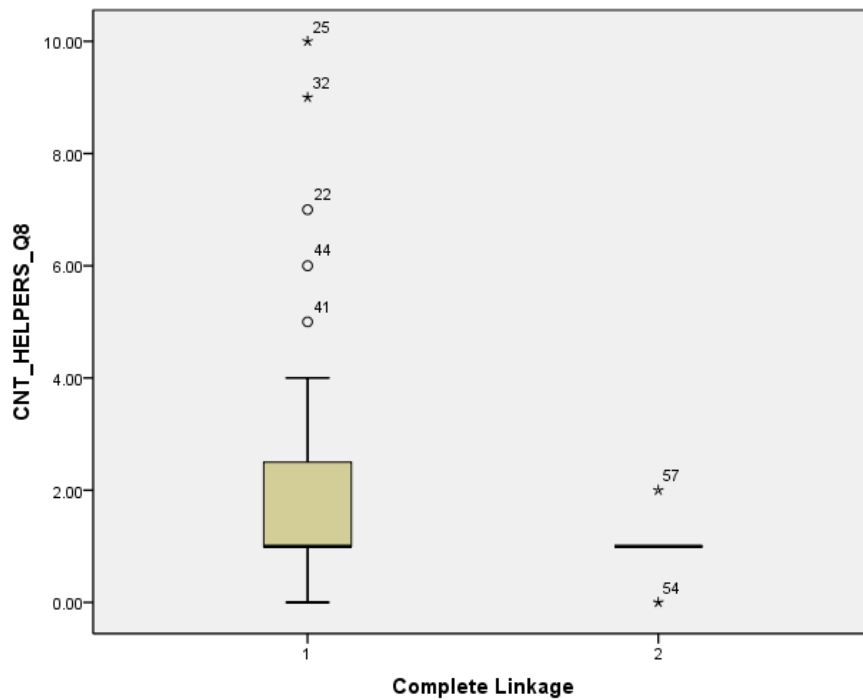
On a pre-screening for test selection to check for normality, QQ-plots did not indicate severe deviation from normality. An independent t-test with equal variances not assumed, was therefore conducted, with a Mann-Whitney test to ensure accurate representation of findings.

No significant statistical difference between Cluster1 (CMI) and Cluster 2 (FMI) in terms of age and grade was found. However, a practical visible difference ( $d > 0.5$ ) was identified between the grade level for CMI and FMI, which denotes a medium effect (Maree, 2007). About 70% of Cluster CMI was more than one year behind in education given the current age, while 55% of Cluster FMI was more than one year behind in education given the current age. It seems that the clusters formed may well be associated with the lag in education, but the researcher cannot state that the lag decides the clustering of a respondent. A point-biserial correlation was also performed with the results Table 6 indicates.

**TABLE 6** Point biserial correlation between clusters and age and grade

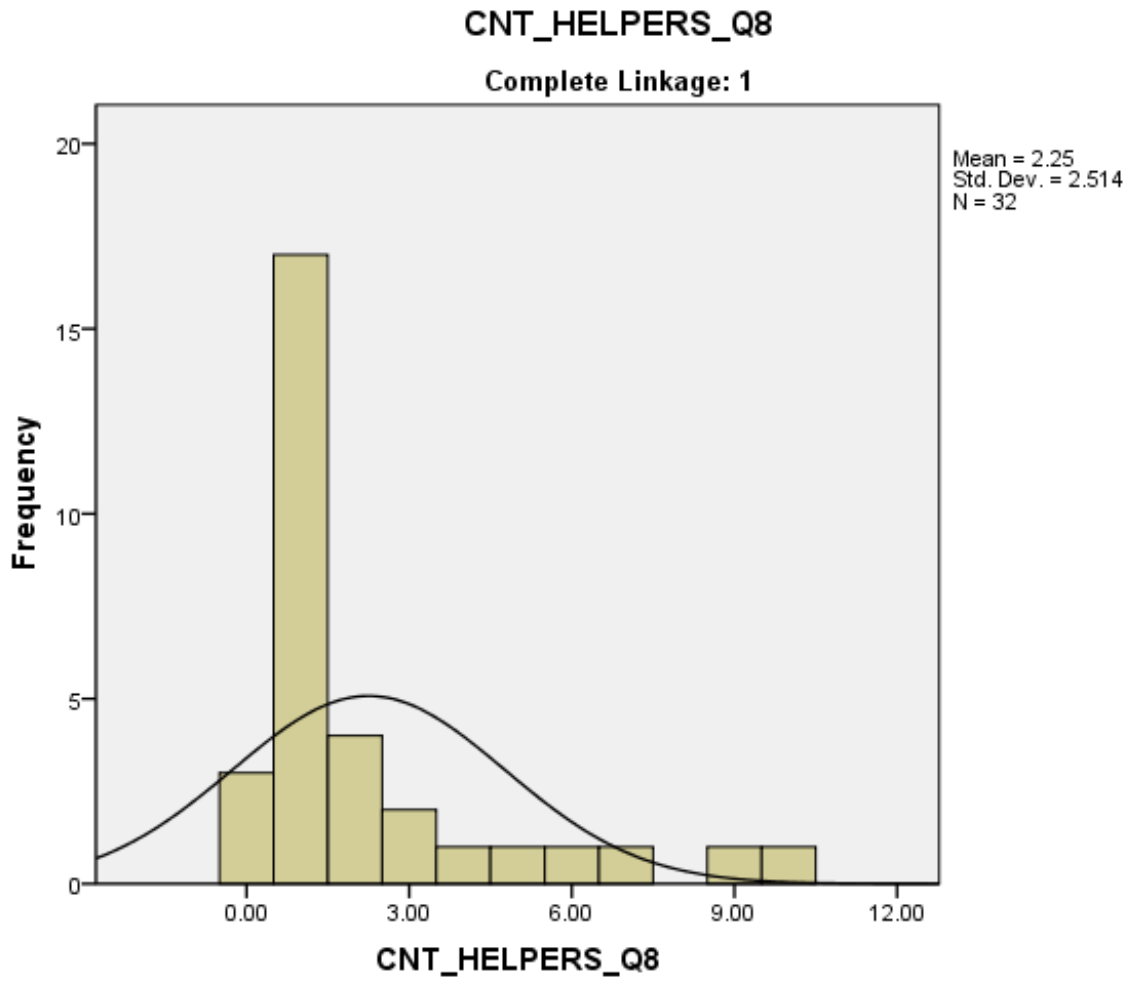
CORRELATION BETWEEN CLUSTERS AND:	P-VALUE	R-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE
<b>Age</b>	0.154	-0.219	Almost practically visible association with age: The younger the participant, the stronger the association with Cluster 2
<b>Grade</b>	0.079	-0.271	
<b>Years lagging in education</b>	0.973	0.005	No association

No statistical or practically significant differences were found between genders and clusters, or between the clusters and types of child-headed households. Death of parents, parents being ill, caretakers that were too old, staying in another place, parents that abandoned their children, and parents who were too drunk to take up their parental responsibilities were all reasons why participants formed child-headed households, but the reasons did not influence the clustering of the participants. The number of helpers for each cluster, however, indicated deviations from normality, clearly visible when referring to the box plots in Figure 2.



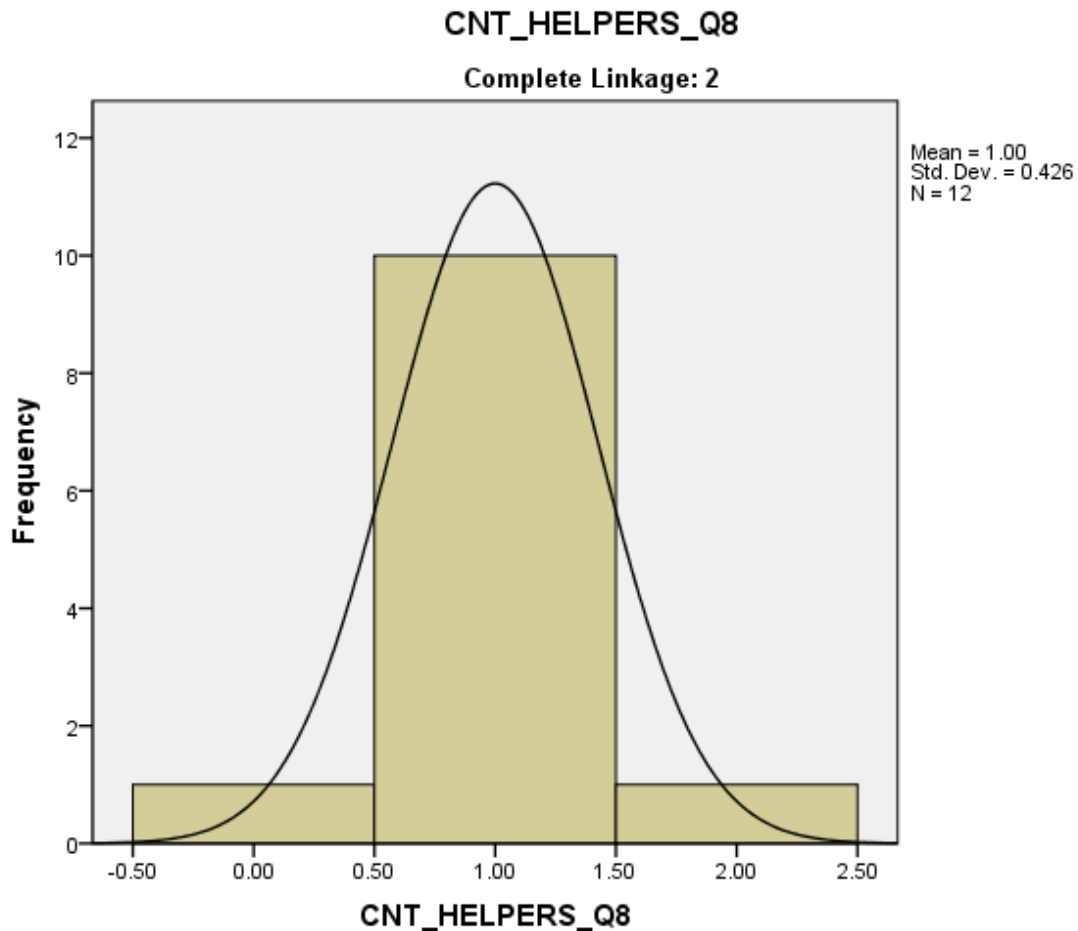
**FIGURE 1** Box plots of the number of helpers for each of the clusters

Because of the deviation from normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov  $p=0.00001$  and ShaCMIro-Wilk  $p=0.00001$ ) both the t-test and Mann-Whitney were performed. The t-test indicated a statistically significant difference ( $p=0.01$ ) between the number of helpers for CMI and FMI respectively. The Mann-Whitney showed  $p=.107$ . To determine the practical significance, Cohen's d-value was calculated. The value of  $d=0.5$  showed that the difference is visible practically in Figure 3.



