

Indigenous pathways to well-being as resilience outcome in rural communities

Janna de Gouveia

March 2015

**Indigenous Pathways to Well-Being as Resilience Outcome
in Rural Communities**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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PROMOTOR
Professor Liesel Ebersöhn

31 March 2015













PRETORIA

And those who were seen dancing
were thought to be insane
by those who could not hear the music

Friedrich Nietzsche

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A special thank you to:

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---oOo---

Philip Murton LLB BSc

Editor

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CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

Indigenous Pathways to Well-Being as Resilience Outcome in Rural Communities

By

Janna de Gouveia

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

I, Philip Murton confirm that I edited the following sections of the abovementioned thesis:

- Chapters 1 to 6
- The Abstract and Acknowledgements

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- Tables of Contents, Figures, Maps.
- Lists of Acronyms.
- All Annexures.

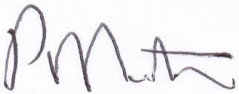
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It is specifically noted that:

3. Participants are not referred to as 'subjects'.
4. The writer uses many expressions and terms that are specific to the field and have specific meanings in that context: "unique" is just one of very many.
5. Anthropomorphism is kept to a minimum without becoming pedantic.
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9. The abstract and summary both exceed the prescribed word limits.

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DEGREE AND PROJECT

PhD

Indigenous pathways to well-being as resilience outcome in rural communities

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Janna de Gouveia

DEPARTMENT

Educational Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED

4 February 2015

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

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Prof Liesel Ebersöhn

DATE

4 February 2015

CC

Jeannie Beukes

Liesel Ebersöhn

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following condition:

1. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.

The purpose of this study was to explore indigenous pathways to well-being within rural adversity contexts of resource scarcity and high risk. Prior to conducting this study, initial, scientific, systematic evidence of indigenous pathways to well-being in high risk and high need South African contexts had not been captured and remained unknown. The Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) project aims to contribute to developing a scientific knowledge system relevant to non-Western cultures and contexts, and supplement existing well-being knowledge with alternative ways of thinking about well-being. An Indigenous Psychology (IP) theoretical framework was adopted while a conceptual framework for non-Western pathways to well-being was developed by integrating current thinking on indigenous knowledge systems and well-being from a non-Western perspective.











Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) principles were used within a longitudinal case study research design. Two bounded cases of rural high risk, high need and non-Western world views were conveniently sampled. Local partners assisted with stratified sampling of participants (n=139) for age (youth=132, elders=93) and gender (women=134, men=91). Inductive data generation comprised two waves of interactive PRA-led conversations per site in regional mother tongues, facilitated by trained local translators. Data sources included PRA-conversations (documented as verbatim transcriptions of audio-recorded PRA conversations, translated into English) and observations (documented textually in field notes and researcher journals by multiple researchers, and visually as photographs of the context over time, as well as PRA artefacts). Thematic in-case and cross-case analysis of data sources resulted in inductive themes on indigenous pathways to well-being.

Two indigenous pathways to well-being were found (each with categories), namely Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being (consisting of 'Communal Pathways to Well-Being' and 'Spiritual Connectedness') and Human Pathways to Well-Being (consisting of 'Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy', 'Maintaining Health' and 'Enjoying Simple Pleasures'). This study confirms that sampled South African *non-Western* pathways to well-being share universal similarities with both Western and non-Western well-being: these are social reciprocity, social engagement, spirituality, objective health, self-development and the experience of positive emotions. Specific non-Western pathways to well-being include the concept of individuals living in relation to their community and the role that cultural values and heritage play in happiness. In contrast to existing non-Western knowledge on well-being, participating non-Western South Africans were silent on the role of ecological systems in well-being, the significance of race and ethnicity, the importance of past selves and the acceptance of life conditions.

This study was silent on the following usually-prominent *Western* well-being trends: individuals living independently from others; the importance of internal traits, values and emotions; personal goals as

priority and the importance of self-acceptance. In this study, participants reported that it was their interdependence that made them happy. Participants also reported that the welfare and priorities of the community took precedence over their own needs and desires. This study posits a conceptualisation of indigenous pathways to well-being in South Africa which may inform relevant psychology research and practice with South African clients from similar contexts.

LIST OF KEY TERMS

-  Indigenous pathways to well-being
-  Indigenous psychologies approach
-  Resource scarcity
-  Chronic, cumulative risk
-  Social reciprocity
-  Social engagement
-  Spiritual connectedness
-  Human capital development
-  Physical health
-  The experience of positive emotions

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1.1 INTRODUCTION & RATIONALE

1.1.1 SITUATING THE STUDY WITHIN INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY

Following the theoretical tradition of Berry, Poortinga, Segall and Dasen (1992) and Triandis (1997), I used indigenous psychology (IP) as theoretical framework for the study. According to indigenous psychology, all worldviews on psychological knowledge (Western and non-Western) are viewed as indigenous in their own right. This view differs from that of Odora Hoppers (2008) which explains indigenous psychology as a way of knowing that is an *alternate* to Western psychological theory and which *questions* Western knowledge. Therefore, in the context of this study, the issue is not so much the idea that applying *Western psychological theory* to distinct South African populations may be inappropriate and irrelevant (Evenden & Sandstrom, 2011). Rather, it is the notion that importing and applying *any* psychological theories to indigenous South African contexts without first gaining an authentic understanding of the phenomena which occur in these contexts, may be problematic (Allwood & Berry, 2006; Evenden & Sandstrom, 2011).

In common with their counterparts in Mexico, Japan, China, the Philippines, India and Taiwan (Hwang, 2004), South African indigenous psychology researchers recognise the need to develop an indigenous psychology unique to context-specific ways of being (MacLeod, 2004; Mpofu, 2002). This process could result in the production of knowledge that is contextually and culturally relevant and which could facilitate the understanding of psychological phenomena in unique *African* environments (Allwood & Berry, 2006; Evenden & Sandstrom, 2011). This study is aligned with Pandey (2011), De La Rey and Ipser's (2004) belief that it is important to recognise the unique, context-based psychologies of indigenous communities and societies, and that the concepts and ideas specific to the historical and cultural orientations of indigenous groups need to be taken into consideration when researching social theories in these societies.

Culturally-embedded understandings of notions such as well-being often challenge traditional standards for behaviours and outcomes (Ungar, 2009). This argument makes an important contribution to the rationale for this study from the perspective of delivering appropriate psychological services. If social researchers and practitioners are guided mostly by one approach over another in their understanding of how people respond to adversity, without recognition and acknowledgement of their specific context, then the interventions that flow from research and assessment practices may be superficial and irrelevant. Macleod (2004) agrees, stating that culture has a profound effect on psychological experiences and should thus not be overlooked. According to Ebersöhn (2012), overlooking one's

culture in trying to obtain an understanding of how someone experiences psychological phenomena may lead to the provision of ineffective and irrelevant services. Additionally, it may result in researchers asking misguided research questions and training professionals to work with populations in contexts that are inappropriate and unrelated.

Indigenous psychology (IP) is not opposed to scientific methods, and does not preclude the use of any particular method (Kim & Berry, 1993a). Rather, IP advocates for the use of multiple paradigms or lenses in trying to understand human functioning (Yang, 1993, 1999). In the search for new and supplementary understandings of indigenous pathways to well-being, IP made provision for the alignment of the current study with Western *and* non-Western readings on pathways to resilience. These readings were helpful in identifying how and where South African indigenous pathways to well-being may be situated within the broader body of knowledge (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Yang, 2000).

Since both cross- and cultural psychology models are accepted in indigenous psychology, the main theoretical and methodological features of these approaches are listed in the first two columns of Table 1.1. Each of these features is applicable to the indigenous psychology approach. The dominant features of each approach are shown in the third column. These features are acceptable as long as they are applied in a manner such that research results compatible with the studied phenomenon (with or without its sociocultural context) can be obtained effectively at certain levels of abstraction (Yang, 2000).

Table 1.1: Comparison of Cross-Cultural, Cultural and Indigenous Psychology (Adapted from Yang, 2000)

Cross-Cultural Psychology	Cultural Psychology	Indigenous Psychology
Aim, Scope and Focus		
To generate a universal psychology by testing, broadening and integrating psychological theories in diverse cultural contexts.	To generate a culture-bound knowledge system by developing theories within and across specific cultures.	To generate mono-cultural and cross-cultural psychologies and then a universal psychology if possible.
A sub-discipline of mainstream psychology.	A psychology and anthropology hybrid field.	Includes both cross-cultural and cultural psychologies as well as other fields of mainstream and non-mainstream psychologies.
Study of psychological and behavioural similarities is emphasised over differences.	Study of psychological and behavioural differences is emphasised over similarities.	No such preference.
Theoretical Orientations		
Natural science model.	Human science or cultural science model.	Both models accepted.
Behavioural manifestations are signs of universal psychological processes.	Behavioural manifestations have an existence of their own.	Both views accepted.

Culture and behaviour (or mind) considered distinguishable from each other in terms of independent vs. dependent variable.	Culture and behaviour (or mind) considered mutually constitutive and indistinguishable from each other.	Both views accepted.
Psychological and behavioural processes structures are separate, discrete or even isolated entities.	Psychological and behavioural processes structures are grouped together.	Both views accepted.
Context-free definitions of psychological and behavioural concepts preferred.	Context-bound definitions of psychological and behavioural concepts preferred.	Both kinds of definitions accepted.
Universal explanations more important than local explanations.	Local explanations more important than universal explanations.	Both kinds of explanations equally important.

The emphasis that IP places on the examination of psychological phenomena in context was particularly useful in IPR and this study (Kim *et al.*, 2006). The social, political, philosophical, religious, cultural and ecological themes which emerged in relation to the data were considered to be meaningful and important in the broader understanding of pathways to well-being in this study (Yang, 2000). Rather than grappling with the notion that so many different approaches and definitions of IP exist, and allowing this issue to affect the understanding of well-being gained from this study, IP transported the themes which emerged from the data to a place where I was able to discover and use natural taxonomies in my search for irregularities, general principles and universal laws on pathways to well-being (Kim *et al.*, 2006).

Indigenous psychology recognises the existence of two different types of knowledge: analytical, semantic and declarative knowledge, and phenomenological, episodic and procedural knowledge. Analytical, semantic, declarative knowledge represents information based on objective, impartial, third-person analysis. Phenomenological, episodic, procedural knowledge represents the first-person experience.

Indigenous psychology sees as its task, the translation of first-person phenomenological, episodic, procedural experience into analytical, semantic and declarative knowledge (Kim, 2000). By adopting an indigenous psychology approach, IPR advocated for a transactional model of causality which focussed on the generative and proactive aspects of human functioning related to resilience. Through the examination of how individuals and groups perceived and interpreted particular events or situations and then assessing individuals' and groups' performance based on their perceptions, the IPR team was able to hone in on specific pathways to resilience where indigenous South African communities suffer at the hands of poverty and hardship (Kim, 2000).

1.1.2 INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY FOR A STUDY ON INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

Many differences in the experience of well-being are notable *within* and *between* countries in Western and non-Western contexts (Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2003; Ryff, 1995; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). However, global *psychology* knowledge on resilience and well-being appears to be foregrounded within a Western context (Christopher, 1999). By comparison, psychological approaches to resilience and well-being in non-Western contexts (such as South Africa) appear to be lagging in their development (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Ryff, Keyes & Hughes, 2003; Ungar, 2004, 2005, 2009).

From theory (Markus & Kitayama, 1998), it is known that Western psychological studies highlight well-being as closely connected with the way in which people perceive themselves. Internal traits, values and emotions, as well as autonomy and differentiation are regarded as core to the experience of well-being in Western society (Singelis, 1994; Suh, 2009). Personal accountability, as well as independence are emphasised as well (Ingersoll-Dayton, Saengtienchai, Kespichayawattana & Aunguroch, 2004). On a broad scale, Western research proposes two dominant approaches to well-being: hedonism (Diener, 1984) and eudaimonism (Deci, 1975). Within these two approaches several related perspectives¹ exist: psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), social well-being (Keyes, 1998), self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2001), orientations to happiness (Seligman, 2002) and flourishing (Keyes, 1998). These perspectives put forward the idea that well-being may be regarded as a cluster of behaviours and attitudes encompassing positive emotions, positive psychological and positive social functioning (Ryff, Keyes & Hughes, 2003).

Studies examining Western psychology approaches to well-being seem to have been conducted primarily in the United States (Carr & Friedman, 2005; Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov & Kornazheva, 2001; Diener, 2000), the United Kingdom (Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008; Ford, Goodman & Meltzer, 2003) and Europe (Diener, 2000; Hammer, 2003; Huppert, 2013). Urban settings seem to have dominated the contexts within which these studies were conducted (Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005). The Western well-being studies reviewed by this researcher were conducted using mainly quantitative and mixed method approaches (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryan & Frederick, 1997; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff *et al.*, 2003; Ryff & Singer, 1998, 2000, 2006; Ryff, Singer, Dienberg Love & Essex, 1998). South African studies have examined the fit between context and Western approaches to well-being using quantitative and mixed methods approaches (Khumalo, Temane & Wissing, 2012; Maree, Ebersöhn & Molepo, 2006; Matoane, 2012; van Zyl & Rothman, 2012). Urban and tertiary education settings have been foregrounded these South African studies (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012).

¹ Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 provides a summary of these approaches.

Non-Western psychology theory on well-being (Constantine, Myers, Kindaichi & Moore, 2004; Houkamau & Sibley, 2011) highlights the idea that individuals exist in relation to their community and environment. This belief extends to the notion that spiritual (Constantine *et al.*, 2004), cultural (Highlen, 1996), racial (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004) and ethnic spheres (Queener & Martin, 2001) also interact and are interdependent role players in the experience of well-being. A result of the interdependent nature of life spheres in non-Western psychological understandings of well-being is the idea that if illness is experienced in one sphere, other spheres may suffer as well (Krippner, 2000; Lee, Oh & Mountcastle, 1992; Singh, 1999). Thus, it is necessary to establish, maintain or restore harmony and balance to indigenous well-being systems (Sue & Sue, 1999; Wing, 1999).

Non-Western psychology studies on well-being (Hwang, 2010; Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004 *et al.*, 2004; Markus & Kitayama; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013) appear to have been conducted in most third world, developing countries and continents. Studies conducted in Africa (Cocks & Møller, 2006), South America (Morita, 1998), Asia (Constantine *et al.*, 2004) and some parts of Europe (Wallace, 2001) have adopted a qualitative approach to researching well-being.

Gaps (Cocks & Møller, 2006; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014; Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004; van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) in the psychological knowledge on well-being from a *Western perspective* are evident in terms of their **applicability to high risk, high need environments in South African contexts characterised by chronic and cumulative adversity**. Additional gaps in Western knowledge on well-being relate to the **experience and understanding of well-being in diverse, indigenous cultural groups such as those in South Africa**. The use of **primarily qualitative and participatory methodologies to examine Western perspectives on well-being** appears to be a further gap in the knowledge.

Gaps (Ebersöhn, 2012; Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010; Maree, Ebersöhn & Molepo, 2006; Moletsane, 2011; Matoane, 2012; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) in the psychological knowledge on well-being from a *non-Western perspective* are evident with regard to **specific studies investigating non-Western expressions of well-being in South Africa**. Currently, some studies examining *Western* expressions of well-being in South African exist (van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012). However, **limited information is available that considers how well-being is expressed when studied inductively**, rather than deductively, where existing perspectives (Western and non-Western) are used to study well-being.

In trying to bridge the gap between what is *known* about and *not known* about Western and non-Western psychology knowledge in the South African context, some South African scholars (Ebersöhn, 2012; Maree *et al.*, 2006; Moletsane, 2011) have begun to create a knowledge base for indigenous psychology. These researchers have focussed their efforts on determining the extent to which valuable

mainstream psychology theories apply to South African cultures (Ebersöhn, 2012; Matoane, 2012). They have also looked at how Western methods and concepts could be adapted to the South African context (Ebersöhn, 2012; Matoane, 2012). These scholars have concluded that more work (regardless of worldview) is needed to develop psychological concepts that are unique and meaningful to African communities (Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010).

It is this rationale that motivated the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) team to conduct a study which seeks to fill the gap which Owusu-Ansah and Mji (2013) point out concerning South Africa's limited advancements in the field of indigenous psychology. By documenting indigenous psychology knowledge, IPR seeks to contribute to new concepts, theories and intervention strategies that resonate with indigenous communities' values and ways of knowing (Chilisa, 2012). Additionally, the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project aims to contribute towards developing a scientific knowledge system relevant to non-Western cultures and contexts, and to supplement existing well-being knowledge with alternative ways of thinking about well-being.

While theoretical understandings of pathways to well-being exist in *other* Western (Keyes, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2006; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005) and non-Western (Cocks & Møller, 2006; Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010; Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004) contexts, a *lack of knowledge* on this topic in unique South African settings resulted in the current study exploring indigenous pathways to well-being within an adversity context of resource scarcity and high risk, under the umbrella of the overarching IPR project. Adopting an indigenous psychology approach (Yang, 2000) was meaningful in this study as it created a space within which to construct *new* IP knowledge on pathways to well-being that are relevant and specific to non-Western cultural groups in South Africa. By exploring how people in high risk, high adversity environments navigate and negotiate towards well-being, this study, under the umbrella of IPR, was able to obtain descriptive understandings of a specific aspect of human functioning within a naturally-occurring, cultural context (Kim, Yang & Hwang, 2006). By describing theory, conceptualisations and empirical descriptions which emerged from the data on indigenous pathways to well-being, it was possible to develop new insights and begin to explain observed discrepancies which appeared between existing literature and the findings of this study. By initiating further inquiry into non-Western theories and approaches, this study hopes to offer supplemental knowledge to build on and enrich existing indigenous psychology knowledge. Doing so, may help to bridge the gap in the knowledge on resilience and well-being in both Western and non-Western settings (Kim, 2000; Matoane, 2012).

1.2 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Exploratory studies such as this one are sometimes regarded as the first stage in a sequence of research studies. Thus, the current study may provide, as Fouché (2002) alludes, opportunities for

future research which examines indigenous pathways to well-being in greater detail. Recommendations for future research are provided in Chapter 6. The indefinite nature of exploratory studies required that I be flexible, creative and open-minded during my investigation (Neuman, 1997). Writing in a research journal (refer to Appendix M to read through my research journal), sharing my ideas with peers and colleagues, adopting an investigative stance and exploring all sources of information as potentially important, allowed me to see beyond the immediate opportunities for generating the specific sets of data with which I was tasked (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Acknowledging existing theoretical knowledge on well-being and referencing the gaps in current Western and non-Western well-being literature² (discussed in the previous section and provide as a convenient reference in Footnote 2) I located this explorative study within what Fouché (2002) states as *silences* that were encountered during my review of literature on indigenous pathways to well-being. Silences in the literature indicated that data on indigenous pathways to well-being in high risk and high need South African contexts have not been systematically and scientifically documented and are thus not *known* or *understood*. Locating this study in the silences on existing literature afforded me with what Babbie and Mouton (2001) explain as an opportunity to gain new insights into well-being from a non-Western, indigenous perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Thus, the objectives which directed the focus of the study were to:

- identify indigenous psychology well-being themes on indigenous pathways to well-being which emerge when data is generated by participants living in high risk, high need South African environments who visually map and diagram what they perceive well-being to be;
- compare these above conceptualisations of indigenous pathways to well-being across cases of sampled site, age and gender;
- discuss indigenous pathways to well-being in relation to existing Western and non-Western understandings of well-being;
- contribute to an indigenous psychology knowledge base on (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being using inductive, qualitative and participatory lenses.

Guided by the aforementioned objectives which were developed in response to the gaps in the literature which I identified, the following research question was formulated in order to contribute to developing a distinct indigenous psychology that is specific to the South African context:

² Gaps in existing Western (Cocks & Møller, 2006; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014; Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004; van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) and non-Western (Ebersöhn, 2012; Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010; Maree, Ebersöhn & Molepo, 2006; Moletsane, 2011; Matoane, 2012; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; van Zyl & Rothmann, 2012) well-being literature are a) applicability of well-being conceptualisations to high risk, high need environments in South African contexts characterised by chronic and cumulative adversity; b) in-depth data exploring the experience and understanding of well-being in diverse, indigenous cultural groups in South Africa; c) specific studies investigating non-Western expressions of well-being in South Africa; d) the use of qualitative and participatory methodologies to examine perspectives on well-being; and e) inductive studies on well-being in a South African context.

How can insights into comparisons of indigenous pathways to well-being in two South African communities, confronted with rural and resource-constrained adversity, inform indigenous psychology knowledge on resilience?

In order to explore the primary research question, I posed two secondary questions as they pertained to research participants living in the communities that were studied in IPR. Firstly, I asked “*What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants of two rural, resource constrained communities in South Africa?*” Secondly, I asked “*How do indigenous pathways to well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?*”

Figure 1.1 provides a graphic representation of the process that was followed in this study. Chapter 1 and 2 of the study presented existing Western and non-Western knowledge on resilience and well-being as one positive adaptation outcome of the process of resilience. Existing theory on well-being, as well as gaps in Western and non-Western well-being knowledge were used to formulate the research questions for the study. Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) was employed to co-generate data with participants by asking the question, “What makes you happy?” (Chapter 3). Participants were given blank posters to work on when answering this question. Participants worked with others in the demographic group to which they were assigned (older men, older women, younger men, younger women) and discussed and recorded their answers in their home language (TshiVhenda or SiSwati). Conversations between participants on what makes them happy were audio recorded for transcription and analysis. Data sources for the study constituted visual artefacts (photographs) and textual sources (transcribed audio recordings and field notes). Audio recordings and participatory posters were translated into English and back translated into participants’ home language.

Data analysis comprised in-case and cross-case analysis of the data sources. Two themes with subthemes and categories emerged from the data: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being and Human Pathways to Well-Being. Literature control (presented in Chapter 4 and 5) was performed to determine how the themes compare to existing Western and non-Western literature on pathways to well-being. The literature control contributed to the findings of the study and new knowledge which the study is able to contribute (Chapter 6).

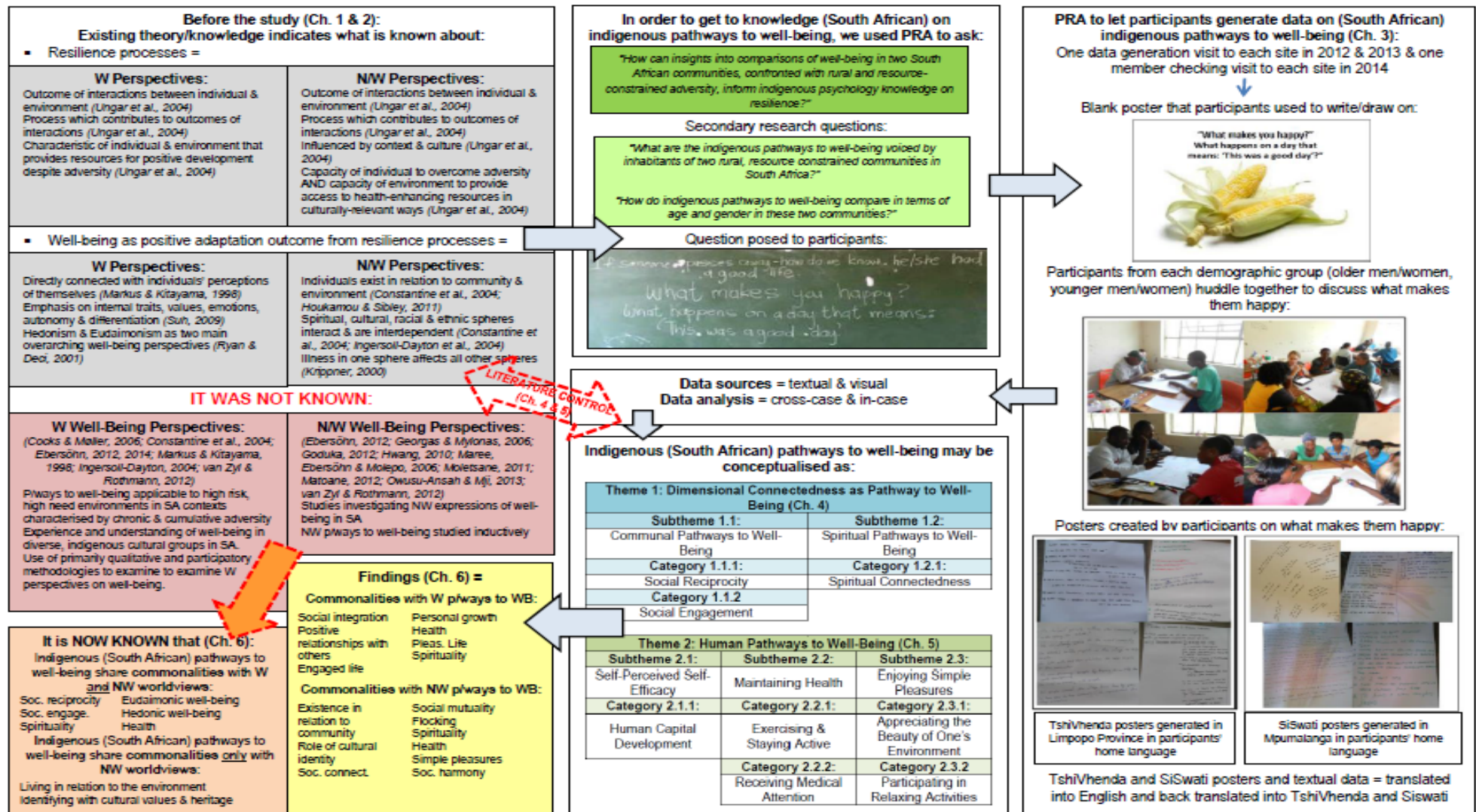


Figure 1.1: Overview of the Research Process (Chambers, 2013; Constantine et al., 2004; Houkamau & Sibley, 2011; Ingersoll-Dayton et al., 2004; Krippner, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Suh, 2009; Ungar et al., 2004)

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.3.1 INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE PROJECT (IPR)

The Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR) at the University of Pretoria generates knowledge on resilience in a global South African context (Ebersöhn, 2012). One project within the CSR is the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) project. The purpose of IPR is to use indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) (Ebersöhn, 2014), with specific reference to the indigenous psychologies approach, to generate non-Western knowledge to supplement existing knowledge on resilience. The focus in IPR is to investigate how individuals and communities make use of IKS during adaptive coping processes synonymous with resilience. IPR contributes to knowledge generation to develop a scientific knowledge system that is relevant and specific to non-Western cultures and communities. Additionally, IPR seeks to supplement existing well-being knowledge with alternative ways of thinking about well-being.

IPR leverages existing CSR projects for funding and access to sites with ecologies of chronic and cumulative adversity. These projects include Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY)³ and International Mentorship of Advanced Graduates for Interdisciplinary Excellence (IMAGINE)⁴. My involvement in IPR began in May 2012, as a fieldworker. The focus of my study is located within IPR with the purpose of explaining indigenous pathways to well-being as a positive adaptation outcome of the process of resilience. In Figure 1.2, I position myself and other doctoral students working in the IPR doctoral lab within the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project. IPR data is co-generated inductively with participants by means of participatory reflection and action (PRA) (Chambers, 2013) principles. The IPR doctoral lab includes Raphael Akanmidu, Safia Mohamed, Marlize Malan Van Rooyen and me. University of Pretoria researchers who also collaborate in knowledge generation for IPR include Drs Vanessa Scherman, Funke Omidire, Ruth Mampane, Monaheng Sefotho, Maitumeleng Ntho-Ntho and Tilda Loots. Professor Liesel Ebersöhn is the principal investigator of IPR and supervised the doctoral team. Collectively we generated, documented and analysed IPR data. Each doctoral co-researcher assumed the role of fieldworker on the project and took responsibility for co-generating and analysing data for one specific demographic group of participants for the duration of the two-year study.

³ The Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY) project investigates risk and resilience through the lenses of educational psychology in rural education. This project's research site is in a rural farmland area where the primary language spoken is Siswati. This project was initiated in 2005 and the principal investigator is Professor Liesel Ebersöhn.

⁴ The International Mentorship of Advanced Graduates for INterdisciplinary Excellence (IMAGINE) programme was initiated in 2011 and is a graduate programme funded by the University of Pretoria (UP) and North Carolina State University (NCSU). In this programme, faculty members and students from UP and NCSU work together with rural communities to conduct research on resource-use, health and well-being. Within the field of Educational Psychology, the CSR generates knowledge on resilience and well-being from an indigenous psychology perspective. In doing so, understanding is generated on how community members respond to socioecological systems (SES) adversity. Professor Liesel Ebersöhn is the principal investigator for IPR.

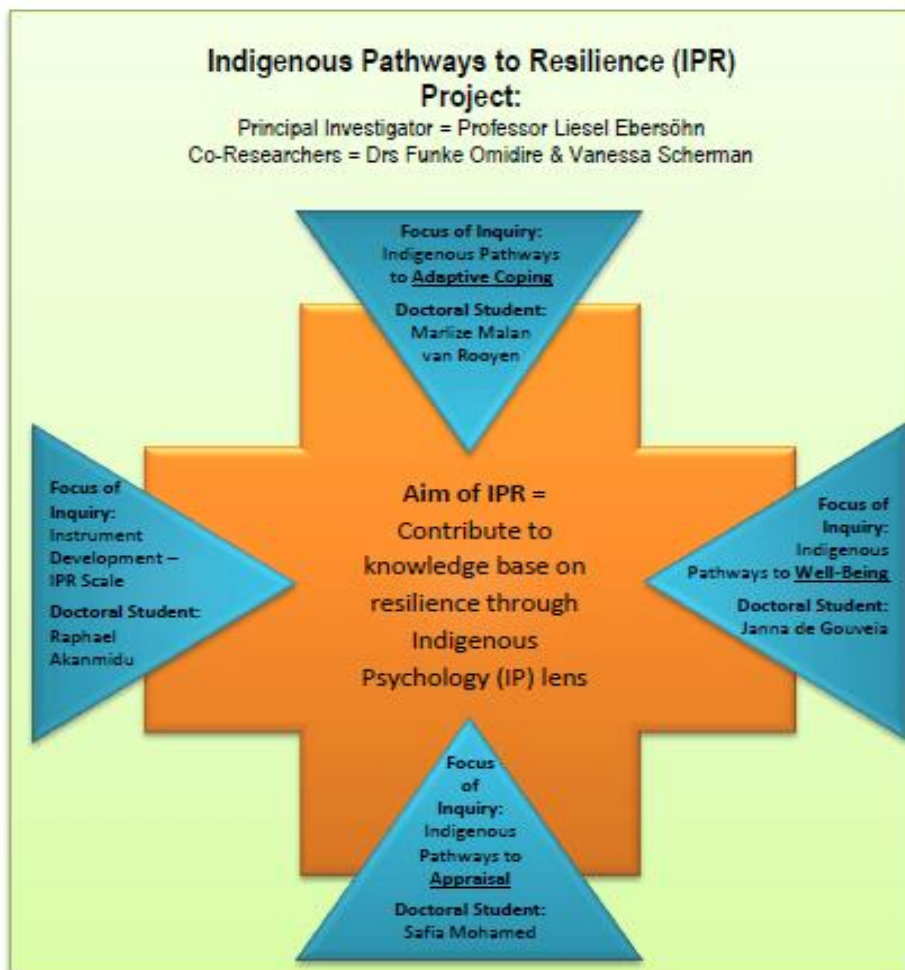


Figure 1.2: Indigenous Pathways to Resilience Project Team

1.3.2 CONCEPTUALISING INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE

The conceptualisation of IPR (Ebersöhn, 2014) within the research group was informed by Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2007) who argue for adaptive coping processes. The literature (Theron & Theron, 2010) suggests that resilience can be conceptualised as the product of a triad of protective resources which include the individual, the family and the environment. More recently, there has been a shift in the literature towards focusing on resilience as a transactional process which relies upon ecosystemic transactions through which individuals navigate and negotiate their way towards support.

Using Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck’s (2007) model of stress and coping, as well as the previously mentioned argument that researchers focus on the processes or pathways that inform resilience, the IPR position is that resilience may be regarded as both a process and an outcome which could be influenced by various systems that individuals encounter. This is because, at the core of the study of coping, are the ways that people respond to, make sense of and address stressors in their daily lives in order to adapt positively to their new set of circumstances (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007; Zautra & Reich, 2011).

IPR proposes (Ebersöhn, 2014) that resilience can be considered an adaptive process where adversity has a long-term impact on individual functioning and development (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007). It also suggests that the way in which people cope with adversity influences the outcomes that they experience. For example, if a person makes use of adaptive coping strategies and skills, it is probable that he or she will experience positive outcomes such as well-being, health and development. However, coping behaviour may also lead to negative outcomes (maladaptation); somebody who employs maladaptive coping strategies and skills may experience negative outcomes such as mental illness. Figure 1.3 provides a graphic illustration of Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007) model, where resilience is considered as both a process and an outcome.

Ebersöhn (2014) adds to Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007) notion of adaptive coping through her work on (teacher) resilience in poverty settings. Ebersöhn (2014) posits resilience processes in poverty as a "lifeline chain" (Ebersöhn, 2014, p. 1). Here, uninterrupted incidences of positive adaptation are linked one after the other. In this sense, the process of resilience and adaptive coping becomes one which could be characterised as a "cable of nonstop vigilance" (Ebersöhn, 2014, p. 1) where there is neither a concrete beginning to the adversity experience nor an end to positive adaptation. Figure 1.4 illustrates how, according to Ebersöhn (2014), resilience in high risk, high need settings is indicated by "relentless positive adaptation" (p. 21) which enables individuals and communities to function from day to day in spite of the chronic and cumulative adversity to which they are exposed.

According to Ebersöhn (2014), current views of this notion of resilience emphasise risk management and development in spite of chronic, cumulative risk and adversity (Strümpfer, 2013). Because resilience is contextual, the culture and context within which individuals and communities function and live, both have a significant influence on decisions that people make in the process of resilience. To this effect, Ebersöhn (2012, 2013) posits an indigenous knowledge system analytical framework: relationship-resourced resilience (RRR) as one indigenous pathway to resilience in South African adverse environments.

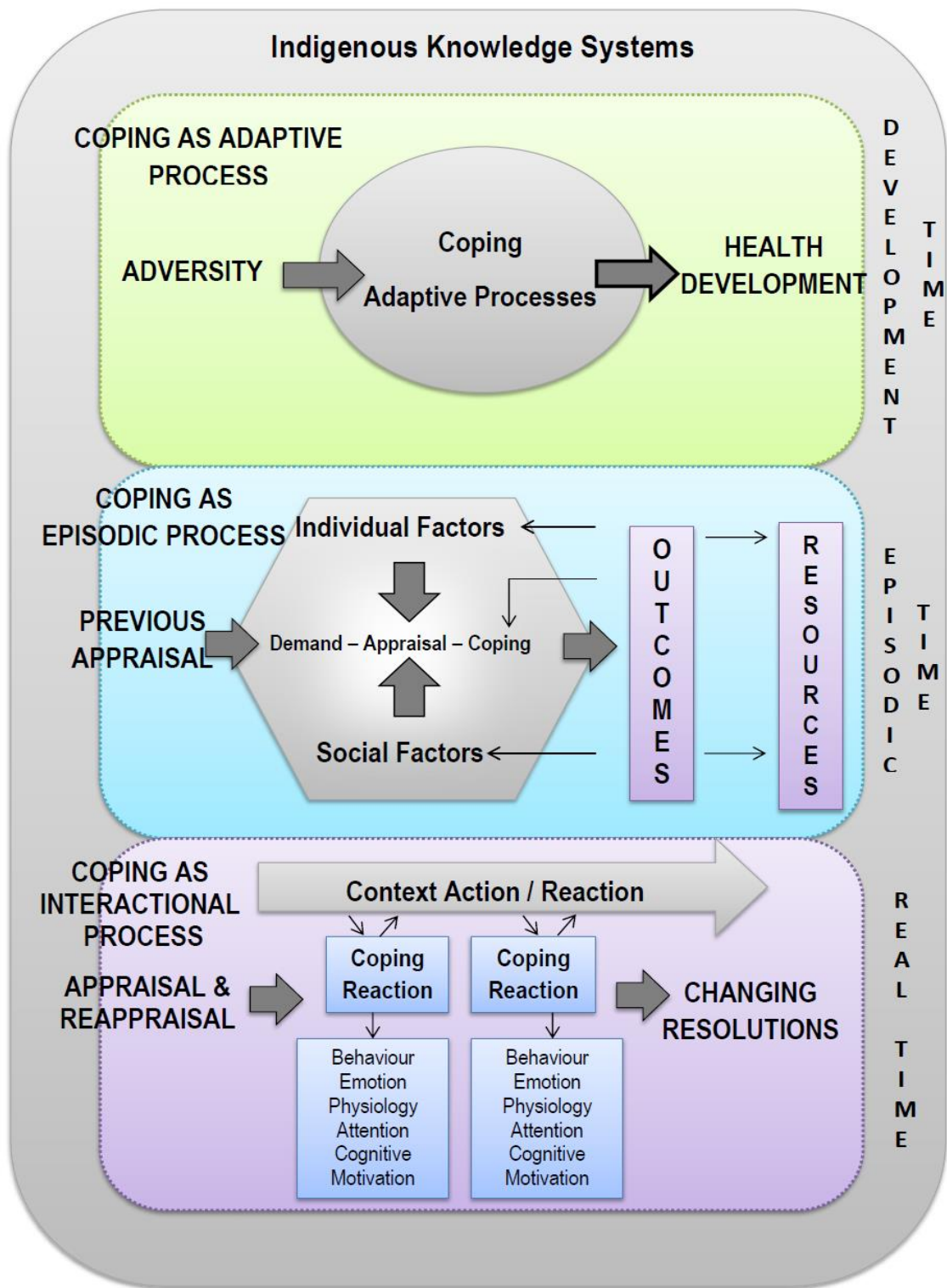


Figure 1.3: Resilience as Process and Outcome (Adapted from Ebersöhn, 2014 & Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2007)

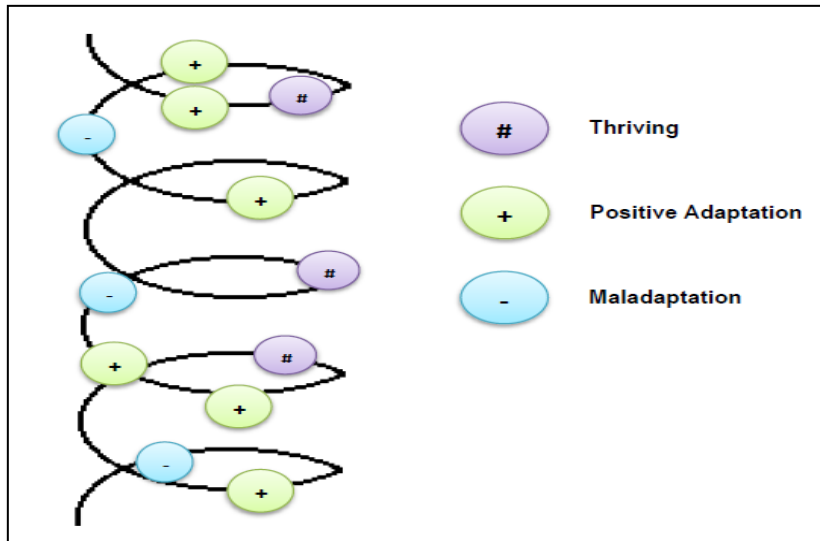


Figure 1.4: Resilience indicated by a Successive Process of Adaptation Incidences (Adapted from Ebersöhn, 2014)

1.3.3 CONTEXTUALISING IPR

Within IPR, participant selection was stratified around geographical region, age and gender. Access to the Limpopo Province research site was made possible through relationships developed through the IMAGINE project. The location of this site is shown in Figure 1.6: it is in a remote part of Limpopo Province where the primary language spoken is TshiVhenda. The location of the Mpumalanga site within the borders of South Africa is shown in Figure 1.7; access to that site was made possible through relationships already developed through the site FLY project. Figure 1.5 is provided to show where both research sites are situated in relation to each other.