**FIGURE 2** Frequency of the number of helpers for CMI

A graphic representation, Figure 4 indicates that only one member of the FMI cluster had more than one helper, while 38 % of the CMI cluster had more than one helper.



**FIGURE 3** Frequency of the number of helpers for FMI

Table 7 shows a comparison between the clusters and the remaining data, with a score assigned to each one. These were a responsibility score (Count Resp.), that reflected the number of responsibilities participants accepted; an income score (Count Inc.), that indicated the number of income sources; an Afrocentric score that indicated the number of *ubuntu* statements to which participants related; a traditions score, that indicated the number of Zulu traditions still practised by the participants; and Year lag, that indicated how many years the participants lagged behind in their schooling.

The comparison between the clusters and the remaining data did not reveal a severe deviation from normality, but the FMI cluster raised concerns. Therefore, both an independent t-test (equal variances not assumed) and a Mann-Whitney were performed.

**TABLE 7 Comparison between the clusters and the remaining data**

	Complete Linkage	Mean	Std. Deviation	p-value		
				t-test *	Mann-Whitney	Effect Size
<b>Cnt_Resp_ Q6</b>	1	8.5313	5.03526	.941	.937	0.02
	2	8.6667	5.48276			
<b>Cnt_Income_ Sources_Q10</b>	1	1.1250	.90696	.468	.507	0.24
	2	1.4167	1.24011			
<b>Afrocentric_Score_ Q28</b>	1	4.7097	1.67717	.172	.216	0.48
	2	3.9091	1.57826			
<b>Traditions_Score_ Q24</b>	1	3.0000	2.21282	.127	.303	0.41
	2	2.0909	1.37510			
<b>Year Lag</b>	1	2.2500	1.90076	.974	.778	0.01
	2	2.2727	1.95402			

*\*Equal variances not assumed*

An almost practically visible effect of the Afrocentric and traditions scores was noted on the clustering.

**Discussion**

Cluster characteristics indicated that an effect that was visible practically was noticeable between the two groups, based on nine variables that represented an overlap between the Afrocentric (*ubuntu*) and Eurocentric characteristics of moral identity. Two general themes emerged as being stronger in the CMI (Closer to Moral Identity) group than in the FMI( Further from Moral Identity)

group. The first theme reflected a stronger sense of group belonging, social contribution and cooperation in the CMI cluster than in the FMI cluster, and a willingness to sacrifice individual preferences for the sake of the greater social well-being.

This theme supports moral identity formation as, according to Hart (2005), it is made easier if adolescents can explore lines of moral actions when they are supported in these explorations by people they respect and with whom they have a relationship. It is also made easier if they feel that their actions will genuinely contribute to the welfare of others. This calls for adults supporting and making available opportunities for adolescents to explore their moral identity, such as school and church activities, where they can connect with the community (Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Hart *et al.*, 1998). This corresponds with the view of the Moral Regeneration Movement, which advocates an ubuntu perspective (South African Government, 2000) whereby actions are judged in terms of interest of the common good or not. Enduring individual characteristics such as sympathy, reliability, generativity and social influence (family, culture, structure) and the ability to form social relationships, combined with their contexts, such as supportive families, form the backdrop of developing moral aspirations (Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Hart, Atkins & Ford, 1998).

The second theme in the CMI cluster reflected a positive sense of self which is characterized by confidence, joyfulness and vitality, evidence of a conscience and the ability to feel compassion/empathy, reflecting the view of Tappan (2005) and Johansson (2007) that their lived experience of their relations influenced how they behaved towards others. It also suggests a measure of personal reflecting (Herman, 2005) which enables them to experience and demonstrate compassion and empathy. An idealized self-concept is also seen as an important aspect in moral identity development, as it motivates and inspires a person to be committed when demands for it are more than typical (Deeb-Sossa, 2007; Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Hart *et al.*, 1998). The two themes of the cluster therefore constitute a move towards the definition of a moral identity for the CMI cluster.

The CMI and FMI clusters were subsequently compared with other characteristics that were identified in the field of the participants. These included their ages, the reason why they were in child-headed households, gender, educational characteristics, cultural aspects, their perceptions of their responsibilities towards their siblings, and their sources of income.

**Clusters compared with age.** According to the stage trajectory of identity development, identity would be expected to move towards an achieved stage in the older participants, whereas younger participants would be more identity-diffused (Wires & Barocas, 1994). In this sample, younger participants associated more with the FMI cluster, which can be associated with an identity diffused state, but may also be attributed to the psycho-dynamic view of typical adolescents. The psycho-dynamic view of adolescents is that that adolescents are egotistic, regarding themselves, on the one hand, as the sole object of interest and the centre of the universe and, on the other hand, as also being capable of self-sacrifice and devotion. Their core identity may also be complemented by an ideal self, a despised self and a notion of a past and future self (Reimer & Wade-Stein 2004), influencing their moral motivation and actions.

The older participants did not associate with either cluster. Mediation within the field thus does not lead to a more pro-social inclination in the older participants, but does not indicate that they are further from moral identity either, possibly indicating that identity achievement may be delayed or, as Ferns and Thom (2001) claim, that black *South African* adolescents do not display the moral developmental pattern that Kohlberg has described. This delay may well have a dual meaning as, on the one hand, the adolescent might not be able to guide younger siblings but, on the other hand, it creates a new window of opportunity for interventions that may yet bring about a positive outcome in terms of their own moral identity development.

**Clusters compared with gender.** According to Nunner-Winkler, Meyer-Nikele and Wohlrab (2007), male stereotypes display mostly negative and morally unfavourable traits, whereas female stereotypes display mostly positive and morally favourable traits. Gender stereotyping in the Zulu context also dictates that fathers do not acknowledge familiarity with their sons, and that it is the

duty of the wife to bring up the children. In this study, no associations were identified between the two clusters and gender, suggesting that neither gender could be viewed as closer to or further from moral identity compared with the other gender. The following quotation demonstrates how a boy accepted and responded to the traditional responsibilities of the other gender, given the change in circumstances:

The challenge I have is that my sisters are getting into the puberty stage now. The one that comes after me, she's the one that had grown a little bit. She is 18 years old. My other two sisters are still in puberty stage. As their brother, I have to motivate them that, as a girl you have to do this and don't do this. If you are a girl you don't have to go like that. And the other one had a problem. She had pains when she was having her periods always, when she had period. So when her periods were close, I had to go to the chemist to get some pills for her (Boy, 19, Gr. 11).

**Clusters compared with grade.** Demographic analysis indicated that participants generally lagged three years in their education, but this showed no association with the forming of the clusters. A practically visible difference ( $d > 0.5$ ) was, however, identified between the grade levels for CMI and FMI, denoting a medium effect (Maree, 2007). About 70% of Cluster CMI was more than one year behind in education, given the current age, whereas 55% of Cluster AI was more than one year behind in education, given the current age.

During the stage of adolescence a downward spiral with regard to academic performance, interest to go to school, intrinsic motivation, self-concept, self-perception and confidence in their own intellectual abilities is often experienced. This may be attributed to the reciprocal influence between the characteristics adolescents bring to their social environments and the characteristics of the environments, which may not fit the psychological needs of the adolescents. Personal assets, such as confidence in their abilities to succeed, good coping skills, high self-esteem and good social skills can, however, help adolescents to deal with school-related stressors (Eccles, Templeton, Barber & Stone, 2003).

Research also indicates a high school dropout rate among child-headed households (Lombe & Ochumbo, 2008; Maqoko & Dreyer, 2007), due to absence of support structures in terms of family, financial and multiple responsibilities (Mankazana, 2009; Maqoko & Dreyer, 2007; Tsegaye, 2008). In a time when adolescents need to prepare for and plan a career, adolescents in child-headed households have to contend with so many adverse factors, such as the immediate survival of the family, that the focus on an individual career may be compromised, affecting the educational characteristics of the child-headed households negatively.