Figure 1.5: Location of both Research Sites within the Borders of South Africa (Downloaded from Google Maps)

While both research sites are rural in nature, there are differences between them. The Limpopo Province research site was far more remote than the Mpumalanga research site in the sense that it was very far away from any major amenities. The physical landscape of each site was also very different, as was the terrain. The following two extracts from my research journal describe my experience of each research site.

I am in awe of the landscape and the terrain of Limpopo Province. Now I understand why Liesel suggested we hire 4x4s in order to make our journey up to the research base. What struck me immediately as we drove into Limpopo Province is that the landscape appears quite hostile. It is dry and dusty and extremely rocky. As David said earlier today, mountain biking here would be like trying to cycle over babies' skulls!

I can't imagine what it must be like to try and drive a normal sedan along the dirt roads of Limpopo Province, let alone have to brave the terrain on foot. It makes me realise just how isolated one may feel when actually one is not very far from basic amenities. While Limpopo Province does not have much going for it in terms of shops etc., there is a Police Station a few kilometres from the research site and a corner café about the same distance away in the opposite direction. However, getting there even in a 4x4 seems taxing so I would hate to have to brave it without the luxury of our beautiful Toyota Hilux – just travelling the 6km from the research site to the main road took us 45 minutes this morning. Imagine having to walk that distance!!!

30 May 2012

It is amazing to me how two 'rural' landscapes can look so different. I have been to Mpumalanga before because we did part of our MEd prac here in 2009 and 2010 so I at least knew what to expect from the environment this time round. Mpumalanga is much greener than Limpopo Province and a lot more 'friendly-looking' if that makes sense. Both landscapes are very mountainous but Mpumalanga's mountains are covered in greenery and trees whereas Limpopo Province was very bare and dry. I suppose that has a lot to do with the part of the country that we are in, and probably the season as well. It is November now which is the rainy season so naturally everything is very green. We were in Limpopo Province in winter which may have made it drier than usual but I suspect it is always pretty dry up there.

13 November 2012

The most recent Census survey, conducted in 2011, provides rich statistical information on the resource scarcity and adversity faced by the research sites' district and local municipalities. This information outlines the primary home language spoken, population size, population groups, household characteristics, as well as access to resources experienced by both research sites. Both research sites will now be described according to key characteristics which determine the boundaries of transferability of the findings of this study (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

1.3.3.1 Limpopo Province Research Site

The sampled district in Limpopo Province is considered to be a small town which comprises 19 villages. Four of these villages participated in IPR. The Mutale municipality is part of the Vhembe district in Limpopo Province and forms the predominant governance structure for the sampled district. The primary language spoken in the Vhembe district is TshiVhenda (Census, 2011). The Vhembe district experiences severe water scarcities, poor water quality, as well as food scarcities (Brooks & Abney, 2013; Rietveld, Haarhoff & Jagals, 2009). Figure 1.6 shows the geographical location of the Limpopo Province research site.



Figure 1.6: Geographic Location of Limpopo Province Research Site (Downloaded from Google Maps)

In 2011, the Mutale municipality comprised a total population of 91 793, making it the second smallest municipality in the Vhembe district. The Mutale municipality comprises more women and youth (including working-age adults) than men and pensioners. Most of the Mutale municipality's population is between the age of 15 and 64 years. The Mutale municipality's population grew from 72 759 people in 1996 to 91 793 people in 2011. Table 1.2 summarises statistical data on the Mutale municipality in the Vhembe district.

Table 1.2: Statistical Data pertaining to the Vhembe District and Mutale Municipality (Adapted from Census, 2011)

Description of Profile	Specification of Profile	Mutale – Local Municipality			
		1996		2011	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Distribution of Functional Ages	<i>0-14 years</i>	33 067	46.3%	35 086	38.2%
	<i>15-64 years</i>	33 784	47.2%	51 079	55.6%
	<i>65 years and over</i>	4 672	6.5%	5 705	6.2%
TOTAL		71 523	100%	91 870	100%
Education Level for 20 Years and Older	<i>No schooling</i>	11 481	39.8%	8 301	18.8%
	<i>Some primary</i>	4 174	14.5%	6 078	13.7%
	<i>Complete primary</i>	1 912	6.6%	2 341	5.3%
	<i>Some secondary</i>	7 188	24.9%	15 720	35.6%
	<i>Gr 12/Matric</i>	3 118	10.8%	8 297	18.8%
	<i>Higher</i>	990	3.4%	3 456	7.8%
TOTAL		28 863	100%	44 193	100%
School Attendance	<i>Attending</i>	27 265	76.8%	36 388	85%
	<i>Not attending</i>	8 246	23.2%	6 386	15%
TOTAL		35 511	100%	42 774	100%
Unemployment	<i>Employed</i>	4 963	32%	9 321	51%
	<i>Unemployed</i>	10 561	68%	8 953	48%
TOTAL		15 524	100%	18 274	100%
Distribution of Households by Type of Dwelling	<i>Formal</i>	4 795	34.8%	20 726	87.9%
	<i>Informal</i>	28	0.2%	169	0.7%
	<i>Traditional</i>	8 955	65%	2 693	11.4%
TOTAL		13 778	100%	23 588	100%
Distribution of Households	<i>Female-headed</i>	7507	54%	13 012	54.8%
	<i>Child-headed</i>	398	2.8%	419	1.7%
TOTAL		13 908	NA	23 751	NA
Distribution of Population Groups	<i>Black African</i>	72 461	99.6%	91 222	99.3%
	<i>Coloured</i>	65	0.09%	86	0.09%
	<i>Indian/Asian</i>	24	0.03%	69	0.07%
	<i>White</i>	209	0.28%	416	0.54%
TOTAL POPULATION		72 759	100%	91 793	100%

Table 1.2 classifies residents of the Mutale municipality older than 20 years of age in terms of their level of education. Of the 44 193 people that provided information on their level of education, 18.8% (8 301 people) had no schooling, 13.7% (6 078 people) received *some* primary school education, 5.3% (2 341 people) completed primary school, 35.6% (15 720 people) had *some* secondary school education,

18.8% (8 297 people) completed Grade 12 and 7.8% (3 456 people) had some form of higher (tertiary) education.

School attendance between 1996 and 2011 increased and the unemployment rate decreased. Additionally, most of the residents (65%) resided in traditional dwellings in 1996, whereas by 2011, the majority of residents (87.9%) had moved into formal dwellings. The number of female- and child-headed households increased to 13 012 (54.8%) and 419 (1.7%) households respectively. Table 1.3 summarises data that pertains to resource access in the Mutale municipality of the Vhembe district.

Table 1.3: Access to Resources for the Mutale Municipality in the Vhembe District (Adapted from Census, 2011)

Description of Profile	Specification of Profile	Mutale Local Municipality	
		2001	2011
		Number	Number
Number of Households with Access to:	<i>Radio</i>	13 464	15 171
	<i>Television</i>	4 030	15 813
	<i>Computer</i>	215	1 828
	<i>Refrigerator</i>	4 318	15 153
	<i>Landline</i>	319	310
	<i>Cell phone</i>	2 541	21 005
	<i>Internet</i>	NA	5 078
Number of Households using Electricity for:	<i>Lighting</i>	7 042	19 782
	<i>Cooking</i>	1 471	4 048
	<i>Heating</i>	1 481	4 636
Number of Households with Access to Piped Water:	<i>Piped (tap) water inside dwelling/yard</i>	3 788	6 386
	<i>Piped (tap) water on a communal stand</i>	10 086	14 553
	<i>No access to piped (tap) water</i>	4 211	2 812
Number of Households with Access to Toilet Facilities:	<i>Flush/chemical toilets</i>	1 241	1 202
	<i>Pit latrines</i>	8 950	21 977
	<i>Bucket toilets</i>	67	37
	<i>No toilets</i>	7 827	478

Table 1.3 indicates an increase in access to resources such as water and electricity. Additionally, access to and use of cellular devices increased substantially. Photo Collage 1.1 provides photographs of the setting and context of Limpopo Province. In these photographs, the rural nature, infrastructure, as well as certain means of transport are depicted. Difficulties faced by the residents of Limpopo Province, such as lack of access to basic services such as running water are also portrayed in the collage, as are the different types of dwellings that can be seen while driving through the community.

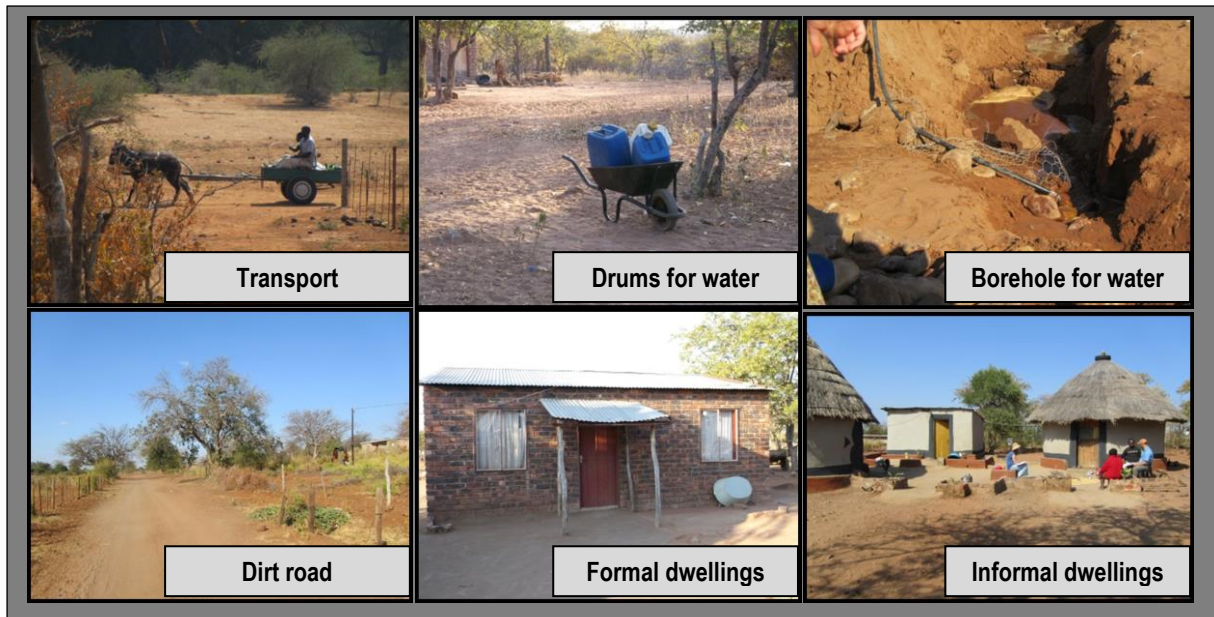


Photo Collage 1.1: Context of Limpopo Province

1.3.3.2 Mpumalanga Research Site

The Mpumalanga research site falls under the Albert Luthuli municipality, forming part of the Gert Sibande district in Mpumalanga. The primary home language spoken in the Gert Sibande district is SiSwati (Census, 2011). Figure 1.7 indicates the location of Mpumalanga.



Figure 1.7: Geographic Location of Mpumalanga Research Site (Downloaded from Google Maps)

The part of Mpumalanga where we generated data is regarded as a farmstead and has a low population density with high proportions of younger children (Aitken, Rangan & Kull, 2009). The total population of the Albert Luthuli municipality in 2011 was 185 658 people. As in the case of Limpopo Province, the Albert Luthuli municipality has more women than men and individuals ranging between 15 and 64 years of age are over-represented. Additionally, 98% of the population are black Africans. Between 1996 and 2011, the Albert Luthuli municipality increased in population by 4011 people.

Whereas the Mutale municipality is the second smallest municipality in the Vhembe district, Albert Luthuli is the second largest municipality in the Gert Sibande district. Table 1.4 provides additional statistical data on the Gert Sibande district and the Albert Luthuli municipality.

Table 1.4: Statistical Data pertaining to the Albert Luthuli Municipality in the Gert Sibande District
 (Adapted from Census, 2011)

Description of Profile	Specification of Profile	Albert Luthuli – Local Municipality			
		1996		2011	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Distribution of Functional Ages	<i>0-14 years</i>	77 348	42.9%	67 801	36.5%
	<i>15-64 years</i>	94 656	52.5%	108 342	58.2%
	<i>65 years and over</i>	8 254	4.6%	9 868	5.3%
TOTAL		180 258	100%	186 010	100%
Education Level for 20 Years and Older	<i>No schooling</i>	31 986	40.3%	18 622	19.9%
	<i>Some primary</i>	11 789	14.9%	12 600	13.5%
	<i>Complete primary</i>	5 065	6.4%	4 146	4.4%
	<i>Some secondary</i>	19 682	24.8%	26 865	28.9%
	<i>Gr 12/Matric</i>	8 113	10.2%	25 217	27%
	<i>Higher</i>	2 715	3.4%	5 905	6.3%
TOTAL		79 350	100%	93 354	100%
School Attendance	<i>Attending</i>	68 812	75%	66 700	78.5%
	<i>Not attending</i>	22 871	25%	18 262	21.5%
TOTAL		91 684	100%	84 961	100%
Unemployment	<i>Employed</i>	20 357	48%	28 593	64.2%
	<i>Unemployed</i>	22 038	52%	15 878	35.8%
TOTAL		42 395	100%	44 471	100%
Distribution of Households by Type of Dwelling	<i>Formal</i>	17 693	17.7%	36 497	77%
	<i>Informal</i>	39 726	39.8%	2 857	6%
	<i>Traditional</i>	42 462	42.5%	7 994	17%
TOTAL		99 881	100%	47 348	100%
Distribution of Households	<i>Female-headed</i>	16 828	47%	23 527	49.3%
	<i>Child-headed</i>	692	19.4%	547	11.4%
TOTAL		35 543	NA	47 705	NA%
Distribution of Population Groups	<i>Black African</i>	177 862	98%	181 531	98%
	<i>Coloured</i>	240	0.1%	434	0.2%
	<i>Indian/Asian</i>	273	0.1%	755	0.4%
	<i>White</i>	3 272	1.8%	2 938	1.4%
TOTAL POPULATION		181 647	100%	185 658	100%

Of the total population of Albert Luthuli who provided information on their education (93 354), 19.9% have no formal education (18 622 people), 13.5% received *some* primary school education (12 600), 4.4% completed primary school (4 146), 28.9% received *some* secondary education (26 865), 27% completed Grade 12 (25 217) and 6.3% received some other form of higher education (5 905 people). Overall school attendance decreased from 1996 to 2011, as did the unemployment rate.

The portion of the population in the Albert Luthuli municipality living in informal dwellings has decreased since 1996, resulting in most of the population residing in formal dwellings. However, the number of female and child-headed households increased to 23 527 (49.3%) and 547 (11.4%) households respectively. Table 1.5 summarises data that pertain to resource access in the Albert Luthuli Municipality of the Gert Sibande district.

Table 1.5: Access to Resources for the Albert Luthuli Municipality in the Gert Sibande District (Adapted from Census, 2011)

Description of Profile	Specification of Profile	Albert Luthuli Local Municipality	
		2001	2011
		Number	Number
Number of Households with Access to:	<i>Radio</i>	29 779	33 529
	<i>Television</i>	15 896	34 262
	<i>Computer</i>	586	4 321
	<i>Refrigerator</i>	15 668	31 114
	<i>Landline</i>	3 590	1 284
	<i>Cell phone</i>	10 015	42 616
	<i>Internet</i>	NA	11 339
Number of Households using Electricity for:	<i>Lighting</i>	19 987	41 734
	<i>Cooking</i>	8 361	24 256
	<i>Heating</i>	7 523	18 297
Number of Households with Access to Piped Water:	<i>Piped (tap) water inside dwelling/yard</i>	18 507	33 510
	<i>Piped (tap) water on a communal stand</i>	11 589	5 506
	<i>No access to piped (tap) water</i>	9 556	8 690
Number of Households with Access to Toilet Facilities:	<i>Flush/chemical toilets</i>	6 990	10 747
	<i>Pit latrines</i>	28 146	32 796
	<i>Bucket toilets</i>	1 425	473
	<i>No toilets</i>	3 090	2 476

As evidenced by Table 1.5, there has been an increase in access to resources such as water and electricity in Albert Luthuli. There has also been a substantial increase in access to and use of mobile phones. Photo Collage 1.2 includes contextual photographs of Mpumalanga. Certain aspects of the

infrastructure as well as the informal agricultural sector which play an important role in the livelihood of residents in Mpumalanga are also shown in this collage.

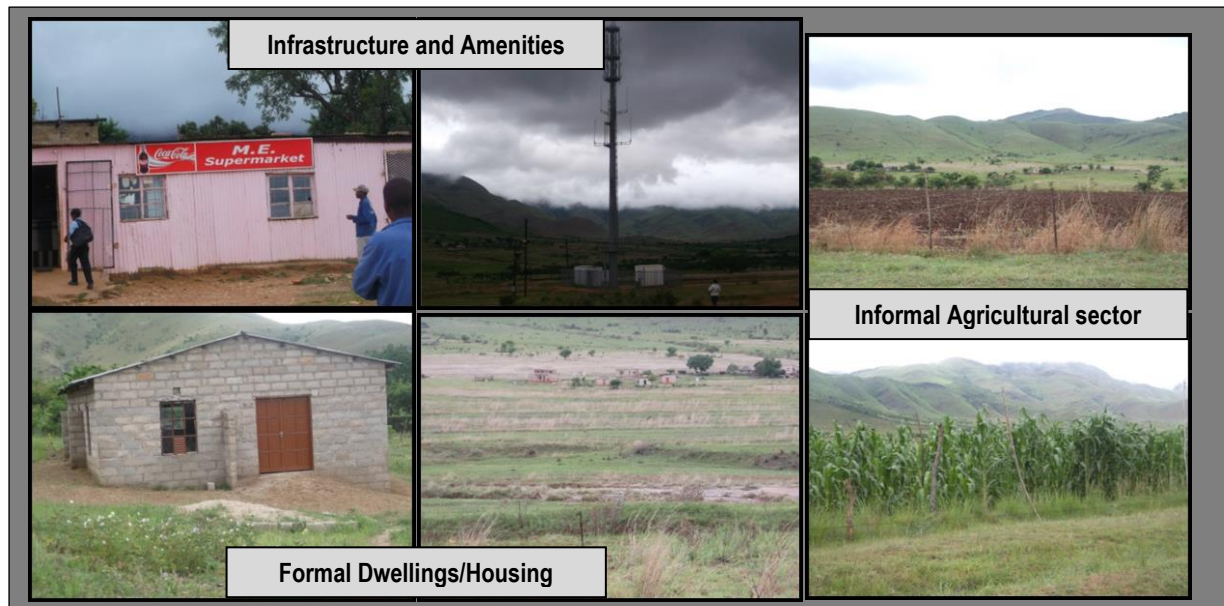


Photo Collage 1.2: Context of Mpumalanga Research Site

On the basis of the statistics made available during data generation, it appears as though the IPR sample comprised more women than men, as well as more younger than older community members. Additionally, the sample comprised mostly community members with low levels of education, high unemployment and a low socioeconomic status.

Additionally, responses privilege the views of a younger generation of women living in examples of South Africa's rural villages. Therefore, although the findings of IPR include descriptions of the experiences of unemployed community members living in rural areas, those findings related to individuals in urban settlements, who are employed and of higher socioeconomic status, are excluded.

1.4 CLARIFICATION OF EXISTING CONCEPTS USED IN THE STUDY

1.4.1 RESILIENCE

In the current study, resilience is conceptualised as a **longitudinal, dynamic process** whereby an **individual is able to achieve or maintain varying levels of positive adaptation despite exposure to significant threat or adversity** (Ebersöhn, 2007; Masten & Wright, 2010; Zautra & Reich, 2011). Furthermore, resilience in the context of this study is understood through a lens of **chronic and cumulative high risk and need** and is guided by the work of Ebersöhn (2014), as informed by Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck (2007). Long-term data co-generated by Ebersöhn (2014) posit resilience in poverty-saturated settings as both a **process** and an **outcome**. Thus, resilience in this study is considered as **sequences of mini-processes of adaptation** which are progressively linked to form a

lifeline chain of resilience (Ebersöhn, 2014) (see Figure 1.4). In this way, adaptive coping processes in resilience are eminent (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011) (see Figure 1.3). While the process of resilience may be expressed by individuals, resilience in this study is also regarded as a **function of an entire transactional “coping system”** within which an individual is embedded (Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011). This system may include many interacting components, such as the nature of the stressor itself, the context in which the encounter takes place, the appraisal of what is at stake, as well as the personal and social resources available to an individual when dealing with a stressful event (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

1.4.2 WELL-BEING

Chun, Moos and Cronkite’s (2006) model posits well-being as a **range of experiences or phenomena** which indicate that an **individual has successfully appraised and coped with various threats or challenges** (Chun *et al.*, 2006) signified by the broader process of resilience. In this sense, Chun *et al.* (2006) regard well-being as **one positive adaptation outcome** of the resilience process (Chun, Moos & Cronkite, 2006). Theoretical understandings of well-being as positive adaptation outcome of resilience are evident in Western and non-Western well-being literature (Chun *et al.*, 2006; Ebersöhn, 2014; Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011).

Figure 1.8 demonstrates Western and non-Western thinking on the relationship between resilience and well-being (Chun *et al.*, 2006; Ebersöhn, 2014; Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011). Ebersöhn’s conceptualisation of resilience as a process through which individuals achieve or maintain varying levels of positive adaptation can be linked to Chun *et al.*’s (2006) work which explains well-being as one of the possible indications that an individual has adapted positively. Drawing on the aforementioned Western and non-Western understandings of well-being as positive adaptation outcome, this study sought to explore how individuals and communities in *South Africa* (specifically) *reached* this desirable state. In other words, what activities, resources and relationships did participants engage with that helped them navigate and negotiate their way towards happiness and well-being? This study did *not* seek to explore the specific characteristics of well-being that comprise this positive state (Chun *et al.*, 2006). In line with existing well-being theory, the term ‘happiness’ is at times used in this study in the same “atheoretical sense of labelling the overall aim of the positive psychology endeavour and referring jointly to positive emotion, engagement, and meaning” (Seligman, Steen, Park & Petersen, 2005, p.413) as is done in the work of Western and non-Western researchers namely, Cropanzano, Sirgy (2012), Seligman, Steen, Park and Petersen (2005), Zimmerman and Easterlin (2006) and Wright (1999).

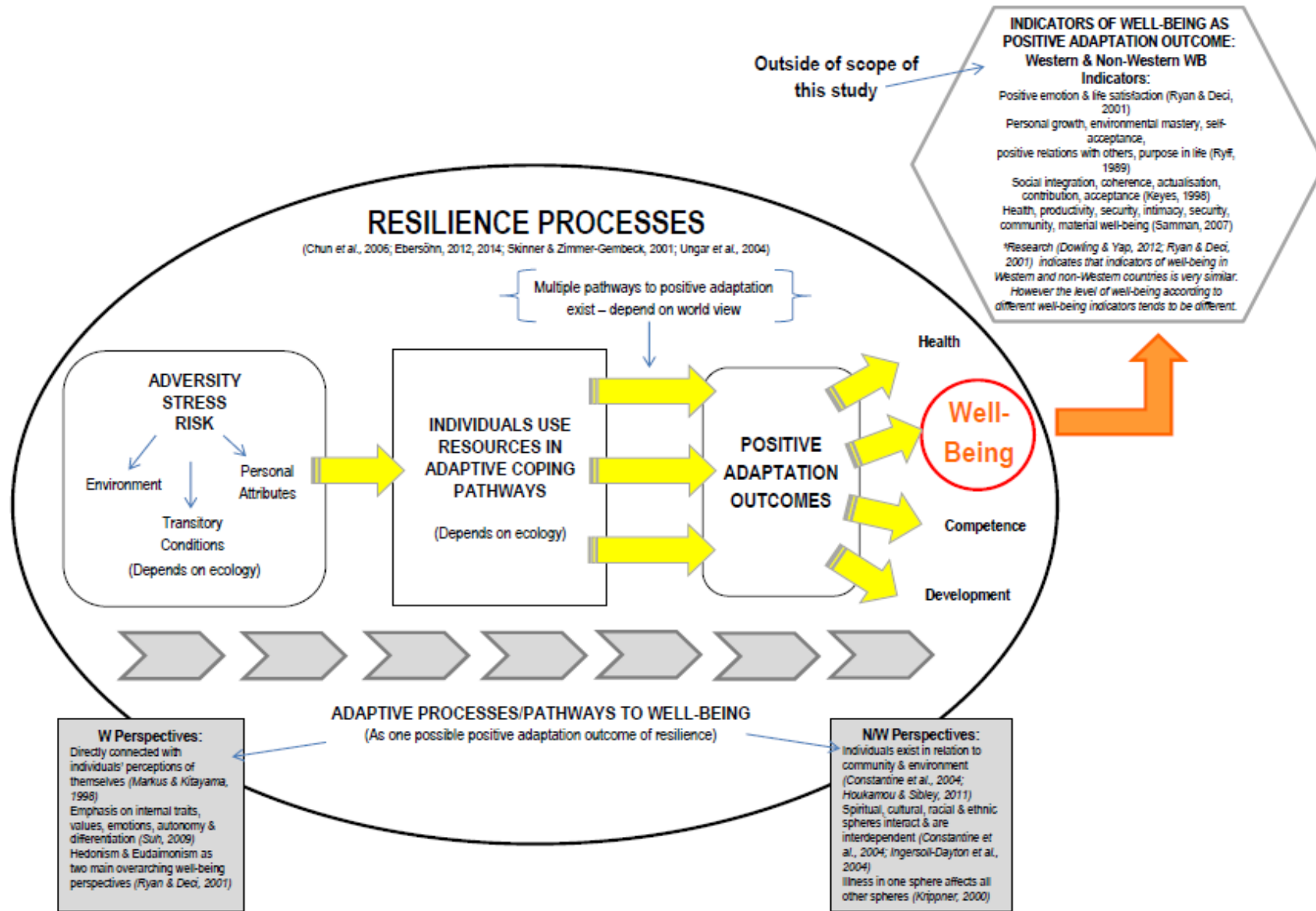


Figure 1.8: Relationship between the Process of Resilience and Well-Being as Positive Adaptation Outcome in Western and non-Western Literature (Chun et al., 2006; Constantine et al., 2004; Dowling & Yap, 2012; Ebersöhn 2012, 2014; Houkamau & Sibley, 2011; Ingersoll-Dayton et al., 2004; Keyes, 1998; Krippner, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989; Samman, 2007; Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011; Ungar et al., 2004)

This study operated from an ‘insider’ or emic perspective, and was concerned with gauging the subjective meanings of well-being for participants living in non-Western contexts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The IPR team made use of participatory reflection and action (PRA) principles and techniques in order to generate data inductively on well-being from ‘within’. In this light, my understanding of South African indigenous pathways to well-being was largely shaped by what emerged from the data (during data generation and analysis).

1.4.3 ‘INDIGENOUS’, INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY AND INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS

Within IPR, I drew on literature on indigenous psychology (Seeland, 2000), the indigenous psychology approach (Berry *et al.*, 1992; Triandis, 1997) and indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) (Hodgson, 2002; Odora Hoppers, 2008) to conceptualise the term ‘indigenous’. In this study, ‘indigenous’ refers to a way of ‘knowing’ or understanding a certain phenomenon or process that is foregrounded by unique, context-specific ‘ways of being’ (MacLeod, 2004; Mpofo, 2002) within a given environment. As discussed in Section 1.4, the definition ‘indigenous’ in this study is specific to the work of Berry *et al.* (1992) and Triandis (1997) which argues that it is possible for both Western *and* non-Western perspectives to be indigenous in their own right. Therefore, within the context of the current study ‘indigenous’ and ‘non-Western’ are regarded as *different concepts* that should not be used interchangeably. Where the terms indigenous and non-Western are used together in this study, the intention is to specify that the knowledge or idea is a) considered to be indigenous because it is characterised as a unique, context-specific ‘way of being’ within a given environment; and b) is considered to be non-Western by virtue of the overarching worldview within which that indigenous knowledge falls.

The term ‘indigenous psychology’ in this study refers to a methodological approach to understanding psychology which reflects a worldwide concern for making psychological knowledge culturally-appropriate (Sinha, 1997) by investigating, documenting and using non-Western knowledge *together with* Western knowledge. The aim of making knowledge culturally-appropriate is to reflect, describe, explain or understand various psychological and behavioural activities within their native contexts, effectively (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992; Enriquez, 1990; Ho, 1998; Kim & Berry, 1993a; Yang, 1993, 1997b).

The term ‘indigenous pathways’ was coined by Ebersöhn (2013) and builds on Ungar’s (2008) notion of pathways to resilience. Ebersöhn (2013) uses indigenous pathways to resilience to refer to embedded cultural-ecological systems, beliefs, knowledge and practices used by individuals and communities with non-Western worldviews in response to significant adversity. In the current study ‘indigenous pathways’ is guided by Ebersöhn’s (2013) conceptualisation of indigenous pathways to resilience. However, in line with Berry *et al.* (1992) and Triandis’ (1997) indigenous psychology approach (which was discussed previously and is adopted by the current study as theoretical framework), ‘indigenous pathways’ in the current study denotes embedded cultural-ecological systems, beliefs, knowledge and practices used by

individuals and communities with Western or non-Western worldviews in response to significant adversity.

1.5 PARADIGMATIC LENSES

IPR uses social constructionism as its guiding epistemological paradigm and PRA as its methodological paradigm. In this section, I substantiate these choices as realised in this study.

1.5.1 METHODOLOGICAL LENS: PARTICIPATORY REFLECTION AND ACTION

Through the use of Participatory Reflection and Action (Chambers, 2013), IPR challenged the basic assumptions and values of traditional social science. Particularly, IPR included and recognised the value of local, tacit knowledge as part of the research process, and challenged the concept of the “researcher-as-expert” (Charles & Neil, 2007, p. 7). Through PRA, IPR also exceeded the limits of traditional research, encouraging shared ownership of the research project, community-based analysis of community problems by research participants and orienting local villagers participating in IPR towards action (Charles & Neil, 2007). Involving and encouraging participation from a variety of role-players, IPR regarded the researchers and community members as equally involved and invested in the project to the degree that responsibility for the outcomes of IPR were shared by all (Bhana, 2005; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2005; Chambers, 2013).

The PRA methods that were employed in the project enabled sharing, enhancement and analysis of knowledge of the life conditions of local community members in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga (Chambers, 1993a; Ferreira, 2006; Leurs, 1996). The action-oriented nature of PRA moved both the IPR research team and the participants to a place of action. Symbols, objects and diagrams served the purpose of representing some well-being and resilience pathways of participants that would have been cumbersome or impossible to put into words (Chambers, 2013). Visual, tangible PRA methods employed in IPR helped to reverse power relations and empower villagers through group visual synergy. Participants added detail, motivated each other, cross-checked each other’s work and discussed and accumulated representations of pathways to resilience and well-being in a manner through which everyone was able to contribute and learn (Chambers, 2013). The PRA artefacts (community maps and participatory diagrams) that were created, empowered the participants through collective analysis and learning because they were immediately credible, and were created and owned by the group (Chambers, 2013).

By making use of PRA in this study, I aimed to create a setting where the people that were most familiar with their environment, local community members, were able to teach me about their needs and aspirations in terms of well-being. This is because PRA implies becoming involved in the lives of rural people so that knowledge can be built and shared. Researchers are given the opportunity to learn from, and with participants, so that opportunities and constraints that they face on a daily basis can be

investigated, analysed, and evaluated (Mukherjee, 2005). In the context of this study, I was able to work with, and learn from participants in an effort to understand their context-specific traits and opportunities.

Several of PRA's broad advantages made it a desirable methodology for this study. Thus, the information yielded through PRA is typically very accurate because it is based on the knowledge that local people possess regarding the conditions of the community that they live in; consequently, the IPR team was able to obtain a more accurate and in-depth understanding of the pathways to resilience in the communities under study, in comparison to what would have been obtained from a non-participatory methodology (Heaver, 1992).

PRA follows an iterative process which implies that goals and objectives may be modified and adapted as the research team's understanding and realisation of what is relevant and what is not, changes (Bhandari, 2003); therefore, the IPR team and participants were continuously engaged in a process of reflecting and re-evaluating what has already been done in communities, with the objective of ensuring that future directions would be appropriate and worthwhile.

PRA is believed by many to be innovative insofar as its techniques are developed for particular situations depending on the skills and knowledge available (Bhandari, 2003). It is interactive, implying that the team and disciplines involved combine expertise in a way that fosters innovation and interdisciplinarity (Bhandari, 2003). This allowed me and the participants the opportunity to employ data generation and analysis techniques that were tailor-made to their specific skills sets, expertise and cultural and historical backgrounds.

A danger of PRA stems from rigid or rapid adoption of its methods (Molteberg & Bergstrom, 2000). According to Chambers (1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1995), PRA is vulnerable to erosion of quality and discrediting because its usage has grown rapidly and it has become fashionable. In order to offset this danger, researchers must invest a great deal of care, patience and time in a research project (Chambers, 1994d). Some additional dangers of PRA include formalism and the potential to become stuck in a set routine or rut (Molteberg & Bergstrom, 2000). If participation is to empower and enable communities, there will always be an element of unpredictability in the research process. If we are to stay spontaneous and creative, we should learn in the field, through experience, feeling free to start, stumble and learn from mistakes. It is up to the research team to use their best judgement in an effort to ensure that the level of participation remains as high as possible, and that the number of rigid rules and sequences followed remains as low as possible. Constantly creating or initiating open exchange and sharing of experiences, ideas and methods, helps to sustain creativity (Chambers, 1994d).

The essence of PRA is to provide participants with the opportunity to write down the outcomes of group discussions. However, this is not always possible because participants from rural, remote parts of South Africa are often illiterate or cannot read, write or speak English (Abedi & Vahidi, 2011). Despite this

limitation of PRA methods, the IPR team was convinced that although some participants were not able to write independently, the use of PRA generated richer and more meaningful data than would have been the case, if the research team used conventional research methods (Maalim, 2006).

1.5.2 META-THEORETICAL PARADIGM: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Social constructionism has its roots in the philosophy of human experience referred to in the writings of Mannheim and Schutz. According to Shadish (1995), social constructionism refers to “constructing knowledge about reality, not constructing reality itself” (p. 67). By adopting a social constructionist lens, I adopted the assumption that humans “do not have direct access to a singular, stable, and fully knowable external reality” (Patton, 2002, p. 96), and that “all understandings are contextually embedded, interpersonally forged, and necessarily limited” (Niemeyer, 1993, p. 1-2). As a result, the pathways to well-being which were co-created through participatory discussion were regarded as a “consensus among informed and sophisticated constructors, not of correspondence within an objective reality” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 44).

By choosing social constructionism as a meta-theoretical paradigm, I hoped to gain an understanding of multiple pathways to well-being, experienced by people living in environments characterised by adversity and rurality. Social constructionism afforded me the opportunity to obtain an in-depth understanding of how people living in rural, resource-constrained communities understand and experience well-being (Patton, 2002; Mouton, 2008). From an ontological and axiological point of view, conducting an emic, multicultural study on the nature of well-being within the meta-theoretical paradigm of social constructionism gave me the opportunity to obtain an insider’s understanding of the deeply held, socially constructed values and truths of people living in those rural, resource-constrained communities (Mouton, 2008).

Despite the inherent advantages of conducting this study from the social constructionist paradigm, there were certain limitations related to this meta-theoretical paradigm which needed to be addressed. Thus, these limitations need to be considered when reading the data. It has been argued that researchers adopting an approach such as social constructionism, which is in complete contrast to positivist approaches, run the risk of discarding the scientific procedures of verification, and abandoning the hope of discovering useful generalisations about human behaviour (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Mouton, 2008; Patton, 2002). A limitation that I needed to address concerned the subjective meaning a researcher might attach to the situation being interpreted and defined (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Layder, 1994). It was important for me to be aware of the danger of imposing my own definitions and subjective interpretations onto the situations and participants in the study when analysing and interpreting the data. To address this challenge, I employed a research journal to monitor and take account of any subjective interpretations in the study.

The social constructionist paradigm stipulates that cause and effect do not necessarily apply except by imputation, and that a given phenomenon can only be understood within the context of investigation (Jansen, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1989; Patton, 2002). This implies that the findings of a qualitative, social constructionism study cannot be generalised from one context to another, nor can solutions or problems be generalised from one setting to another (Mouton, 2008). The findings of a constructionist study therefore simply represent a human construction which needs to be taken into consideration when moving towards consensus on a given issue (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Mouton, 2008; Patton, 2002). In accordance with this stipulation, the aim of the study was to report on the occurrences and phenomena observed during one study, which cannot necessarily be generalised to the greater population (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). However, it was the intention that individuals wishing to participate in future studies related to the well-being of rural people, or wishing to become involved in rural resilience-related research would discover through this study, some ideas within the findings that could be of use to them.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Researching a complex and dynamic phenomenon such as the well-being of people living in rural communities presented methodological challenges and dilemmas. A comparative case study design following PRA methods was employed. Cases were conveniently sampled using high risk, high need bounded systems as the units for analysis. Data was co-generated using visual PRA-based techniques, as well as observation-as-context-of-interaction. Data was documented by means of audio recordings, verbatim transcriptions of those audio recordings in English and the participants' home language, PRA artefacts and field notes of the research process. Data was analysed and interpreted following an inductive thematic data analysis process. Table 1.6 provides an outline of the selected methodological choices.

1.6.1 METHODOLOGICAL DECISIONS IN IPR

IPR uses a comparative case study design. This design is regarded by many as one of the most appropriate means of exploring social issues in real life situations. According to Stake (2013), the value of the case study design lies in the fact that it pays attention to the small subtleties and complexities of a case in its own right, and that it is inherently embedded in social truths. The decision to employ a comparative case study design meant that I was able to address the research questions through obtaining thick, rich, vivid accounts of what makes people happy when living in harsh rural environments (Stake, 2013).

The point of departure of this study is that individuals and communities do not have direct access to a singular, stable and fully knowable reality (Patton, 2002). Rather, their understandings of the world and of their lives are contextually embedded and interpersonally forged (Niemeyer, 1993). As such,

understandings and interpretations of the experiences of communities and individuals are complex, nuanced and multi-layered. The paradigmatic choices of this study are discussed in depth in Chapter 3.

1.6.2 DATA GENERATION: STRATEGIES, DOCUMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In attempting to gather thick, rich, detailed descriptions of how well-being is experienced and perceived in rural communities, the IPR team employed PRA techniques as the primary method of co-generating data (Chambers, 2013). These techniques included the incorporation of a participatory mapping activity and three participatory diagramming activities. We also made use of informal observations (observation-as-context-of-interaction) (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000) throughout the research process. These observations were documented as field notes in each co-researcher's research journal.

Data generation in the case study was longitudinal, consisting of two waves per site over two years (2012 and 2013)⁵. Data was documented through observation of both research sites, making use of field notes and photographs to record observations.

⁵ Work by the Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR) at both research sites has been running for more than two years: ethical clearance to participate in this project, as well as to collect data and interact with participants was obtained on 10 May 2012 (reference number UP 12/04/04). Therefore, the first year of data collection took place over the course of 2012, while the second year of data collection took place over the course of 2013.

Table 1.6: Outline of Methodological Choices that directed this Study

PARADIGMATIC LENSES		
Theoretical Paradigm: Indigenous Psychologies Approach	Methodological Paradigm: Participatory Research	Meta-Theoretical paradigm: Social constructionism
RESEARCH DESIGN		
Comparative Case Study following Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) principles		
Convenient Selection of Cases: Two High Risk and High Need Rural Villages		
Villages in two research sites in Mpumalanga and Limpopo Province with which the ERA Unit at the University of Pretoria has a long-standing relationship.		
Selection Criteria:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rurality as one form of significant adversity including chronic and cumulative high need and high risk ecologies = former Apartheid 'Bantustans' characterised by most residents living in informal settlements, poor infrastructural support, low education levels and a population comprising more men than women and more children than adults (because of adult males migrating to urban areas in search of employment) • Embedded non-Western worldview • Convenient access to sites via existing CSR relationships 		
N = 135; Total Female Participants = 78; Total Male Participants = 57; Total Older Participants = 53; Total Younger Participants = 82	Limpopo Province Site: Total Female Participants = 32; Total Male Participants = 23; Total Older Participants = 23; Total Younger Participants = 32	Mpumalanga Site: Total Female Participants = 46; Total Male Participants = 34; Total Older Participants = 30; Total Younger Participants = 82
Selection Criteria:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants were members of the two rural, resource-constrained communities conveniently sampled as sites with high adversity; • Participants needed to be living in those communities during the data generation and member checking phases of IPR (2012-2014); • Participants needed to comply with one of the four demographic groups at each site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Older men: men over the age of 35 years; ○ Older women: women over the age of 35 years; ○ Younger men: men between the ages of 21 and 35 years; ○ Younger women: women between the ages of 21 and 35 years. 		

DATA GENERATION				
Data Generation Techniques:		Data Documentation Techniques:		
<p>a) <u>Visual PRA-based:</u> Participatory mapping activity: Community Map Participatory diagramming activities: Drums Activity, Knobkerrie Activity, Mielie Activity</p> <p>b) <u>Observation-as-context-of-interaction:</u> Active participation in PRA activities; Awareness of power dynamics between co-researchers and participants; Interaction as an evolving process; Reflexivity in criteria for validation; Assuming situational identities</p>		<p>Audio recordings of PRA activities (Appendix A) Verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings in English (Appendix B) Verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings in the language of the participants, translated into English (Tshivenda, Siswati and Isizulu) (Appendix C) PRA artefacts, photographs/visual data of PRA artefacts and research sites (Appendix D) Field notes of research process by four field workers (Appendix E)</p>		
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION				
Thematic analysis of verbatim transcriptions in English, translations of verbatim transcriptions of audio recordings in the language of participants into English and field notes and interpretation of emotional, social and psychological well-being themes. Cross-case analysis of each research site based on the initial thematic analysis of each case.				
QUALITY CRITERIA OF THE STUDY				
<p>Credibility: Prolonged engagement in the field; Peer debriefing; Crystallisation; Member checking; Audit trail ; Reflexivity</p>	<p>Transferability: Thick descriptions; Purposive sampling; Documentation of densely compiled; Descriptions and field notes of observations made during the data generation process.</p>	<p>Dependability: Audit trail; Code-recode strategy; Crystallisation; Peer examination; Member-checking</p>	<p>Confirmability: Crystallisation; Reflexivity</p>	<p>Authenticity: Member-checking; Audit trail</p>
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS				
Openness and honesty; certainty and clarity about purpose of study and data generation; social and cultural differences; avoidance of false expectations; consideration of time; building trust; flexibility; putting local values, needs and concerns first; ensuring genuine custodianship.				

PRA data was also recorded photographically: here, each fieldworker took responsibility for ensuring that the PRA activities conducted by his or her demographic group, as well as interactions which occurred during PRA activities were extensively recorded. As the participants at both sites spoke very limited English, local community members trained as translators and were mobilised in order to communicate with participants. Following an iterative process, the research participants and IPR team constantly reflected and re-evaluated our interactions in order to ensure that the future directions of our engagement would be appropriate and worthwhile.

Stake's (2013) and Charmaz's (2000) guidelines on conducting thematic analysis were applied when analysing and interpreting the verbatim transcripts of the PRA activities, visual data and field notes. By employing thematic analysis as the analysis technique for the current study, I was able to identify, analyse and describe both the implicit and explicit ideas and themes which emerged from the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). A cross-case analysis of the two research sites facilitated the comparison of commonalities and differences in the events, activities and processes of each case or site in the study (Khan & Van Wynsberghe, 2008). This process was integral to extending the IPR team's expertise beyond the single cases at each site. The cross-case analysis was done by constructing an array; this allowed for the qualitative analysis of each case and ultimately afforded the team the opportunity to draw conclusions about each case with regard to their similarities and differences (Yin, 2014).

1.6.3 QUALITY CRITERIA

Various strategies pertaining to credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity were employed in IPR to ensure the quality of the study. Prolonged engagement in the field, peer debriefing, crystallisation and member-checking formed the basis for ensuring the quality of this study. Member checking and reflexivity were also fundamental to this process (Creswell, 2005; Denzin, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). An in-depth discussion of the quality criteria which guided the research decisions made during this study is presented in Chapter 3.

1.6.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ensuring that IPR and the current study were conducted in an ethical manner in accordance with best practice implied that the research team must align itself with ethical principles specific to PRA studies and educational and psychological research. As PRA researchers it was imperative for us to clarify, with the research participants, the purpose of IPR and the activities which we conducted (Chambers, 2006). Making use of trained translators, all four field workers, as well as the primary investigator sat with the participants in their demographic group and explained that we were visiting their community in order to co-generate data on resilience. This conversation required the IPR research team to emphasise that we were not visiting the community to share or give away material possessions: this perception was held strongly by some of the participants (Chambers, 2013).

The IPR research team was emphatic in explaining to participants that although we did not have anything material to give them in exchange for their knowledge, we hoped that through the stories we would be able to publish on resilience in their community, the knowledge that they shared with us would benefit them through enhanced understandings of how their community lived and functioned (Boser, 2006; Chambers, 2013). The process of obtaining informed consent was also negotiated in this way.

The IPR research group was cautious about how information was stored and handled. All confidential information was kept in the custody of one co-researcher, who ensured that it was locked away and stored out of sight in a safe place. Confidentiality and anonymity issues were addressed with participants by omitting all identifying information from the data that was documented. The ethical considerations which the IPR research team adhered to are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 (Mouton, 2008).

1.7 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In order to complete this overview of the current study, a summary of the key findings is provided in Table 1.7. These findings are based on the research questions which were posed at the beginning of this chapter. Chapter 6 provides a detailed discussion of the study's research findings.

Table 1.7: Summary of the Main Findings of the Study

Research Questions	Findings
<p>Primary Question: <i>How can insights into comparisons of well-being in two South African communities, characterised as rural and resource-constrained, inform indigenous psychology knowledge on resilience?</i></p>	<p>Participating South African samples share universal similarities with both Western and non-Western well-being: these similarities are social reciprocity, social engagement, spirituality, objective health, self-development and the experience of positive emotions. Specific non-Western pathways to well-being include the notion that individuals live in relation to their community and the role that cultural values and heritage play in happiness.</p> <p>This study was silent on the following usually-prominent Western well-being trends: the notion that individuals live independently of others; the importance of internal traits, values and emotions; personal goals as priority; and, the importance of self-acceptance.</p> <p>In contrast to existing non-Western knowledge on well-being, participating non-Western South Africans were silent on the role of ecological systems in well-being, the significance of race and ethnicity, the importance of past selves and the acceptance of life conditions.</p>
<p>Secondary Questions: 1. <i>What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?</i></p>	<p>Pathways to well-being in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga follow a very similar trajectory. In accordance with existing Western and non-Western knowledge, the participating South Africans at both sites regarded social reciprocity, social engagement, spirituality, eudaimonic well-being, health and hedonistic well-being as prevalent pathways to well-being.</p> <p>In accordance with existing non-Western knowledge on well-being, the participating South Africans at both sites regarded the notion of living in relation to their community and the role of cultural identity as significant indigenous pathways to well-being.</p>

<p>2. <i>How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age, gender and village site in these two communities?</i></p>	<p>Pathways to well-being were universal across age and gender groups. All four groups (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) regarded communal, human and spiritual pathways as significantly affecting their experience of well-being, in line with the findings of Western and non-Western literature.</p>
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1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Within the context of the current study, the IPR data needs to be recognised as cross-sectional (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, the data generated in this study provided glimpses of particular populations at a specific point in time. Although the IPR data may at best promote a deepened understanding and possibly even reflect the hallmarks of longitudinal research (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), at worst it does not account for all the variables that influence indigenous knowledge on resilience and well-being in high risk, high need South African settings (Mann, 2003).

Methodologically, insights on indigenous pathways to well-being are particular to two specific rural and high adversity South African communities. The sampled cases were regarded as experiencing high risk and high need on the basis of their geographical location.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, the noteworthy role which culture plays in the perception and experience of life may influence significantly the findings of studies conducted in the sampled provinces of South Africa. Different tribes (in the South African provinces) may experience and have different perceptions and conceptualisations of health and well-being. In this light, transferability is limited due to the small sample of unique cases (Hays, 2000; Willing, 2008). Accessed and documented indigenous knowledge might not be true for other non-Western South African contexts. In addition, the documented indigenous knowledge does not necessarily represent the voices and experiences of all community members in the bounded systems selected for IPR. Excluded insights in IPR comprise non-Western views of those who are employed in high adversity contexts, as well as non-Western views of those living in urban areas.

Statistics provided by the 2011 South African Census survey also suggest that the two IPR cases sampled in this study experienced high risk and high need. The two South African provinces where these two IPR cases are situated are characterised by low levels of education. Specifically, only 1% of both IPR case populations have received tertiary education or training. Additionally, the provinces of both IPR cases had the highest population of residents over the age of 15 years who had not received any education or training. The two cases sampled were in the two South African provinces with the lowest average income levels. Both had severely limited access to water and they had the highest number of child-headed households when data for the 2011 Census was collected. However, there were also other risk factors for South African population groups that were not prevalent in the two sampled cases. For example, neither of them suffered from severely limited access to electricity used

for recreation, cooking or for carrying out chores. Additionally, neither of them was as severely affected by out-migration as other South African population groups.

While it is certain that the two cases sampled for IPR are representative of other population groups and communities in South Africa that experience a general lack of access to resources, lower levels of education and low socioeconomic status, the findings of IPR may not be relevant to communities that experience more specific socio-ecological risks such as families affected by out-migration. It should be noted that the two cases appeared to be characterised by the large number of households headed by children who had endured the death of both parents: consequently, another delimitation of IPR may be the relevance of its findings to households where both parents are still alive and who actively contribute to the running of the house in a variety of ways.

A further delimitation of IPR and the current study pertains to the racial and ethnic groups which constituted the two sampled cases. In both cases, the population comprised mostly Black African residents. Other communities in South Africa typically comprise fairly diverse populations in terms of race and ethnicity but in contrast, the two cases sampled for IPR were particularly homogenous. The implication of co-generating data with such homogenous case samples is that there is a possibility that the experiences voiced and the concerns raised may be specific only to one portion of the South African population. If the case samples had consisted of a more diverse group of people in terms of race and ethnicity, then it is possible that the findings of the study would have been more varied, representing a wider range of racial and ethnic experiences than would be found from a 100% Black African case sample.

The sampling method employed to select participants (convenience sampling) resulted in a sample characterised by unemployment, a bias toward women and participants younger than 35 years. Additionally, the sample of participants was biased towards people who were healthy physically and who had access to transport to travel to the research sites. The well-being experiences of those people employed on a full- or part-time basis were excluded from the data co-generated through IPR. Moreover, the experiences and perceptions of many male community members, as well as those over the age of 35 years may have been excluded.

The use of PRA principles in IPR implied diverse, creative interactions with participants during the data generation phase (Mbongwe, 2013). An acknowledgement that the team worked with people who volunteered their time and resources to participate in the project calls for an understanding that the phenomenon would continue to change as participants adapted to new situations and challenges (Merriam, 2002). The steps taken to ensure the dependability of IPR data included maintaining a thorough audit trail of the research process, through the generation of audio recordings, verbatim transcripts (in both English and participants' mother tongue), as well as field notes and researcher journals (Creswell, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Silverman, 2000).

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore (South African) indigenous *pathways* to well-being to contribute to initial, systematic, scientific documentation of this process. Although the purpose of the study was not to explore participants' *conceptualisations* (indicators) of well-being or the notion that well-being may be considered one possible positive adaptation of well-being, furthering the study to include these understandings may be beneficial. Recommendations for future research are made in this regard.

In 2012, the first year of data generation, it became evident that some of the potential research participants were hesitant to talk to and work with people who were different from them. In many ways, the differences between the research team and the community members were so great that some participants, particularly the older generation, seemed weary of becoming involved with the research team (Chambers, 2013). The team was able to address this challenge by sharing meals and building rapport and trust with participants before the PRA activities formally commenced. Photographs 1.1 and 1.2 depict meals shared at both research sites in order to build a good relationship with participants.



**Photograph 1.1: Sharing a meal,
Limpopo Province, July 2014**



**Photograph 1.2: Sharing a meal,
Mpumalanga, July 2014**

Once the participants seemed more comfortable with the presence of the research team in their community, we continued to engage with them in non-threatening and non-intrusive ways in order to learn about their lives and what makes them happy (well-being). These activities were participatory in nature, and the participants seemed to enjoy this engagement and interaction with the research team, as well as with other members of their community (Chambers, 2006).

Because the participants at both sites spoke either no English, or very limited English, the research team relied on translators to convey important information. Because of our reliance on the translators, it is possible that the nuances of what we were trying to communicate to participants, as well as what they were trying to communicate to us, may have got lost in translation (Temple, 2002). We could not be sure whether the participants always understood what we were enquiring about. When we returned to both

sites in 2013, we found that participants were much more at ease with the research process in general, since they had been through this process once before. Although there were several new participants who arrived to co-generate data during the 2013 site visits, the participants who had been present in 2012 were a significant help in supporting new participants through the process of completing the various PRA activities, in addition to the translators who co-facilitated this process (Temple & Young, 2004).

In the case of the documentation of observations in the field, as well as the recording of audio data, it is possible that there were inconsistencies in the way that observations were documented, and audio was recorded. Small differences are evident in the quality and content of the field notes and observations because these were taken by four different co-researchers working on the IPR project (Ashmore & Reed, 2000). Each co-researcher could have had a slightly different understanding of the task at hand, as well as how these tasks and their documentation should be carried out. It is possible that these differences may have affected the final version of the collective research journal (Ashmore & Reed, 2000).

Some of the audio recordings (especially during the Mpumalanga site visits) were very unclear because of the high noise levels of neighbouring groups of participants and the background activities. During the Mpumalanga 2012 site visit, it was not possible to transcribe some of the audio recordings at all, because it was difficult to hear what was being said. In the case of the home language transcriptions, participants spoke very softly and swallowed their words, making it difficult to follow what they were trying to say.

It was also very difficult to find people who could transcribe and translate the home language audio recordings for the IPR project; this difficulty arose because the transcribers and translators needed to be fluent in and able to read and write not only English but also the home language of the participants. In the case of the SiSwati transcriptions, the transcribers and translators also needed to be fluent in and able to read and write IsiZulu, as participants often switched between the two languages; also, within some demographic groups, there were participants that spoke either SiSwati or IsiZulu (Temple & Young, 2004).

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided insights into the importance of the current study and how it is located within the broader Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project. I provided comprehensive background and contextual information which set the scene for the chapters to follow, and clarified key concepts, as well as the working assumptions which guided my approach to this study. Finally, I outlined the methodological decisions which were made and implemented to co-generate, analyse and interpret the data that emerged from the study.

In Chapter 2, I conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on well-being, from Western and non-Western perspectives. I place the current study within this body of literature and then draw to the reader's attention, key areas where this study may supplement existing knowledge on indigenous pathways to resilience and well-being.

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

I begin Chapter 2 by discussing existing pathways to resilience from a Western and non-Western perspective, while acknowledging the role which well-being as one positive adaptation outcome may play in this process. I discuss my position on the term 'indigenous' and comment on how I believe indigenous knowledge created through the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project (IPR) might contribute to an indigenous perspective on pathways to resilience. I explore the literature on current theories and approaches to well-being and situate the current study within this body of knowledge. Finally, I highlight empirically-based research on Western and non-Western pathways to well-being, differentiating between psychology, sociology and health approaches to well-being. I also make a case for the need for the current study, highlighting gaps in the literature on well-being from an indigenous psychology perspective.

2.2 WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON EXISTING PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING

This section considers relevant literature on existing pathways to resilience that helped to deepen my understanding of how the current study may contribute to the body of resilience knowledge. Western conceptualisations of well-being are discussed in terms of psychology, sociology and health approaches to well-being, as are defining characteristics and pursuits of individuals operating from a Eurocentric orientation. Key characteristics of Western well-being are summarised in Table 2.1, while relationships between Western well-being characteristics are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

2.2.1 EXPLORING PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE: THE PILLARS OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND RESILIENCE AS TRANSACTIONAL PROCESS

The resilience framework emerged within a broader transformation in theory and research on psychology that created developmental psychopathology (Cicchetti, 1984; Masten, 1989; Sroufe & Rutter, 1984). A core tenet of developmental psychopathology is that investigations of positive and negative adaptation are mutually informative (Sroufe, 1990). A resilience framework is consistent with this perspective because it asserts that the study of developmental processes under extraordinary conditions can inform our understandings of both typical and atypical development.

Scholarly attention to resilience in the late twentieth century rekindled interest in positive psychology because these investigators studied, wrote and spoke about the human capacity for positive adaptation and achievement in the face of adversity (Masten, 2001). The resilience perspective stressed the importance of promoting competence through positive models of intervention and change, in addition to

reducing or ameliorating the effects of adversity on children (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Thus, early pioneers of resilience encouraged greater attention among researchers and practitioners to positive models and processes, as well as to the strength of individuals, families, communities and societies (Linley & Joseph, 2004).

Positive psychology emphasises positive emotions, positive characteristics, skills and capabilities, as well as positive organisations (Seligman, 2002). In this study, I foreground how exploring the three pillars of positive psychology (Seligman, 2002) may serve as a pathway to investigating indigenous pathways to well-being in resilience. Given that well-being typically indicates the optimality of one's functioning through the three pillars of positive psychology, this study could potentially contribute to existing knowledge of how people from various contexts and communities voice and perceive their experiences of well-being.

When research on resilience first emerged, the general trend was to explore factors that protected at-risk individuals from maladjustment (Fava & Tomba, 2009; Theron & Theron, 2010). Initially, these so-called protective resources were thought only to reside in the individual, and typically included personality traits, dispositional characteristics and biological factors. However, over time, the focus shifted to understanding resilience as a process that relied upon protective resources that could be found in one's environment (for example, family and the community) as well as within the individual. Researchers then started to identify variables that contributed to resilience, implying a 'variable-focussed' approach. This approach characteristically studied protective resources within the individual, the family and the environment that encouraged resilience, despite a multitude of adversities and threats (Theron & Theron, 2010). Thus, resilience was conceptualised as the *product* of a triad of protective resources and no longer as just a personal attribute.

From this point on, researchers began to focus on resilience as a *transactional process* which relied upon ecosystemic transactions that included young people navigating towards, and negotiating for support, as well as communities and families reciprocating such efforts. In understanding resilience as an ecosystemic concept, researchers began to consider the cultural and contextual forces at play in the development of resilience, and have begun to build theories of resilience that embrace cultural antecedents. In recent studies of resilience, the focus has shifted from merely listing protective resources, to foregrounding culturally and contextually-specific mechanisms that foster resilience. In this light, researchers are now choosing to focus on the *processes* or *pathways* to resilience in specific contexts and cultures.

Although the current study does not focus entirely on indigenous conceptualisations of *resilience*, it does regard well-being and resilience as interconnected concepts. In common with Chun *et al.* (2006) and as discussed in Section 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 in Chapter 1, I consider well-being to be part of the process of resilience. I believe that by exploring well-being, it may be possible to contribute to existing pathways to

resilience, with a view to enriching indigenous resilience research. Well-being as a positive adaptation outcome could contribute towards positive assets, resources, capabilities and traits of communities and individuals as a pathway to resilience in non-Western contexts. Well-being as an interactional process may contribute towards socioecological transactions as a pathway to resilience.

2.2.2 WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVES ON WELL-BEING

2.2.2.1 The Pursuit of Autonomy and Differentiation

Western views of well-being are connected to the way in which the self is perceived (Markus & Kitayama, 1998). According to these perspectives, individuals are metaphysically discrete and separate from others. Individuals are thought to be motivated by self-actualisation (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998), where having the opportunity to “realise oneself” or “developing one’s distinct potential” (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226) are both fundamentally important.

Many Western psychology well-being approaches emphasise unique internal traits, values and emotions which individuals possess that contribute toward the experience of autonomy and differentiation from others. DeNeve and Cooper (1998) conducted a meta-analysis involving 197 samples with more than 40 000 adults in which subjective well-being (SWB) (comprising life satisfaction, the presence of positive mood and the absence of negative mood) was a criterion variable related to various personality traits. This quantitative study found that many personality traits were significantly associated with SWB, suggesting a correspondence between chronic personality styles and individual differences in SWB. Because of the trait-like features which have been identified in SWB (Ryan & Deci, 2001), some studies have focussed on contrasts between chronically happy and unhappy people. For example Lyubomirsky and Tucker (1998) demonstrated that characteristically happy people tend to construe the same life events and encounters more favourably than unhappy people. If one considers the psychological constructs and characteristics that are often associated with North American or Western mental health, it is evident that they portray personal qualities such as being independent, self-reliant and capable of transcending the influences of others and of society (Suh, 2009). Thus, within such a Western view, the personal traits and goals of individuals seem to be considered a higher priority than the goals of others in one’s community (Singelis, 1994).

Embedded in a historical and cultural milieu in which the individual is regarded as a primary attributor to well-being, Eurocentric, Western orientations regard personal accountability as central to the well-being of a given individual. In this light, happiness is regarded as each person’s natural and unalienable right; moreover, people are responsible for their own happiness (Ingersoll-Dayton, Saengtienchai, Kespichayawattana & Aunguroch, 2004). In a qualitative study conducted by Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.* (2004) on the views of Thai elders regarding psychological well-being, it was found that some overlap exists between perceived critical aspects of well-being derived from Western and non-Western

approaches. However, even though some overlap was evident in the findings, it still appeared as though people living in Western contexts strive for well-being by living independent lives, learning how to master and control their environment, identifying and realising their potential, as well as creating and achieving their personal goals.

2.2.2.2 Western Psychology Approaches to Well-Being

At a base level, Western psychology research on well-being denotes two broad approaches: hedonism and eudaimonism. Hedonism is largely explained as ‘emotional well-being’ because its key characteristic is ‘positive emotions’ (expressed by positive affect and avowed quality of life) (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Psychologists who have adopted the hedonistic view of well-being tend to focus on a broad conception of hedonism that includes preferences and pleasures of the mind as well as the body (Kubovy, 1999). The predominant view among hedonic psychologists is that well-being consists of subjective happiness and concerns the experience of pleasure as opposed to displeasure, broadly construed to include all judgements about the good or bad elements of life. Most research within hedonic psychology has used the assessment of subjective well-being (SWB) (Diener & Lucas, 1999) to determine how happy an individual is.

Eudaimonism is largely explained as ‘positive functioning’ which requires a person to be fully functioning or living optimally (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The term ‘eudaimonia’ refers to well-being as distinct from happiness per se (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Eudaimonic theories maintain that not all desires would yield happiness when achieved. Even though they may be pleasure-producing, some outcomes may not be beneficial to certain people and would therefore not promote wellness. Thus, from a eudaimonic perspective, happiness cannot be equated with well-being. Ryff & Singer (1998) explored the question of well-being in the context of developing a lifespan theory of human flourishing and challenged SWB models of well-being, saying that they were “limited in scope where positive functioning is concerned” and stating that “SWB is often a fallible indicator of healthy living” (Ryan & Deci, 2001, p. 146). Drawing from the work of Aristotle, Ryff and Singer (1998, 2000) describe well-being not simply as the attainment of pleasure, but as “the striving for perfection that represents the realization of one’s true potential” (Ryff, 1995, p. 100). Ryff and Keyes (1995) thus spoke of psychological well-being (PWB) as distinct from SWB and presented a multidimensional approach to the measurement of PWB. In this model of positive psychological functioning, individuals demonstrate the capacity to succeed in meeting challenges in their personal or private life in line with six psychological domains: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, self-acceptance, positive relations with others and purpose in life (Ryff, 1989). According to Ryan and Deci (2001), this model of psychological well-being has since presented evidence, for example, that living a psychologically-fulfilled life, as represented by PWB, can influence specific physiological systems relating to immunological functioning and health promotion (Ryff & Singer, 1998).

In addition to his contribution to the development of a model of positive psychological functioning, Keyes (1998) conducted further studies in order to substantiate and test a social model of well-being that may reflect social health. In the first of a series of studies, Keyes (1998) discussed the social nature of life and its challenges, arguing that such challenges might be criteria that individuals use to assess the quality of their lives. Employing a random-digit-dialling sample of adults in the United States over the age of 18 years, Keyes (1998) conducted telephonic interviews, followed by self-administered questionnaires in an effort to explore and explain the social challenges which adults in the United States experienced. This study found that life includes numerous social challenges, and that well-being should thus include social dimensions such as coherence, integration, actualisation, contribution and acceptance. In light of the findings of this study, Keyes (1998) introduced the notion of positive social functioning, which was regarded as an individual's ability to meet the challenges or social tasks within one's social structure or community successfully, in line with five social domains: integration, contribution coherence, actualisation and acceptance. An important aspect of Keyes' (1998) initial study into positive social functioning, was the finding that social well-being tends to increase with education and age. According to the findings of this study (Keyes, 1998) some aspects of social well-being decrease linearly while others increase linearly. Others still, increase, but at a decelerating rate. The results of this study suggest therefore, that the resources, skills and experience gained through education and its sequelae, as well as through the aging processes are instrumental to negotiating the challenges of life (Keyes, 1998).

Recently, more integrated frameworks for the study of subjective well-being have been developed. Self-determination theory (SDT) also embraces the concept of eudaimonia as a central definitional aspect of well-being, and attempts to specify what it means to actualise the self and how this goal can be accomplished (Ryan & Deci, 2001). SDT posits three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. These basic psychological needs prescribe conditions from certain developmental periods, for positive functioning to be achieved. They also prescribe conditions from certain social contexts in order to experience positive functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). According to Ryan and Deci (2001), the specification of basic needs defines not only the minimum requirements of psychological health, but also describes the nutrients that the social environment must provide for people to thrive and grow psychologically. Therefore, SDT describes the conditions (or pathways) that facilitate versus undermine well-being within varied developmental periods and specific social contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2001). While this is so, it is important to acknowledge that SDT does not suggest that the basic needs are equally valued in all families, social groups or cultures. Nevertheless, it does maintain that thwarting these needs will result in negative psychological consequences in all social or cultural contexts. In this sense, contextual and cultural, as well as developmental factors continually influence the modes of expression, the means of satisfaction, as well as the ambient supports for these needs (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Seligman's (2002) research focusses on psychological interventions to increase individual happiness, in line with the positive psychology approach. The positive psychology approach is an umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits and enabling institutions (Seligman, Steen, Park & Petersen, 2005). Research findings from positive psychology are intended to supplement, not replace, what is known about human suffering, weakness and disorder. Rather, it intends to provide a more complete and balanced scientific understanding of the human experience (Seligman *et al.*, 2005). Seligman *et al.* (2005) believe that "a complete science and a complete practice of positive psychology should include an understanding of suffering and happiness, as well as their interaction, and validated interventions that both relieve and increase happiness – two inseparable endeavours" (p. 410).

Within the tradition of positive psychology, Seligman *et al.* (2005) discuss happiness, choosing to approach this term through three distinct, better-defined routes called the 'orientations to happiness'. The orientations to happiness framework proposes that there are three different pathways to happiness: positive emotion and pleasure (the pleasurable life), engagement (the good or engaged life) and meaning (the meaningful life). A study conducted by Petersen, Park and Seligman (2005) found that people reliably differ according to the type of life that they pursue, and further, that the most satisfied people are those who orient their pursuits toward all three. This study also found that in cases where people pursued all three orientations to happiness, engagement and meaning carried the greatest weight in terms of the degree of happiness which people experienced (Petersen *et al.*, 2005).

Keyes (2002, 2005, 2007) attempted to unify the eudaimonic and hedonic approaches to well-being, introducing the concept of flourishing. Keyes introduced and applied an operationalisation of mental health as "a syndrome of positive feelings and positive functioning" (Keyes, 2002, p. 208). In a series of studies on this topic, data was borrowed from the MacArthur Foundation's Midlife in the United States Survey (MIDUS) and random-digit-dialling of non-institutionalised English-speaking adults between the ages of 25 and 74 years living in the 48 contiguous states whose household included at least one telephone, was employed. During telephonic interviews using the MIDUS and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Third Edition Revised (DSM-III-R), Keyes assessed whether respondents exhibited symptoms indicative of major depressive episode, generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder or alcohol dependence over the last 12 months (Keyes, 2005). These studies (Keyes, 2002; 2005) suggested that flourishing and mental health is associated with superior profiles of psychological functioning. Additionally, they confirmed that mental health and mental illness in a Western setting such as the United States are not at opposite ends of a single continuum. Rather, they constitute distinct but correlated axes that suggest that mental health should be viewed as a complete state. Therefore, these studies (in particular Keyes, 2005) showed that the absence of mental illness does not equate to the presence of mental health. Another valuable finding of Keyes' (2002) study was that males, older adults, more educated individuals and married adults were more likely to be mentally healthy.

Keyes' (2002; 2005; 2006a) research on the mental health continuum resulted in the development of his notion of flourishing, which comprises 13 specific dimensions of well-being representing the underlying structure of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (2006a). These dimensions indicate that an individual is flourishing. Table 2.1 summarises the variety of approaches to well-being which were consulted in developing this literature review.

Figure 2.1 indicates the above- mentioned Western approaches to well-being and how they relate to each other. From this illustration, it is evident that Western psychology approaches to well-being prioritise the state of the individual over the health of the community. Moreover, well-being of individuals comprises elements of personal accountability and explicit pursuit, which take precedence over other aspects of an individual's life. Within the realm of the individual as pathway to well-being, differentiation is emphasised. The hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being form distinct pathways to well-being which fall within the human pathway to well-being. These two pathways encompass related and at times overlapping concepts of some existing Western psychology approaches to well-being (indicated by bi-directional arrows between well-being dimensions) which are outlined in Table 2.1. The social realm of functioning plays a marginal role in psychology theory as pathway to well-being for individuals living in Western society.

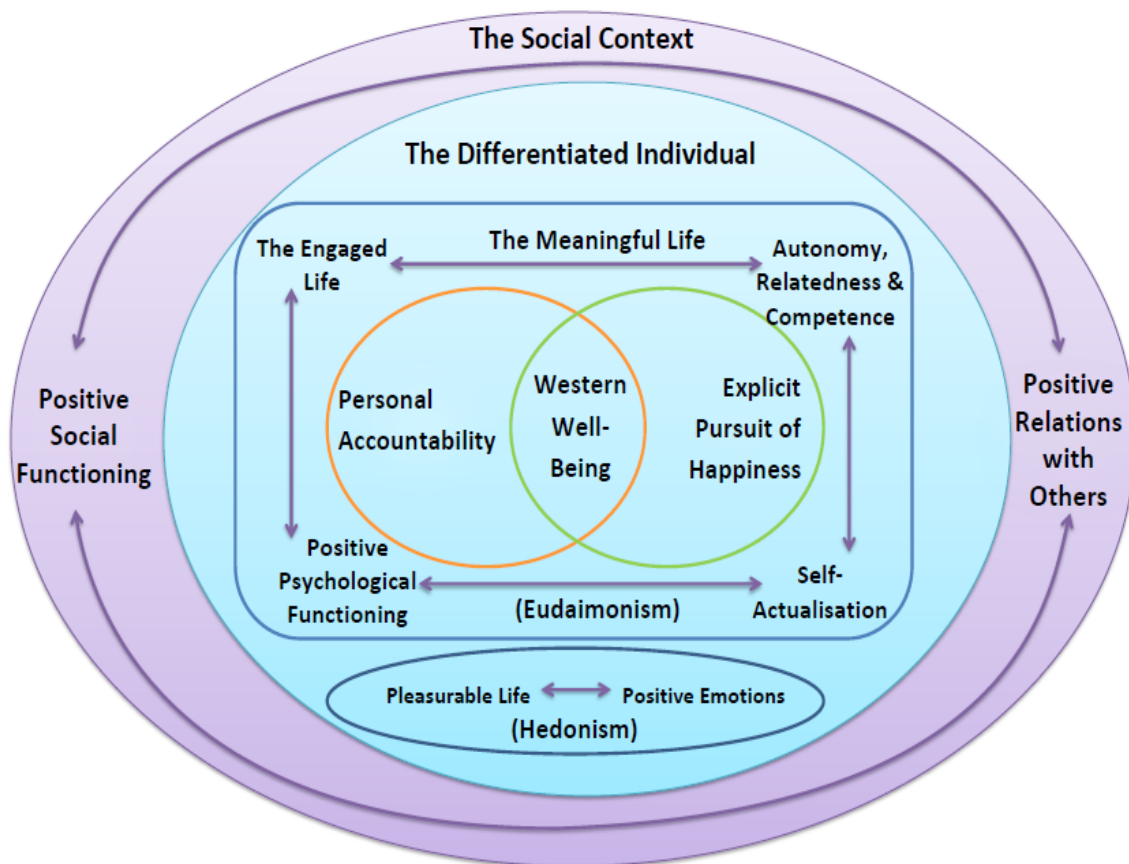


Figure 2.1: Western Pathways to Well-Being

Table 2.1: Summary of Western Psychology Approaches to Well-Being

Leading Theorist	Approach to Well-Being						Sources Consulted
Diener	Hedonic Well-Being: Emphasis is placed on happiness - 'emotional' well-being Emphasises the importance of welfare in terms of the pleasurable quality of one's experiences						Diener (1984) Diener, Sapyta and Suh (1998) Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith (1999) Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005)
Ryan & Deci	Eudaimonic Well-being: Individual's ability to self-actualise and be fully functioning						Deci & Ryan (2000) Ryan & Deci (2001)
Ryff	Psychological Well-Being: Part of eudaimonic well-being Six aspects of human actualisation:						Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) Ryff (1989) Ryff and Keyes (1995) Ryff, Keyes and Hughes (2003) Ryff and Singer (1998; 2000; 2006) Ryff, Singer, Dienberg, Love and Essex (1998)
	Autonomy	Environmental mastery	Personal growth	Self-acceptance	Positive relationships with others	Purpose in life	
Keyes	Social Well-Being: Part of eudaimonic well-being - social domain of well-being through five distinct social dimensions:						Keyes (1998)
	Integration	Contribution	Coherence	Actualisation	Acceptance		
Ryan & Deci	Self-Determination Theory: Self-actualisation Three basic psychological needs provide guidance on minimum requirements an individual has to achieve to realise psychological health						Ryan and Deci (2001)
	Autonomy	Relatedness			Competence		
Seligman	Orientations to Happiness: Three different pathways to happiness:						Peterson, Park and Seligman (2005) Peterson and Seligman (2004)

Leading Theorist	Approach to Well-Being			Sources Consulted
	Pleasurable life	Good/engaged life	Meaningful life	Seligman (1991; 2002a; 2002b) Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) Seligman and Royzman (2003) Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson (2005)
Keys	Flourishing: The absence of mental illness does not necessarily signify well-being - languishing Flourishing = possess characteristics of emotional, psychology & social well-being - 13 dimensions of mental health			Keyes (1998; 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005a; 2005b; 2006a; 2006b; 2007) Keyes and Haidt (2003) Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) Ryff (1989) Ryff, Keyes and Hughes (2003)
	Positive Emotions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Positive affect ○ Avowed quality of life 	Positive Psychological Functioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Autonomy ○ Environmental mastery ○ Personal growth ○ Self-acceptance ○ Positive relationships with others ○ Purpose in life 	Positive Social Functioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Integration ○ Social Contribution ○ Social Coherence ○ Social Actualisation ○ Social Acceptance 	

According to Samman (2007), approaches such as Ryff's (1989) positive psychological functioning and Diener's (1984) hedonic well-being may be problematic in determining internationally comparable indicators of well-being. This is because in most cases, the cross-cultural comparability of these approaches to well-being has been challenged. Samman (2007) maintains that some existing Western psychology approaches to well-being may be relatively restrictive with regard to their definition of psychological well-being as both process and outcome. Moreover, researchers are challenged when it comes to combining constructs from some approaches and determining what is indicated when certain combinations of constructs appear together. Samman (2007) recommends a well-being approach that considers several alternative dimensions to well-being: material well-being, health, productivity, security, intimacy, community and spirituality. Table 2.2 outlines each of the domains of well-being suggested by Samman (2007).