Academic under-achievement has also been linked to the state of identity diffusion (Wires & Barocas, 1994) which is characterized by a lack of commitment and a tendency to seemingly drift aimlessly, with a carefree attitude (Berg & Erling, 2005). What is interesting to note, however, is that the CMI-cluster, which indicated a more caring inclination, had more participants that were more than one year behind in their education than the FMI-cluster. It is cautiously suggested that this may be because of a greater commitment towards the welfare of their family than to their own educational needs. As some participants responded:

I had to attend school and take care of my sisters at the same time. I didn't have enough time to do school work. So, as a result, I failed at school at the end of the year. So even if I was ready to do the school-work, there was always something else in my home life to disturb me (Boy, 19).

It was really hard because I never got enough time to concentrate on my school work. The baby was always sick. I didn't know what was wrong with it. It complained of a stomach ache and I had to nurse[d] it, sometimes I couldn't even go to school (Girl, 17).

Before I used to take care of the baby, and he was very sick. Little bit by little bit, he got sick. And we didn't have the grant before. We had food, but I couldn't do homework ... I didn't do well at school because there were days when I had to sleep at the hospital (Girl, 17).

In this study, it is suggested that academic under-achievement should not be linked to identity diffusion, but rather to the psycho-social factors to which the participants are subjected. In addition

to that, the cognitive ability referred to for exercising moral judgement should not be confused with the intellectual skills associated with levels of formal school education, as the ability to read, write and intellectualize neither guarantees nor excludes moral identity.

By putting the needs of the household before their own, the participants appear to function within Kohlberg's (1981) conventional level of moral reasoning, somewhat between Stages 3 and 4, where people make choices from a 'member-of-society' perspective, considering the good of others, the maintenance of positive relations, and the rules of society. This tendency is comfortably aligned to the ubuntu perspective of a moral person, where the community is valued higher than the individual, and also corresponds with Colby's (2002) statement that people can exhibit moral character or integrity without being at Kohlberg's highest stages.

*Clusters and cultural aspects.* In the original 60 participants, results indicated that 45% of the participants preferred more than half of the Afrocentric statements to the Eurocentric statements, indicating that less than half the participants had a stronger identification with Afrocentric values (Pretorius, 2012). An almost practically visible effect of the Afrocentric and traditions scores was, however, noted on the clustering, with both scores being higher for the CMI cluster. It suggests, therefore, that participants who were closer to moral identity related more to the Afrocentric perspective of ubuntu. They also practiced more Zulu traditions than did participants of the FMI cluster.

Moreover, the CMI cluster presented with 38% of participants that had more than one helper compared with only one participant in the FMI cluster. The CMI cluster thus appears still to function closer to the Afrocentric way of living view than the FMI cluster, supporting the results of a study by Phinney, Jacoby and Sylva (2007) that a greater level of embeddedness in ethnic identity provided more support and resulted in a more pro-social inclination, which is an important aspect of moral identity. In the context of traditional Zulu and other African cultures, the extended family structure is held up to people as a model, one in which parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces live together and are cared for by their children, grandchildren and other

relatives in mutual love and respect (Ejizu, n.d). Hart's model of moral identity formation (2005), which views the context of supportive families and cultures as contributing to developing moral aspirations, supports the idea of an extended family structure. Despite the finding of Pretorius (2012) that kinship support in this population is fragmented and that support is often on an 'only given when asked for' basis, the number of helpers is still more associated with the CMI cluster than with the FMI cluster.

### **Limitations**

Within the scope of the research, it was impossible to study every field aspect relating to moral identity within the population group. Although 44 participants qualify as major research in a minor subgroup (Maree, 2007), the missing responses of the remaining 16 participants, which could not be used in the clustering, may have influenced the strength of associations.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the finding that a larger percentage of the cluster that was closer to moral identity (CMI) was more than one year behind in their schooling compared to the further from moral identity cluster (FMI), further research on this aspect is recommended. This may provide a new angle on moral identity development in child-headed households and create a deeper understanding of their context.

It is further recommended that the apparent delay in moral identity development should be constructively used to promote interventions that may foster an achieved moral identity. It is recommended that this aspect should be considered in the development of a model that health and social work practitioners can use to enhance moral identity development when working with this population.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of the article was to examine how moral identity featured in the field of the adolescents in Zulu child-headed households. In the eventual sample of 44 participants, the study unexpectedly

revealed a lag in school grade associated with the clusters: More participants in the closer to moral identity cluster (CMI) were lagging more than one year compared to the other cluster.

Cluster associations between the field aspects of ethnicity and age yield results similar to those of other studies that indicate association between these field aspects and moral identity development. Moral identity development, however, seems to be delayed in the older participants, which creates an opportunity for constructive intervention. The exploration of the field aspects in the participants related to moral identity is relevant as it contributes to the body of knowledge to identify aspects that can be utilized to enhance moral identity in Zulu child-headed households based on their lived experience.

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# SECTION C: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This section provides the reader with a summative overview of the study, an evaluation of its aims and objectives and a conclusion on whether objectives were reached. Final conclusions, recommendations for further research, policy and practice are presented.

The research problem that directed the research was twofold. Firstly, the adolescents in charge of the Zulu child-headed households are not empowered to guide the development or enhancement of a moral identity in the children in their care, due to a lack of guidance from parents or adult caregivers. Secondly, no model exists within the context of the Zulu child-headed households that can assist the adolescents to deal with that challenge.

The following research question, based on the problem statement, directed the investigation: Which aspects of the field of the Zulu child-headed households may enhance moral identity in these households?

### **Primary objectives**

The academic goal of the study was to address gaps in knowledge on moral identity in the context of Zulu child-headed households from the perspectives of the adolescent heads of the households. The strategic goal of the research was to investigate the field of Zulu child-headed households from their perspective, in order to identify those aspects that can be used to enhance moral identity in these households. The aspects identified were to be used to make recommendations for the development of a model to enhance moral identity in child-headed households, thus applying the practical relevance of the research (Bak, 2004:16; Fouché & De Vos, 2011:95).

### **Secondary objectives**

The following steps were taken to achieve the research goals:

- Investigate the field of Zulu child-headed households from a Gestalt perspective by
  - ✓ exploring kinship support in Zulu child-headed households;

- ✓ exploring adolescents' perceptions on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households;
  - ✓ exploring ethnic identification of the adolescent heads of the households; and
  - ✓ exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.
- Identify aspects in the field of Zulu child-headed households that can be utilised to develop a model to enhance moral identity in these households.
  - Make recommendations about the aspects to be considered in developing a model for enhancing moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.

## **2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In identifying the aspects of the field to be utilised in developing the model, the characteristics of the field itself are significant. The various aspects that emerged in the field as being relevant to developing a model from the context created by the perceptions of the participants are discussed next. These were presented in four articles.

### **ARTICLE 1: Kinship support as perceived by adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households**

The aim of this study was to investigate kinship support in Zulu child-headed households from the perspective of the adolescent head in order to gain contextual insight into the development of their moral identity. Their contexts indicated a need of someone to act in the place of a parent in caring for their siblings, and that they were also in need of support themselves. Despite willingness to provide kinship support, and an ability to recognise what their responsibilities are, the adolescent heads experienced that they did not have the physical and emotional means to provide adequate support.

Most of the participants had at least two helpers or supporters, although assistance was not provided consistently, leaving gaps in the continuous adult guidance needed for facilitating moral identity. Some participants indicated ambivalence towards the involvement of kin, which added to their hesitation to ask for assistance, and which made them lose out on potential support.

Consistent support is mostly provided at a non-personal level in the form of grants and educational aid. Institutions, such as schools and churches, that can generally be expected to provide a moral compass, do not feature adequately in child-headed

households, especially at personal level. Advice is most frequently received from family members, and less from friends. Despite the fact that all participants attend school, teachers do not lend physical aid, nor are they viewed as a source of advice and support.

Whereas some physical support from kin to the child-headed households is provided, the need for emotional support appears not to be met adequately through kinship sources. The adolescent heads admitted that they themselves did not have adequate knowledge to provide such support to their siblings. They expressed the need for guidance, not only in terms of the needs of their siblings, but also in terms of advice to address their own emotional needs.

Results of this study, therefore, correlate with other studies that indicate that kinship support is fragmented and does not substantiate the notion of “no such thing as an orphan in Africa”. Consequently, the inadequate kinship support experienced poses a risk in that the necessary adult guidance to encourage and facilitate the development of moral identity in this vulnerable population is lacking.

## **ARTICLE 2: Perceptions of adolescents on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households**

Perceptions of adolescent heads in Zulu child-headed households about helping their siblings become ‘good people’, were studied. These adolescents indicated that valuable advice on how to motivate their siblings to become good people was available from some source, but that they needed advisors to be more physically present to equip them with practical application skills.

Persons who give/gave advice may not necessarily be available anymore (deceased parent) but the advice was still regarded as valuable. This is in line with the perception of traditional Zulu kinship support that includes advice from people who were previously part of their lives, known as ancestors, and corresponds with the Gestalt theoretical paradigm according to which aspects of the field are viewed as not constrained by time.

The participants perceive that the way to become a ‘good person’, that is having moral identity, pertains to four elements. Firstly, the element of *provision* includes the basic requirements of having food and shelter, and living in hygienic conditions. Secondly, *protection* demands that certain behaviours, such as abuse and neglect, should be avoided, but also that certain behaviours, such as maintaining family ties, should be upheld. Thirdly, motivation to *pursue* educational requirements in becoming a good

person is necessary. In the fourth place, *persons* who can serve as advisors are indispensable elements of the process of facilitating the development of a good person.

The links between moral identity and social worlds became apparent when the types of advice the adolescents received were analysed. Even though normative values change in society, participants displayed the cognitive ability to distinguish between right and wrong, beneficial and harmful, not only to themselves, but also to their communities. Despite not being able to provide the conditions necessary for facilitating moral identity in their siblings, and being themselves in need of assistance, they yet appeared to have a good idea of what they were aiming at.