Table 2.2: Samman's (2007) Suggested Domains of Well-Being

Domains	Items of Interest
Material Well-Being	Food, housing and income
Health	Health
Productivity	Work
Security	Physical security
Intimacy	Friends and family
Community	Neighbourhood, education, ability actively to help others
Spirituality/Religion	Well-being from spiritual, religious or philosophical beliefs

2.2.2.3 Western Sociology Approaches to Well-Being

Over the past 40 years, scholars within the social sciences have concerned themselves with the measurement of happiness and well-being on local, national and international levels (Easterlin, 1974; Graham, 2009; Oswald, 1997). However, traditionally viewed as individual, personal and private, happiness and well-being were once considered to be outside the scope of the field of sociology (Hyman, 2014). A great deal of sociological research is manifestly *motivated by* concern for the well-being of the people and communities that sociologists research (Bartram, 2011), but, sociologists appear to have been slower and more reluctant to embrace happiness studies than scholars in other fields. Only a few examinations of everyday experiences of happiness have emerged from sociological inquiry (Cieslik, 2013; Hyman, 2011, 2014).

One sociologist, Ruut Veenhoven (2011), has explored the ways in which improved living conditions can bring about a rise in happiness levels (Hyman, 2014). Moreover, sociologists such as Easterlin (2001) and Layard (2011) have contributed to the growing sociological body of work on happiness and well-being that focusses on measures of happiness. Across this area of work, happiness and well-being

have been measured in a number of ways (Hyman, 2014). A quantitative survey research design has predominantly been used to capture individuals' overall level of happiness (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003; Kahneman, Krueger, Schkade, Schwarz & Stone, 2004). With the survey research design (for example the World Values Survey), respondents are typically asked to indicate their happiness on a scale that consists of a number of points (Bartram, 2011). Although these studies provide interesting information on how happy people are, they do not actively ask what happiness *is*, or how people *achieve happiness*. Rather, they assume that people know for themselves what happiness is. According to Davidson (1992), addressing questions on happiness in broad and abstract ways may not be a productive exercise unless the data prove to be useful in addressing particular research questions.

Qualitative research on happiness from a sociological perspective appears to be less common (Bartram, 2011). In a similar vein, studies seeking to understand particular aspects of the way in which happiness is experienced on an everyday level, as well as the meanings that individuals attribute to these aspects still seem to be lacking (Hyman, 2014). According to Bartram (2011), this may be a result of the notion that gaining data on people's perceptions about determinants of happiness may not be a reliable way to learn what actually leads to happiness. However, identifying and exploring discrepancies between people's perceptions of the determinants of happiness may be quite an interesting exercise. Rather than focussing qualitative studies on exploring the indicators of happiness (which go beyond the scope of this study), Bartram (2011) suggests that qualitative studies may contribute to sociology perspectives on happiness by exploring *how* people *understand* and *define* happiness instead.

Defining happiness from a sociological perspective appears to be challenging, partially because its meaning in everyday usage seems obvious (Bartram, 2011). According to Layard (2005) it may be sufficient to define happiness as "feeling good – enjoying life and wanting that feeling to be maintained" (p. 12). More complex definitions of happiness (Haybron, 2008) however, define it as a "positive emotional state". Within this definition, happiness comprises positive moods and emotions, as well as mood propensities. According to Haybron's (2008) definition, a happy person would be someone who finds it relatively easy to experience positive moods and emotions and whose experience of life amounts to psychic affirmation (Bartram, 2011). Commonly, in sociology (as well as in positive psychology and behavioural economics), definitions of happiness typically focus on the purported mental, emotional or behavioural processes that are understood to *lead* to happiness (Jugureanu, Hughes & Hughes, 2014). Following from such 'criteria', Veenhoven (2006) categorises four types of definitions that see happiness as life satisfaction: affective, cognitive, attitudinal and mixed definitions. When depicted as an *affective* phenomenon, happiness is an emotion and is understood as an overall evaluation of both pleasant and unpleasant experiences and how the sum of these experiences balances out (Kahneman, 2000). As a cognitive phenomenon, happiness is the result of a deliberate evaluation process according to one's chosen criteria (Veenhoven, 2006) - the smaller the distance between one's aspirations and one's reality, the greater the level of perceived happiness (Annas, 2004).

The third category of happiness definitions which Veenhoven (2006) discusses depicts happiness as a positive attitude towards one's life. Finally, mixed definitions of happiness integrate affect, cognition and attitude into one understanding (Veenhoven, 2006).

Wilkinson (1991) defined well-being broadly as a concept that includes the social, cultural and physical needs of people, their families, institutions and communities. Furthermore, Wilkinson (1991) regards individual well-being, social well-being and ecological well-being as complementary and interdependent. This means that the well-being of the individual is required for social well-being, and is therefore a criterion with which to assess the prospects for social well-being in a given community setting.

Wilkinson (1991) argues for five conditions or elements of social well-being that may offer individuals maximum support in their quest for well-being: distributive justice, open communication, tolerance, collective action and communion. *Distributive justice* refers to the idea that people are equally human, and that recognising this fact and incorporating this recognition into purposive action to remove inequalities may lead to and encourage affirmative, accurate responses from and between people. In the context of individual well-being, Wilkinson (1991) argues that anything impeding the flow of *open communication* among people whose lives are connected in other ways also impedes social well-being. Thus, in order for the individual and the community to develop fully, it is important that full and authentic communication takes place. *Tolerance* refers to the acceptance of differences and similarities among humans, and is a shared value among people that affects how they interact. Tolerance of others is therefore an important component of individual well-being, as well as a shared normative standard for behaviours that supports well-being. *Collective action* refers to the principle of social well-being that requires all people to work together in pursuit of their common interests. According to Wilkinson (1991), "this is a factor in achieving particular goals and in solving particular problems, but also is a process of building social relationships" (p. 74). At the local level, collective action is the foundation of the community. The community as a field of social interaction oriented to local issues and concerns exists in, and is thus a factor in, the collective actions of local residents. Collective action expressing the entire range of common locally-oriented interests can be interconnected by actors, associations and activities in the community field and to the extent this occurs, it promotes and enriches the collective life of the population. Finally, *communion* pertains to the consciousness of community and joyful response to relationships that are realised. In this sense, communion can contribute to individual and by extension, social well-being, by encouraging equity, openness, tolerance and collective action (Wilkinson, 1991).

According to Wilkinson (1991), individual and social well-being cannot be achieved except in ways that also promote ecological well-being. In the context of Wilkinson's (1991) work, ecological well-being refers to natural and other contributions that support and sustain human life. Therefore, in order for individual and social well-being to be achieved, it is important to treat the environment in such a way that it is regarded as fundamentally related to and intertwined with the social life that it supports (Wilkinson, 1991).

Sociology perspectives (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988) on social capital help to explain sociology perspectives on well-being. Bourdieu (1986) characterises social capital as the capital of associations and social acknowledgement. Coleman (1988) alludes to social capital as elements of the social structure that may encourage activities of people inside the social structure itself. For example, parental consideration may be seen as a social standard that encourages youths' ensuing movement and achievement in the public arena; social connections are a type of social capital that build up commitments, desires and reliability. Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti (1993) characterise social capital as those "components of social association, for example, trust, standards, and systems that can enhance productivity of society by encouraging composed activities" (p. 167). The World Bank (2011) concurs with Putnam *et al.* (1993) and Coleman (1988) explaining that "social capital is not simply the total of the foundations which support a general public – it is the magic that binds them."

While other (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988) definitions of social capital refer to social associations or informal organisations as components of social capital, Putnam *et al.* (1993) regards social capital as an impetus of coordination and participation, a crucial resource to accomplish desirable social outcomes. Krishna and Shrader's (2000) model disaggregates social capital into two components: structural and cognitive. The structural component of social capital refers to the extent and intensity of associational links or activity. The cognitive component covers perception of support, reciprocity, sharing and trust. According to Krishna and Shrader (2000), these two components of social capital may be characterised as what people 'do' and what people 'feel' when considering social relations. Woolcock and Narayan (2000) refer to an additional important construct in social capital, namely the difference between bonding and bridging. Bonding and bridging in social capital overlaps with the idea of horizontal (inhering relationships between similar individuals or groups in the same social context) and vertical social capital (inhering relationships between different levels of society) (Harpham, Grant & Thomas, 2002). The idea of bonding and bridging in social capital is an important one because it illustrates the importance of balancing both components: without vertical social capital connecting communities to local government or groups with resources, social networks, norms and trust may not be able to actually improve the well-being of a community. Equally, without horizontal links to other groups or communities, important information channels, support channels or other benefits of solidarity would be lost.

2.2.2.4 Western Health Approaches to Well-Being

The majority of the literature on health and well-being examines the relationship between social support and health (Berkman, Glass, Brissette & Seeman, 2000; Cohen, Gottlieb & Underwood, 2000; Connell & D'Augelli, 1990; Hale & Hannum, 2005; Thoits, 2015), the relationship between physical health and psychological well-being (Cole & Bellavance, 1997; Cuijpers & Schoevers, 2004; Harris & Barraclough, 1998; Harvey, 2014; Saz & Dewey, 2001; Schulz *et al.*, 2002; White, 2001; Wulsin *et al.*, 1999) and the impact of physical activity on well-being (Fox, 1999; Hassmén, Koivula & Uutela, 2000; Netz & Wu,

2005; Scully, Kremer, Meade, Graham & Dudgeon, 1998; Yoon & Bernell, 2013). Additionally, many studies have focussed on the relationship between social support and psychological well-being (Armstrong & Griffith, 2004; Dignam & West, 1988; Dollard & Winefield, 1998). Generally, these studies vary in whether or not they take social support as the main focus of their research or include it as one predictor among a set of others (Wright, Borrill, Teers & Cassidy, 2006).

Where previous research has examined social support in relation to psychological and physical health (discussed later in this section), physical health has been conceptualised as the final outcome in the model. In these instances, poor physical health is found to be associated with poor psychological health (Dignam, Barrera & West, 1986; Dignam & West, 1988) and increased levels of psychological distress (White, 2001). Harvey (2014) conducted a quantitative study, using a cross-sectional design with 100 prison officers recruited through convenience sampling across all areas within one male prison in the United Kingdom. This study examined perceived physical health, psychological distress and social support among prison officers in the United Kingdom and found that perceived poor physical health (according to four dimensions) was positively correlated with psychological distress. The four dimensions which Harvey (2014) studied and which correlated with psychological distress were physical functioning, bodily pain, general health and limitations in usual role activities.

Studies conducted by Cole and Bellavance (1997), Cuijpers and Schoevers (2004), Harris and Barraclough (1998), Saz and Dewey (2001), Schulz, Drayer and Rollman (2002) and Wulsin, Vaillant and Wells (1999) also contribute to the body of knowledge on the relationship between physical health and psychological well-being and distress. These studies suggest a relationship between depression and mortality, suggesting that depression (as one form of psychological distress) may mediate the relationship between physical and mental health. Studies such those mentioned above (Cole & Bellavance, 1997; Cuijpers & Schoevers, 2004; Harris & Barraclough, 1998; Saz & Dewey, 2001; Schulz *et al.*, 2002; Wulsin *et al.*, 1999) contribute to existing knowledge on physical and mental health in the sense that they demonstrate that in as much as poor physical health may lead to poor psychological health, poor psychological health may conversely lead to poor physical health (Batterham, Christensen, Mackinnon, 2010).

Batterham *et al.* (2010) expanded on existing studies examining the relationship between mental health and morbidity by conducting a quantitative study with 896 community-dwelling participants aged 70 to 97, assessed four times over 12 years, tracking their vital status for up to 17 years. Relationships of depression and anxiety with survival time, controlling for health, age and gender were tested using Cox proportional hazards regressions embedded in structural equation models. This study found that among community-dwelling elderly participants, depressive symptoms and greater mortality were accounted for by physical health status. Thus, the study found that a strong association between depressive symptoms and poorer physical health exists (Batterham *et al.*, 2010). According to Batterham *et al.* (2010), the findings of this study may be attributed to physiological effects of depression such as

immunological and cardiac processes which are strongly correlated with mortality *risk*. What is interesting to note from this study, is that while there was a strong association between depression and *morbidity*, there was no direct link between depression and *mortality*.

In studies examining the influence of physical activity on mental health and well-being, Hassmén *et al.* (2000) found that the more physically active one is the less depressed, less suppressed anger, less cynical distrust and less perceived stress one feels. In this sense, those who engage in exercise frequently, seem to possess a stronger sense of coherence and a stronger feeling of social integration than their inactive counterparts. Such individuals also seem to perceive their health and fitness to be better than those who exercise less frequently (Hassmén *et al.*, 2000). Similarly, in a review of the literature on physical activity and mental health, Fox (1999) found that physical activity can indirectly improve subjective well-being and life quality by keeping disease and premature death at bay.

Fox's (1999) review of the literature considered the contribution that physical activity may make to a) treatment of mental illness and disorders; b) prevention of mental illness and disorders; c) improvement of mental and physical well-being of those with mental disorders; and d) improvement of mental well-being of the general population. Fox's (1999) review suggests that there is a great deal of convincing evidence to suggest that exercise can be useful in treating and avoiding depressive illnesses, and can be used as a means of reducing stress and anxiety on a daily basis. Additionally, Fox's (1999) review suggests that there is sufficient evidence to show that even single bouts of activity can improve mood and sleep quality and that people who are active are much more likely to rate themselves and their sense of mental well-being positively. Additionally, the "feeling good effect" (Fox, 1999, p. 414) of exercise appears to offer a vehicle for more deep-seated change through improvements in the way in which individuals view their physical selves. According to Fox (1991), when individuals regard their 'physical selves' in a positive light, they seem to experience higher self-esteem and identity change, elements of psychological well-being discussed by several researchers studying psychology approaches to well-being (Keyes, Ryff, 1989). A critical review offered by Scully *et al.* (1998) supports Fox's (1991) argument, suggesting that several extensive reviews of the exercise psychology literature (Mutrie & Biddle, 1995; Martinsen, 1995; McAuley, 1994) offer positive support for the role that exercise may play in the promotion of positive mental health. For example, McAuley (1994) identified a positive relationship between exercise and self-esteem, self-efficacy, psychological well-being and cognitive functioning, as well as a negative correlation between exercise and anxiety, stress and depression.

Based on studies examining the role of social support in physical and mental health, Wong, Wu, Gregorich and Pérez-Stable (2014) summarise 'social support' as a number of characteristics of a network that is available to an individual that might promote well-being and increase resistance to health problems (Cohen, Gottlieb & Underwood, 2000). Early work conducted on social support and physical and mental health conducted by House, Landis and Umberson (1988) suggested that social support processes could positively influence an individual's physical and mental health. Studies

conducted by Berkman and Syme (1979) showed that longer recovery times from illness and higher mortality rates were associated with less social support and having less contact with others. According to Seeman and Berkman (1988) and Seeman and McEwen (1996), individuals with larger social networks are more likely able to tap into different types of social support, such as tangible and emotional support. This is an important finding because higher levels of social support in particular, are associated with more positive patterns of cognitive aging and active social engagement (Seeman, Lusignolo, Albert & Berkman, 2001), as well as decreased levels of depression and increased physical functioning (Gurung, Taylor & Seeman, 2003).

According to Loucks, Berkman, Gruenewald and Seeman (2006), one explanation for the positive effect of social support on health may be the hypothesis that social support reduces mortality under all conditions. For example, research conducted by Lyyra and Heikkinen (2006) shows that emotional support in specific relationships (such as with an intimate partner or one's child) may be associated with decreased mortality and longer survival. Another explanation may be that social support acts as a buffer under stressful conditions (Birditt & Antonucci, 2008; Fung, Yeung, Li & Lang, 2009).

According to Wong *et al.*, (2014), research on the main effects and stress buffering theories of social support have led to greater attention to the type of social support as well as the context within which it is provided. For example, the *availability* of social support appears to be important, especially for women, because they tend to have a greater lifetime risk of developing a functional disability or multiple chronic conditions. This is because women typically have a longer life expectancy than men (Wong *et al.*, 2014). As women age, they also seem to experience more social, financial and cultural constraints than men (Lee Wha, Kim & Young Joe, 2008). According to Bierman and Clancy (2001), older women also tend to be more financially at risk because they are more likely to have participated less in the workforce and generally receive less support from their children compared with older men (Lee Wha *et al.*, 2008).

Litwak, Silverstein, Bengtson and Hirst (2003) suggest that the type of social support that benefits individuals' physical and mental health depends on the *situation* and that the *state of health* of the individual receiving the support. Several researchers (Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Cohen, Mermelstein, Kamarck & Hoberman, 1985; Stewart, Ware, Sherbourne & Wells, 1992) explain social support as being divided into categories based on different types of functional support determined by the degree to which interpersonal relationships serve particular functions. Cohen *et al.* (2000) maintains that the functions of social support that appear to be the most commonly recognised are instrumental aid or tangible, information or advice, emotional support or companionship, as well as validation. In the context of Cohen *et al.*'s (2000) understanding of social support as benefiting health, tangible support refers to the provision of assistance for daily activities, informational support refers to the provision of advice or information about particular service needs and emotional support or companionship refers to

having a person express sympathy, caring and acceptance of the person needing support (Wong *et al.*, 2014).

Finally, in Wong *et al.*'s (2014) study which examined which types of social support were associated with older women's self-report of physical and mental health by asking women to complete a health behaviour survey that included the Medical Outcomes Study-Short Form-12 (MOS SF-12), Wong *et al.* (2014) found that emotional support had the greatest effect for most women on both physical and mental health. The results of this study showed that women tend to obtain their social support from their social support network, which is thought to influence physiological stress responses, psychological states, as well as traits such as self-esteem, health-damaging and health-promoting behaviour and exposure to diseases (Holwerda, Deeg, Beekman, van Tilburg, Stek, Jonker & Schoevers, 2014).

Finally, some determinants of health may be important in understanding well-being from a health perspective. Johnson (2014) outlines five major determinants of health: genetic make-up, lifestyle choices, access to quality, affordable health care, the physical environment and the social environment. At the forefront of health determinants are poverty and inequality (social environment as determinants of health) (Marmot, 2005). Poverty, in the form of material deprivation (such as dirty water and poor nutrition) (physical environment as health determinants), in conjunction with a lack of quality medical care (access to quality, affordable health care as health determinant) accounts for high mortality rates and shortened life spans in countries such as Sierra Leone (Marmot, 2005). Analysis of the global burden of disease has pointed to the importance of risk factors such as being overweight, smoking, alcohol and poor diet in determining health (or lack thereof) (lifestyle choices as health determinant) (WHO, 2002).

According to Rose (1992), it is important to examine the 'cause of the causes' in determining how various aspects affect health. Specifically, it is necessary to determine and understand the social conditions that give rise to high risks of non-communicable disease. Marmot (2005) argues that in addition to understanding how and why for example, poverty causes infectious disease, researchers need to be thinking about how to break the link between poverty and disease. Additionally, Marmot (2005) argues that it is important that researchers inquire into whether the action that is taking place to relieve poverty is having the desired effect. Wilkinson (2005) maintains that the social gradient in health is a particular challenge in determining the effects of poverty-reducing interventions. Where material deprivation is severe, a social gradient in mortality could rise from degrees of deprivation to absolute deprivation. In wealthy countries with low levels of material deprivation, the gradient could change from absolute to relative deprivation. Marmot (2004) related relative deprivation to a broader approach to social functioning and meeting human needs: capabilities (Sen, 1992) or spiritual resources (Fogel, 2000). According to Marmot (2005), it is likely that material or physical needs are important to the gradient in health. In addition to focussing on material conditions and the control of infectious disease, Marmot (2005) recommends that researchers focus on social determinants of health. Farmer (1999,

2003) reports that the circumstances in which people work are as important for communicable disease as they are for non-communicable disease. Social conditions significantly influence both the onset and response to treatment of major infectious disease.

2.3 NON-WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON EXISTING PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE AND WELL-BEING

This section addresses various non-Western conceptualisations of and pathways to well-being. The term ‘indigenous’ is clarified and the influence of culture on well-being discussed. An integrated approach to well-being from an indigenous or non-Western perspective is presented. This approach is aligned with the conceptual framework of the study which is presented in Section 2.5 of this chapter. Figure 2.2: Non-Western Pathways to Well-Being is presented in this section to illustrate how most non-Western societies navigate and negotiate their way toward well-being.

2.3.1 THE INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE ON PATHWAYS TO RESILIENCE

Although our understanding of resilience and well-being has been broadened to account for community and cultural factors, these are still mainly evaluated from the perspective of Eurocentric scientific discourse (Ungar, 2009). According to Ungar (2009), a coherent definition of resilience and well-being that captures the dual focus of the individual and his or her ecology is yet to be presented.

Spencer, Harpalani, Cassidy, Jacobs, Donde, Goss, Munoz-Miller, Charles and Wilson (2006) are of the opinion that a “carefully nuanced approach is particularly needed when considering broad ethnic enclaves and, more generally, all humans’ normative pursuit of stage-specific life course competencies” (Spencer *et al.*, 2006, p. 627). For these authors, the threats faced by youth⁶ - particularly youth from minority ethnic groups, in combination with the successful and unsuccessful strategies that they employ in coping with risks, must be understood both in relation to their maturational and identity formation statuses, as well as in relation to the larger social, cultural and historical contexts of development. Research indicates that many youth manage to achieve good outcomes and demonstrate resilience (Werner, 1989; Werner & Smith, 2001). However, the mediating processes between risk factors and resilient outcomes with regard to youth of colour are infrequently unpacked (Spencer *et al.*, 2006). Many instances of resilience shown by vulnerable youth in spite of adverse living conditions often go unrecognised. As such, these individuals are denied a sense of agency, success and inferred accomplishment (Spencer *et al.*, 2006).

⁶ Within this study, the terms ‘youth’ and ‘individual(s)’ are used interchangeably, depending on the terminology used by the researcher(s) or theorist(s) whose argument or study is being discussed. Within the context of the study, these two terms refer to a person who may encounter significant adversity and who navigates or negotiates his or her way towards protective resources (through a transactional-ecological process) in order to achieve positive adaptation.

Through the International Resilience Project (IRP), it became apparent that finding one uniform explanation for what constitutes resilience would neither be likely nor desirable. The multinational team that worked on the IRP acknowledged the dominance of Westernised conceptualisations of resilience as an intrapsychic construct (Ungar, 2004). However, these models were rejected when the data that was generated failed to support them. Instead, a more contextually-relevant understanding of resilience emerged. This finding shows that objective criteria for evaluating positive outcomes globally, do not exist. It is up to the individual, who is influenced by culture and context, to appraise whether his or her life at a given point in time, is successful. The findings of the IRP highlight the fact that both global and culturally or contextually-specific aspects of resilience exist. Specific characteristics and processes that at-risk youth employ to survive seem to reflect the culture and context in which they live (Ungar, Brown, Liebenberg, Othman, Kwong, Armstrong & Gilgun, 2007).

One of the benefits of building general psychology on a culturally-indigenous knowledge base is that such a psychology could ultimately be far richer than current Eurocentric models. Science as a knowledge construction process is universal for all societies. However, the images, social representations and forms of logic that are used in the creation of knowledge, originate specifically from the cultural heritages of the scientists who co-create this knowledge (Valsiner, 2007).

Slunecko and Hengl (2006) argue that it may be possible to by-pass the “cultural blinders of one society’s heritage” (p. 17) when adopting an indigenous psychology approach to psychological experiences. This is because even the birth-place of psychology, Germany, could be regarded as an indigenous society. The kind of psychology that emerged in Germany in the 19th century was thus also a form of indigenous psychology.

2.3.2 CROSS- AND MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON WELL-BEING

Collectivistic versus individualistic societal orientations are commonly used notions that help to differentiate between Western and non-Western conceptualisations of well-being. Western cultures appear to be grounded more in individualism, while non-Western societies, generally speaking, are more grounded in collectivism. There are important lessons related to happiness and meaning-making that can be learned from taking a closer look at collectivism and individualism as they pertain to well-being.

What *is* known about the relationship between collectivist and individualist societies and well-being is that the way in which researchers go about determining which society experiences higher levels of well-being is complex and relative. It also depends on the definition of well-being employed and the perceived role of culture in a given society. What is *not* known is the impact that *rurality* has on individuals’ or communities’ experience of well-being. Most researchers, in conducting their studies, have chosen to contemplate collectivistic and individualistic orientations to well-being related to wealth.

However, little is said about how either of these orientations, in working towards an understanding of well-being, holds up wherever risk and adversity are rife. Some theorists (Ruce & Steele, 2004) posit that neither collectivism nor individualism in its current form is appropriate for gaining an understanding of well-being in countries with complex, multifaceted historical and contextual backgrounds such as South Africa. According to Rice and Steele (2004) there may be other aspects of culture that are equally important in understanding resilience and how individuals navigate and negotiate their way to positive adaptation.

Existing research shows that it is neither fair nor accurate to claim that one orientation experiences higher levels of well-being than another. Some studies have indicated that collectivist societies may experience lower levels of subjective well-being than individualist societies (Ahuvia, 2002). Veenhoven (1999, 2002) suggests that individualists are thought to create lifestyles that align well with their abilities and preferences (Veenhoven, 1999). As such, they pursue their own intrinsic needs, rather than acting in a manner that serves to meet various social obligations. Rego and Cunha (2009) found a different empirical pattern to be true. They argue that collectivist cultures experience higher levels of subjective well-being because they are assumedly able to 'absorb' the relational resources that communities value and look for in a given context. Collectivists seem to fit well with their environment and seem to experience lower levels of cultural discrepancy (Matsumoto, Kouznetsova, Ray, Ratzlaff, Biehl & Raroque, 1999).

The fit between individualistic or collectivistic paradigms and the cultural context seems to be a reasonable explanation as to why some researchers (Matsumoto *et al.*, 1999; Ramamoorthy & Carroll, 1998; Rego & Cunha, 2009) suggest that collectivistic cultures experience a greater sense of subjective well-being (Ramamoorthy & Carroll, 1998). Matsumoto *et al.* (1999) suggested that individuals with greater cultural discrepancies (as is likely the case in an individualistic culture), for example, between psychological and ecological cultural values, need to employ greater coping strategies to help them manage cultural discrepancies. In doing so, it is probable that such individuals or societies indirectly experience greater negative emotions. Similarly, Lu (2006, p. 205) argues that if an individual is aligned with the widely shared values or behaviours of his culture:

[... his transactions with the social environment are bound to be smooth, as in a sense the societal culture resides inside him. However, if an individual does not share the societal culture, his transactions with the social environment are likely to be conflictual, stressful, confrontational, or resigned, hampering his psychological adjustment and [subjective well-being].

Theoretical and empirical evidence (Florsheim, 1997; Veenhoven, 1999) suggests a more nuanced relationship between individualism, collectivism and well-being. In poor countries, individualistic societies do not experience particularly high levels of subjective well-being (Veenhoven, 1999). In

wealthier countries, individualistic societies experience high levels of subjective well-being (Veenhoven, 1999). This may be because a collectivistic paradigm functions well in an environment where people need to collaborate and share in order to survive and flourish. As wealth accumulates, the dependence that people have on their family, neighbourhood and other networks of generalised social reciprocity may become less important. The erosion of social capital would then lead to individualism. Because individualistic and collectivistic societies have such different worldviews, the nature of subjective well-being in a collectivistic and individualistic culture would also be different.

I find it problematic that both of these arguments employ Western conceptualisations of well-being (in this case subjective well-being) in individualistic and collectivistic contexts to determine which cultures appear 'happier'. I posit that if we are to know how collectivistic, non-Western societies experience well-being (and to what degree it is experienced), it is not useful to employ a Western conceptualisation of well-being in assessments of non-Western communities. We need to use appropriate methodologies, concepts and ideas derived from non-Western research studies to understand how non-Western societies navigate and negotiate their way toward positive adjustment.

Various studies (Neff, 2007; Rice & Steele, 2004; Vorster, Wissing, Venter, Kruger, Kruger, Malan, de Ridder, Veldman, Steyn, Margetts & MacIntyre, 2000) provide examples of why researchers cannot rely on pre-existing conceptualisations of collectivism and individualism to understand well-being. Rice and Steele (2004) found that different cultures produce people with different levels of subjective well-being, and that aspects of culture that influence well-being do not give way quickly or easily. Neff (2007) found that there appears to be a 'well-being hierarchy' in South Africa, due to the legacy of apartheid, which is based on race and ethnicity. Additionally, Neff (2007) found that to a certain extent, there may be cultural differences associated with well-being, which exist even between groups in South Africa. Finally, Vorster *et al.* (2000) found that in South Africa, subjective well-being seems to improve relative to the degree of urbanisation that the individual experiences, as well as in relation to one's socioeconomic status.

These three studies all point out that not enough research about resilience and well-being exists in the South African context to allow us to say, comprehensively, how well-being occurs in that context. It has been hypothesised that these occurrences are the result of the complex structure that exists in South Africa, but at present there is not enough evidence to argue this point one way or the other. Furthermore, it does not yet seem clear, exactly what this structure is, or how and why it affects resilience and well-being.

2.3.3 INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVES ON WELL-BEING

2.3.3.1 The Influence of Indigenous Well-Being Knowledge Systems

In non-Western societies, indigenous psychology perspectives on well-being are informed by the indigenous well-being knowledge systems (IWBKS) which a community observes. A fundamental principle of IWBKS is that individuals are not distinct or isolated (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Gergen, Gulerce, Lock & Misra, 1996; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Pflug, 2009). Rather, they are thought to exist in relation to their community and their environment. This belief is informed by the spiritual, cultural, racial and ethnic spheres which interact and are interdependent (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Highlen, 1996; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Lee, 1996; Queener & Martin, 2001). Figure 2.2 illustrates the ways in which indigenous well-being knowledge systems function so that individuals and communities are able to experience well-being.

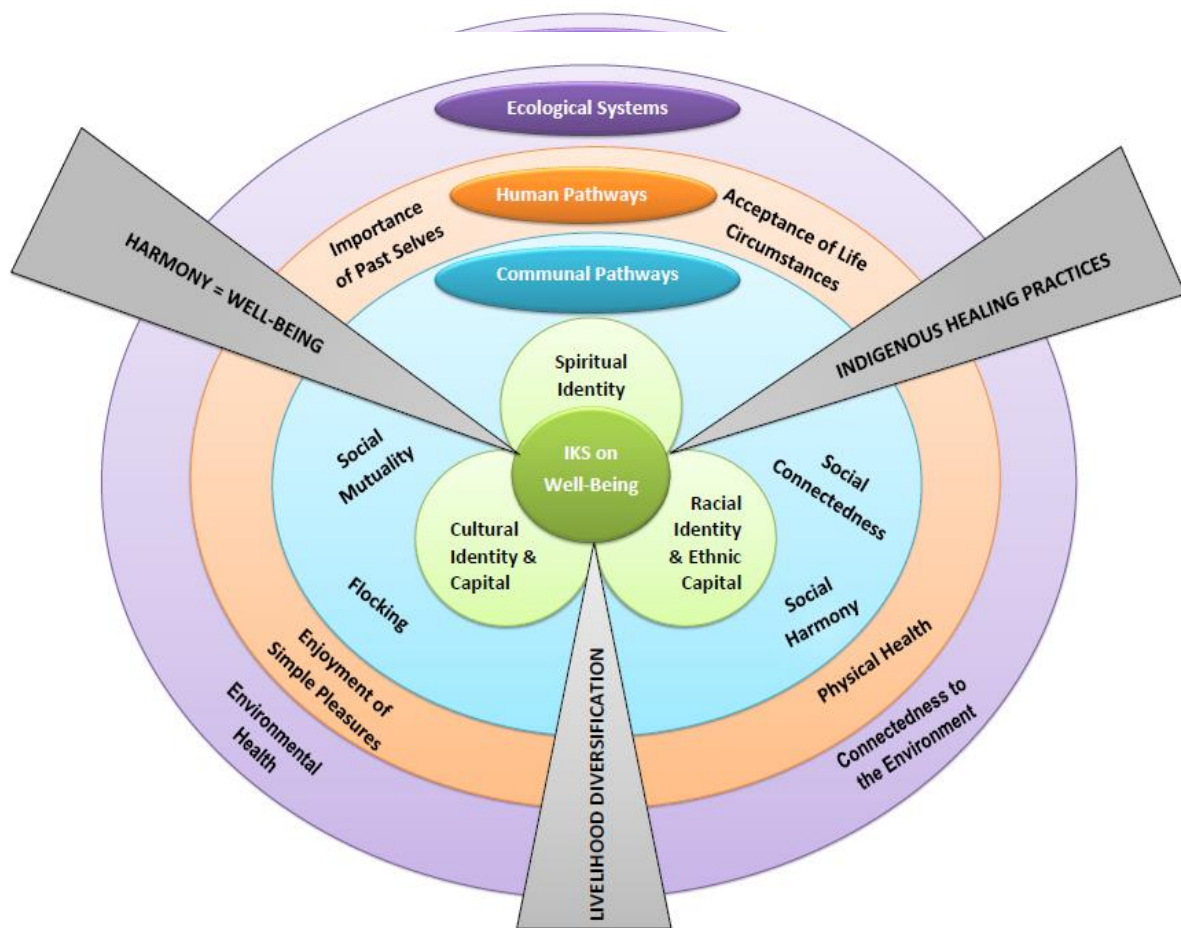


Figure 2.2: Non-Western Pathways to Well-Being

Within the IWBKS framework, the term 'cultural identity and capital' refers to the notion that different modes of behaviour, values and attitudes exist that are suited to positive adjustment within a given society (Ether & Deaux, 1994; Lee & Davis, 2000; Oishi, 2000; Wilson & Constantine, 1999). The way in which one interprets and makes sense of these cultural elements and assimilates these understandings

into an existing self-perceived identity all form part of one's indigenous well-being knowledge system (Constantine & Sue, 2006; Neville & Lilly, 2000; Utsey, Ponterotto, Reynolds & Cancelli, 2000). King *et al.* (2009) believe that "cultural identity depends not only on access to culture and heritage but also on opportunities for cultural expression and cultural endorsement within society's institutions" (p.77). In this light, culture, and an individual's understanding of its relevance to life, will affect, inform and filter through to each facet of one's existence. It will also play an integral role in how one navigates and negotiates well-being.

According to Houkamau and Sibley (2011), international research on the relationship between culture and identity supports a "culture-as-cure" perspective (p. 379). Such a perspective demonstrates that a positive view of one's own culture is associated with a range of favourable social, psychological and health outcomes. A great deal of international research has reported on the positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological constructs such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, personal mastery and locus of control. Higher levels of acculturation have also been associated with higher levels of preventative health behaviours among many ethnic minority groups.

Research that focuses on the well-being of people from various ethnic groups internationally has focused on enhancing the self-esteem of individual members of groups by encouraging engagement with a group's language and cultural practices (Tucker, 1999; Zimmerman, Israel, Schulz & Checkoway, 1992). This is because most ethnic groups are endowed with exclusive traditions which enable members to search within and find powerful sources of personal dignity and pride (Hutnik, 1991). Additional research suggests that those individuals who are part of an ethnic minority and choose to accept this aspect of their identity, and who are knowledgeable about the culture of their group, seem to fare better on various measures of psychological well-being (Belgrave, Cherry, Cunningham, Walwyn, Latlaka-Rennert & Phillips, 1994; Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004).

Rather than undergoing the cognitively taxing process of retrieving, weighing and appraising a wide variety of personal information, and then translating this judgement into a numeric response to determine how happy one is, Schwarz and Strack (1999) believe that many people rely on cues that are readily accessible and salient at the time of making judgements about their lives. More often than not, culture is an important one of these cues. According to Triandis (1989), cultures emphasise different elements of experience and give priority to different types of information. In this way, culture plays a fundamental role in determining what types of information are persistently salient among members of a specific culture.

On the subject of the influence of race and ethnicity on IWBKS, Constantine and Sue (2006) found that people of colour tend to have positive racial and ethnic perceptions of themselves. The internalisation of such perceptions is important to their well-being because assimilating positive notions of race and

ethnicity into one's identity helps people to feel as though they belong to and are a meaningful and useful part of their community (Ether & Deaux, 1994; Neville & Lilly, 2000; Utsey *et al.*, 2000). Doing so also tends to result in individuals demonstrating resilience in the face of significant change and high levels of stress (Constantine & Sue, 2006), particularly when living in societies characterised by a history of oppression and discrimination. Crocker, Luthanen, Blaine and Broadnax (1994) found that the degree to which individuals positively assessed their ethnic or racial group (a term coined as 'collective self-esteem') may be regarded as having a significant impact on their health and well-being. In instances where individuals were able to acknowledge and separate how they felt from how the rest of society felt about their group, the effects of discrimination (which typically affects well-being negatively) were mitigated (Lee, 2003). Furthermore, identifying with one's racial or ethnic group, even when that group forms the minority, increases one's sense of belonging and helps people to feel accepted. The added investment in one's ethnic group and the way that this group makes one feel, appear to be a worthy pathway to well-being which affects and directs one's experiences of and responses to other dimensions of life as further pathways to well-being (Crocker *et al.*, 1994).

The spiritual meaning system, or the understandings of various metaphysical levels of existence that one observes, also forms part of one's indigenous well-being knowledge system (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Cook & Wiley, 2000; Garrett & Wilbur, 1999; Helms & Cook, 1999; Queener & Martin, 2001). This system may comprise elements or beliefs specific to a certain religion, defined by a relationship with a deity through a formalised institution (such as Christianity) (Falicov, 1999; Koss-Chioina, 1995; Myers, 1999). Alternatively, it may comprise beliefs and customs represented by alternative indigenous spiritual forces, determined by one's cultural and ethnic heritage (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998). For example, in African cultures good health extends to the well-being of one's 'spiritual environment'. The presence of certain 'good' or 'bad' spirits, witches or sorcerers in this environment significantly affects the degree to which one experiences well-being (Cocks & Møller, 2006). In such instances it may be necessary to defer to a higher power, or strengthen one's own resistance and that of one's family to withstand harm.

One's spiritual identity and the ways in which one goes about maintaining and restoring spiritual harmony are integrally linked to both one's cultural and ethnic identities. For example, in certain Asian cultures where Buddhism is practised, emphasis is placed on harmonising relationships between the individual and the rest of the world (Wallace, 2001). Thus, an individual wanting to be well must look after his or her spiritual health as well as deal with relationships with other people and with the environment (Barnes, 1998; Heinrich, Corbine & Thomas, 1990; Vontress, 1991). Consequently, an individual's religious or spiritual orientation will to a large degree determine how he or she behaves in other areas of life with a view to experiencing well-being.

Internationally, it has been found that individuals involved in spiritual or religious life may experience greater well-being than those who are not (Daaleman, Cobb & Frey, 2001; Kim, Seidlitz, Ro, Evinger &

Duberstein, 2004). This is because spiritually-well individuals express themselves through trust, honesty, integrity, altruism, compassion and service (Chapman, 1987). According to Park (2003), spiritually-based beliefs and practices provide strategies for finding solutions to life's problems, as well as peace of mind. Some previous studies have demonstrated that spirituality moderates various relationships (Davis, 2005; Fabricatore, Handal & Fenzel, 2000; Kim & Seidlitz, 2002; Young, Cashwell & Shcherbakova, 2000); however, a study conducted by Temane and Wissing (2006) went one step further by indicating a mediational role of spirituality in the dynamics of context and psychological well-being (Temane & Wissing, 2006). Overall, the findings of Temane and Wissing's (2006) study indicate that spirituality is important in the lives of people, and that it may be important for psychological well-being for a number of reasons (Koenig, 2004). For example, spirituality may be regarded as fostering a positive world-view, as well as meaning and purpose. Additionally, it may make it easier for an individual to become psychologically-integrated, provide hope and a sense of personal empowerment, as well as a sense of control. Moreover, it may provide guidance for decision-making, offer answers to ultimate questions, and provide social support (Temane & Wissing, 2006).

2.3.3.2 Interdependence and Harmony in the Indigenous Well-Being System

Given the interdependent nature of the various spheres of life, non-Western, indigenous perspectives on well-being believe that if 'ill-health' is experienced in one sphere, all the other spheres will suffer, causing imbalance to the system as a whole (Krippner, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 1992; Singh, 1999; Sue & Sue, 1999; Wing, 1998). When this happens, it becomes necessary to restore harmony and balance to the overarching indigenous well-being system. This may be done through a variety of indigenous healing practices such as herbalism (Falicov, 1999; Garrut & Wilbur, 1999; Heinrich *et al.*, 1990), communication with ancestors (Cocks & Møller, 2002; du Toit, 1998; Ngubane, 1977), fasts (Barnes, 1998; Pourat, Lubben, Wallace & Moon, 1999) and warding off evil spirits (Buhrmann, 1986; du Pisani, 1988). Naturally, the indigenous healing intervention practices which are mobilised are determined by one's indigenous well-being knowledge system. For example, King *et al.* (2009) found that in the Aboriginal Ojibway tradition, four different elements of life (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual) are intricately woven together and interact to support a strong, healthy human being. In this tradition, balance extends beyond the individual. In order to receive good health and healing, one must live in harmony with others, the community and the spirit world. Land, food and health also play an important role in the Ojibway tradition and are key components in the notion of "being alive well" (King *et al.*, 2009, p. 76).

2.3.3.3 Indigenous Healing Intervention Practices

The literature on indigenous pathways to well-being emphasises the role that indigenous healing intervention practices have on the indigenous well-being system. Because health and well-being are regarded by non-Western societies as interdependent and holistic, it stands to reason that a

transactional relationship exists between a given society's indigenous healing intervention practices and its communal, human and ecological 'ways of being'. Insofar as one's cultural, ethnic and spiritual identities determine the various indigenous healing intervention practices that individuals (and communities) adopt, so too do these healing practices influence and determine the value assigned to, and the emphasis placed on certain aspects of communal, human and ecological 'life' (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Morita, 1998; Garrutt & Wilbur, 1999; Shimabukuro, Daniels & D'Andrea, 1999; Wallace, 2001).

For example, in restoring harmony to the indigenous well-being system, individuals or communities may be required to participate in a variety of behavioural interventions (such as Morita or Naikan therapy) (Morita, 1998), culture-based creative arts practices (such as Cuento therapy, folktales, song and dance) (Bruchac, 1991; Bruchac & Caduto, 1991; Constantine, Malgady & Rogler, 1986; Hamilton, 1985), or even develop certain herbal remedies or 'mutis' (Cocks & Møller, 2006). Additionally, they may be required to engage in certain social strategies for maintaining and restoring good health; for example, maintaining dignity, avoiding jealousy and envy, or providing support to the sick (Cocks & Møller, 2006). Depending on the aspects or dimensions of communal, human and ecological life that are evident in a given society, certain indigenous healing intervention practices will take precedence. In societies where for example, herbalism is practised (Barnes, 1998; Falicov, 1999; Garrutt & Wilbur, 1999; Heinrich *et al.*, 1990), the environment within which one lives would also have a role to play in the indigenous healing intervention practices that are accessed, depending on the natural or physical resources available.

2.3.3.4 Livelihood Diversification

The concept of livelihood diversification was made meaningful by Ellis (2007) and refers to a portfolio of activities and social support capabilities that rural (and in some cases urban and peri-urban) households may mobilise in order to survive and improve their standard of living. Accessing various livelihood strategies may occur as a deliberate household strategy (Stark, 1991) or as an involuntary response to crisis (Davies, 1996).

The term 'livelihood' in the context of livelihood diversification strategies refers to more than just income (Lipton & Maxwell, 1992). According to Ellis (2007), livelihoods encompass income, both in cash and in kind, as well as the social institutions (such as kin, family, one's compound, village etc.), gender relations and property rights required to sustain and support a given standard of living. Many studies have found that social and kinship networks are important for facilitating and sustaining diverse income portfolios (Berry, 1989, 1993; Bryceson, 1996). These networks are critical for interpreting the constraints and options of individuals and families distinguished by gender, income, wealth, access and assets. For example, access rights to land may be a key determinant in the type of livelihood strategy pursued by certain households. Likewise, social prescriptions on permissible courses of action of women may result in certain livelihood options being available to women as opposed to men (Davies &

Hossain, 1997; Dwyer & Bruce, 1988). Livelihoods may also include access to, and benefits derived from, social and public services provided by the government or municipality; for example, education, health services, roads and water supplies (Blackwood & Lunch, 1994; Lipton & van der Gaag, 1993).

2.3.3.5 Communal Pathways to Well-Being

An extensive review of the literature on communal pathways to well-being indicates the prevalence of four major themes related to the importance of social relationships for well-being: social connectedness, social harmony, social mutuality and flocking.

Social connectedness refers directly to the notion that people live and function in relation to others. In this light, a complex interplay exists between being independent and able to cope on one's own, being dependent but feeling as if one can ask for and accept help where necessary and being willing and feeling able to give assistance to others in their time of need (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Fozdar, 2008; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; King *et al.*, 2009; Shu & Zhu, 2009). Various studies have highlighted the role that both affective and instrumental support play (Constantine & Sue, 2006; Cox, 2012; Siu & Phillips, 2002; Suh & Oishi, 2002) in well-being. Friends and family both play an important role in providing for the affective and instrumental needs of others. In terms of affective support (Siu & Phillips, 2002), family and friends seem to come together to create an internal support network for people, which functions as a source of personal empowerment and cultural resources for facilitating coping schemata, coping strategies and adaptive coping resources (Constantine & Sue, 2006). These affective support resources enable individuals to adjust their outlook on adversity, as well as their subjective interpretations of their environment when they are faced with various hardships. The term 'provision of instrumental support' refers to the ability to offer or receive practical support strategies: these would typically include having someone to help with the provision of fresh food; looking after another's children while he or she is at work; or helping out around the house, all of which play a role in uplifting morale and the sense of being able to cope with one's day-to-day responsibilities (Siu & Phillips, 2002).

Social connectedness involves a degree of striving for independence because it is important to ensure that others are not burdened to the degree that *they* are not able to cope. This may occur because their perceived sense of responsibility to others in the community exceeds whatever they are realistically able to offer both affectively and instrumentally (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004). Maintaining harmony and equilibrium between 'give-and-take' in the community becomes important, because without this balance, additional stressors in the community may be created (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004).

Social harmony refers to the importance of feeling included (sense of belonging) in one's community, living with a sense of safety and experiencing peace. Social harmony is integrally connected to social connectedness, as well as to social mutuality and flocking. In order to experience social harmony, people need to be socially connected to and socially engaged (referring to social mutuality) with their

social sphere. People must also be able to capitalise on the social resources available within their environment (referring to flocking). Social harmony differs from social connectedness because it focusses on the *quality* of relationships with others in one's environment (Fozdar, 2008; King *et al.*, 2009; Lu & Gilmour, 2006; Pflug, 2009; Sotgiu, Galati, Manzano & Rognoni, 2011). For example, Thomas, Cairney, Gunthorpe, Paradies and Sayers (2010) argue that indigenous perspectives on mental health include being in harmony with one's country, lawfulness, social and kinship relationships. Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.* (2004) regard the avoidance of conflict, healthy relationships with one's life partner, children and extended family, as well as with friends and neighbours as important to well-being. Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.* (2004) also believe that in maintaining positive relationships with others, individuals are more likely to experience feelings of security and a sense of inclusion in their community. Lu and Gilmour (2006) maintain that the collective welfare of one's community (defined by the health of the social relationships that make up a community) is more important than the interests of individuals living within that community. Therefore, if an individual is to contribute positively to the quality of relationships within a community (so that social harmony may be experienced) then that person may sometimes need to make sacrifices for the good of the village (King *et al.*, 2009).

Social mutuality refers to the notion that in order to experience well-being from a non-Western perspective, one must act in accordance with one's cultural group (Diener, Gohm, Suh & Oishi, 2000; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Kitayama, Markus & Kurokawa, 2000; Oishi, 2000). For example, it may be necessary to ensure that one's required roles and responsibilities are performed in line with certain cultural norms and standards. Moreover, it may be necessary to act on the basis of others' needs and expectations when making decisions and engaging in certain behaviours. Kitayama *et al.* (2000) argue that in striving for social mutuality, it is important to 'fit in' with one's culture and social group. Individuals may need to adjust the status and nature of their relationships so that they become members of that group. They may also need to constrain, tame or condition their desires and wishes to facilitate interpersonal harmony and unity (Uchida, Norasakkunkit & Kitayama, 2004).

Acting in line with community-based values such as respect is important in ensuring social mutuality. In most indigenous societies, respect is regarded as fundamental to well-being. In the context of Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study, respect is defined as listening to, and following the advice of the others in the community, particularly one's elders. Respect is regarded as important to the experience of well-being, because it is seen as a marker of success, as well as an indicator of one's social standing in the community. Moreover, the level of respect which an individual receives is regarded as a reflection of the wisdom which that individual holds. Respect affirms an individual's success as a parent and indicates that the individual's children will care for them in the future. All these markers of respect are also important cultural indicators of social mutuality, and are strived for by most non-Western societies.

The goals which people strive towards also play an important role in the degree of social mutuality which they are able to achieve. According to Oishi (2000), pathways to well-being differ across cultures

depending on their salient needs and values. The goals which a culture or society strives toward will also be determined by its needs and values. Therefore, if people are to live happily and in relation with others, they must take into account the external standards which their culture, family or village may exert on their lifestyle, and try to live in accordance with these standards. For example, marriage is typically regarded as an important cultural institution which non-Western young men and women strive towards. In pursuing a healthy marriage, many young men and women are able to uphold the traditional values of their culture and realise one of the goals which their parents and community as a whole have set for them (Diener *et al.*, 2000).

The last theme related to communal pathways to well-being which emerged from the literature pertains to the idea of ‘*flocking*’ (Ebersöhn, 2012; 2014). The central tenet of flocking is that individuals are regarded as related to or connected with others (as discussed in previous sections) via relationships. These relationships imply that individuals are also connected with many resources through the relationships that they build with others, which may be used to address adversity. By virtue of the relationships which individuals develop with others in their community, they also develop relationship skills which can be used to “access, mobilise and sustain resources used to counteract ongoing risk” (Ebersöhn, 2012; p. 30). Yip, Subramanian, Mitchell, Lee, Wang and Kawachi (2007), make use of the term “cognitive social capital” (p. 35) to explain a phenomenon similar to flocking, where collective action (such as trust, reciprocity and sense of belonging) and emotional support are used to facilitate social networks and support mechanisms with a view to experiencing well-being. Farid and Lazarus (2008) refer to “social capital” (p. 1053) as processes such as trust, social support and cooperation which can be accessed and mobilised to enhance relationships and improve the experience of well-being. One factor that all of these terms have in common is that they involve a process of mobilising networks of kinship, acquaintances and ties in order to manage and address stress and risk.

2.3.3.6 Human Pathways to Well-Being

Human pathways to well-being are defined as pathways important to individuals in their personal capacity that affect well-being. In order to understand human pathways to well-being, we need to acknowledge the role that one’s indigenous well-being knowledge system plays in one’s perceptions and experiences of certain phenomena. For example, Suh (2009) argues that the self stands at the juncture of culture and well-being. In order to understand how and why certain cultures perceive well-being in a given light, it is necessary to understand how certain cultures influence the self. This is because culture provides form and shape to the self and influences how individuals think and feel about various aspects of their lives. As mentioned previously, most non-Western cultures believe that an individual exists in relation to others. Thus, individuals are considered to be fundamentally socially-oriented (Yang, 2000), situation-centred (Hsu, 1953), interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) and inextricably bound with others through emotional ties (Kim & Choi, 1994).

Research (Suh, Diener, Oishi & Triandis, 1998; Suh, 2009) suggests that the self plays a central role in determining the relative weight which is assigned to internal or external information when making judgements about one's life satisfaction. Traditional Western psychology approaches maintain that the most effective way to judge one's life is to become introspective and reflect on one's internal feelings and thoughts (Suh *et al.*, 1998). Individualistic communities, where the independent elements of self-esteem are endorsed, match this traditional assumption. However, when individuals regard themselves first and foremost as living in relation to others, the way in which they evaluate themselves seems to be based most significantly on external social information.

Four prevalent human pathways to well-being could be considered in relation to the greater indigenous well-being system: the importance of the past self, acceptance of one's life circumstances, physical health and enjoyment of simple pleasures. According to Kim, Cai, Gilliland, Chiu, Xia and Tam (2012), the way that individuals consider their past selves may be just as important as how they judge their present selves when talking about well-being in a non-Western context. People originating from European American cultures seem to discount the past when evaluating their present lives. However, people from non-Western cultures appear to respect the past when evaluating their current lives. The amount of attention paid to one's past (while considering one's present) may be linked to the fact that the self is perceived differently in various cultures (Kim *et al.*, 2012). The fact that the self is either intertwined with or separated from the present and past thus influences how much thought is given to one's past when making judgements about the state of one's well-being. Non-Western populations appear to have a greater tendency to consider their present selves as a reflection of and connection to, their past selves (Briley, 2009; Briley & Aaker, 2006; Ji, Guo, Zhang & Messervey, 2009; Morris & Peng, 1994; Wang & Conway, 2004). Moreover, indigenous communities believe that they may benefit by reflecting on and learning from the past (Briley, 2009; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992; Wang & Conway, 2004).

Insight into how past selves are incorporated into current experiences of well-being may have important implications for understanding the ways in which non-Western societies choose to live their lives. For instance, Asian Americans may be more culturally-prepared to gain life satisfaction by indulging in nostalgic memories of glory from the past even though this type of nostalgia may actually lead to them losing life satisfaction through the recollection of unpleasant experiences in the past (Kim *et al.*, 2012). Both pleasant and unpleasant events in the past may have a longer lasting impact on the subjective well-being of Asian Americans than they would have on European Americans. On the one hand, this tendency may prepare Asian Americans to learn from past experience and would support them in improving their current selves (Cheng & Schweitzer, 1996; Stevenson & Stigler, 1992). On the other hand, they may be more inclined than European Americans to indulge in past glory or allow themselves to be haunted by their past (Kim *et al.*, 2012). This would make it very difficult for them to move forward with their current lives.

Socially, Asian Americans may value their past positive social relations more than European Americans. This is because their current life satisfaction is partly contingent on these social relations. However, they may also find it more difficult to forgive and forget the social harms inflicted on them by people in their previous social networks or life stages (Kim *et al.*, 2012). In contrast, the fact that European Americans do not seem too concerned about learning from the past, may prime them to switch their focus and invest their efforts in different domains of their lives (Heine, Kitayama, Lehman, Takata, Ide, Leung & Matsumoto, 2001). This in turn may help to enforce the dissociation between the past and present selves. Nonetheless, this practice may also prepare European Americans to let bygones be bygones and move on to new projects in their lives, rather than holding on to the wrongs of the past. They may also be more willing to set higher goals for the future, having accomplished current goals, because they do not indulge as much in past glory. European Americans are also less likely to hold grudges and are more likely to “forgive and forget” (Kim *et al.*, 2012, p. 1116). Non-Western societies share a history of oppression, submission and unfair discrimination. Experiences which one had in the past, as well as the ways in which these experiences influenced one’s perception of self and what is important, are integral to understanding the human pathways to well-being.

Acceptance of life conditions is related to beliefs about the past self. A prevalent human pathway to well-being is the ability to accept life as it happens and to remain calm and peaceful as one’s life unfolds (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004). Findings from Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*’s (2004) study found that when individuals from non-Western societies were able to let go of past hurts (such as those caused by a history of oppression and discrimination), they were more likely to experience peace of mind and a sense of internal calm. They made a conscious effort to strive for a sense of peace in spite of the wrongs and the implications of their past. Certain non-Western cultural influences have been noted as significant in societies that strive for peace and satisfaction with life ‘as it is’. For example, populations that adopt Buddhist beliefs and practices regard the acceptance of fate as important in the experience of well-being and life satisfaction. Moreover, Buddhists believe that karma may support individuals and communities in accepting difficult life situations and that letting go of negative thoughts may ultimately lead to a better quality of life, because people are more likely to be content with what they have.

Pflug (2009) reported similar findings in a non-Western African context, where South African participants indicated that the experience of a calm, balanced mental or affective state such as contentment or peace of mind was integral to the ‘human’ experience of well-being. In a similar vein, Taylor (2008) found that while Arctic populations value the ability to determine their own destinies, being able to embrace some of the less positive effects of poverty and modernisation was also important in shaping their experience of the lives they that they lead and the opportunities which they have been granted. Thus, acknowledgement of what one has, and an appreciation of one’s life in general, may result in greater well-being. This is because people are able to live in the present and make the best use of what they have, as opposed to trying constantly to upgrade their lifestyle to the specifications of other, or

different societies that do not share the same ideals, history or contextual influences as one's current society.

Maintaining a state of optimal physical health is regarded as an important indigenous pathway to well-being; after all, a person's productivity is often linked to how healthy he or she is. In many non-Western developing contexts, individuals rely on high productivity and output levels in order to experience well-being. In such contexts, individuals report that their well-being depends greatly upon their ability to perform key roles associated with work or family (Elliot-Schmidt & Strong, 1997). If individuals are unwell, then they will not be able to perform, in a proper manner, all the occupational or traditional roles regarded as being important in their culture. Findings by Sotgiu *et al.* (2011) revealed that non-Western communities regarded health as important because when a person's body is functioning well, that person has the opportunity to organise his or her present and future existence, and to achieve satisfying levels of subjective well-being.

Finally, a study conducted by Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.* (2004) found that people living in non-Western, indigenous contexts valued the ability to enjoy simple pleasures in life. This was important to participants because it helped them to stay relaxed and unburdened by worry brought on by risk and stress encountered each day. The simple pleasures referred to in Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study pertained to interactions with others in the community, combining work with other pleasurable events such as socialising with colleagues, as well as engaging in solitary pleasures such as gardening.

2.3.3.7 Ecological Pathways to Well-Being

According to Berkes and Folke (1994), people who live within a given environment for prolonged periods of time (such as local villagers whose family have resided in a given area for many generations) often have local knowledge and understanding about their environment that allows them to conduct those activities that are a necessary part of everyday life. Typically, the knowledge which local people hold about their environment and the role that it plays in their lives is substantial in relation to the knowledge that outsiders are able to gather. This knowledge seems to be culturally transmitted and is accumulated over the span of a few generations. A great deal of the information that local people possess about their environment is regarded as traditional knowledge (Pálsson, 1991). This knowledge allows them to organise and manage their environment in ways that are meaningful to the rest of their indigenous knowledge system.

A study conducted by Brown and Kasser (2005) found that the environment (and one's relationship with the environment) play an important role in the well-being of individuals and the collective. Well-being may be enhanced by engaging in deliberate efforts to include elements of one's environment in daily life (Eigner, 2001; Sohr, 2001). Two major themes emerge from the literature on the environment's

relationship to health and well-being: the effect that environmental 'health' has on well-being and the 'state of connectedness' to the environment in the experience of well-being.

Environmental health in the context of this literature review refers to any threats within the environment (for example natural disasters such as droughts, floods, lack of resources etc.) and how these threats affect the well-being of individuals and communities. A variety of environmental concerns such as the quality of water, land or soil, have a significant effect on the health of the communities who experience these conditions (Crighton *et al.*, 2003). The environmental conditions to which one is exposed have a direct and lasting impact on many facets of life, such as livelihood, income, local migration and at times, even the state of political affairs (Corvalan *et al.*, 2005). An individual or community's economic and physical security, freedom, choice and social relations may be affected.

Whenever simple environmental resources such as water and food are jeopardised because of a state of poor environmental health, people living within these environments are severely affected. If there is no water, then it is not possible to produce food; human health may be affected adversely and economic development and geopolitical stability compromised. The use of certain environmental resources needed for traditional healing interventions such as herbalism, mutis and animal products may not be possible. Where there is no food, poor, rural countries or communities are severely affected because they depend on productive ecosystems to provide them with basic nutrition in order to survive. The promotion of rural development may also suffer (Corvalan *et al.*, 2005).

The health of the environment is particularly important in poor or marginalised communities because of the high degree of cumulative risk and adversity to which these communities are exposed (Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014). Being part of an unhealthy environment exacerbates the already present risk characteristic of many rural settings. Longitudinal research conducted by Ebersöhn (2012, 2014) has highlighted the way in which individuals and communities 'flock' together to make use of resources that *are* available to them, in order to counter the demands of their environment.

Connectedness to the environment is captured by the cultural, spiritual and recreational services which one's environment may provide as a pathway to well-being. According to Corvalan *et al.* (2005), people and communities obtain many non-material benefits from their environment which are highly valued. For example, engagement with the environment may provide opportunities for tourism, recreation, aesthetic appreciation, inspiration and education. All of these non-material aspects related to one's connectedness with the environment have been found to improve mental health, enhance one's subjective sense of culture or place, as well as improving one's knowledge of natural and social sciences.

A study in Australia (Kelly, Lewin, Stain, Coleman, Fitzgerald, Perkins & Beard, 2011) revealed that residents value their environment and find solace in a deeper personal meaning that is not affiliated with

an institution. Furthermore, the potential importance of location for people living in Australia was demonstrated by the small but significant contribution of perceived barriers to services and supports, and the important role detected for perceived community support. This said, Kelly *et al.* (2011) do point out that more detailed pathways are needed, which investigate how these factors impact with rural events such as droughts.

In common with the findings of other studies of the living environment in Australia, Butler and Cohen (2010) found that older people living in rural areas face many challenges. However, those people still feel that these challenges are far outweighed by the benefits which they experience from their rural communities and natural surroundings. Beauty, space, a slower pace and community connections were all aspects of rural life that participants in Butler and Cohen's study treasured. Additionally, those participants expressed the value of nature to their lives and how it contributed to their well-being because it provides them with a sense of peace and safety, and allows them to interact with nature. Furthermore, the aesthetic capital with which they were provided, such as having a connection with natural beauty, also promoted well-being (Butler & Cohen, 2010).

Traditional practices such as seasonal cycles of thanks and celebration have also been linked to the ecological system and play an important role in developing the social capital and well-being of non-Western societies. A study conducted by Rigby, Rosen, Berry and Hart (2011) looked at the effect that the environment had on aboriginal culture, which regards connectedness to the land as a very important pathway to well-being. This study referred to activities termed 'Caring for Country' where communities spend time gathering crops for food and medicine as well as performing ceremonies in their natural environment and protecting sacred areas; these activities all help aboriginal people to feel connected to the land and as a result they experience superior health outcomes and positive adaptation. Whenever members of the community were not able to participate in environmental activities that they typically found meaningful and enjoyable, their quality of life was significantly compromised.

2.4 EXPLORING THE DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN WESTERN AND NON-WESTERN WELL-BEING KNOWLEDGE

In previous sections, I discussed in detail, the way in which pathways to well-being are conceptualised from both Western and non-Western perspectives. In this section, I conclude the discussion on well-being literature by juxtaposing Western and non-Western pathways to well-being in a way which is meaningful to the purpose of this study.

Western and non-Western approaches to well-being recognise that well-being will manifest and be experienced differently, based on the culture and other factors prevalent in a given society (Wissing, Wissing, du Toit & Temane, 2006). What is regarded as a 'good' life in one culture or context, may not necessarily be so in another.

In comparisons of Western and non-Western well-being, the dominant cultural orientations still appear to be those of individualism and collectivism (Diener & Suh, 2000; Suh, Diener, Oishi & Triandis, 1998; Triandis, 2000). Western individualistic societies regard the self and the actualisation of the self as being integral to well-being. In Western societies, individuals are thought to achieve well-being through the pursuit of autonomy, independence and differentiation. In non-Western, collectivistic societies, the individual is regarded as interdependent to other forces in the environment such as the community, spiritual world and indigenous knowledge systems specific to his or her culture. Thus, well-being is attained through the establishment, maintenance or restoration of balance to the entire system within which individuals and communities function. In short, well-being in Western cultures is predominantly guided and determined according to the needs of the individual, whereas in non-Western societies, it is predominantly guided and determined by the needs of the group and the broader indigenous well-being system.

In Western societies, well-being is focussed on meeting the needs of the individual; consequently, the primary pathways to well-being in Western contexts appear to be through the attainment of personal happiness and optimal psychological functioning. Individuals strive toward personal goals such as autonomy, competency, personal growth, self-acceptance and the experience of flow. In non-Western societies, the primary pathway to well-being is through maintaining or restoring balance to the well-being system at large. Therefore, individuals and communities engage in activities and pursuits across a number of life spheres (communal, human, spiritual and ecological) in an attempt to bring balance to the system. Whereas the health of the community and one's social context is central to non-Western pathways to well-being, the social realm features less prominently in Western pathways to well-being. Although social aspects such as positive relations with others and optimal social functioning (defined as social coherence, contribution, integration, acceptance and actualisation) have recently been given more recognition as Western pathways to well-being, these are still regarded as secondary to individual or human pathways and are regarded as important in the sense that they contribute to the overall sense of individual well-being, rather than being of benefit to the collective.

2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK INSPIRED BY BRONFENBRENNER'S BIO-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY

I developed the conceptual framework while reviewing literature to account for my conceptual meaning making before data collection. The conceptual framework presented here is therefore a by-product of the literature review which I have already presented. As discussed in Chapter 1, literature on (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being is limited (Ebersöhn, 2012; Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010; Maree *et al.*, 2006; Moletsane, 2011). In order to contribute to indigenous psychology knowledge that is based on (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being, it is necessary to know what well-being theory posits with regard to current Western and non-Western well-

being. Existing Western and non-Western pathways to well-being can then be compared to (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being using existing knowledge from the initial conceptual space. In Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1.6 I show how I use findings to revise this initial conceptualisation, and present a revised conceptualisation of (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being derived from the data.

The conceptual framework includes relevant well-being understandings from both Western and non-Western well-being literature. As I have explained, non-Western studies on well-being are limited. Since the current study aims to inquire specifically into non-Western theories and approaches to well-being, I foreground non-Western well-being literature in the conceptual framework. Details on individual categories and subcategories included in the framework were provided in Section 2.2.2 and 2.3.3 of this chapter. Figure 2.3 graphically represents the conceptual framework for the study.

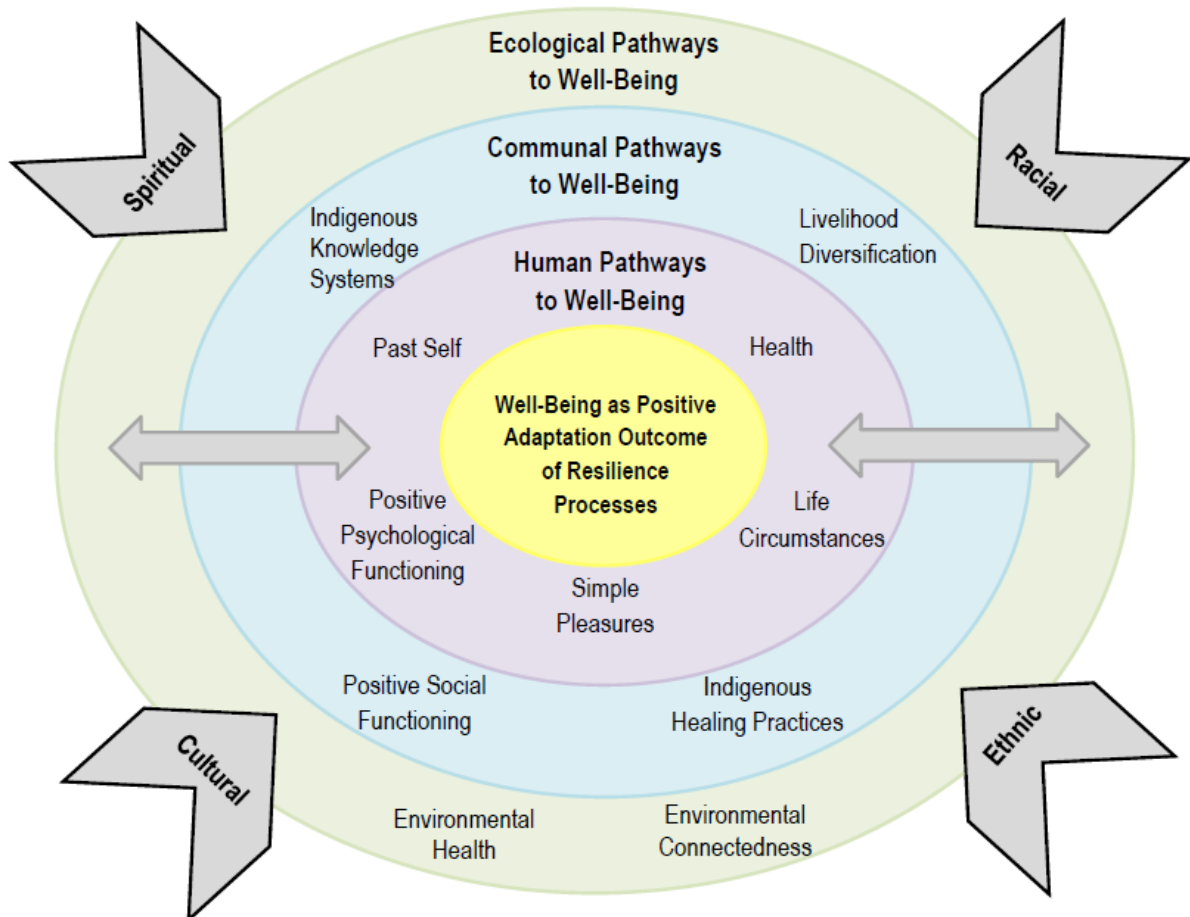


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework was inspired by Bronfenbrenner and Bronfenbrenner's (2009) bio-ecological systems theory which posits that individuals function and develop within a complex set of nested, interconnected systems. The conceptual framework of this study is similar to Bronfenbrenner and Bronfenbrenner's (2009) model in that the bidirectional influences between an individual's development

and his or her surrounding environmental influences are significant (Bronfenbrenner & Bronfenbrenner, 2009). As with current Western knowledge on well-being (Keyes, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff & Singer, 2006; Seligman, Steen, Park & Peterson, 2005), existing indigenous psychology theory on well-being (Cocks & Møller, 2006; Georgas & Mylonas, 2006; Goduka, 2012; Hwang, 2010; Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004) posits the existence of well-being systems that are observed by communities and which influence well-being. The underlying notion of well-being systems is that individuals exist in relation to their community and environment and cannot be regarded as distinct or isolated (Bronfenbrenner & Bronfenbrenner, 2009; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Pflug, 2009). Spiritual, cultural, racial and ethnic identities and capital determine small nuances of each individual or community's well-being system (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Queener & Martin, 2001).

Krippner (2000) states that indigenous well-being systems are regarded as interdependent. These systems require the presence of harmony in each sphere for well-being to be achieved. Where balance is disturbed, it is necessary to take certain measures to restore harmony to the system. How balance is restored is determined by the spiritual, cultural, racial and ethnic systems which individuals and communities subscribe to (Krippner, 2000). Typically, the pathways which are employed to restore balance are regarded as indigenous healing intervention practices (Cocks & Møller, 2002).

As I discuss in Sections 2.2.2 and 2.3.3 of this chapter, three prevalent pathways to well-being emerge from Western and non-Western well-being literature: communal (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Fozdar, 2008; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Keyes, 2007; King *et al.*, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Samman, 2007; Shu & Zhu, 2009), human (Keyes, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Seligman, 2002; Suh, 2009; Yang, 2000) and ecological (Brown & Kasser, 2005; Corvalan *et al.*, 2005; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014; Eigner, 2001; Sohr, 2001) pathways. A spiritual pathway (Cocks & Møller, 2006; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Queener & Martin, 2001; Wallace, 2001) to well-being is implied through the spiritual meaning system that forms part of the individual's well-being system. These pathways suggest ways in which individuals navigate and negotiate towards well-being.