The recognition of the advice that was perceived as the most helpful to facilitate moral identity in their siblings mediates the formation of internal conclusions and assists in facilitating moral identity within the participants themselves.

### **ARTICLE 3: Ethnic identification as contributor to the development of moral identity in child-headed households**

The aim of this study was to explore whether and in what way ethnic membership is one of the core constructs in moral identity development of adolescents in Zulu child-headed households, as ethnic identity in the Zulu culture is strongly integrated with a moral identity.

The majority of participants described their households as being Zulu. Most participants phrased their perceptions of a traditional Zulu in concrete, physical and literal terms, indicating that it is not an identity they have explored well. It was found that ancestor worship and paying lobola were the only two traditions still being practised by more than half of the participants. This finding supports the views of Ejizu (n.d) and others that traditional religion no longer enjoys exclusive dominance and control over the life of the vast majority of the population. Being in a subculture of poverty, paying lobola is most probably out of reach of the male participants, making it most likely a wish, rather than a practised tradition. However, it does suggest a measure of respect for the tradition and an element of an inferred code of conduct that emerged, which indicated that many of the participants displayed a certain degree of a social perspective of ethnicity. A contextual definition of *ubuntu* emerged as *the selfless, respectful giving or attempts to give to the wider community, from what you have and who you are as a person, even if it is inadequate, as well as respecting the inadequate efforts of another.*

Less than half the participants had a stronger identification with Afrocentric values. When taking into account the fact that the Eurocentric statements used in the item are viewed as being immoral from an *ubuntu* perspective (Metz, 2007), it appears that the majority of the participants would be viewed as choosing immoral values as their personal values, if viewed from the Afrocentric perspective. Most of the participants, however, regarded themselves as good people, indicating that they did not view their choices as immoral, thus identifying themselves more with the Eurocentric perspective.

The core constructs of the collective identity of the participants could not be identified as being predominantly traditionally Zulu, Afrocentric or even Eurocentric. Consequently, as Turiel (2007) suggested, their core identity is possibly embedded in other constructs. The context of poverty and fragmented kinship support in the field of Zulu child-headed households may provide core constructs in their identity rather than encouraging them to identify themselves with the Zulu culture.

#### **ARTICLE 4: Exploring moral identity in Zulu child-headed households**

The aim of the article was to examine how moral identity featured in the field of the adolescents in Zulu child-headed households.

Based on nine variables that represented an overlap between the Afrocentric (*ubuntu*) and Eurocentric characteristics of moral identity, a smaller sample size emerged where two clusters formed. The characteristics of the two clusters showed them either to be closer to forming a moral identity or further from forming a moral identity.

Two general themes emerged as being stronger in the CMI (Closer to Moral Identity) group than in the FMI (Further from Moral Identity) group. The first theme reflected a stronger sense of group belonging, social contribution and cooperation in the CMI cluster than in the FMI cluster, and a willingness to sacrifice individual preferences for the sake of the greater social well-being. The second theme in the CMI cluster reflected a positive sense of self which is characterised by confidence, joyfulness and vitality, evidence of a conscience and the ability to feel compassion/empathy. The two themes of the cluster, therefore, constitute a move towards the definition of a moral identity for the CMI cluster.

No associations were identified between the two clusters and gender, suggesting that neither gender could be viewed as closer to or further from moral identity compared with the other gender, which does not support the view that male gender stereotyping predominates in the Zulu context. Boys in this study fulfil roles traditionally allocated to

females in the Zulu culture. Despite the challenges they face in terms of knowledge about the other gender, they show a willingness to fulfil the female, traditionally caring role.

Cluster associations between the field aspects of ethnicity and age yield results similar to those of other studies that indicate association between these field aspects and moral identity development. Moral identity development, however, seems to be delayed in the older participants, which creates an opportunity for constructive intervention.

Participants who were closer to moral identity related more to the Afrocentric perspective of ubuntu. They also practised more Zulu traditions than did participants of the FMI cluster. Moreover, the CMI cluster had more helpers than the FMI cluster. The CMI cluster thus appears still to function closer to the Afrocentric way of living, where more support was provided and resulted in a more pro-social inclination. From the findings that kinship support in this population is fragmented and that support is often on an 'only given when asked for' basis, the importance of the number of helpers was highlighted by the results showing that more helpers are associated with positive moral identity development.

The study unexpectedly revealed a lag in school grade associated with the clusters: More participants in the closer to moral identity cluster (CMI) were lagging more than one year compared to the other cluster. The CMI cluster, which indicated a more caring inclination, had more participants that were more than one year behind in their education than the FMI-cluster. It is cautiously suggested that this inclination may be ascribed to a greater commitment towards the welfare of their family than to their own educational needs.

In this study, it is suggested that academic under-achievement should not be linked to identity diffusion, but rather to the psycho-social factors to which the participants are subjected. In addition to that, the cognitive ability referred to for exercising moral judgement should not be confused with the intellectual skills associated with levels of formal school education, as the ability to read, write and intellectualise neither guarantees nor excludes moral identity.

## **2.1 Overall conclusion**

In identifying the aspects of the field to be utilised in developing the model, the characteristics of the field of the child-headed households themselves are significant. Acknowledging the characteristic that a field is a systematic web of relationships, this study showed that the boundary of the field of the participants does not only include the other members of the Zulu child-headed households, but also the mediation within other aspects of the wider community. A specific aspect that was highlighted was that the

number of helpers was more important than the source of helpers. In terms of the background literature study this aspect corresponds with the African proverb that “it takes a whole village to raise a child”. The fragmented nature of the kinship support provided to the participants, however, created awareness of the lack of sufficient numbers of helpers and thus accentuated the sense of need for advisors. Linked to fragmented and inconsistent kinship support, the web of relationships is linked to the lack of knowledge on how to access support, for example obtaining food parcels or applying for a foster grant instead of for a child grant. This lack of knowledge, in turn, affects choices of self-regulation and adjustment, such as decisions on how to best provide for their siblings, thus affecting their sense of self.

The interconnected reciprocal effect of the field deserved attention. When the adolescent heads invest in developing siblings’ moral identity they themselves are also influenced. The participants related how they have changed since they started taking care of their siblings – their free time and friendships are affected together with their sense of responsibility. On the one hand, they rise to the occasion to provide for their siblings in terms of trying to provide food and homework assistance, but, on the other hand, they are also confronted with a sense of powerlessness when they do not succeed in their efforts. While some related that they did have friends, friendships mostly came second to the responsibilities of being the head of the household.

The Gestalt figuration of their moral sense continuously emerged, transformed and receded in relation to how it is socially mediated. Looking at the examples given by elders in the community created awareness of what moral values they believed they wanted to follow or reject. Recalling the advice given by parents or other moral exemplars displayed not only the web of relationships, but also the effect of the field over space and time. This served to give direction, meaning and hope in their lives. Awareness of the desired moral values was also influenced by the boundary interaction between Afrocentric and Eurocentric perspectives, which gave an indication of how the cultural and moral identity in this population was mediated as opposed to traditional views. The various aspects that emerged in the field as being relevant to develop a model from the context created by the perceptions of the participants will be discussed next.

## **2.2 Identifying relevant aspects regarding moral identity development in this population**

From the investigation, the following aspects were identified as useful to make recommendations for the development of a model:

1. The adolescent heads have the cognitive ability to understand right and wrong, and what is harmful and beneficial towards themselves and the community. They also have an idea of what they are aiming at in order to acquire a moral identity. This is a positive factor for the development of a moral identity.
2. The adolescent heads recognise that they have a dual role. On the one hand, they realise that they have to provide the various levels of care, but, on the other hand it is clear that they are still in a dependent role and in need of care themselves. Support to fulfil their emotional, educational and physical needs is required. The adolescent heads also need advice about parenting practices, especially regarding gender role guidance and ways to provide for physical needs. The participants are willing to take up their role as caregivers and, to a certain extent, understand what is required of them in terms of caregiving. Yet, they still need assistance in terms of practical application skills. They are clearly in need of the physical presence of an advisor. Being able to identify what it is that is needed and being willing to fulfil parenting roles are positive factors for the development of a moral identity.
3. Although most of the adolescent heads have access to physical support, it is only provided when asked for, and then mostly by family members. Some adolescents feel ambivalent about asking for support. They then refrain from asking, and in so doing lose out on the support. Schools and churches do not feature adequately as moral compass at a personal emotional level, but they do play a significant role at a physical level. Food scheme programmes provide support at schools and seem to make a difference to school attendance, but school holidays still pose a threat regarding having enough to eat. Nutrition plays an important role in biological maturation, which supports moral identity development. Support is therefore fragmented and this fact poses a risk for moral identity development.
4. All adolescent heads attend school and regard education as important. Their perception of education provides a sense of hope that things can be better. These aspects are positive factors for moral identity development. Although academic performance does not appear to be linked to the development of a cognitive ability to develop a moral identity, being in an academic environment contributes to moral identity development.
5. The adolescent heads that displayed characteristics of being closer to forming a moral identity had more members that lagged more than one year in their school

performance. This aspect is an unexpected result that needs further investigation. However, this is in line with the group characteristic of having a willingness to sacrifice individual preference for the sake of the greater well-being of their households rather than their own. It also indicates that poor academic performance does not undermine moral identity development.