Communal pathways reference indigenous well-being knowledge systems (Cocks & Møller, 2002; King *et al.*, 2009), indigenous healing intervention practices (Cocks & Møller, 2002; King *et al.*, 2009), livelihood diversification (Ellis, 2007) and aspects of positive social functioning (Keyes, 2007; Samman, 2007) as pathways employed in Western and non-Western communities. Human pathways to well-being reference individuals' personal capacity to bring about well-being. Prevalent human pathways to well-being that appear in Western and non-Western literature are: the importance of the past self (Suh, 2009), acceptance of life circumstances (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004), physical health (Samman, 2007; Sotgiu *et al.*, 2011), enjoyment of simple pleasures (Diener, Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Lyubomirsky

et al., 2005) and aspects of positive psychological functioning (Ryff *et al.*, 2003). Finally, ecological pathways to well-being refer to the role which the environment plays in enhancing health and well-being. Environmental health (Crighton, Elliot, van der Meer, Small & Upshur, 2003) and environmental connectedness (Corvalan, Hales & McMichael, 2005) form the basis of this pathway to well-being. In Chapter 6 I use data to integrate this conceptual framework. In Section 6.2.1.6 I present the revised conceptualisation of indigenous pathways to well-being following the empirical study.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I consulted a variety of studies and analysed the existing knowledge base with regard to the positive psychology and flourishing perspective, the indigenous psychology perspective and the cross-cultural perspective of well-being. I positioned myself and this study with reference to the use of the term 'indigenous' and discussed existing pathways to resilience. Finally, I outlined my conceptual framework for the study, and argued for further research into resilience and well-being in indigenous high risk settings in order to inform indigenous psychology knowledge on resilience. In the next chapter, I authenticate my choice of a participatory reflection and action comparative case study as the research design for this study and explain how cases and participants were selected. I also discuss the data generation and analysis procedures which were followed and explain how rigour was enhanced through deliberate decisions and strategies.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted from a social constructionism meta-theoretical stance; it employed principles of participatory reflection and action as a methodological paradigm. The indigenous psychologies approach formed the theoretical framework from which the study was conducted.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the overarching, longer term (2012-2014) IPR project, within which the current study was conducted, employed a comparative case study design (Zartman, 2012). IPR made use of convenience sampling to guide the sampling of two high risk, high need rural research sites as units of analysis for the study. Both sites held predominantly non-Western worldviews and participants were VhaVhenda and AmaSwati (Abrams, 2010). Insights based on such indigenous worldviews would be required for indigenous psychology knowledge generation. Patton's (2002) layered case study approach was employed to select participants to form smaller, cross-sectional case studies within each of the two primary units of analysis. Convenience sampling was used to select participants who could be rich informants of indigenous perspectives. Later, participants were divided into four distinct demographic groups: older men (males older than 35 years), older women (females older than 35 years), younger men (males between 21 and 34 years), younger women (females between 21 and 35 years) (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Studies by Arku (2010), Keyes (1998, 2002), Khumalo, Temane and Wissing (2012) and Sokoya, Muthukrishna and Collings (2005) which point to the idea that the determinants of well-being may vary according to age and gender guided the decision to divide participants into demographic groups. PRA methods (Chambers, 2013) fostered a creative, participatory environment within which participants were able to engage in a process of generating data on indigenous pathways to resilience. Data sources included:

- audio data: audio recordings of PRA conversations between researcher, translator and participants;
- textual data: verbatim transcriptions of audio recorded PRA conversations, translated into English and comprehensive field notes compiled by each co-researcher of IPR; and
- visual data: photographs of contextual information and participants' community maps and posters.

Data was analysed using in-case and cross-case analysis techniques, staying true to the principles of inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Throughout the research process, I was mindful of

the principles applicable to conducting ethical, rigorous qualitative research. These principles were mentioned briefly in Chapter 1 and are discussed in more detail in later sections of this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN: COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY DESIGN

3.2.1 CHOICE OF A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY DESIGN

As discussed in Section 1.3 (Background to the Study) of Chapter 1, the cases for the IPR project constituted two non-Western, indigenous rural communities as bounded systems. Both cases were considered to possess indigenous knowledge based on the predominant language spoken by each community (TshiVhenda or SiSwati), as documented by the 2011 South African Census Survey (Census, 2011). In this way, both cases were regarded as having participants who could be key informants (Abrams, 2010; Census, 2011; Odora Hoppers, 2008) who hold indigenous knowledge by virtue of the local cultural and meaning-making rituals and behaviours observed by the VhaVhenda and AmaSwati tribes (Abrams, 2010). Both communities are faced with intense challenges of poverty in an emerging economy in South Africa. They both experienced high risk and high need, as well as chronic and cumulative adversity. They fell within former Apartheid Bantustans and as such are characterised by a history of oppression and discrimination. The history of VhaVhenda and AmaSwati tribes moving to and settling in former Bantustans also suggests that people living in these areas possess rich, indigenous knowledge that has been carried down through generations.

The cases in IPR were considered to be rural by virtue of their geographical location (see Figure 1.5 on p. 14 of Chapter 1) and the prevailing characteristics of the former Bantustans which are still typically isolated and lacking in significant governance and infrastructural services (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012; Mapesela, Hlalele & Alexander, 2012; Matsumoko, Bwoma & Worley, 2012; Ryan-Nicholls, 2004). Both cases were regarded as low-resource ecologies because they experienced limited access to important resources. This shortcoming was apparent in the form of physical disrepair and lack of support services. Additionally, they both are characterised by low household incomes, low education levels and high health and socioeconomic need (see Tables 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 in Chapter 1 which were adapted from the South African Census Survey conducted in 2011).

The comparative case study design (Zartman, 2012) adopted by IPR spanned a three- year timeline; thus, data was generated in 2012 and 2013 and member checking was conducted in 2014. By employing a comparative case study design the research team could obtain in-depth information on a series of interesting real-world cases within their naturally-occurring environment (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999; Patton, 2002). This research design was useful in the context of IPR because the research team could systematically compare several data points, in a holistic way which was sensitive to the context within which data was generated (Patton, 2002).

A comparative case study design afforded the IPR research group opportunities to compare variables of age (the older and younger generation of community members living in areas where data was generated) and gender (male and female)⁷. The decision to distinguish well-being experiences based on gender originated from quantitative and qualitative empirical studies by Khumalo *et al.* (2012), Sokoya *et al.* (2005) and Arku (2008) which suggest that “gendered indicators of well-being” (Arku, 2010, p. 235) may exist. Khumalo *et al.*'s (2012) study explored the association of socio-demographic variables in an African context using two models that conceptualise and measure well-being as a holistic, integrated and complex construct, namely the General Psychological Well-Being model (GPW) and the Mental Health Continuum model (MHC). This quantitative study was conducted among an African sample in the North West Province of South Africa and employed descriptive statistics, correlations, cross-tabulations and regression analysis to compute the results. Arku (2010) conducted a qualitative case study in Ghana to determine whether and how, the Volta Rural Water Supply Project (VRWSP) impacted access to clean water, and if it resulted in any time savings for both men and women. This study also looked at whether and how men and women's use of the saved time met their own understanding of well-being. Sokoya *et al.*'s (2005) qualitative study aimed to investigate factors influencing psychological well-being in farm families from an Afrocentric and gender perspective. Research participants comprised 40 adults and 31 children drawn from five farming communities in Ogun State, Nigeria, through purposive sampling. Keyes' (1998) quantitative study on social well-being found that social well-being may vary in numerous ways according to age (discussed in Chapter 2). Moreover, Keyes' (2002) study found that males may experience greater mental health (flourishing) than females.

Focussing on age in the way in which participants were grouped during PRA activities echoes participatory studies conducted by Chomitz, McGowan, Wendel, Williams, Cabral, King, Olcott, Cappello, Breen and Hacker (2010), Oser, Hooghe and Marien (2013), Hargittai and Walejko (2008) and Hyypä, Mäki, Alanen and Impivaara (2008) which employed stratification in the selection of participants for their studies. Categorising participants according to age stemmed from readings on studies conducted by Khumalo *et al.* (2012) and Sokoya *et al.* (2005) which suggest that differences in how individuals experience well-being at different life stages may also exist. In consultation with community leaders at the research sites in the weeks prior to data collection, it was jointly decided that participants who were between the ages of 21 and 34 years would be categorised as 'young' while participants who were 35 years or older were categorised as 'older'. The decision only to include participants who were 21 years or older in the study was agreed upon in order to ensure that all

⁷ While studies which compare variables such as age and gender are typically quantitative (such as Khumalo *et al.*, 2012), the current study follows the tradition of Sokoya *et al.* (2005) and Arku (2010) which compare age and gender using a qualitative approach.

participants of IPR were regarded as adults according to South African legislation⁸ (Children's Institute, 2011).

Site location was also compared to obtain rich, nuanced understandings of indigenous pathways to resilience mobilised by participants of IPR in their natural environment. Generating data over a two-year time period (member checking was conducted in 2014) added time as dimension. That allowed the research team to compare the responses given by certain groups from one year to the next. Being able to do so strengthened the dependability of the research findings (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2012, 2014).

A comparative case study design was valuable because it provided a space within which the research team could consider the voices of several relevant groups (for example different generations and gender groups) and their interactions (Patton, 2002). Through the different IPR demographic groups forming part of each unit of analysis, it was possible to observe and document exchanges between men and women, as well as older and younger community members. These were important observations for the research team to make because of the significant role which certain cultural traditions may play in one's interactions within a given society (Abrams, 2010). For example, in native African tribes such as VhaVhenda and AmaSwati, the elders of the community are often regarded as the custodians of knowledge, whereas the youth may be regarded as the generation to which knowledge and beliefs are transferred to be taught to future generations (Abrams, 2010). The research team also paid close attention to the small nuances that characterised the participants' interactions; for example, the ritual of sharing a meal together before sitting down to work. This approach meant that we were able to gain profound insights into how the cultural, historical and ethnic context influenced the way in which participants navigated and negotiated well-being as a process, as well as the way in which they experienced well-being as an outcome (Babbie & Mouton, 2004; Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The current study adopted a layered case study approach, as suggested by Patton (2002). This approach was useful in the context of IPR as it provided the chance to make certain general observations about the data that was collected; for example, with regard to the overarching pathways to well-being mobilised by participants. This layered approach afforded the opportunity to conduct further analysis (for example into the responses of specific demographic groups) with each of the two primary units of analysis. This analysis was used as part of a cross-case analysis where larger case units were built out of smaller ones. In this sense, the overarching IPR research group case was underpinned by smaller, cross-sectional case studies which looked specifically at certain sites, time periods and demographic groups.

⁸ When the IPR project began, it was believed that the age of majority in South Africa was 21 years. However, information provided by the Children's Institute (2011) explains that the age of majority in South Africa has been brought down to 18 years to bring it in line with the definition of a child according to the Constitution.

Patton's (2002) layered case study approach helped me to conduct an in-depth investigation and comparison of well-being with community members living in high risk, rural communities in various parts of South Africa. Furthermore, it allowed the findings of the study to be applied to a larger range of similar situations and contexts (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Figure 3.1 illustrates the nature of the cases encompassed by this study.

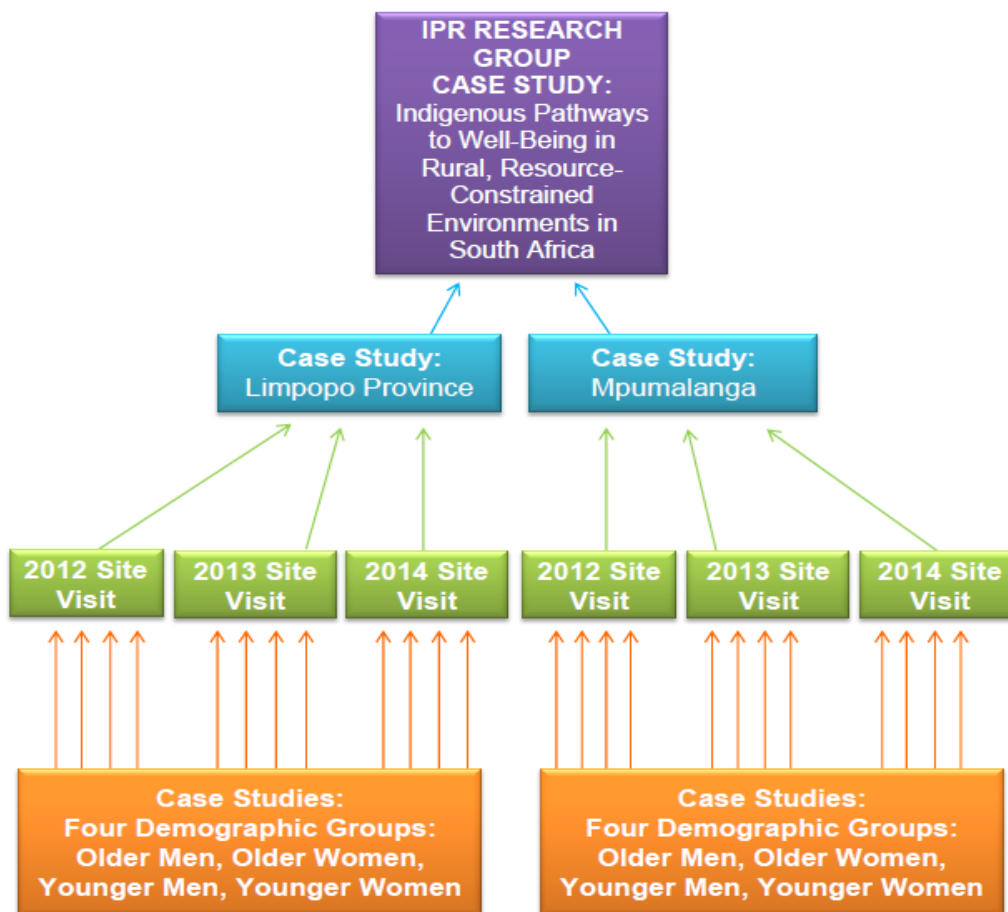


Figure 3.1: Nature of the Cases encompassed by the Current Study

3.2.2 LIMITATIONS OF COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY RESEARCH DESIGNS

The first challenge pertained to the view that one cannot generalise findings on the basis of an individual case (Flyvbjerg; 2011). However, the notion that knowledge cannot formally be generalised, should not negate the idea that this knowledge cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or society (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Platt, 1992; Ragin & Becker, 1992).

IPR adopted two specific strategies to ensure the transferability of the study. Firstly, the research team employed the same data generation and analysis techniques in both of the cases selected (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Hamel, Dufour & Fortin, 1993). Secondly, the research team selected cases from different geographical regions with male and female participants who fell into two primary age groups: 21 to 35 years, and 35 years and above. In this way, the team was able to include a degree of heterogeneity in

the study which may have broadened the fit between studies and situations to which one might want to transfer cases (Schofield, 2002).

Another limitation of comparative case study research is the issue of dependability (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985); this was addressed through the construction of a code book. I compiled the general categories and codes that guided me across each case. As such, I was able to specify in advance, what was necessary in the data to code in various ways, as well as to make judgements of each category's prevalence (see Appendix G for an example of my code book). By using the same set of criteria to assign particular values to variables, I was able to enhance intra- and inter-coder reliability because the same set of criteria to assign variables with particular values can now be used by different analysts (Stenbacka, 2001).

The research team provided comprehensive, contextualised details of cases and findings of the cross-case analysis that formed part of IPR (and this study) through researcher journals and extensive field notes (Rueschemeyer, 2003). This process ensured that cases did not become obscured and that the complexity of meaning of each case was not lost through the comparison of cases in this study (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008; Peattie, 2001; Tesch, 1990). Additionally, this process ensured preservation of the distinctiveness of the cases which we investigated and ensured that the value of the participants' engagement through cross-case analysis was conveyed (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008).

The IPR research group compensated for the loss of individual complexity of meaning from each case by separating the case study data into separate units of meaning. By recontextualising the case study data when they were later integrated and clustered into themes, we were able to immerse ourselves within individual cases through cross-case synthesis (Ayres, Kavanagh & Knafl, 2003).

3.2.3 SELECTION OF CASES

The Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) project and the current study aimed to conduct an indigenous psychology investigation which explored and documented primarily non-Western indigenous knowledge. Research sites with whom partnerships already existed, and which could be assumed to possess non-Western, indigenous knowledge (as a result of their VhaVhenda and AmaSwati heritage) (Abrams, 2010) were conveniently selected (Patton, 2002; Schwandt *et al.*, 2007). Both research sites were characterised by high risk and high need. Members of each community were regarded as rich informants for IPR and the current study because they possessed knowledge of the adversity and adaptation conditions of their ecology. Participants for the study were selected conveniently through word of mouth and via community announcements made by the chief or headman in each village.

In line with participatory studies conducted by von Unger (2012), Caspari (2006) and Bergold and Thomas (2012) the IPR team opted to co-generate data with indigenous African tribes (such as the VhaVhenda and AmaSwati tribes). Data generation meant deliberately engaging with participants who

live permanently at each research site would help to ensure that participants of the study were rich informants and custodians of indigenous knowledge. However, every community member residing at the research sites was invited to participate in the study, with those who arrived at the site of data generation each day being welcomed into the study.

Within the parameters of the IPR research group, the current study evolved from inquiries into several smaller cases of indigenous pathways to well-being across four demographic groups (discussed in the next section) in high risk South African settings, over a specific period of time (2012-2014). Each of these smaller cases was then compared as part of the examination of the two primary units of analysis which considered indigenous pathways to well-being in rural communities characterised by hardship.

Access to the two research sites forming part of IPR was obtained through relationships which the Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR) negotiated with the Flourishing Learning Youth (FLY) and International Mentorship of Advanced Graduates in Interdisciplinary Excellence (IMAGINE) programmes. Specific attention was paid to initiating potential research participation relationships with communities who experienced limited access to human, physical, financial, natural and social capital. Additionally, we were interested in working with communities which possessed inherent indigenous knowledge measured and determined by the predominant language spoken in each community, as well as by the local cultural and meaning-making rituals and traditions typically observed by the VhaVhenda and AmaSwati tribes (Odora Hoppers, 2008). It was important to us that this indigenous knowledge, which was to be accessed through the indigenous knowledge systems of the research participants, would reveal how communities and the people living in them, manage their environment and deal with adversity (Battiste, 2009; Roos, Chigeza & Van Niekerk, 2010).

The IPR team employed convenience sampling in its selection of each research site. Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling (Cohen *et al.*, 2007) that involves selecting individuals as respondents on the basis that they happen to be easily accessible. Thus, in convenience sampling, researchers simply choose their sample from the people to whom they have easy access. Although we did not have full control over which community members could be selected for participation in the study, we aimed to select adult participants who fell into four distinct demographic groups: older men (six participants over the age of 35 years), older women (six participants over the age of 35 years), younger men (six participants between the ages of 21 and 35 years) and younger women (six participants between the ages of 21 and 35 years). This meant that we had, on average, 24 participants at each research site, making a total of 48 participants overall.

The purpose of dividing the selected participants according to the demographics of age, gender and site was to obtain specific information related to the well-being perspectives of each of these groups. The primary focus with each of the four demographic groups was to look specifically at how different groups of people participating in IPR experienced well-being from their worldview and in the presence of

chronic risk. Thus, by dividing the selected IPR participants, we were able to understand well-being experiences and perceptions of, for example, young women living in adverse environmental conditions (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Additionally, we were able to compare the well-being experiences of the different demographic groups. In being able to compare and contrast experiences, we were able to learn more about how indigenous culture and historical heritage may or may not have influenced the adaptation outcomes of people living in the communities with whom we partnered (Patton, 2002). Table 3.1 provides a summary of the number of participants at each site and visit.

A limitation of convenience sampling that is particularly relevant to this study is that convenience, by itself, does not offer any kind of justification for the inclusion of certain people or events in a given sample (Denscombe, 2010). Although convenience may be a reasonable practical consideration when choosing a sample, it should definitely not be the only factor used by researchers in the selection process. Thus, the findings of this study may be limited because participation was open to whoever wanted to contribute to the generation of data, regardless of the value of their contributions. There were some specific individuals whom the research team believed could make very valuable contributions to the knowledge that we were trying to co-create; however, they were not necessarily included in the sample. It is possible that if the IPR research group had specifically sought out those members of the community who were regarded as knowledgeable on the topics of coping, risk appraisal and well-being (for example, traditional healers, members of the tribal council, or headmen), then richer insights could have been gained; these could have given better insights into the generation of knowledge on indigenous pathways to resilience. The IPR research group was able to counter this limitation by selecting sample sites that while convenient, were also able to serve the greater purpose of addressing the questions posed by IPR. The existing relationships which the CSR has developed with FLY and IMAGINE were integral to this process. Both of these projects intend to conduct research on well-being from an indigenous psychology perspective and had access to participants with relevant, meaningful indigenous knowledge systems (Denscombe, 2010).

Table 3.1: Participation at each Site during Visits

Site	Date of Data Generation	Number of Participants per Demographic Group									Total Partic. Across Demo. Groups per Year	Total Prev. Partic. Across Demo. Groups per Year
		Days Spent at Site Generating Data	Older Men	Prev. Partic.	Older Women	Prev. Partic.	Young Men	Prev. Partic.	Young Women	Prev. Partic.		
Limpopo Province	2012-06-06	1	3	NA	4	NA	2	NA	4	NA	13	NA
	2013-07-02	1	4	2	5	1	8	1	10	2	27	6
	2014-04-29	1	4	4	3	3	2	2	6	6	15	15
Limpopo Province Total Partic. per Demo. Group across Years		3	11	6	12	4	12	3	20	8	55	21
Mpumalanga	2012-11-06	2	2	NA	5	NA	3	NA	7	NA	17	NA
	2012-11-07		4	NA	5	NA	8	NA	7	NA	24	NA
	2013-11-5	2	2	1	5	4	4	0	4	1	15	6
	2013-11-6		2	1	5	4	4	0	4	1	15	6
	2014-05-02	1	0	0	0	0	5	5	4	4	9	9
Mpumalanga Total Partic. per Demo. Group across Years		5	10	2	20	8	24	5	26	6	80	21
Both Sites Total Partic. per Demo. Group across Years		8	21	8	32	12	36	8	46	14	135	42
Total Participants			Older Men	Prev. Partic.	Older Women	Prev. Partic.	Young Men	Prev. Partic.	Young Women	Prev. Partic.		
Older		53	21	8	32	12						
Younger		82					36	8	46	14		
Total Participants			Older Men	Prev. Partic.	Young Men	Prev. Partic.	Older Women	Prev. Partic.	Young Women	Prev. Partic.		
Male		57	21	8	36	8						
Female		78					32	12	46	14		

3.2.4 LIMITATIONS OF CROSS-SECTIONAL RESEARCH DESIGN

As discussed in Section 1.6.1 (Methodological Decisions in IPR) of Chapter 1 and shown in Table 3.2 (Research Schedule of Site Visit Dates and Duration of Stay) in the following section, both IPR research sites were visited three times (twice for data generation and once for member-checking). This pattern of data generation and member-checking reflects the principles of a cross-sectional research design. Initially, the current study was not intended to be designed as a cross-sectional research study; however, elements of cross-sectional research are evident in it.

According to Cohen *et al.* (2007), cross-sectional studies are typically characterised by a process of taking 'snapshots' of certain populations at specific points in time. In IPR, two snapshots were taken of both research sites in 2012 and 2013. Levin (2006) and Mann (2003) explain that when snapshots of populations are taken in cross-sectional research studies, usually through a survey design, the intention is to estimate the prevalence of an outcome of interest. Additionally, cross-sectional studies may be employed to infer causation whenever association between risk factors and an outcome are of interest to the research team (*ibid.*). The aspect of cross-sectional studies which considers risk and outcomes was also evident in IPR and the current study. Specifically, adversity identified during the research site visits in 2012 was revisited in 2013 with a view to evaluating the extent to which adversity had been mediated. Additionally, the appraisal process, methods of coping and pathways to well-being voiced by participants during the 2012 data generation site visit were also revisited in 2013.

Taking snapshots of communities as a means of generating data is a time-efficient way of collecting in-depth information in its naturally occurring-environment (Levin, 2006). This was an important factor in the current study as the IPR research group wanted to co-generate sufficient data without disrupting the daily responsibilities of participants. However, the relatively short amount of time which the IPR research team spent in the field may have limited the ability to account for all the variables that could have influenced the study, comprehensively (Mann, 2003). This includes, for example, participants who were ill during certain site visits and those who found employment and were thus not able to attend subsequent data generation sessions.

According to Lubatkin and Chatterjee (1991), it is important to remember that when using a cross-sectional research design to generate data, researchers may fail to account for trend effects in their investigations because data is generated over short intervals; for example, over a one-year period. Moreover, reliance on data collected over a short period may result in failure to detect the true nature of a relationship that is being investigated (Rumelt, 1991). This may make it difficult to determine true causal relationships (Hill & Hansen, 1991). Bergin and Holbein (1997) concur, stating that most researchers employing a cross-sectional research design fail to examine the stability of their empirical relationships over time. Mann (2003) adds to this discussion by arguing that, very often, cross-sectional studies make it difficult to differentiate cause and effect from simple association. This in turn makes it

difficult to infer explanations for why certain phenomena occur. The IPR research group remained aware of the fact that these issues may limit the usefulness of the findings of the study. We were attentive to the responses which participants gave when referring to instances of resilience and related (well-being, coping and risk appraisal) experiences. The 2014 member checking site visits were conducted in such a way that participation and further discussion was facilitated in order to ensure that comprehensive understandings of experiences, perceptions and relationships between the two, were obtained.

The cross-sectional nature of IPR's data generation site visits may have caused the team to miss or exclude significant differences between those who were able to participate in the study (Mann, 2003). In one instance, a participant at the Limpopo Province research site died after the 2013 site visit and was therefore not able to participate in the member-checking process in 2014. Moreover, many of the participants who participated in 2012 were not able to participate in 2013 and 2014: they had obtained employment and were not able to take time off from work to participate in the study.

In order to maximise the availability of existing IPR participants to participate during all three site visits, the IPR research group took the precaution of scheduling the data generation sessions on days and at times which would be most convenient to participants. For instance, in Mpumalanga, site visits were typically scheduled in the early afternoon when participants were not required to be at work. Sessions ended early enough for participants to travel home while it was still light outside and while transportation was still available for those not within walking distance from the research site. In Limpopo Province, the research group was careful not to schedule site visits on days when government grants were dispensed, as had happened by mistake in 2012. Data generation sessions were typically arranged for in the morning after a meal and ended promptly after lunch.

3.3 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES

In this section, I describe the research process of this study. Table 3.2 presents a summary of the dates where research sites were visited, as well as the duration of each stay.

Table 3.2: Research Schedule of Site Visit Dates and Duration of Stay

Site	Starting Date of First Visit	End Date of First Visit	Total Duration of First Visit	Year in which First Visit Took Place
Limpopo Province	31 May	9 June	9 days	2012
Mpumalanga	5 November	7 November	2 days	2012
Site	Starting Date of Second Visit	End Date of Second Visit	Total Duration of Second Visit	Year in which Second Visit Took Place
Limpopo Province	30 June	6 July	7 days	2013
Mpumalanga	4 November	6 November	2 days	2013
Site	Starting Date of	End Date of	Total Duration of	Year in which

	Member Checking Visit	Member Checking Visit	Member Checking Visit	Member Checking Visit Took Place
Limpopo Province	28 April	30 April	2 days	2014
Mpumalanga	1 May	3 May	2 days	2014

3.3.1 LIMPOPO PROVINCE SITE VISITS

The first set of site visits took place in 2012. Thus, the first Limpopo Province visit started on 31 May 2012 and ended on 9 June 2012. This site visit lasted for nine days because the IPR research team engaged in several days of preparation and knowledge sharing with other scholars in the field, before data generation commenced. The second visit to Limpopo Province took place from 30 June 2013 until 6 July 2013. This site visit was shorter than the first because the co-researchers and principal investigator began generating data the day after arrival, and left the day after data was generated.

During the first site visit to Limpopo Province, three participants engaged in the older men's group and four participants engaged in the older women's group. Two participants engaged in the younger men's group, while four participants contributed to data generation in the younger women's group. During the 2013 site visit, the number of participants increased significantly as word spread that the research team would be returning.

Before departing after the 2012 site visit, the co-researchers asked the staff working at the research site to help contact the research participants before the 2013 visit commenced. The purpose of this was to invite them back into the project so that they could contribute new experiences and realities to the study. In 2013, the sample size increased for every demographic group. Thus, the older men's group increased from three participants to four and the older women's group increased from four participants to five. The younger men's group experienced the greatest increase in numbers from two participants to eight. The younger women's group increased from four participants to ten. In total, 13 and 27 participants contributed to the generation of data over 2012 and 2013 respectively.

3.3.2 MPUMALANGA SITE VISITS

The first visit to Mpumalanga took place in November 2012, approximately five months after the initial visit to Limpopo Province. This site visit was scheduled from 5 November 2012 to 7 November 2012; a total of two days. The second site visit to Mpumalanga was from 4 November 2013 to 6 November 2013, exactly one year later, and also lasted two days. Data was generated over two days at both site visits to Mpumalanga. This schedule allowed potential participants time to get to the research site after work. It also provided the co-researchers and principal investigator with enough time to work through all the planned PRA activities without impinging on the time that participants needed in the afternoons to see to their other responsibilities.

The number of participants who opted to be involved in IPR at both site visits to Mpumalanga was similar to those at Limpopo Province. On day one of the 2012 site visit, the older men's group received two participants, the older women's group five participants, the younger men's group three participants and the younger women's group seven participants. On day two of this site visit, the older men and younger men received additional participants making totals of four and eight participants respectively. The number of participants engaged in the older women and younger women's groups remained the same over both days.

During the second site visit to Mpumalanga in 2013, the number of participants in each group remained the same over both days. The older men's group had two participants, the older women's group five participants, the younger men's group four participants and the younger women's group four participants. In total, 17, 24 and 15 participants contributed to the generation of data in Mpumalanga over 2012 and 2013 respectively.

In order to ensure that participants returned to the research site for the 2013 round of data generation, the co-researchers sent out sms's in English and Siswati, reminding 2012 participants of the dates, times and venue at which the 2013 site visit would take place. In addition, one of the co-researchers, Marelize Malan van Rooyen, made an appointment to visit the site in person beforehand to finalise all the arrangements. At this appointment, she met with one of the participants of the 2012 older men's group who was integral in ensuring that as many participants as possible arrived for data generation on the agreed-upon 2013 site visit dates.

3.3.3 MEMBER CHECKING SITE VISITS, 2014

Seale (1999), Cho and Trent (2005), Carlson (2010), Creswell and Miller (2000), Doyle (2007) and Harper and Cole (2012) regard member checking as an integral process in qualitative research studies as this technique helps to establish the credibility of a study (Angun, 2000). Typically, member checking takes place throughout a study and requires the researcher to play data back to the research participants to check the accuracy with which the researcher may have interpreted participants' responses (Ongwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). In general, the number of participants who were able to return for the member checking site visit in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga was less than the number that had been present for the two data generation visits. It is possible that fewer participants were able to attend the member checking site visits because these occurred very soon before the 2014 National and Provincial Elections. Many participants had volunteered to work for various political parties. In one instance, a community member who had participated in previous years in Limpopo Province had died; her sister chose to represent her at the relevant member checking site visit. Photograph 3.1 captures the welcoming of Limpopo Province participants to the 2014 member checking site visit.



**Photograph 3.1: Limpopo Province,
May, 2014**

A total of 15 participants were present for member checking in Limpopo Province, while nine participants were present for member checking in Mpumalanga. Of the 15 participants who attended the Limpopo Province member checking visit, four formed part of the older men's group and three formed part of the older women's group. While there were only two younger men present at the Limpopo Province site; six younger women were able to attend. In Mpumalanga, nobody from the older men or older women's groups was able to attend. However, five younger men and four younger women contributed to the member checking exercises. Photographs 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 show the IPR doctoral co-researchers conducting participatory member checking conversations in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga.



**Photograph 3.2: Limpopo Province,
May, 2014**



**Photograph 3.3: Limpopo Province,
May, 2014**



**Photograph 3.4: Mpumalanga,
May, 2014**



**Photograph 3.5: Mpumalanga,
May, 2014**

3.3.4 TRANSLATORS AS PART OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Translators and mother tongue transcribers contributed significantly to the IPR project because the researchers and participants were not conversant in the same languages. Translators in Limpopo Province comprised native TshiVhenda speakers, while translators in Mpumalanga comprised native SiSwati speakers. Translators were also a part of the communities where data was generated. In Limpopo Province, community members were trained by a local research facility to listen for information in their mother tongue and then reproduce this information in a different language in which they are fluent (English). However, in Mpumalanga where there were not enough translators available, a teacher from a nearby school assisted in translations during data generation.

There does not appear to be any one correct way of translating. According to Temple (2002), translation is far more than just the exchange of words from the language of the participants to that of the researcher (or vice-versa). Translators (functioning in either an oral or written capacity) are as much a part of the research process as are the researchers and should be viewed as active participants within this process. This is because they are basically tasked with the responsibility of producing text or speech from their own perspective. Barbara Godard describes translation as “a truly associative process, an ongoing appeal to memory and to a private thesaurus, a pingpong of potentially infinite rebounds” (Simon, 1996, p. 23). Thus, the act of translating is also very much a process of interpretation where the perspective of the translator is integral to the process of deciphering what participants using a different language want to share with researchers.

Temple (1999) and Edwards (1998) have expressed concern about the fact that often, researchers employ translators “as if they were transmitters of neutral messages across languages...ignoring the linguistic imperialism central to an unquestioning use of English as a baseline language” (Temple, 2002, p. 847). This act is problematic because as research has shown, some concepts may be difficult to interpret or explain across cultures and languages. According to Temple and Young (2004), it is important to adopt an approach to research and translation that acknowledges that the way in which knowledge is viewed and produced is to a large degree influenced by one’s location within the social world. Thus it is important that the translators of a research study form part of the process of knowledge production. Edwards (1998) recommends that translators be treated as ‘key informants’ as opposed to neutral transmitters. This philosophy affords researchers the opportunity to discuss possible differences in perspective between participants, translators and researchers.

In order to curb this potential challenge in the context of IPR, it was important that the research team spend time with the translators at each research site. We spoke to them about their social location, values and beliefs, as well as their understanding of their relationship to the IPR research group and the participants (Temple & Edwards, 2002). By engaging in this process, we were able to ensure that the translators became a visible part of the research process, and to some extent enhanced the

accountability of the translators in much the same way as researchers may strive to be explicit about their own social and political positions (Temple & Edwards, 2002). Moreover, this process resulted in the research team being able to allow for differences in understandings of words, concepts and world views across the languages encountered during the research process (Temple & Young, 2004).

Through the process of talking to and working with the translators, I was able to document important observations regarding the significance of the translators to the research process, as well as the way in which language dictated how we were able to work with participants. I recorded these observations in my research diary:

After a great deal of deliberation, we were back to our original plan - to a degree. Given that the truck still had to go out and fetch another load of people, we decided to use the time to try and get some surveys done so that our work for tomorrow would be a bit less strenuous. We also decided to use some of this time getting to know our translators, and familiarising them with what we hoped to achieve over the course of the next two days.

Initially, I had thought that our plans and explanations of activities were fairly straightforward. However, when we actually told our plans and our explanations to the translators, it only took a grimace or two to help us realise that even what we thought was extremely simple language and thinking may be foreign to the participants. Some of the tiny little nuances related to differences in language soon started to emerge. For example, whereas in English we have MANY different words that can be used to express love (e.g. adore, esteem, respect, admire etc.) there is only one word to express or describe love in Venda. Therefore, to try and expect participants to understand concepts such as 'adore' would simply be unrealistic and unreasonable. As such, we really had to give some serious thought to how we wanted to word our instructions to participants, so that they understood what was expected of them in a manner that they were familiar with. The translators were integral to this process. Because the translators were all active, participating members of the community who spoke the language, they were apt in telling us what wording would or wouldn't work with participants. Given that translators knew many of the participants personally also helped, as they were able to give us an idea of what we could expect from participants in terms of insight and understanding. This was probably the first time that I actually realised just how much we NEEDED our translators! I had always realised that without them we probably would not be able to communicate with participants, but it never crossed my mind the depth of insight that they would be able to contribute in helping us obtain rich, personal responses from community members with differing levels of education, life experience and discernment.

5 June 2012

In working with translators, Temple and Young (2004) stress that more often than not, the effect that one community or group of people (who use a certain language) has on another can be a very biased

process given the perceived status that different languages may carry. The differences in power which often accompany differing statuses may influence the translation of meaning from one language to another. In this sense, speaking for others regardless of the language used is always a political issue in which language is used to construct the self and others (Alcoff, 1991; Back & Solomos, 1993; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1996). Because the IPR research group saw themselves as active in the research process, we had a responsibility to ensure that the way in which participants were represented in terms of their language and through the data generation process was accurate and meaningful. Part of this process required the team to question the baseline from which we were making claims about participants and required us to think carefully about whom we chose to represent participants through the translation process (Temple & Young, 2004).

Temple (2002) highlights various epistemological and methodological factors that could and should be considered when choosing translators to represent groups of participants. Not surprisingly, ethnicity, age, gender of researchers and translators are regarded as highly influential in interactions with participants. In order to suitably 'match' participants with translators in IPR the research team needed to draw on the indigenous knowledge systems of the communities with which we were working (Temple & Edwards, 2002). The practice of pairing participants and translators according to social standing (for example placing an older male translator with the group of older men, and a younger female translator with the group of older women) ensured that participants felt at ease to express their opinions and to talk freely about issues in their community which affected their lives. In Photograph 3.6 Professor Ebersöhn briefs the translators in Limpopo Province on the data generation process: by getting to know each translator on a personal level, researchers could develop a feel for which translators may be best suited for specific demographic groups.



Photograph 3.6: Limpopo Province, July, 2013
(Professor Ebersöhn is sitting on the far left)

3.4 PRA DATA GENERATION AND DOCUMENTATION

3.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Within the context of the broader Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (IPR) project, we wanted to learn about how men and women living with high levels of adversity voiced indigenous pathways to resilience. Informed by Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007) work on adaptive coping, the IPR group wanted to establish inductively and through an indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) lens, what the participants perceived as risk factors and protective resources. We also wanted to understand the appraisal process which participants follow to evaluate an aspect in the community as a threat or an asset. Flowing from this, we wanted to establish patterns of coping when faced with adversity, and understand how participants find and make meaning in their daily lives: in other words, we wanted to know what makes them happy. This inductive process assumed the presence of indigenous knowledge systems and was implemented by way of PRA.

3.4.2 PRA DATA GENERATION

As discussed in Chapter 1, Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) has stressed the passing of initiative and control onto local people with the notion that instead of the idea of power, the emphasis is to empower (Chambers, 1994b). With traditional methods of data collecting, such as questionnaires and interviewing, power is prevalent: specifically, the interviewer has the power. With PRA the objective is to start a process that involves more than just gathering data. The researcher becomes less of an extractor of data and more of a facilitator of process (Chambers, 1994b).

Through IPR, the use of PRA methods enabled co-researchers to co-generate data with participants in a variety of ways. Firstly, the PRA activities enabled us to share, enhance and analyse knowledge of the life conditions of our participants as portrayed by them through several non-verbal media (Chambers, 1993a). Secondly, PRA methods enabled us to consider closely the interactions between the different elements present in the complex relationships which participants had with their environment (Bar-On & Prinsen, 1999; Binns, Hill & Nel, 1997, Juliá & Kondrat, 2005). Participants benefited from engaging in PRA activities because this gave an opportunity to identify and express their needs and aspirations in their own way, without having a team of co-researchers offer their expertise from an outsider's perspective (Chambers, 1993b; Chambers, Pacey & Thrupp, 1989; Ebersöhn, 2007).

One of the difficulties encountered by the research team during the data generation and documentation process was the amount of time that it took for participants to complete various PRA activities. Although a reasonable amount of time was set aside at each site visit for conducting these activities, we found that participants generally needed a great deal more time than was anticipated, even after the time planned for second rounds of data generation had been adjusted. Appendix I outlines the planning schedule for each data generation and member checking site visit from 2012 to 2014.

According to Chambers (2006), Gibbon (2003), Rambaldi, Chambers, McCall and Fox (2006) the time of people living in rural communities is often precious, especially at difficult times of the year such as the harvesting season. Rural people are often quite polite, hospitable and deferential to outsiders, who do not realise the sacrifices that they may be making to participate in certain activities such as research studies. As such, we needed to be flexible in ensuring that participants were accommodated in terms of the amount of time that they were able to spend with us, without compromising on the quality of the data which was co-generated. To this end, we engaged in the common iterative process in participatory research by reflecting on and adapting the question-directed activities which we had planned. This approach was used instead of trying to stick rigidly to predetermined, outsider-generated tools or techniques in an effort to obtain the data which we needed to be able to answer the research questions. The following extract from my research journal alludes to a particularly challenging morning where the research team needed to be flexible in how we went about collecting data that day.

“Our day started off a bit frustrating because the participants were late due to the fact that today was 'pension dispensary day' so everybody was standing in a line in town waiting to get their pensions. This put a huge strain on the group because suddenly we were hit with the realisation that there was a possibility that after all this time, effort and preparation, we might not be able to get our PhD data collection done today - that didn't go down well. Nevertheless, we came up with a plan to rather go into the villages today and conduct a few more surveys. Just as this decision was taken, the bakkies all pulled up with droves of people! In Toddy's words, we all thought, “Uh oh!” change of plan again!”

5 June 2012

Because the 2012 to 2014 phase of IPR involved various co-researchers who contributed collectively to the generation of data at each site, it was important that the team should employ a focussed strategy in terms of working with participants and carrying out the PRA activities. Specifically, participants engaged in conversations with co-researchers through drawings which were employed as mechanisms for initiating and eliciting discussion. Each drawing was directed by a specific research question which was developed with the broader purpose of IPR in mind. Skinner and Zimmer-Gembeck's (2007) model formed the foundation on which these research questions were built: that model considers resilience as an adaptive process through which an individual is required to respond to, make sense of and address stressors and risks Table 3.3 provides a summary of what each PRA conversation attempted to achieve.

Table 3.3: Summary of PRA Conversations Planned for Data Generation

Participatory Conversation One: Community Map	
<i>"Imagine you are a bird flying over your community. Think about everything that you would be able to see and draw that for us on your page."</i>	
Description	Rationale
Participants mapped out their village on a large piece of paper. Participants pasted a picture of a cow next to all items on the map regarded as beneficial to the community and a snake next to those items regarded as threatening. Participants engaged in an informal discussion with the fieldworker regarding their community map and identified threatening and beneficial items in their community.	To obtain a visual impression of the community. To establish perceived protective and risk resources in the community. To obtain an understanding of the appraisal process/es employed by community members.
Participatory Conversation Two: Drum Activity	
<i>"I would like you to share with me how you solved a problem in the past. Were there any problems in the past that you would like to share with me? I am really interested in how you solved them?"</i>	
Description	Rationale
Participants illustrated on a large piece of paper, how their community has solved problems in the past. Participants engaged in an informal discussion with the fieldworker regarding their illustration.	To determine and establish patterns of coping employed by community members. To identify solutions employed in the past to address risk in the community.
Participatory Conversation Three: Knobkerrie Activity	
<i>"How would your community solve a future problem?"</i>	
Description	Rationale
Participants illustrated on a large piece of paper, how they could solve problems in the future. Participants engaged in an informal discussion with their fieldworker regarding their illustration.	To identify resources, ideas and plans that could be employed to address current or future risks in the community.
Participatory Conversation Four: Mealie Activity	
<i>"If you go to bed at night and you close your eyes and go to sleep and you think of everything that happened that day, how do you know that it was a good day?"</i>	
Description	Rationale
Participants had to illustrate on a large piece of paper, what made/makes them happy. Participants engaged in an informal discussion with their fieldworker regarding their illustration.	To establish how community members find and make meaning in their daily lives.

At each site, in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga, one venue was used to generate data with all four demographic groups (older men, older women, younger men and younger women). Access to venues was based on existing research partnerships developed through the Centre for the Study of Resilience (CSR). Photographs 3.7 and 3.8 show the research venues in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga, as

well as how these sites were set up in order to facilitate the PRA conversations with each demographic group.



**Photograph 3.7: Limpopo Province,
July 2013**



**Photograph 3.8: Mpumalanga,
November, 2012**

Each demographic group sat at their own table, with other members of that specific demographic group. Each group worked with one specific doctoral co-researcher for the entire duration of the research study. The purpose of the co-researcher at each table was to facilitate the PRA activities and to initiate and elicit conversation with the participants, based on the drawing which they were busy with. Each group also received their own translator who worked with them for the duration of the data generation session. There was some degree of turnover of translators during the two-year span of the project. Thus, some translators were able to return to help year-after-year, and many new translators joined the IPR team, depending on who was available on the days of data generation.

Each data generation session began with the primary investigator (Professor Liesel Ebersöhn) introducing the participants to the research site and IPR project. Photograph 3.9 displays this process.



Photograph 3.9: Limpopo Province, June, 2012
(Professor Ebersöhn explaining the data generation process with the help of a local translator)

A translator then translated the words of the primary researcher into the mother tongue of the participants as the introduction was made. Thereafter, the co-researchers introduced themselves, in turn, to their group of research participants and introduced the first PRA conversation that was to be conducted. While the co-researchers were introducing themselves and the various PRA conversations, the translator working with that group translated what was being said, so that all participants understood what was being communicated to them.

3.4.3 DATA DOCUMENTATION

Data for IPR was documented in a number of ways. Firstly, the data generation process was audio recorded using various electronic devices such as smart phones, tablets and dictaphones so that the research team could transcribe the conversations at a later stage. Audio recording uses technology and techniques to frame and structure the representation of an event (Stockdale, 2002). It is an integral aspect of data documentation for a variety of researchers (such as conversation analysts, ethnographers and linguists) because it makes it possible to “get the actual happenings” of an event “on tape” (Sacks, 1984, p. 26). Part of the attraction of being able to record an event on tape is that these recordings can be replayed, transcribed and studied “extendedly – however long it may take” (Sacks, 1984, p. 26).

According to Ashmore and Reed (2000), audio recordings are beneficial to the research process because they allow certain nuances which are not recoverable in any other way to come to the fore. Additionally, audio recordings allow researchers to check a particular analysis against the materials, in all their detail, that were used to produce the analysis. Researchers can also return to a recorded interaction with new analytic interests (Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997). However, a common criticism of audio recordings is that they cannot be used in isolation (Ashmore & Reed, 2000). This is because the data captured by an audio recording is not immediately available as a point of reference because it would be time-consuming and inconvenient to scan through hundreds of audio recordings in order to re-examine a given interaction that was important to the data generation and analysis process (Have, 1999). As mentioned above, audio recordings were employed by the IPR research group with a view to having each recording transcribed verbatim at a later stage. In this sense, we were able to ‘capture’ the interactions recorded for easy reference in future (Ashmore & Reed, 2000).

In addition to audio recording interactions and transcribing them for easy reference, the data generation process was also visually documented through photographs taken by cameras and smart phones. The use of photographs allowed the IPR research group to record visual detail with emphasis on reproducing objects, events, places, signs and symbols, as well as behavioural interactions which were observed during the research process.

Quite often, images generated by researchers are used as visual records or visual diaries (Prosser & Schwartz, 1998). Within the context of IPR, photographs were used primarily as visual records of the reality faced by participants from one day to the next. In this sense, each co-researcher took responsibility for capturing images which provided unbiased records of, for example, the environment within which participants lived and survived. A benefit of employing photography in order to create such a record is that photographs have the capacity to provide “extra somatic memory” (Prosser & Schwartz, 1998, p. 107); in other words, a camera may be used to record visual detail without the complication of fatigue that would otherwise have been experienced by field workers using a different documentation method. Photographs were also particularly useful in the current study given the comparative case study research design which we used. According to Prosser and Schwartz (1998), photographs may offer a great deal of potential as comparative data because they are not contaminated by idiosyncrasies which may occur when more than one researcher is responsible for recording and documenting data.

Finally, each doctoral co-researcher was responsible for taking detailed field notes of the PRA conversations held between his or her group of research participants. According to Mulhall (2003), field notes are central to observational studies in general and ethnographies in particular. Many ethnographers consider the field as “something we construct both through the practical transactions and activities of data collection and through the literary activities of writing field notes, analytic memoranda and the like” (Atkinson, 1992, p. 5). This perspective suggests that the ways in which researchers, specifically ethnographers, present themselves, collect data, write notes and analyse their data are all important parts of the research process. Field notes are regarded as a valuable part of most research processes but Mulhall (2003) has observed that the nature of participant observation and of making field notes during this process tends to be somewhat disorganised; this often results in loose texts that only make sense to the author. This shortcoming is problematic because field notes are very often used as an audit trail of a research process to provide evidence of validity and reliability (Sandelowski, 1986) whereby readers are able to follow actions and decisions made by researchers.

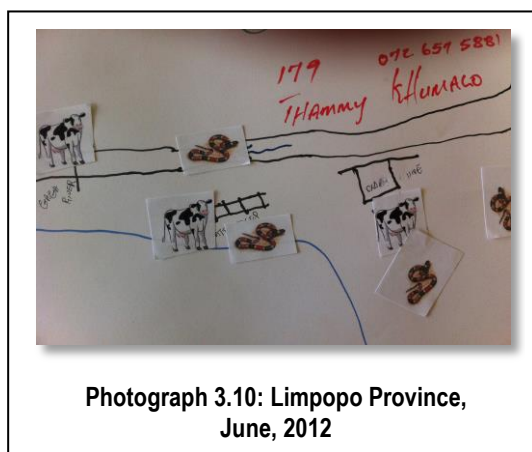
In order to manage this potential limitation of field notes, the IPR co-researchers took immense care in what they chose to record and document in those notes. As a minimum, each co-researcher was expected to record observations which described the participants with whom he or she worked, the setting within which data was generated, the process which was followed (including a description of each activity and how participants responded during the activity) and the content that was included in each PRA conversation. Additionally, co-researchers were encouraged to include their own personal reflections on the phenomena observed in order to extend the value of the field notes to include “reflexive validity” (Mulhall, 2003, p. 311) which could be used to articulate how each co-researcher as “the instrument” (Mulhall, 2003, p. 311) affected the direction and the focus of his or her individual data generation process (Waterman, 1998).

3.4.4 PARTICIPATORY CONVERSATION ONE: COMMUNITY MAP

The first participatory conversation was facilitated by drawing a community map; the objective was to obtain an insider's perspective on the context within which research participants functioned and thrived (see Appendix E for photographs of community maps). The research team also aimed at establishing perceived risk factors and protective resources in the environment, and in doing so, obtain an understanding of the process of appraisal which community members used to decide whether or not a certain aspect of their environment should be perceived as an asset or a threat.

One of the reasons why community mapping was chosen as a starting point was because this type of activity can also be used to build rapport. Thus, our goal was to get to know participants and their surroundings better. According to Leurs (1996), Slater and Ford (1990) and White and Taket (1997), participatory mapping is crucial to PRA and can be used to depict various aspects of rural life, such as social issues, resources, health, literacy, economic activity and forms of livelihood. Thus, maps drawn by villagers or participants provide a basis for learning about different aspects of a village (IDS Participation Resource Centre, 2000; Molteberg & Bergstrom, 2000; Mukherjee, 1993; Slater & Ford, 1990). From this point, problems illustrated on the map can be described and discussed, along with the opportunities and constraints which seem relevant in a given community.

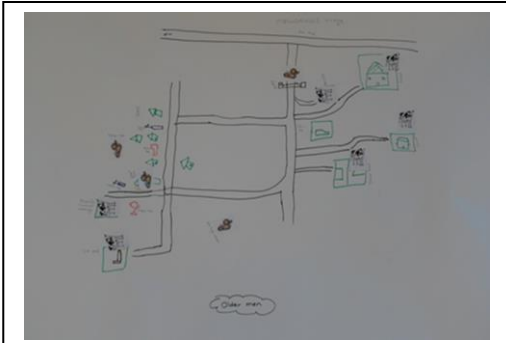
With reference to Table 3.5, the use of symbols (cows to indicate protective resources and snakes to indicate risk factors) afforded us the opportunity to establish perceived risk and protective resources in the community. Photograph 3.10 shows the symbols used during the community mapping activity to establish assets and threats in the participants' environment.



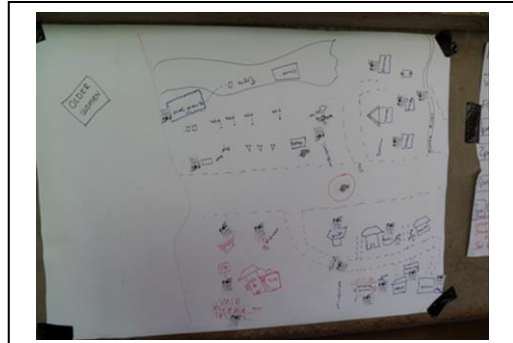
Photograph 3.10: Limpopo Province,
June, 2012

A good knowledge of these perceived risks and protected resources helped the research team in clarifying the appraisal process which participants follow when faced with new or different experiences and events in their community. Moreover, pertinent issues which the community has faced were revealed. Photographs 3.11, 3.12, 3.13 and 3.14 demonstrate the participants' process of creating

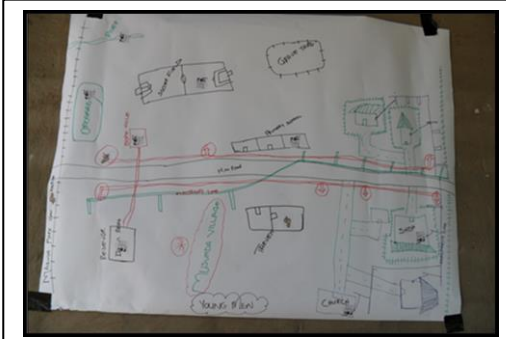
community maps in Limpopo Province, while Photographs 3.15, 3.16, 3.17 and 3.18 show community maps made in Mpumalanga.



**Photograph 3.11: Older Men,
Limpopo Province, July, 2013**



**Photograph 3.12: Older Women,
Limpopo Province, July, 2013**



**Photograph 3.13: Older Men,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**



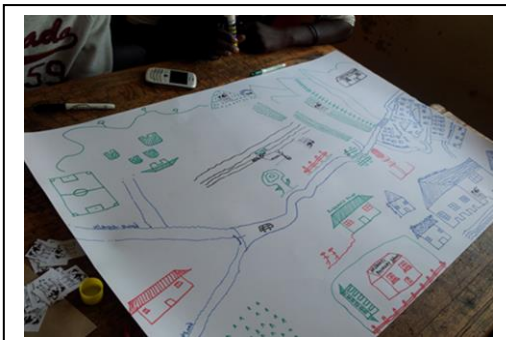
**Photograph 3.14: Older Women,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**



**Photograph 3.15: Older Men,
Limpopo Province, July, 2013**



**Photograph 3.16: Older Women,
Limpopo Province, July, 2013**



**Photograph 3.17: Younger Men,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**



**Photograph 3.18: Younger Women,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**

3.4.5 PARTICIPATORY DIAGRAMMING

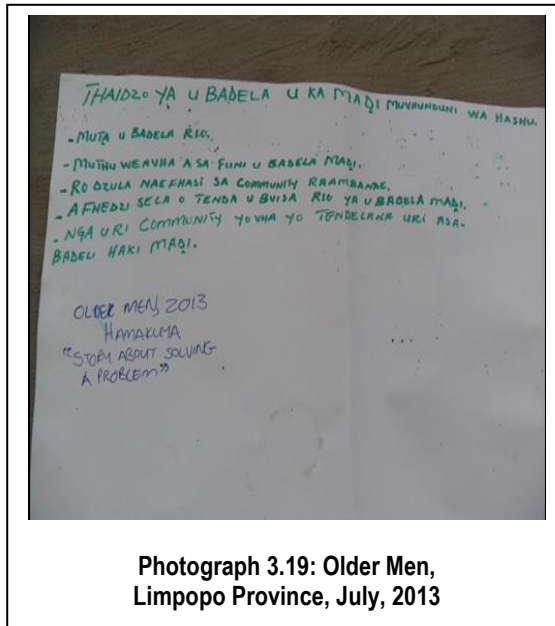
For Conversations Two to Four we used participatory diagramming (Binns, Hill & Nel, 1997; Chambers, 1993a; Juliá & Kondrat, 2005), which involved drawing various diagrams such as Venn diagrams, pie diagrams, bar charts and flow charts. These diagrams help to build consensus and can form a base for resolving conflicts and differences of opinion. They help in cross-checking information, as well as building up a knowledge base on the topic under discussion (RRA Notes, 1991). Participatory diagrams may also represent greater detail than verbal discussions typically provide, and may assist in the discussion of related issues that are important to different participants (IDS Participation Resource Centre, 2000; Loader & Amartya, 1999; White & Taket, 1997). They help participants to feel interested and involved in discussing different aspects of their own village, and can also be more objective than verbal group discussions since any changes to be incorporated can take place immediately and any errors can be rectified at once. Participatory diagramming also facilitates exchange of views on the basis of information presented in the diagrams. In participatory diagramming, people have the entire set for discussion in front of them and can go into finer details without missing any important points (Mukherjee, 1993; White & Taket, 1997).

3.4.6 PARTICIPATORY CONVERSATION TWO: DRUMS ACTIVITY

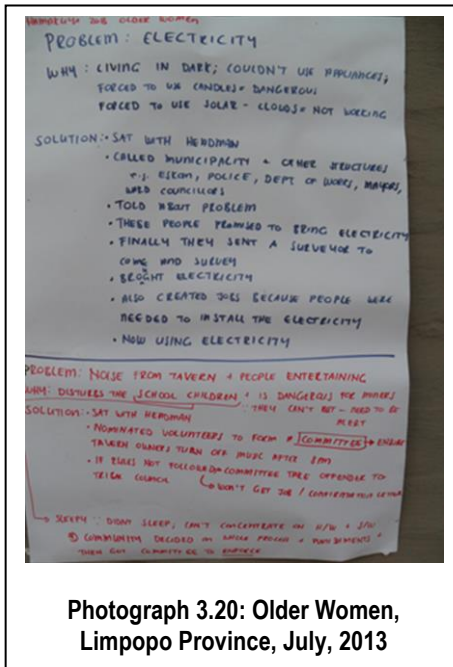
The second participatory conversation attempted to answer research questions related to the patterns of coping employed by community members, by identifying strategies and solutions which community members had employed in the past, in order to address risk in their community. In this sense, participants were asked to illustrate how their community solved problems in the past.

In order to make this concept more accessible to participants, the metaphor of a drum was mobilised, because drums can be used to call community members together to discuss a problem and find a solution. A picture of a drum was printed onto each poster to be used for this conversation, as a way of making the idea more concrete.

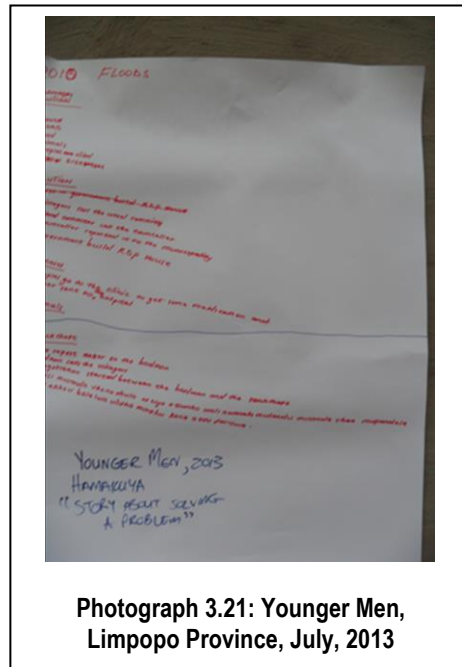
This process enabled the research team to determine established patterns of coping with reference to past structures, relationships and networks within the community, as well as belief structures (see Appendix E for photographs of the drum posters). Additionally, solutions to identified problems served as a launch pad through which conversations were initiated on how future problems might be solved. Photographs 3.19 to 3.26 provide examples of the posters that participants made, illustrating how they solved problems in the past.



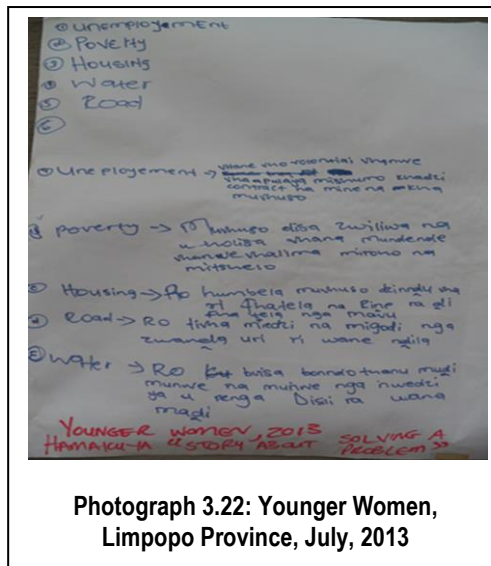
Photograph 3.19: Older Men, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



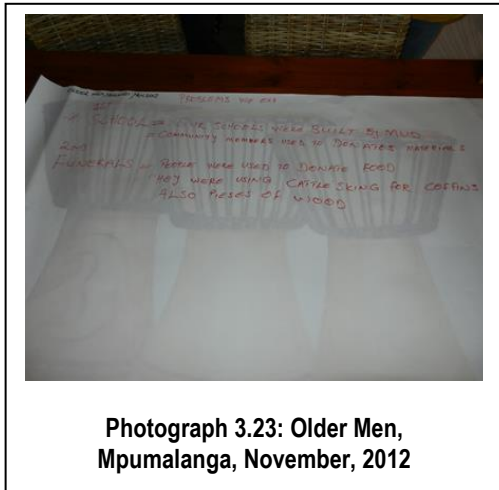
Photograph 3.20: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



Photograph 3.21: Younger Men, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



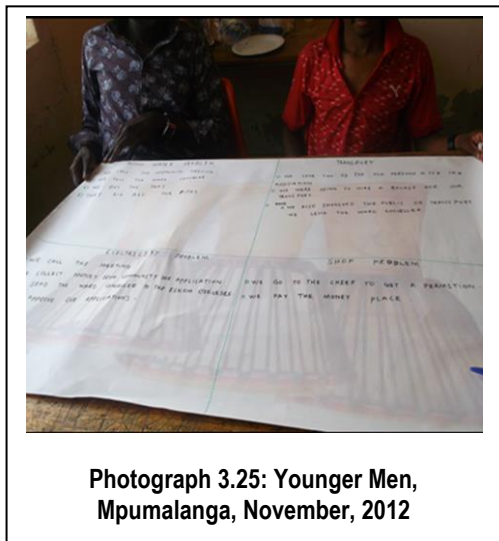
Photograph 3.22: Younger Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



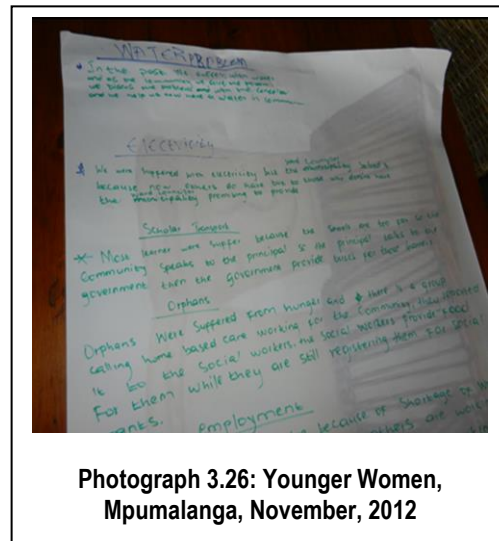
Photograph 3.23: Older Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.24: Older Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.25: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

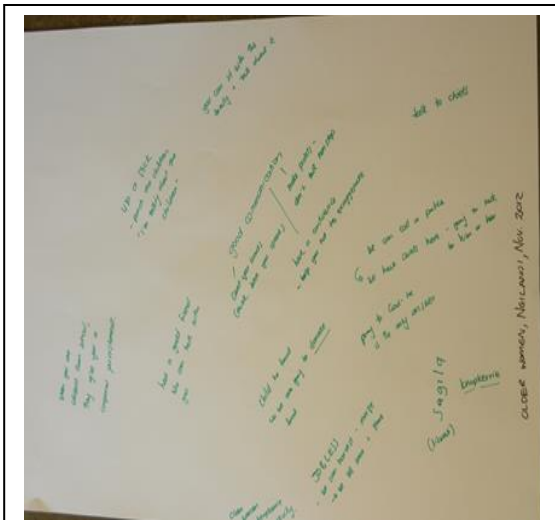


Photograph 3.26: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

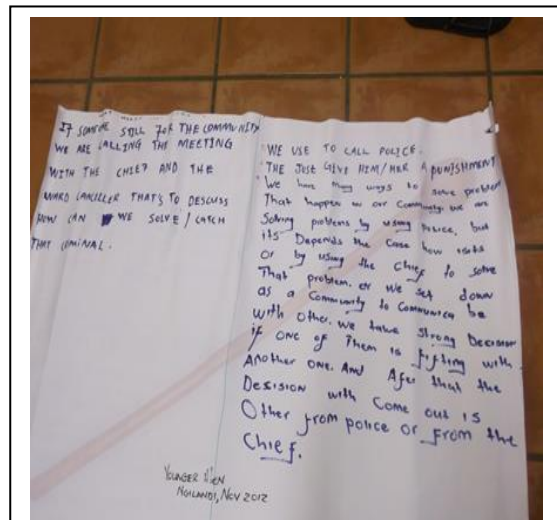
3.4.7 PARTICIPATORY CONVERSATION THREE: KNOBKERRIE ACTIVITY

The objective of the third participatory conversation was to identify resources, plans and ideas that could be mobilised to address future risks which community members may experience. Additionally, this conversation sought to answer research questions pertaining to how participants might solve problems in the future (see Appendix E for photographs of the knobkerrie posters).

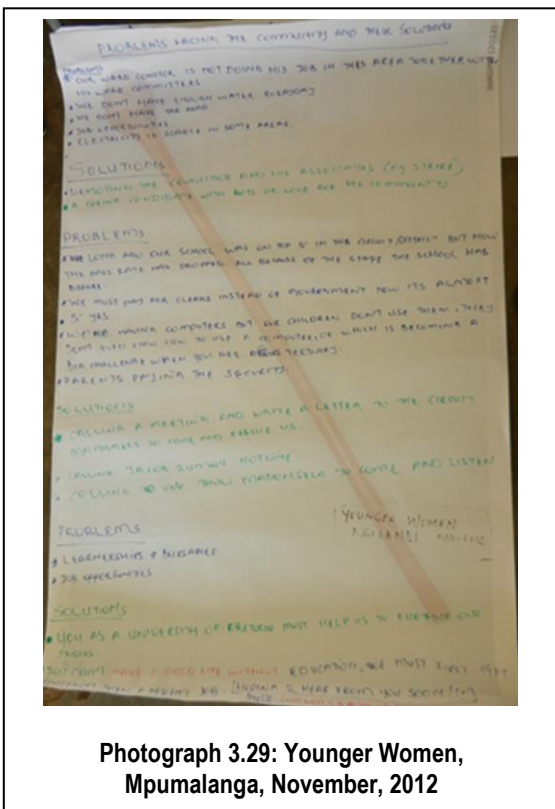
The metaphor of a knobkerrie, a short stick with a knob at the top and typically used as a weapon or for protection, was mobilised to help participants understand what the research team wanted them to discuss. As in the case of the drum activity, a picture of a knobkerrie was printed onto each poster which was to be used for this conversation. Photographs 3.27, 3.28, 3.29 and 3.30 show how community members thought they could solve future problems in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga.



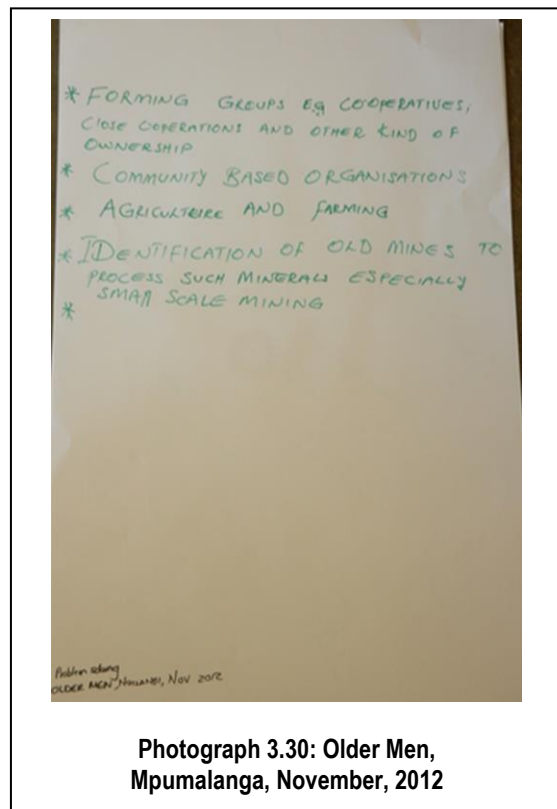
Photograph 3.27: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



Photograph 3.28: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.29: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

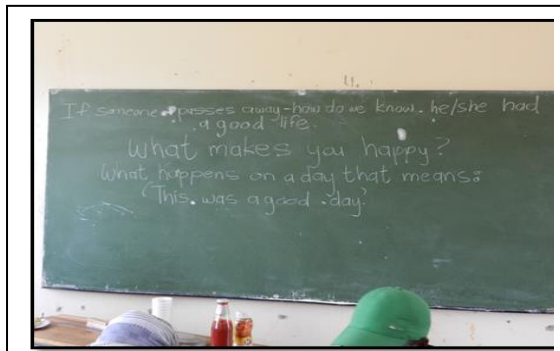


Photograph 3.30: Older Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

3.4.8 PARTICIPATORY CONVERSATION FOUR: MEALIE ACTIVITY

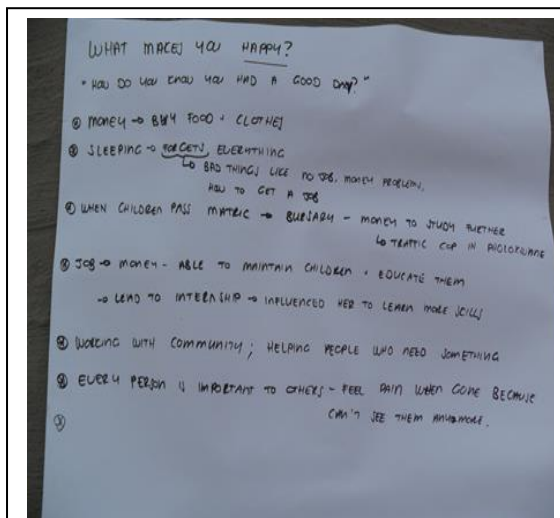
The fourth participatory conversation was conducted after the research team had established a) protective resources and risk resources within the community; b) what solutions have been employed in the past to address risks; and c) what resources and past ideas the communities have applied, that may help to address risks. The objective of this fourth conversation was to establish how community members find and make meaning in their daily lives; in other words, what makes them happy.

Photograph 3.31 indicates the instructions which were given to participants at the Mpumalanga research site for Participatory Conversation Four: Mealie Activity.

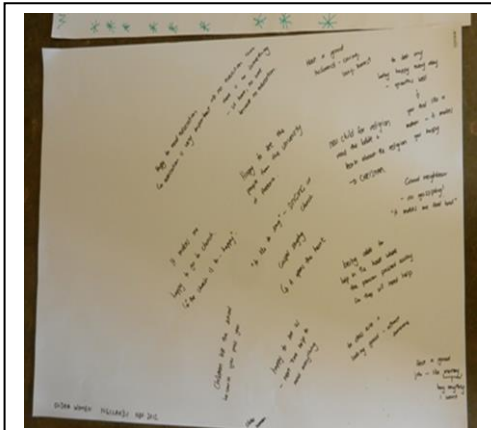


Photograph 3.31: Mielie Activity, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

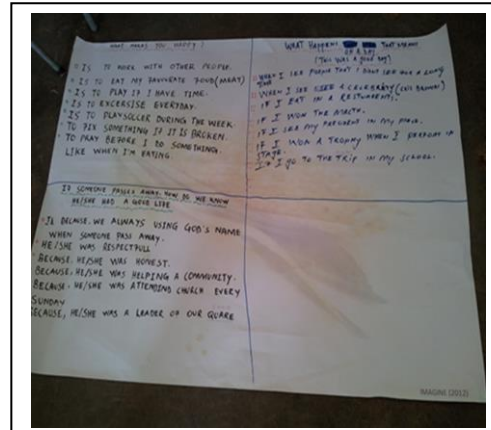
The metaphor of a mealie, a source of nourishment and comfort in many African cultures, was used to illustrate the type of information which we were hoping participants would share with us. A picture of a mealie was printed onto the front of each poster used for this conversation. Photographs 3.32 to 3.39 provide examples of what makes participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga happy.



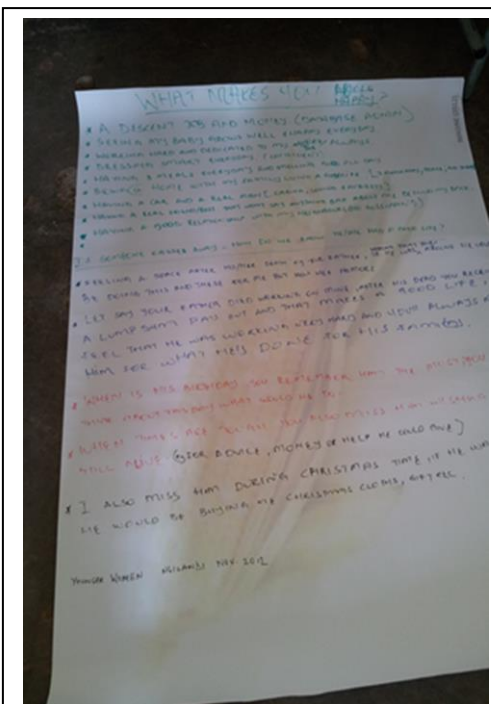
Photograph 3.32: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



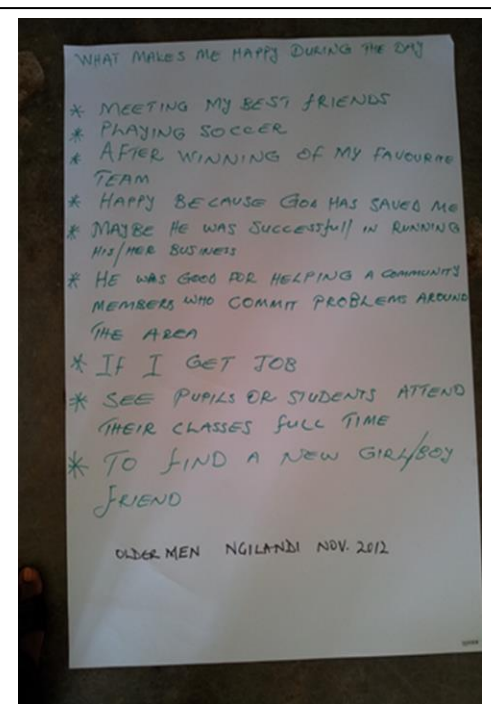
Photograph 3.36: Older Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.37: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.38: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 3.39: Older Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

One important area of criticism concerning PRA data was especially relevant to this study. According to White and Pettit (2004), participatory research may hide diversity and present a falsely homogenous view of the community members whose views it is supposed to present. In common with other research methods, PRA may require a certain degree of labelling (for example, men, women, young, old etc.) which may mask internal distinctions within groups. Given the specific demographic groups which IPR sought to study and engage with, I needed to be aware, constantly, that my role within the process of PRA data generation was one of actively encouraging participants to create collective, shared interpretations of reality as opposed to simply allowing an existing consensus to emerge (White & Pettit, 2004). By ensuring that each participant had the opportunity to share his or her story and by committing

to taking thorough field notes which documented not only the collective but the individual experiences of participants, I believe the IPR research group was able to fulfil this role.

3.4.9 OBSERVATION-AS-CONTEXT-OF-INTERACTION

The work of Angrosino and Mays de Perez (2000) was integral to this study in the sense that it guided my thinking on the membership role that I wished to play within the communities that I studied. Specifically, Angrosino and Mays de Perez's (2000) insights into the thoughts of the ethnographer and how he or she interacts with members of the community being studied were integral to how I chose to engage with and observe participants in this study.

The primary purpose of observation in this study was to collect non-verbal data portrayed by participants with regard to how they wanted to be treated, as well as how they felt about certain topics that were discussed. The research team needed to be aware of these issues so that we could adjust our engagement with participants and adapt our conversations with them in such a way that they felt comfortable to share their stories with us. Additionally, this was an important process because it afforded the team the opportunity to modify the participatory environment which we were trying to create, so as to level the playing field with regard to power. We did not want inadvertently to create settings and situations in which participants felt uncomfortable and as if they were being disempowered.