6. Ethnic identity is not a core construct in moral identity development in this population. Participants lean towards identifying with the Eurocentric perspective, although some elements of the Afrocentric perspective are still important to them. From a pure Afrocentric perspective the participants may be regarded as immoral, which may cause intergenerational conflict. However, participants who displayed characteristics of being closer to forming a moral identity also tended to display more of the Afrocentric characteristics in their daily lives than did the other participants. Lack of ethnic identity is a risk factor for moral identity development.
7. Moral identity development appears to be delayed in older adolescent heads. This aspect provides the opportunity for interventions that may facilitate moral identity development.
8. Adolescent heads do not fulfil traditional gender role stereotypes. Boys displayed gender role functioning that is stereotypically female.
9. Moral aspects that overlap in both Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives were more prevalent, indicating that participants were closer to forming a moral identity. These aspects were
  - a strong sense of belonging to a group, with the characteristic of having a willingness to sacrifice individual preference for the sake of the greater well-being; and
  - b. a positive sense of self with personal characteristics of confidence, joyfulness, vitality, conscience and empathy/compassion.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS ON WHICH ASPECTS TO USE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL TO ENHANCE MORAL IDENTITY IN CHILD-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS**

Recognising the willingness and efforts of the adolescents in child-headed households as primary caretakers, the following three aspects are recommended as central themes for the development of a model to enhance their moral identity development:

#### *Use the school environment*

A central aspect that emerged as useful for developing the model was the aspect of the school as an institution. Whereas other studies focused on challenges the members of child-headed households face in attending school, leading to school drop-out (Mogatlane *et al.*, 2010, Maqoqo & Dreyer, 2007, SAIRR, 2009, Tsegaya, 2008), the findings of this study differed. It pointed out the importance of the school as a place that provided a sense of identity and belonging; of having a place to go. It was clear, from the findings, that various services could be implemented from there.

Various studies have already proved what effect the absence of parents or effective caregivers has on the moral identity development of children in Zulu child-headed households. In the absence of parents, being in school provided a stabilising influence on the participants of this study.

Bearing in mind what the characteristics of developing a moral identity are, using the school environment and premises for the following should be considered:

- Providing a context for group-belonging, leading to a positive sense of self.
- Creating a sense of hope that it is possible to become successful providers.
- Assisting by providing food schemes for basic needs and biological maturation needed for higher cognitive functioning. Although not explicitly mentioned by the participants, part of the parenting skills that they require is knowledge of the importance of nutrition, as opposed to just providing food.
- Providing a place where emotional support and parenting guidance can be given. Providing this kind of assistance in the school setting as part of the Life Orientation curriculum could be considered, as it will benefit not only the participant, but also all future parents. In addition, it could diminish the sense of isolation that some experience, and provide much needed peer group support.

- Being exposed to pro-social opportunities, which enhance moral identity development.

*Consider how various aspects of identity feature in this population*

The ethnic identity perception of what a Zulu is has been socially mediated to include more Eurocentric aspects. Traditional gender-role identity has also been mediated through their circumstances, thus allowing for greater freedom in planning interventions.

- In order to address possible intergenerational conflict, it is recommended that the two themes in the Eurocentric and Afrocentric overlapping moral variables identified in this study should be pursued in the development of the model. The model should thus focus on interventions that will promote a stronger sense of belonging to a group, social contribution and cooperation, and a willingness to sacrifice individual preferences for the sake of the greater social well-being. The model should also pursue interventions aimed at promoting confidence, joyfulness and vitality, conscience and the ability to feel compassion/empathy. This can bring about that positive sense of self that is essential for moral identity development.
- It is further recommended that the apparent delay in moral identity development should be constructively used to promote interventions that may foster an achieved moral identity. Interventions should therefore also focus on other young adults.

*Promote access to helpers*

The study showed that more positive outcomes are associated with numbers of helpers than the source of help. In this regard the model should focus on the following:

- Promoting proactive and consistent provision of assistance.
- Ensuring that child-headed households have access to at least two helpers who are available consistently.
- Helpers should provide assistance at a physical level, such as helping with household chores to allow participants greater opportunity for working at their own academic achievements in order to sustain their hope of a better future.
- Helpers should be able to give advice about effective parenting practices, including gender guidance, in addition to providing emotional support.

Based on the experience and perceptions of the participants, it is clear that teachers are not equipped to provide the assistance the participants identified as a need.. This obviously calls for an interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to be included in the development of a model. The following table presents some indication of the recommended interventions and roleplayers that should be included in the model:

**TABLE 1** Identified roleplayers in developing a model to enhance moral identity in child-headed households

ASPECT		POSSIBLE ROLEPLAYERS	
Physical needs	Food	Food schemes Food parcels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Social Development</li> <li>NGO/FBO</li> </ul>
	Shelter	Home Hostel Day care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Housing</li> <li>Department of Basic Education</li> <li>Department of Social Development</li> </ul>
	Health	School clinic	School nurse provided by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Health/</li> <li>Social Responsibility Plan of Private Health Sector</li> </ul>
Needs towards knowledge	Kinds of support available	Housing support Types of grants and criteria for grants Financial aid to study Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Housing</li> <li>Department of Social Development</li> <li>Department of Higher Education</li> <li>Department of Justice/ Human Rights Council</li> </ul>
	How to access support	Where to go What documents are needed How to fill in the documents Waiting periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Housing</li> <li>Department of Social Development</li> <li>Department of Higher Education</li> <li>Department of Justice/Human Rights Council</li> <li>Department of Home Affairs</li> </ul>
	Parenting skills	Parenting course Support group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health nurse</li> </ul>
Developmental needs	Academic needs	Creating time to attend to academics by providing supervision for siblings Address developmental delays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Basic Education</li> <li>Department of Social Development</li> <li>Occupational therapist</li> </ul>
	Career needs	Career development/ opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Department of Higher Education</li> </ul>
	Emotional needs	Support groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental Health nurse</li> </ul>

The skills of mental health practitioners such as psychiatric nurses are deemed especially appropriate for inclusion in the model, as they are trained not only to address many of the physical health needs of child-headed households, but also to provide the necessary emotional support. They also know when to refer patients to other members of the multi-disciplinary team, such as social workers or occupational therapists.

As the school environment seemed to provide the greatest measure of stability, despite its shortcomings, it is recommended that the model be driven from the school premises and that higher education institutions should be encouraged to consider using schools as placement options for the currently compulsory community service of health practitioners such as occupational therapists.

#### **4. CONTRIBUTION AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study contributed to the field of knowledge of moral identity as dealt with from the perspective of Zulu adolescents living in child-headed households. The aspects recommended for inclusion in a model to enhance their moral identity reflect their lived experience and are thus useful as far as representativeness is concerned.

The questionnaire is the first to explore moral identity development in terms of the Gestalt of the field of Zulu child-headed households. This may serve as a baseline for further development of instruments to measure additional aspects of moral identity development in this population.

The results of the study confirm the characteristics of the field as described in the Gestalt theoretical paradigm. The interconnectedness of the different field aspects, the reciprocal effect of various elements in the field, as well as the continuation of factors over time are field characteristics that were especially relevant to the study in question. This study also supported social mediation theory as displayed in the move towards the Eurocentric perspective and gender-role stereotype mediation. Characteristics of identity in younger participants corresponded with the identity development theory, but seemed to follow a different or delayed development in the older participants in terms of their moral identity.

The researcher was surprised by the eagerness of the participants to contribute to the study, and deeply moved by the courage participants showed in spite of the hardships they faced. Although she knew from the literature review that schooling was a challenge for members of child-headed households, in real life the situation was worse than she anticipated. She also did not anticipate that the group that had more attributes of forming a moral identity would be the group where more members lagged in their school work.

She was pleasantly surprised by the fact that all the participants still attended school and experienced a sincere appreciation for the implementation of school feeding schemes.

The study achieved its objectives as the field of the Zulu child-headed households was explored, aspects were identified that could enhance moral identity and the recommendations were made about what could be used in the development of a model.

The study may have had the following limitations:

The greatest challenge this study posed was in relation to a lack of standardised instruments that measure moral identity or that are standardised for the Zulu population only. If such instruments were available, they could increase reliability in the measuring instrument. The exploratory nature of the questionnaire may, however, provide perspectives of this study that could contribute to initialising such instruments.

There were no scaled questions in the original questionnaire and participants only had to tick the option relevant to their circumstances. This was done, because Germann (2005) indicated in his study on child-headed households in Zimbabwe that the adolescents in his study found it difficult to deal with a Likert scale response.

The advice of an expert statistical consultant, namely that closed questions with yes/no options be introduced, was followed. In most cases, however, the respondents ticked the responses relevant to themselves. As a result, it seemed as if a number of values were missing. Where the field assistant was alert, it was clarified whether a missing value represented a 'no' response or no response. Owing to anonymity this could not always be followed up, which led to the exclusion of some of the participants when the cluster analysis was done.

## **5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The following recommendations for further research resulting from the research process of this study are identified:

- Developing standardised instruments for exploration of the field of the Zulu adolescent population should be a priority. Such instruments, that focus on use in Zulu cultures specifically, will therefore be a recommendation, as they could add tremendous value to reliability in understanding phenomena such as ethnic and moral identity. The questionnaire used in this research, could serve as a platform in the development of such instruments.

- The initial translation of the questionnaire was done by a court interpreter in order to capture the local dialect. It was subsequently referred to a qualified translator to verify the translation. This proved to be essential, as various mistakes were detected and corrected. A third translator was then contracted to ensure that the essence of the questions were correctly interpreted. A field note was made of concerns of the recipients about the quality of the services of the interpreters for the justice system, when the first person acted as the translator. This could be a topic for research, even though it falls outside the scope of the research field under discussion.
- In light of the finding that a larger percentage of the cluster that was closer to moral identity (CMI) was more than one year behind in their schooling compared to the further from moral identity cluster (FMI), further research on this aspect is recommended. Such research may provide a new perspective on moral identity development in child-headed households and create a deeper understanding of their context.

Some situations that emerged as the research process continued, which roused the researcher's interest. They have either not been explored sufficiently, or fell outside the scope of the relevant study. These situations are the following:

- It was indicated that in one of the schools the principal eventually asked a student in Grade 9 to try and find a job, when the student's child enrolled for Grade 1. In addition, it would appear that in some schools some of the learners were older than some of the teachers. This may be an area of investigation in further research.
- Food scheme investigation was not part of the scope of this study, but within the context of the influence of biological maturation on the development of moral identity, the quality, consistency and nutritional value of these schemes may be a topic for further research.
- The *ubuntu* principle of acquiring and distributing wealth was chosen by many of the participants. As the participants are from a subculture of poverty the answer may have been influenced by that variable. Future research could therefore possibly explore identification with the Afrocentric perspective when comparing poverty-affected Zulu adolescents and wealthy Zulu adolescents. A study of the relationship between poverty/affluence and empathy may also contribute to the field of moral identity development.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Moral identity development is a multi-faceted area of human development that is socially mediated in different contexts. This study provided a way to investigate the context of the field of Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo municipal area from the unique perspectives of the adolescent heads of the households. The investigation was conducted on the basis of the Gestalt paradigm.

The primary goal of the study was achieved by presenting information on moral identity from the perspectives and contexts of Zulu child-headed households. The aspects that can be used to enhance moral identity in these households were identified. This was done by studying the field of Zulu child-headed households, which included kinship support, exploring adolescents' perceptions on facilitating moral identity in Zulu child-headed households, ethnic identification and moral identity in Zulu child-headed households. The identified aspects were then used to make recommendations for developing a model for enhancing moral identity in Zulu child-headed households.

The original thesis statement, that adolescents in Zulu child-headed households were not empowered to adequately facilitate moral identity in their siblings, was confirmed at many levels. Fragmented kinship support, basic physical needs, lack of knowledge about parenting practices, as well as their own developmental needs contributed to the adolescents' compromised ability to enhance or develop moral identity in their siblings.

This created awareness of the aspects that can be used to develop a model to enhance moral identity in the households in question. The research question that directed the study has thus been answered. The limitations and shortcomings of the study were identified. They may serve as valuable considerations in other cross-cultural studies conducted in a rural setting.

# Section D: Addenda

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## ADDENDUM 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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18 July 2012

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

#### **Ethical clearance: Investigating moral identity in child headed households**

Student: Jacqueline Pretorius  
Student nr: 23238577

Ethical clearance was approved by the Ethics Committees of Hugenote College and UNISA before commencement of the study.

After the closure of the Hugenote College, continuation of the study was approved at the North West University under the ethical number NWU-00060-08-A1.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Kruger', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Prof. A. Kruger  
Director of Research

## ADDENDUM 2: CERTIFICATE BY LANGUAGE EDITOR

**AARTIA JOUBERT**

Accredited Member of the South African Translators' Institute (No. 1000088)

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that I have edited the thesis by Jacqueline Pretorius,  
*Investigating moral identity in child-headed households.*

**AARTIA JOUBERT**

BA, HDE

Accredited Member: Afrikaans-English; English-Afrikaans  
SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSLATORS' INSTITUTE

9 November 2012



Members of the South African Translators' Institute are subject to a code of ethics. If you have been the recipient of unethical treatment, please contact the Institute [[www.translators.org.za](http://www.translators.org.za)].

**SATI – Bridging Language Barriers**

## **ADDENDUM 3: CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH)**

### **Zulu child-headed households in the Mkhondo area**

It sometimes happens that a child that is still at school, or that is younger than 18 years, takes over the responsibility of a parent by caring for brothers and sisters. This may be because:

- The parents died
- The parents are sick
- The caretaker is too old
- The parents are in jail
- The parents are working or staying in another place
- The parents are always drunk

If you are living in such a household your help is needed.

**Purpose of the study:** You are being asked to participate in a research study. We are trying to find a way to help adolescents in Zulu child-headed households to help their brothers and sisters to become good people. This research is being done by Jacqueline Pretorius as part of her doctoral studies at the North West University.

**Procedures:** If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take approximately 45 minutes. You may also be asked to participate in a conversation based on the results of the questionnaire. This will be in a separate session on another day and may last for approximately two hours.

**Discomforts and risks:** It may feel uncomfortable to answer some of the questions in the questionnaire, but there are no known risks in participating in the research. You have the right however, not to answer questions that make you feel uncomfortable. You also have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

**Confidentiality:** If you decide to participate, your personal information will be kept confidential. This means that your name will not appear on the questionnaire, but are kept

separately where only the researcher has access to it. Your view may appear in the report that the researcher writes, but your name will not be linked to it. This is also the case if you participate in the discussion. The discussion will be audio or video taped, but your name will not be used.

**Interpreter:** An interpreter may be used so that you are ensured that you understand all the questions and can answer in your own language.

**Compensation and benefits:** You will not be paid or compensated for your participation. Your answers may however contribute to improve the lives of young people with similar experiences.

**Questions:** You have the right to ask the researcher questions if you have any problem with the research.

**Informed consent:** I have been read or read the entire form in my own language. All of my questions have been answered. I agree to participate in the study.

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

## ADDENDUM 4: QUESTIONNAIRE

Nr: \_\_\_\_\_

This is not a test. It is a questionnaire to which you have all the answers. Please answer all the questions truthfully. You will not get in any trouble for any of your answers. Your name does not appear on the questionnaire, so no-one will know that these are your answers.

Akusona isivivinyo lesi. Ngumbuzo nqala lapho okumele ube nezi mpendulo zonke. Sicela uphendule yonke imibuzo ngeqiniso. Angeke ungene enkingeni noma ngaziphi izimpendulo zakho. Igama lakho angeke lidalulwe ku mbuzo nqala, ngakho ke akekho ozokwazi ukuthi lezi yizimpendulo zakho.

Are you the person who has the responsibility of being in charge of your household?

Ingabe ungumuntu onomsebenzi wokondla abantu ohlala nabo?

Yes/yebo	1
No/cha	0

If you answered no, you don't have to fill out the rest of the questionnaire.

Uma impendulo yakho ingu/kuwu cha, asisekho isidingo sokuphendula imibuzo esele.

Male	1
Female	2

1. How old are you?/ Uneminyaka emingaki?

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2. What is the highest grade that you passed at school?

Ugcine kuliphi ibanga esikoleni?

Gr1	1
Gr 2	2
Gr 3	3
Gr 4	4
Gr5	5
Gr6	6
Gr7	7
Gr8	8
Gr9	9
Gr10	10
Gr11	11

3. Do you have to raise children younger than you that are living with you?

Ingabe kumele ukhulise abantwana abancane ohlala nabo?

Yes	1
No	2

If you answered no, you don't have to fill out the rest of the questionnaire.

Uma impendulo yakho kuwu cha, asisekho isidingo sokuphendula imibuzo esele.

4. Why are you the head of your household? You may mark more than one option if you need to.

Kungani kube nguwe obheke ikhaya? Ungamaka ngaphezu kokukodwa uma kufanele.

		Yes/yebo	No/cha
4.1	The parents died/ Abazali abasekho emhlabeni	1	0
4.2	The parents are too sick to work/ Abazali abasebenzi bagula kakhulu	1	0
4.3	The caretaker is too old/ Onakekela ikhaya usemdala kakhulu	1	0
4.4	The parents are in jail/ Abazali basejele	1	0
4.5	The parents are working or staying in another place/ Abazali bayasebenza noma bahlala kwenye indawo	1	0
4.6	The parents are always drunk/ Abazali bahleze bephuze kakhulu utshwala	1	0
4.7	The parents left and never came back/ Abazali bahamba abaphindanga babuya	1	0
4.8	Other : Please give the reason:/ Okunye : nikeza incazelo	1	0

5. What do you think are your responsibilities as head of your household? You may mark as many options as you see fit.

Ucabanga ukuthi ikuphi okuwumsebenzi wakho njengo muntu obheke ikhaya? Ungamaka ngaphezu kokukodwa uma kufanele.

		yes	No
5.1	Getting money to buy what they need/ Ukuthola imali ukuze ubathengele konke abakudingayo	1	2
5.2	Cooking/ Ukupheka	1	2
5.3	Cleaning/ Ukuhlanza indlu	1	2
5.4	Making sure they attend school/ Ukuqinisekisa ukuthi bayaya esikoleni	1	2
5.5	Helping them with homework/ Ukubasiza emsebenzini wabo wesikole	1	2
5.6	Giving them food/ Ukubanikeza ukudla	1	2
5.7	Helping them with emotional problems/ukubasiza uma bekhathazekile emphefumulweni /ukubasiza uma benezi nkinga emphefumulweni	1	2
5.8	Taking care of them if they are sick/ Ukubanakekela uma begula	1	2
5.9	Teach them what is right and wrong/ Ukubafundisa phakathi kokulungile nokungalungile	1	2
5.10	Punish them if they do wrong things/ Ukubajezisa uma benze okungalungile	1	2
5.11	Bathing them/ Ukubageza noma ukuhlamba imizimba yabo	1	2
5.12	Giving them medicine/ Ukubaphuzisa imithi yabo yakwadokotela	1	2
5.13	Taking them to the clinic when they need medical help/ Ukubahambisa emtholampilo uma bedinga usizo lweze mpilo	1	2
5.14	Taking them to church/ Ukubahambisa esontweni	1	2

5.15	Comforting them if they are sad/ Ukubaduduza uma bekhathazekile	1	2
5.16	Other: Please list them/ Okunye : Kuchaze	1	2

6. How well do you believe you are fulfilling these responsibilities? Mark only one.

Yingabe uyayifeza kahle lemisebenzi? Maka okukodwa vo.

Not well/ Hhayi kahle	1
Average/ Uphakathi nendawo	2
Very well/ Kahle kakhulu	3

7. Who is helping you with these responsibilities? You may mark everyone who is helping you.

Ngubani okusizayo ukwenza lezinto ozibalile. Ungamaka wonke umuntu okusizayo

		Yes	No
7.1	Legal guardian/ Yilowo onelungelo lokuhlala nawe	1	2
7.2	Child care worker/ Yilowo ogada umntwana	1	2
7.3	Social worker/ Yilowo obhekelele inhlalo yabantu /unonhlalohle	1	2
7.4	Brothers/ Abafowenu	1	2
7.5	Sisters/ Odadewenu	1	2
7.6	Friend/ Umngani	1	2
7.7	Neighbor/ Umakhelwane	1	2
7.8	Uncle/ Umalume	1	2

7.9	Aunt/ U Anti	1	2
7.10	Other: Please list/ Abanye : Babale	1	2

8. What do you have to do to get money and food for your household? You may as many options as you see fit. You will not get anyone in trouble for your answers.

Yikuphi okwenzayo ukuze uthole imali kanye nokudla kwekhaya? Ungamaka konke okuyiqiso ngendlela ofisa ngayo. Akekho ozomngenisa enkingeni ngezimpendulo zakho.

		Yes	No
8.1	Full time Employment with someone else/ Ukhona omsebenzelayo ngokugcwele	1	2
8.2.1	Part time employment: with someone else/ Ukhona omsebenzelayo isikhathi esincane	1	2
8.2.2	Please state how many hours per week:/ Nikeza amahora owasebenzayo ngeviki :		
8.3	Selling alcohol/ Uthengisa utshwala	1	2
8.4	Selling cigarettes/ Uthengisa ugwayi	1	2
8.5	Selling drugs/ Uthengisa izidakamizwa	1	2
8.6	Selling sex/ Uthengisa ngomzimba	1	2
8.7	Stealing/ Uyantshontsha	1	2
8.8	Selling other things/ Kukhona okunye okudayisayo	1	2
8.9	Begging/ Uphila ngokucela	1	2

8.10	Own business/ Uphethe ibhizinisi/Uyazisebenza	1	2
8.11	Other: Please specify/ Okunye : Kuchaze	1	2

9. What other sources of income do you have? You may mark more than one option.

Yiyiphi enye indlela othola ngayo imali? Ungamaka ngaphezu kokukodwa

		yes	no
9.1	Inheritance/ Ifa/imali yomuntu owashona	1	2
9.2	Donations by other people/ Iminikelo evela kwabanye abantu/Kukhona abakupha imali	1	2
9.3	Parent sends money/ Imali oyithunyelelwa abazali	1	2
9.4	Foster grant/ Imali yezingane ozinakekelayo	1	2
9.5	Child grant/ Imali yengane	1	2
9.6	Disability grant/ Imali yokukhubazeka	1	2
9.7	Old age pension (Government)/ Impesheli yokuguga (evela kuhulumeni)	1	2
9.8	Old age pension (Employer)/ Impesheli yokuguga (evela kumqashi)	1	2
9.9	Unemployment benefit/ Imali yokungasebenzi ( UIF)	1	2
9.10	Other: Please specify/ Okunye :kuchaze	1	2

10. In the last week, did you have enough food in the house so that everyone in the house could eat every day?

Ngeviki eliphelile, ingabe beninakho ukudla okwanele ukuthi nidle nsukuzonke nonke ekhaya?

Yes/yebo	1
No/cha	0

11. Who gives you advice on how to raise the younger children in your home?

Ngubani okubonisayo ekukhuliseni abantwana abancane ekhaya?

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12. What is the best advice someone gave you about how to raise your brothers and sisters?

Yisiphi iseluleko esihle owake wasinikezwa ngomunye umuntu maqondana nokukhulisa osisi bakho nabafowenu?

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13. What support do you need to follow the advice you were given?

Yiluphi usizo oludingayo ukuze ulandele iseluleko owanikezwa sona?

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14. What else do you need to be advised on, so that you can help the children in your home to become good people?

Yikuphi okunye odinga ukuboniswa kukho, ukuze ukhulise laba bantwana ohlala nabo ekhaya ukuze babe nekusasa eliqhakazile?

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15. What examples do you see from the behaviours of the elders in the community that you would want to follow on how to raise the children in your home?

Yiziphi izibonelo ozibonayo ekuziphatheni kwabadala emphakathini wangakini ongathanda ukuthi uzenze noma uzilandele ekukhuliseni izingane zakini?

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16. What examples do you see from the behaviours of the elders in your community that you do not want to follow on how to raise your brothers and sisters?

Yiziphi izibonelo ozibonayo ekuziphatheni kwabadala emphakathini wangakini ongeke uthande ukuthi uzenze noma uzilandele ekukhuliseni izingane zakini?

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17. What is the kindest thing anybody did for you?

Yikuphi okuhle owake wakwenzelwa ngomunye umuntu?

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17.1 Why was it so special for you? Kungani kwakubalulekile kuwe?

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17.2 How did you show your appreciation? Wakhombisa kanjani ukukuthokozela lokho?

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18. What is the kindest thing you ever did for someone?

Yikuphi okuhle owake wakwenzela omunye umuntu?

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18.1 Why did you do it?

Kungani wakhetha ukukwenza lokhu?

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19. Who is the most important person in your life

Ngubani obaluleke kakhulu empilweni yakho?

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19.1 Why is the person so important?

Kungani lo muntu ebaluleke kakhulu empilweni yakho?

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20. Please mark the options that describe your life. You may mark as many as you see fit.

Maka indawo echaza ngempilo yakho. Ungamaka konke lapho othanda ukumaka khona

	Description	Yes	No
20.1	I attend school/ Ngifunda isikole	1	0
20.2	I attend study groups/ Ngiyatadisha nabanye abantwana	1	0
20.3	I am healthy/ Ngingumqemane empilweni	1	0
20.4	I do things for others without expecting money/ Ngenzela abantu izinto ngale kokulindela inkokhelo	1	0

20.5	All the people staying in my house are healthy/ Bonke abantu engihlala nabo ekhaya bayaphila	1	0
20.6	I get along well with the people staying in my house/ Ngizwana kakhulu nabo bonke abantu engihlala nabo ekhaya	1	0
20.7	I get along well with family members not staying in my house/ Ngizwana kakhulu namalunga omndeni angahlali ekhaya	1	0
20.8	I go to church/prayer meetings at least twice a month/ Ngiyaya esontweni nase mikhulekweni okungenani kabili ngenyanga	1	0
20.9	I make sure that my brothers and sisters go to church/prayer meetings/ Ngiyaqinisekisa ukuthi obhuti bami kanye nosisi bami nabo bayaya esontweni nase mikhulekweni	1	0
20.10	At least one of us in the household own a cell phone / Okungenani ukhona oyedwa ekhaya ono makhalekhukwini/iselula	1	0
20.11	We have a television in the house/ Sinawo umabona kude ekhaya	1	0
20.12	We have a DVD player in the house/ Sinawo umdlali ma DVD ekhaya	1	0
20.13	I feel safe at home/ Ngizizwa ngivikelekile/ngikhuselekile ekhaya	1	0
20.14	I feel safe in my neighborhood/ Ngizizwa ngiphephile komakhelwane bami	1	0
20.15	I feel positive about my life/ Ngizizwa nginethemba ngempilo yami	1	0
20.16	It is easy for me to ask for help/ kulula kimina ukucela usizo	1	0
20.17	The other people in my house follow my advice/ Abantu engihlala nabo ekhaya balandela umyalelo wami	1	0
20.18	I have someone that gives me advice/ Kukhona umuntu ongibonisayo/onginika izeluleko	1	0
20.19	I don't think about what other people feel/ Angikhathali ukuthi abanye abantu bazizwa kanjani	1	0

20.20	It hurts to see another person in pain./ Kubuhlungu ukubona omunye umuntu esezinhlungwini	1	0
20.21	I get very upset when I see a young child who is being treated in a mean way./ Ngiyathukuthela kabi uma ngibona ingane ihlukunyezwa	1	0
20.22	Seeing a hurt animal by the side of the road is very upsetting. / Kuyacasula ukubona isilwane esilimele eduzane komgwaqo	1	0
20.23	What I have is mine and I will not share it/ Lokhu enginakho kungo kwami futhi angeke ngiphisane ngako	1	0
20.24	I have sexual relationships/ Kukhona enginobudlelwano naye ngoko cansi	1	0
20.25	If people won't do things my way, I will force them/ Uma abantu bengeke benze izinto ngendlela yami,ngiyobaphoqelela ukuba bakwenze	1	0
20.26	I always tell the truth, even if it will get me in trouble/ Ngihleze ngikhuluma iqiniso,noma ngabe lingifaka enkingeni	1	0
20.27	I am a good person/ Ngingumuntu olungile	1	0
20.28	I feel bad if I take something without asking/ Ngiphatheka kabi uma ngithathe into ngaphandle kokuyicela	1	0
20.29	It does not bother me if I tell a lie/ Akungikhathazi uma ngikhulume amanga	1	0
20.30	There are things I have done that I feel bad about/ Kune zinto engazenza ezingiphatha kabi	1	0

21. Please mark how your household should be described. Choose only one.

Zulu/ AmaZulu	1
African / Abantu base Afikha	2
South African/ Abantu base Mzansi -Afrikha	3
Other: Please specify/ Okunye : Sicela uchaze	4

22. In your opinion, what is a traditional Zulu?

Ngokombono wakho, yini usiko lwama Zulu?

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23. What Zulu traditions does your household still practice?

Yimaphi amasiko esiZulu asalandelwa ekhaya kini?

		Yes/yebo	No/cha
23.1	Labola/ Ukulobola	1	0
23.2	Ancestor worship/ Ukukhonza amadlozi	1	0
23.3	Stick fighting/ Ukulwa ngezinduku	1	0
23.4	Witchdoctor/ Ubuthakathi	1	0
23.5	Traditional healer/ Izinyanga	1	0
23.6	Initiation school/ Ukusoka	1	0
23.7	Virginity testing/ Ukuhlolwa kwamatshitshi	1	0
23.8	Other: Please mention what they are/ Okunye: Chaza ukuthi yikuphi	1	0

24. What do you do in your free time? You may mark more than one option.

Wenza ini ngesikhathi sakho? Maka ngaphezu kokukodwa

		Yes/yebo	No/cha
24.1	I stay at home and take care of my family/ Ngihlala ekhaya nginakekele umndeni wami	1	0
24.2	I go out and leave the children at home alone/ Ngiyahamba ngishiye abantwana ekhaya	1	0
24.3	My friends come to my house/ Abangani bami beza ekhaya	1	0
24.4	I go to the shebeen/ Ngiya endaweni yokuphuzela utshwala	1	0
24.5	I go to church activities/ Ngiya ezintweni ezenziwa esontweni	1	0
24.6	I participate in a sport activity/ Ngiyazibandakanya emidlalweni	1	0
24.7	I go to study groups/ / Ngiya ukuyotadisha nabanye	1	0
24.8	Other:/ Okunye :	1	0

25. What games do you play with the younger children in your home?

Yimiphi imimdlalo oyidlala ekhaya nabantwana ohlala nabo?

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26. What is Ubuntu?

Yini uBuntu ?

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27. The next question have column A and B. For each number, choose between A or B. Choose the option that agrees with what you believe about life.

Umbuzo olandelayo une kholamu eno A no B. kuyo yonke inamba, khetha phakathi kuka A no B. Khetha ingxenye evumelana nokholelwa yikho mayelana nempilo yakho.

A		B		
27.1	<p>Killing a person is wrong because people have the right to life/</p> <p>Ukubulala umuntu akulunganga ngoba wonke umuntu unelungelo lokuphila</p>	1	<p>OR</p> <p>Noma</p> <p>Ukubulala umuntu akulunganga ngoba naye uyingxenye yomphakathi</p>	2
27.2	<p>It is wrong to take something from someone even if they won't miss it</p> <p>Akulunganga ukuthatha into komunye umuntu noma engeke aze ayikhumbule</p>	1	<p>OR</p> <p>Noma</p> <p>Kulungile ukuthatha into komunye umuntu, uma enezinto eziningi</p>	2

27.3	<p>Traditions should be discarded whenever they fail to improve people's quality of life/</p> <p>Kumele amasiko avalwe uma ehluleka ukuthuthukisa izimpilo zabantu</p>	1	OR	<p>There is often good reason to act according to tradition, even when it is inconvenient/</p> <p>Kukhona lapho kuye kudingeke khona ukuthi usebenzise amasiko noma ngabe kungadingekile</p>	2
			Noma		
27.4	<p>Make a decision when you are under pressure, even if not everybody agrees with your decision/</p> <p>Thatha isinqumo uma ucindezelekile, noma ngabe akekho ovumelana nesinqumo sakho</p>	1	OR	<p>See that everybody agree before you make a decision when you are under pressure/</p> <p>Bheka ukuthi wonke umuntu uyavuma yini ngaphambi kokuba uthathe isinqumo uma ucindezelekile</p>	2
			Noma		
27.5	<p>People deserve to be punished for what they have done wrong/</p> <p>Abantu kumele bajeziswe uma benze izinto ezingalunganga</p>	1	OR	<p>People deserve to make peace when they have done something wrong /</p> <p>Abantu kumele baxolelane uma benze izinto ezingalunganga</p>	2
			Noma		
27.6	<p>Compete with others to create wealth/</p> <p>Qophisana nabanye ukuze uzoba nomnotho</p>	1	OR	<p>People should work together to create wealth/</p> <p>Abantu kumele basebenzisane ndawonye ukuze bakhe umnotho</p>	2
			Noma		

27.7	My money is my own because I worked for it/ Imali enginayo ingeyami ngoba ngiyisebenzele	1	OR Noma	I must share my money with those in need/ Kumele ngabe imali yami kanye nalabo abaswele	2
27.8	It's up to me to get married and have children/ Kukimi ukuthi ngingashada futhi ngibe nabantwana	1	OR Noma	I have a duty to get married and have children/ Nginomsebenzi wokuthi kumele ngishade futhi ngithole abantwana	2

Thank you for your time.

Ngiyabonga ngesikhathi sakho.

## **ADDENDUM 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

1. Tell me about your experience in trying to raise your brothers and sisters to become good people.
2. What kind of help do you think you need to help your brothers and sisters become good people
3. A lot of people who answered these questionnaires said they want their brothers and sisters to respect them. What are your views on that?
4. A lot of people who have completed these questionnaires say that they need people who will teach them right from wrong. What are your views on that?
5. What kinds of things do you think you need to know to become good people?

## ADDENDUM 6: EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPTION (EXTRACTION)

Interviewer: If you think of what you need, is it money or what so that it can help you and lighten your burden? As you said that it's too much. If you think about it, what do you need?

Respondent: If we can have a good place, a safe place, because where we stay we don't have a electricity and water. If you want water you have to go to the tap. If you cook you have to buy fire wood. A house and money, so that I can give them what they need.

Interviewer: Emotionally, you don't have a problem? Do you just need money? So you mean if someone could put the money on the table for you, which would mean that your problems are over? Because you are a head of the house that's more than you should carry, you understand?

Respondent: It can change Mama, because the person they rely on is me. I'm the one who gives them everything they need.

Interviewer: So then, what are your fears.. things that you think will stop you from succeeding?

Respondent: It's just because they are girls and they could get pregnant, because as I'm here now I don't know where they are. Or whether they have gone out. But I believe that they don't, even though I'm not sure.

Interviewer: Oh! That's your fear?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: So then, what do you think we can do to help you so that you can help them to become better people?

**Respondent:** I think if they can help me with someone that is a girl like them, who can manage to motivate them, and tell them if you are a girl you have to take care of yourself like this and that. And you don't do this and that. And I think the most important thing is to get a safe home....

**Interviewer:** **Who do** you trust at home?

**Respondent:** No-one.

**Interviewer:** You go to church?

**Respondent:** I don't have time Mama; I have a lot of things to do. On Sunday when I wake up in the morning I have to do laundry and make sure that they do theirs too. If they don't do it I have to wake them up and tell them to do it. In the middle of the day I have to look at their homework, and sometimes they are still playing and I have to call them to come and do homework. I check their homework first and then come back to do my homework. Around half past 9 I have to study. Maybe tomorrow , I'm writing a test so I have to study. And then from then it's around 1, so you can't do anything from there.

**Interviewer:** So do you think you can cope with this situation? School, as you said you failed. Which grade did you fail? And did you fail once or?

**Respondent:** I failed twice.

**Interviewer:** You fail two times? So you think the coming exam you are not going to fail?

**Respondent:** Yes I do, because I'm trying my best to cope. So there is nothing I can do. What's happened to me it's happen; I'm used to it.

## **ADDENDUM 7: EXAMPLES OF FIELD NOTES**

### **Self-reflection**

I am often phoned (please call me) or at times some of the participants will show up at the office to get some advice about a personal matter. As far as possible I refer them to resources in the community, for example social services, a pastor or an elder. I cannot turn them away. They are helping me and it would be unethical to use them for my own purposes and not be there for them. In any case; the interaction of our fields also help shape the gestalt of the investigation!

I was treated with respect, and my culture was also considered. I was for offered a chair where all the other people were sitting on the traditional mats. My surprise is possibly an indication of some bias -be careful!!!

I wish I could speak better Zulu, so that I could have conducted the interviews. I neglected to guide N.... to only ask one question at a time, and did not to explain the concept of leading questions, which in the end, makes it a bigger challenge to distinguish between her and the children's views.

Political conversation was never part of the dialogue of the children, but features with the adults.

### **Observation**

Ethandakukuyanda: Nonhlanhla's house

Date: 9 May 2011

A lot of home-based carers arrived with children who they say are the heads of their households, but they are too young for my sample population. I counted 44 of these children.

It appears that the children are all very eager to participate and are so pleased with the stationary and food.

Iswepe: Community Hall

Date: 16 May 2011

I was confronted by the ANC ward councillor who arrived with screeching tyres for not arranging with him that I was having a political rally, as he was in charge of the community hall. (Wish he would take charge of the toilets too, as they are filthy). I explained the purpose of the gathering to him, which then calmed him down. He left, but still left someone behind who piled into the food intended for the children. He also asked for some of the stationary intended for the children. The children did not appear to be upset.

### **Informal conversations**

More than one elder indicated that “the new South Africa” was to blame for erosion of morality and that the education system focused on the Western ways, which made the children “too clever”. One specifically mentioned that it was Mr.Thabo Mbeki, who is long since not president any more, who was to blame.

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