There were four co-researchers and one principal investigator involved in the data generation process; consequently, field notes formed an integral part of data documentation with regard to what was observed and what transpired during the participatory conversations with each demographic group. I made use of field notes in both the descriptive and reflective senses in order to document and comment on this process (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For descriptive notes, I relied on words, pictures and photographs of the setting, participants' actions and conversations that I observed. For reflective notes, I captured my own ideas, concerns and thoughts regarding the study. The value of field notes for my involvement in the IPR project was that they became supplementary to other data generation techniques which were employed. Additionally, our collective field notes allowed me to document observations as accurately as I could, making it possible to establish context and meaning (Bodgan & Biklen, 2003).

One specific example of how observation was employed and documented in this study stands out from the rest. This example pertains to my experience in this study as a young, white, English-speaking woman in a black Vhenda or Swati setting. There were very clear expectations from research participants and other community members as to how I should conduct myself, and how I should go about the process of generating my data. At both data generation site visits to Limpopo Province, I received very clear verbal and non-verbal messages from the male participants that they would not be willing to talk to me, simply because I was a woman. Instead, they opted to talk to and collaborate with

another co-researcher, Raphael Akanmidu, who is a Nigerian man and about the same age as some of the older male participants. The following extract from my research diary illustrates some of the thoughts which went through my mind as I watched the situation unfold.

“One thing that really stood out for me today ... was how defined the gender roles in the Tshivenda/Limpopo Province cultures are. At one stage during the morning when we were all trying to find people to interview for the conservation of resources survey, we really needed to add some men to our group. However, when it came to asking the interpreters if there were any men that wanted to be interviewed, they mostly all said no. At first I thought that this was related to the fact that they did not want to be interviewed by women (because at the time there were only young women available to conduct interviews). While this was definitely a factor, further reflection led me to the understanding that this is not something that a man in a Venda community would ordinarily be asked or expected to do. In essence, this goes back to the gender roles specifically – I felt like the men were really putting their figurative foot down with us today. At first it actually made me feel a bit bad because I could feel their eyes on my back as I walked away from the group of men, having asked the translator if anyone would be prepared to be interviewed. Not only that, but I could hear the snickering as I walked away, and I am almost certain it was at me! However, now that I have had a chance to digest, I appreciate and understand that this is just a part of who they are as people. I too, have my own little idiosyncrasies, and therefore should not be judging them. Isn't that what PRA is all about anyway?”

5 June 2012

During such site visits and interactions with the research participants, I needed to be aware of the dynamics that could exist between us, as well as how these dynamics might affect the data which I was ultimately able to generate. Additionally, as one of four co-researchers, it was important for me to consider the effect that may have been had, if I had chosen to work with a different demographic group, rather than with the one which I initially opted for: the older women's group.

Angrosino and Mays de Perez (2000, p.680) expressed the view that "in most social interactions, people assess behaviour not in terms of its conformity to social or cultural norms in the abstract, but in regard to its consistency which is perceived as a pattern that somehow makes sense to others in a given social situation." This background helped me to understand that the people with whom I was working functioned in terms of an ideology that led them to expect and experience power in a certain way. In the case of the young men who did not want to work with me, there was a clear perception by the participants that my engagement with them would be indicative of power working downward from a white institution to a subordinated and marginalised group of people. I needed to recognise and accept that people quite often have different ways of making sense of a situation; by doing so, I was able to respond in a manner which acknowledged the multidimensional nature of power relationships where

various systems, agents of the systems, key informants and researchers are all key constituents (Behar, 1993; Hsiung, 2008). I also needed to acknowledge that attributes such as my gender, race, age and class would shape participants' interpretations of what would happen on the days of data generation, as well as what I would observe in the field (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000; Weston, 1996).

Within the context of ethnographic research, researchers, even those coming from traditionally 'dominant' social groups, need to engage in a process of consciousness-raising about the nature and effects of their interactions with others (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). Using the example of the male research participants in Limpopo not wanting to be interviewed by or interact with a young, white, female researcher, I needed to reflect on why this may be, as well as how this understanding may have contributed to my insights into the cultures we were studying. The male researchers required me to submit to their needs and expectations of the unfolding research process in a way that made them feel as though they had power and could control the process. I grew up in a very different culture with a very different value system, where generally speaking, there were no strong patriarchal influences; with this background I needed to think clearly about what the research process required of me to be able to work with various groups; I needed to put my own personal views and agendas on one side.

One of the dangers of observational data is that the researcher may not be interested in what happens outside of the public eye and must therefore rely on key informants to gather important information (De Munck & Sobo, 1998). The co-researchers knew that they needed to avoid a situation where they obtained different understandings of what they observed and interpreted through the observational data; consequently, the IPR research team agreed ahead of time on the type of data that they would be interested in documenting. Specifically, they agreed to document observations on participant behaviour before, during and after PRA conversations, as well as any small, nuanced occurrences that took place during PRA conversations (Kawulich, 2011). Steps were taken to ensure that the research team was familiar with the culture and traditions of the research participants and these also helped to alleviate this problem in the sense that each co-researcher was better able to represent and interpret events empathetically and in a way which held true to the cultural intricacies of the communities that were studied (Bernard, 1994).

3.5 DATA SOURCE PREPARATION

3.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Long and Johnson (2000) and Malterud (2001) maintain that as part of the process of conducting research, particularly in multisite studies, data collection techniques and the documentation of research procedures need to be robust. An important part of this process is the preparation and organisation of raw data for data analysis (Constas, 1992; Mays & Pope, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Various forms of raw data had to be prepared for analysis for this study, including the preparation of the

verbatim transcriptions and in some cases their translation into English. Visual data and field notes also needed to be organised in an accessible way.

3.5.2 TRANSCRIPTIONS OF PRA CONVERSATIONS

3.5.2.1 Verbatim Transcriptions in Mother Tongue and English

While the co-researchers took joint responsibility for transcribing the English elements of all the audio recordings, it was necessary to enlist the support of trained translators to transcribe mother tongue portions of the audio recordings, and then translate this text into English. For the audio recordings in which either SiSwati or Tshivhenda were spoken by participants, a mother tongue speaker of the respective language was hired to transcribe all the recordings into the relevant language. Once this process had been completed, these mother tongue transcribers were tasked with translating their recordings from the mother language into English (see Appendixes C and D examples of mother tongue transcriptions and translations respectively).

In order to ensure consistency across transcribers and translators, as well as amongst co-researchers responsible for the English transcriptions, a set template was employed (see Appendix J for an example of this template). Within the context of IPR, the transcriptions which were generated sought to preserve the “morphologic naturalness” (McLellan, MacQueen & Neidig, 2003, p. 65) of the transcriptions by keeping word forms and the use of punctuation as close as possible to the speech of research participants. Moreover, we sought to preserve the authenticity of the transcript structure by keeping text clearly structured using speech markers. Secondly, we generated verbatim accounts of participants’ responses and discussions during PRA activities in an attempt to generate exact reproductions of the data generation sessions captured by the audio recordings. In this sense, we chose to transcribe the audio recordings in their entirety. We needed to ensure that all transcripts were generated systematically and so we agreed that the transcripts should include elisions, mispronunciations, slang and grammatical errors.

Before the transcribing process started, we agreed that in order to improve the readability of the transcripts, they should be formatted identically and support manual coding. We set the font for transcriptions at the same style and size as the one used to write up the research findings, to create a sense of uniformity in the documents which accompany the doctoral theses (McLellan *et al.*, 2003). We also opted to include a cover sheet for each set of transcriptions, such as the one for the Older Women’s group, where data was generated in 2013 in Limpopo Province. Additionally, a brief informational text box was inserted at the beginning of each transcription outlining that a new activity had begun, and summarising the details and goals of that activity. According to McLellan *et al.* (2003), including this type of information is referred to as ‘source labelling’ and allows the reader to scan

documents visually and quickly and identifies what a given text may be related to. Appendix J provides an example of the format used to transcribe audio recordings into verbatim text.

A new set of transcriptions was created by each mother tongue transcriber who was hired to transcribe the TshiVhenda, SiSwati and IsiZulu elements of the audio recordings (refer to Appendix C for examples of mother tongue transcriptions). It was advantageous to create an entirely new set of transcriptions focussing on mother tongue discussion and conversations between participants because any small nuances that occurred throughout these participants' interactions became accessible to the co-researchers as part of the data analysis process. Additionally, these transcriptions were helpful in assisting the co-researchers to ensure the accuracy of information passed on to them through the translators employed during data generation.

In IPR, we chose not to transcribe personal discussions which occurred between participants during data generation, in an attempt to respect their privacy (McLellan *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, whenever participants specifically made use of their mother tongue to instruct the translator not to mention certain pieces of information to the co-researcher, this data was also omitted from the transcriptions. Basically, only those discussions and conversations that took place in the participants' mother tongue and which contributed to answering the specific research question were documented and transcribed. Appendixes C and D provide examples of the transcriptions and translations which were generated by mother tongue transcribers for the current study.

3.5.3 ORGANISATION OF VISUAL DATA FOR ANALYSIS

The documentation of visual data was an integral part of the data generation process. Specifically, the research team made use of photographs in order to document the PRA conversations that took place at each site visit. Photographs of participants were taken while they were completing various activities, as well as after each activity or conversation had been completed, in order to capture the end product of each demographic group (Prosser, 2011). Additionally, we made use of photographs to document and capture aspects of the environment which were relevant to IPR and to understanding the broader context within which participants lived (see Appendix E for examples of visually-documented data) (Goldman, *et al.*, 2005; Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010).

In PRA it is not unusual for participants to take away the artefacts, maps and diagrams generated through participatory activities as this is part of an ownership process (Chambers, 1995). In IPR, participants were given the opportunity to keep the community maps and posters which they co-created during the data generation process and in most cases, participants did choose to take their work home with them at the end of each day. As such, the research team found it necessary to ensure that all the visual data generated was recorded and captured photographically for analysis at a later stage (Appendix E provides an example of the recording of visual data in preparation for analysis). Co-

researchers involved in the IPR project took collective responsibility for photographing their own and other groups' PRA activities in an attempt to obtain as much visual data as possible, to be used later to piece together the data generation process in preparation for analysis.

All visual data which was recorded photographically was sorted according to site, date of site visit, demographic group and finally, activity. The data was then saved onto a master file so that it could be distributed to all co-researchers for individual analysis.

3.5.4 ORGANISATION OF FIELD NOTES FOR ANALYSIS

It was of the utmost importance to the research team to make sure that certain information was documented while co-researchers were conducting PRA conversations with participants. We ensured that as a team we all collected thorough data on each step of the data generation process and used our field notes for this. Proactively, the team discussed and agreed upon what information would be important to capture while participants were engaged in PRA conversations. We agreed that the minimum contents of each co-researcher's field notes would be a description of each activity, the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the participants in that activity and the content which was included in a given PRA conversation. In addition, we agreed that as the data generation process progressed, the co-researchers should also take reflective notes based on behaviours observed and content included in each conversation.

The IPR research team chose to make use of a standard format for recording field notes, as a means of ensuring that each co-researcher was able to record the same basic information at each stage of the data generation process. In doing so, the research team was able to ensure preservation of the integrity of the data which was generated; moreover, a sense of order was upheld throughout the research process (see Appendix F for an example of the co-researchers' field notes) (MacQueen & Milstein, 1999). Additionally, this process ensured that the field notes of each co-researcher were accessible and understandable to readers not familiar with their particular practices and group of participants (MacLellan *et al*, 2003).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.6.1 CASE ANALYSIS IN COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY RESEARCH

According to Voss, Tsiriktsis and Frohlich (2002), a key step in any research project is the search for cross-case patterns through cross-case analysis. Cross-case analysis can help researchers to determine and define generalities seen across the data when making conclusions, and may help a researcher to see beyond a single case (Stretton, 1969). The use of cross-case analysis also assists researchers to develop a deeper understanding of the findings of the original case by analysing the

outcome of that case and setting these results against cases with similar criteria, to determine what factors contributed to the outcome (Khan & Van Wynsberghe, 2008).

Cross-case analysis enhances a researcher’s ability to understand how relationships may exist among discrete cases. A researcher can accumulate knowledge from the original case, refine and develop concepts (Ragin, 1997) and build or test theory (Eckstein, 2002). It allows the researcher to compare cases from one or more settings, communities or groups and as such, provides opportunities to learn from different cases and gather critical evidence to modify policy (Khan & Van Wynsberghe, 2008).

As the current study made use of a layered case study design (Patton, 2002), cross-case analysis was conducted to determine the similarities and differences between sites, genders and ages in each case. As such, the cross-case analysis comprised arrays which outlined the findings for each demographic group studied at each site. For example, there was an array for the older women’s group where data was generated in Limpopo Province, in 2012. There were also arrays which summarised the findings of each site in each year; for example, collective findings for the Mpumalanga 2013 site visit. Figure 3.2 indicates each array that was compiled in order to cross-analyse the cases that made up the overarching case study describing the nature of well-being in rural communities experiencing adverse conditions.

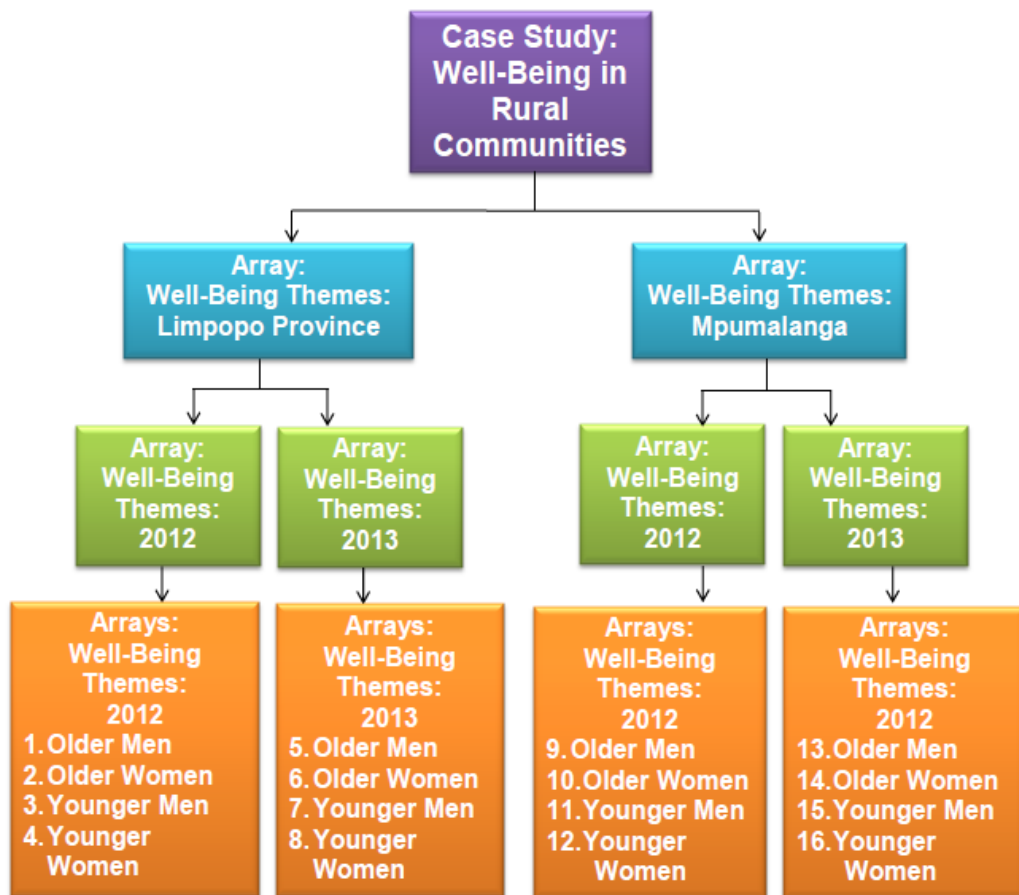


Figure 3.2: Arrays Compiled for Cross-Case Analysis in the Study

Once each array had been compiled, it was possible to determine whether different cases appeared to share similar profiles and whether or not they could be regarded as instances of the same 'type' of a general case (Yin, 2014). During this process, it was also possible to look at whether cases were different enough to be viewed as contrasting ones. The observed profiles could be used to confirm or refute the expectations which the co-researchers brought into the study, and connect the findings to existing research conducted on well-being. Appendix K details the cross-case analysis process of the current study.

3.6.2 INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA OF DATA FOR ANALYSIS

A significant component of the analysis and interpretation process was to formulate inclusion and exclusion criteria which could be used in reference to the data that was analysed (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In order to formulate these criteria, I conducted a process of conceptualisation, which entailed making working definitions for each concept used in the study (these criteria are provided within each results chapter, according to the theme discussed by that chapter). First, I developed meaningful definitions of each theme according to existing literature, but also in light of the distinct characteristics of the themes as they emerged from the data. Next, I developed definitions for each subtheme in accordance with the overarching characteristics within which those subthemes fell. Thereafter, I developed definitions for each category. I also specified the indicators for each category, stating the presence and absence of each concept (see Appendix G) (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

Once all the data had been analysed and interpreted, the research team conducted participatory member checking exercises with participants to check for perceived accuracy of the findings and in doing so, establish the credibility of the study (Schwandt, Lincoln & Guba, 2007). This process provided me with the opportunity to get clarity on various issues which emerged from the data, and ultimately helped me to ensure that I had coded and themed the data appropriately (Creswell, 2012; Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). Because the study was conducted from a social constructionism epistemological lens and a participatory research methodological lens, it was essential for me to give the participants an opportunity to ensure that their voices had been heard and that their messages had been received in the way they had intended (Chambers, 1994d; Patton, 2002).

Because the codes and meaning derived from thematic analysis and interpretation may differ from researcher to researcher, a copy of the thematic analysis is attached. The purpose of attaching this is to allow the reader to peruse the work with a view to understanding how and from where the themes were derived (Anderson, 2010; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that human beings are inherently subjective, especially in their interpretation of various events and occurrences. As such, achieving objective truth remains a challenge in that every researcher's subjective experience of interaction adds to the body of knowledge (Mbongwe, 2014).

3.6.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF TEXTUAL DATA SOURCES

This study comprised several different textual data sources which were analysed according to Charmaz's (2000) guidelines on thematic analysis. Specifically, it was necessary to analyse the mother tongue and English verbatim transcripts which were developed from the audio recordings of each PRA conversation. In addition, the research team needed to analyse the field notes which were developed during the data generation process at each site visit.

Open coding was employed in the analysis of the English verbatim transcripts (including those translated into English) which were generated by the IPR research team. Through this process, we looked on a line-by-line basis at the phrases, paragraphs and sentences which seemed to represent the perceptions of the participants (Glaser, 1978). Within these codes, the participants' perceptions and experiences of happiness, as well as their perceived risk and protective resources in the community, were identified. These common elements then formed part of categorical aggregation (Creswell, 2012) (see Appendix J for an example of this stage of the thematic analysis process).

The research team also chose to make brief electronic notes in the margins of the transcripts, which assisted in sorting the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Afterwards, data was recorded in a way that allowed us to identify categories and themes as they emerged (see Appendix M for an example of this stage of the thematic analysis process). Once working categories for analysis had been developed, themes and subthemes were created, based on the relationships which existed between and within categories (see Appendix J for an example of this stage of the thematic analysis process). As the study evolved, so did the themes, subthemes and categories which were identified. This process was recorded in the code book (Appendix F) so that future researchers would be able to track the data analysis process from the raw data (in the form of English and home language transcripts) to the final product which is reported in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study. The research team engaged the research participants through various member checking exercises, to ensure that the interpretation of the data was accurate, (see Appendix K for member checking examples).

3.6.3.1 Analysis of Field Notes

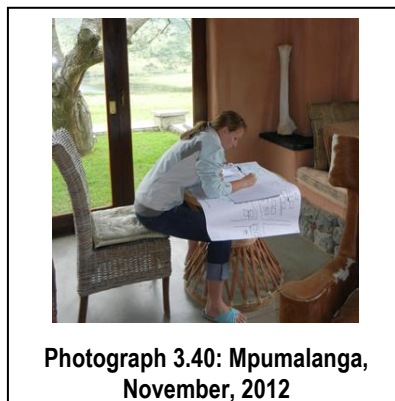
In addition to using the field notes to compliment data from the participants to support the interpretation of accounts (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005) the IPR research team also chose to follow Altheide's (2013) guidelines on how secondary documents such as field notes may be integrated into the data analysis process. Thus, the field notes and research journals of the co-researchers on the IPR project were analysed in much the same way as the transcripts mentioned in the previous section. Each demographic group per site visit was given individual attention (Patton, 2002) and was treated as an individual case which needed to be analysed (Yin, 2014). The same open codes that were created while analysing the transcriptions were also employed during the analysis of the field notes. Categorical

aggregation was then performed (Creswell, 2012). The co-researchers found that it was helpful to continue the routine of making electronic notes in the margins of the transcripts, to sort the data in a meaningful way (Straus & Corbin, 1990). Data was then recorded as categories and potential sub-themes emerged (please refer to Appendix F for an example of field notes created during data generation).

3.6.3.2 Analysis of Visual Data

The visual data was captured in the form of photographs of community maps and participatory posters which were co-created by participants during the data generation process. Because community members took their posters home with them, it was important to capture the contents of each poster photographically before the data generation sessions ended and participants went home. Therefore, although the content of the visual data which was analysed pertained to the PRA posters which participants created, photographs of these posters were analysed as opposed to analysing each original poster. Appendix C provides examples of the posters which were captured photographically to enable participants to take their posters home with them. Appendix L provides examples of the analysed photographs of participants' PRA posters. An inductive process of data analysis and interpretation was then applied to them. Through this analysis, I sought meaningful, symbolic content which would contribute to my understanding of how participants perceived and experienced well-being (Molestane, de Lange, Mitchell, Stuart, Buthelezi & Taylor, 2007; Viljoen, 2004).

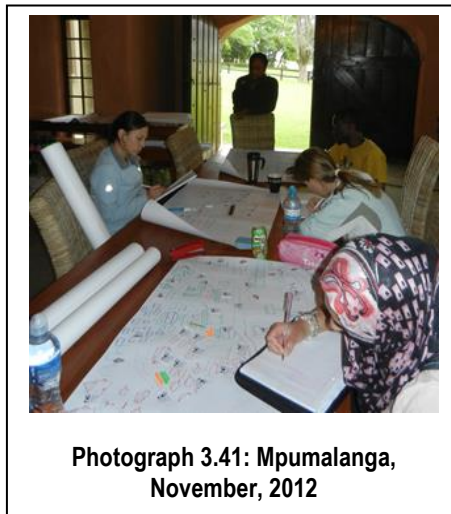
I analysed the photographs following the same steps of the thematic analysis process. As such, important symbols and pictures appearing on each photograph of the PRA activities were coded, with memos written onto the printed photographs of each PRA activity (see Appendix O for an example of analysed visual data). In addition, I attempted to “align emerged visual categories with the textual descriptions” (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2007, p. 212). I also wrote notes on potential links, similarities, preliminary categories and interpretations, after which I clustered the identified categories into themes and subthemes (Ebersöhn & Eloff, 2007). Whenever participants included text in their posters, I conducted a “line by line reading” of the text (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p.780). Also, whenever participants had written in their mother tongue, I needed to have this text translated into English. Photograph 3.40 shows me conducting a preliminary analysis of some of the visual data generated in Mpumalanga in 2012.



Photograph 3.40: Mpumalanga, November, 2012

3.6.4 CHALLENGES IN THE ANALYSIS PROCESS

The thematic analysis of the transcribed texts was time-consuming but provided a record of the research process and an audit trail (Anderson, 2002; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Although we had large volumes of data to analyse, each co-researcher benefitted from being part of a larger research team that generated and subsequently made a preliminary analysis of all the data together. It was helpful to be one of four co-researchers who were collectively making sense of all the raw data. Photograph 3.41 shows one instance where group analysis proved especially helpful, having spent an entire day in the field generating data.



I assumed the role of primary analyst with regard to the specific research topic of this study - inductively identifying core meanings in the data with regard to patterns, themes, subthemes and categories - falling under the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project. This role gave me the opportunity to have three colleagues acting as external coders for the study. Consequently, I had the privilege of having three additional people checking, to ensure that I had understood the data correctly, and had not misinterpreted what the participants were trying to convey. The use of external coders also ensured that I did not overlook any important data relevant to the study.

By remaining engaged throughout the research process whilst having access to the thoughts and ideas of co-researchers, the research team could gain insight into the context of each co-researcher's study, as well as into the context of the broader Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project. These insights subsequently helped the research team when the time arrived to analyse and interpret the data against the theoretical framework of the study (see Section 1.1.1 in Chapter 1).

The research team consulted regularly with the principal investigator and supervisor to discuss the data analysis process. We spent a great deal of time addressing issues which we identified, related to the codes and themes, and we were able to go through the process of coding and recoding each line of the

data with the assistance of the principal investigator (Charmaz, 2000). We also made notes of possible themes and categories, after which we finalised the themes and subthemes which had emerged (see Appendix G for an example of this stage of the analysis process). Photo 3.42 shows one instance after a site visit in Mpumalanga where Professor Ebersöhn and I had a supervision meeting to finalise the themes which emerged from analysis of the data.



**Photograph 3.42: Mpumalanga,
November, 2013**

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Participatory research embraces specific ethical choices (Chambers, 2006). Given the participatory nature of the IPR project, we aligned ourselves with the relevant ethical practices. One of the most important aspects of conducting ethical participatory research is that researchers need to be clear in their own minds, and on behalf of their participants, about the purpose of the study and the activities that participants are being asked to be involved in. As a team we sensed a clear perception by participants that we were visiting their community in order to bring them material items which would better their lives. When participants learned that this was not the case, they were visibly disappointed and to a degree quite hurt that we felt it appropriate to come into their community, ask them to participate in our activities and not give them anything to take back for their family.

Another important lesson which we learned through IPR was that no matter how hard you try, your presence at a research site will not be politically neutral (Rambaldi *et al.*, 2006). According to Kinden (2005), participatory research does not see the researcher as being able to give power to participants *per se*, but views research as inherently power-laden, needing negotiation between researchers and participants. There is a need for constant awareness that PR can become a political process, and this requires cognisance of the fact that there may be unintended consequences for communities that one works with: for example, some members could be empowered and/or disempowered by the process. As

such, PR demands that researchers give the appearance of complying with certain political causes or stances that reflect the needs and goals of the research participants.

One example of this scenario that occurred within the current study pertained to the issue of time. During the 2013 site visit to Limpopo Province, we were not able to start the PRA activities at the anticipated time, and so we did not have enough time to complete all the planned activities and take participants home to their families before a certain hour. Thus, it was necessary as a team to re-evaluate whose benefits we needed to keep in mind on the day of data generation. On the one hand, the research team had a list of activities that we needed to conduct in order to answer the research questions; on the other hand, we had a large group of participants who needed to get home to their families or back to work, having spent a large portion of their day with us. Ultimately, we decided that it was not in our participants' best interests to keep them at the research site any longer than what we had originally committed to, and so we opted to omit one PRA activity from the plan in order to honour our commitment to the allocated time schedule.

In addition to adhering to the principles of ethical participatory research, we also took the utmost care to stay true to the ethics of educational and psychological research. We did this by ensuring the highest degree of caution regarding the handling and storage of information, confidentiality and anonymity in the identification of participants, as well as the contributions made by participants once informed consent had been obtained. We attempted to maintain a good reputation with the community in order to gain entry to the community, research setting and facilities needed to carry out the research study (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

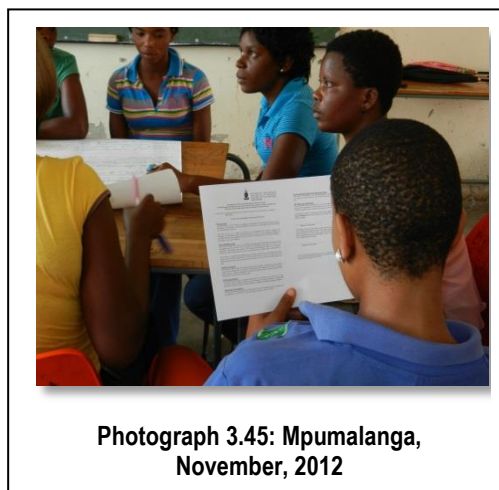
3.7.2 INFORMED CONSENT AND VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

By drawing from readings and insights on participatory reflection and action (PRA), I have come to believe that it is not necessarily possible to ensure informed consent in PRA in the same way as one would be able to do so in more conventional research methodologies (Boser, 2006). This is because the scope of the participatory research process is not determined in advance by one specific individual. This means that it may be difficult for participants to provide informed consent up front (Williamson 2002). Within the context of the current study, it was vital that we allowed our participants to lead the process of obtaining informed consent. At both the Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga sites, participants informed us of some of their expectations before they would engage in the PRA activities that we had planned. For example, it was very important to participants at both sites that we share a meal with them before starting. Photographs 3.43 and 3.44 show a meal shared with participants at each research site.



Since our participants wanted to be treated sensitively and with the level of respect (Halai, 2006) that their culture demanded, we chose to address the issue of informed consent in a very informal setting. At the beginning of each data generation session, our priority remained to build a strong relationship with our participants, and through that process, we invited them into the IPR project. We chose to talk to our Limpopo Province participants about informed consent under the shade of the trees at the research site. By this stage, we had already met most of our participants, and therefore we sat scattered in and around them while we told them about our study.

We followed a similar process in Mpumalanga, choosing to talk about informed consent and the voluntary nature of participation in the IPR project while we shared lunch together. In addressing the issue of informed consent and voluntary participation in such an informal way, we were able to put the participants at ease and create an environment within which they felt comfortable enough to ask questions and raise concerns that they had about the project. Photograph 3.45 shows younger female participants in Mpumalanga, reading through their informed consent forms.



We ensured that participants received clear, comprehensive information in their mother tongue, not only about the details of the IPR project, but also about what would be expected of them during the study.

Trained translators, who were also members of the community and thus already had a relationship with some of the participants, were integral to this process. In addition to explaining the concept of consent for participation in the study, the translators also explained that we would be using cameras and audio recorders in order to record the PRA activities (Mauthner, Mauthner, Birch, Jessop & Miller, 2002; Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001).

3.7.3 PROTECTION FROM HARM

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), social research should cause neither physical nor emotional harm to the participants in a study, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study or not. Therefore, as co-researchers on the IPR project, we were ethically obliged to ensure that the participants in the study were not exposed to any possibility of physical and/or emotional harm of which we may have been aware (Strydom, 2005). For example, it was important to us that we did not reveal any information that may have embarrassed participants, or endangered their home life, work life, or relationships. It was also vital that informed consent be obtained whenever the risks of research may have been greater than the risks a participant might face in everyday life (Mouton, 2008). Even where modest risk or harm may have been anticipated, it was important that informed consent be obtained.

All participants stated that they were happy to be identifiable, by their photographs and names, and were eager to know the results of the study when these were ready. The participants seemed to embrace their participation in the study and as a result they appeared to feel empowered by the activities which they completed.

3.7.4 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

In order to protect the participants from harm, I took care to observe the principles of confidentiality and privacy throughout the research process (Elmes, Kantowitz & Roediger, 1999). These principles are intended to ensure respect and protection to research participants by assuring the confidentiality of information shared, as well as anonymity by not revealing the identity of individuals and organisations involved (Halai, 2006). However, confidentiality in PR cannot always be assured, as there will probably not be a single, distant researcher who gathers all the data and assumes responsibility for removing identifying information before releasing the findings (Boser, 2006).

Since the study was part of the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project, we needed to be aware that even though all specific identifying information would be removed before the results of the project were published, the location of the project within the local context would probably render anonymity unlikely (Williamson & Prosser, 2002). Nevertheless, we took responsibility for not reporting private data that would identify participants in order to ensure confidentiality. It was interesting to observe that the participants of the study felt that they would like to be identifiable because they saw the participatory research process as a platform through which they were able to play a part in bringing about change in

their community. Thus, they openly shared their experiences and views on issues in their community, in line with the research questions of the broader Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project.

All data which was generated as part of the study was stored safely, and the research team was careful not to expose any of the participants' names or locations. Additionally, participants were assured of privacy and anonymity, but they were also informed of their obligation to respect the confidentiality of any information shared by others during the study. In the raw data, we changed the names of the participants to a pseudonym and code which reflected the site, year of data generation and demographic group within which each person fell. For example the older women's (OW) group from the 2013 Limpopo Province site visit was coded as "Name (LP-2013)". Although I find that the ethical guidelines provided by most research institutions are mostly not appropriate for meeting the ethical requirements of a participatory research study, I do believe that PR is by nature inherently ethical, given that it is a "normative, dialectic process with a democratising intent" (Mbongwe, 2014, p. 111).

3.7.5 TRUST

The purpose of the study was to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and perceptions of well-being of people living in remote rural contexts. All good participatory studies are founded on a relationship of trust between insiders and an outsider (Chambers, 2006; Gibbon, 2003; Rambaldi *et al.*, 2006). We aimed to create an environment where participants felt safe and secure enough to share their views and voice their opinions without hesitation. In order to build and maintain a good rapport, we applied the principles of trust and respect of privacy whenever interacting with the participants in the study. We also ensured that we were able to create a positive, warm relationship with the participants.

By using verbal and non-verbal communication, we indicated to the participants that we wanted the same goals and objectives for their communities as they did. We also reassured them that we were not visiting their communities to make major changes or to demonstrate to them that the way in which they lived and functioned was wrong. Rather, we attempted to convey to participants the authentic belief that we had in them, through which *they* could be enabled to become agents of change. In this sense, we were also very aware of the need not to mislead participants in any way, even unintentionally (Mouton, 2008).

3.8 QUALITY CRITERIA OF THE STUDY

3.8.1 INTRODUCTION

Given the nature of social constructionism, which aims to explore the co-constructed reality that is established by the participants involved, the aim of this study was not to discover the 'ultimate truth' about the nature of well-being in rural, resource-constrained communities. Rather, the intention was first

to gain insight into how information on the nature of well-being in those communities can inform an indigenous psychology perspective on well-being, and then describe the findings in a detailed but meaningful way. In keeping with the quality criteria described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as well as Denzin (2005), I employed various strategies pertaining to credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity to ensure the quality of the study. Reflexivity has played a fundamental role in this process. Table 1.6 in Chapter 1 outlines the specific strategies which were employed to ensure that this study meets those requirements of credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity.

3.8.2 CREDIBILITY

Mays and Pope (2000) describe credibility as the accurate presentation of a particular context or event, as described by the researcher. Van der Riet and Wassenaar (2002) describe it as the assurance that a researcher's conclusions stem from the data generated. Typically, a researcher achieves credibility for a study by applying techniques of triangulation (in quantitative research) or crystallisation (in qualitative research) to the methods used to generate and analyse data; this allows the researcher to determine whether there are any discrepancies in the research findings (Creswell, 2005). As such, the degree of credibility is determined by the professional integrity of a researcher together with his or her methodological capabilities and rigour (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Seale, 2000). The research team attempted to maintain credibility throughout the research process by representing the perspectives and experiences of the participants in as holistic a manner as possible. Several important strategies were employed in order to meet this requirement.

During the data generation phase of the study, the research team took care to ensure that they documented the research process accurately as it unfolded, and likewise took care to record any changes to the initial plan that were needed. Thus, these changes were recorded in our field notes and research journals (refer to Appendixes F and P), along with all other major actions and events that occurred throughout the data generation process. A similar process was followed during data analysis, where we were always aware of the need to document the transcriptions accurately, and the need to note the steps that we followed while analysing the data. Mouton (2008) argues that keeping track of one's fieldwork not only serves as a historical record for oneself and other researchers but also serves as a form of quality control. By keeping an accurate record of the main decisions and events which occur during a research process, the researcher has the opportunity to construct a record of the procedures followed, for reference at a later stage.

As part of the documentation process, we made a consistent effort to record the dates when we entered the field, a record of who participated in the study, a record of who contributed to and participated in the generation of data, factors which may have had an impact on the fieldwork, as well as the results of the

study (Mouton, 2008). All of this information helped the team to develop an audit trail which may help readers to access a transparent process and gain a clearer understanding of the study.

The research team relied on a process of peer review and debriefing, whereby we requested the primary investigator and co-researchers to comment on and review the data generation, analysis and interpretation processes. I was able to make use of fellow co-researchers as external coders during the preliminary phases of data analysis: this assistance was essential in helping me to present work which would be considered as credible in the research world. After all, my peers were able to support me in thinking more deeply about why and how I had come to certain conclusions about the data. The research team also challenged me to think about whether or not these conclusions were accurate.

Finally, we relied on crystallisation to obtain multiple perspectives on the nature of well-being in rural, resource-constrained environments. This approach helped us to gain a layered understanding of multiple meanings from various sources of data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Once the team had a more refined set of themes and sub-themes to work from, participatory member checking exercises were conducted in the field in order to verify that those themes and subthemes as well as categories were a true reflection of what had been said and co-constructed on the days of data generation. This member checking process also gave participants the opportunity to reflect on the credibility of their own accounts of perceptions, as they portrayed them during previous visits to the field (Appendix N).

3.8.3 TRANSFERABILITY

The term 'transferability' relates to the extent to which a reader or fellow researcher is able to take the findings of a given study and transfer them to other contexts (van der Riet & Wassenaar, 2002). By documenting densely compiled descriptions and field notes of observations made during the data generation process (Appendix F and P), I believe that as a team, we were able to achieve an appropriate level of transferability for the IPR project (Mays & Pope, 2000; Creswell, 2005). Making use of photographs (Appendix E) as a means of contextualising the study also helped in illustrating the physical setting and context of each research site. The intention in using these strategies was to enable readers and fellow researchers to determine the extent to which the findings may be applied to other contexts.

As mentioned previously, there was never any intention to generalise the findings of this study. Here, we should bear in mind that the study made significant use of PRA principles, and each setting had its own distinctive features including its own resources, challenges and preferences; consequently, the findings cannot merely be transferred from one community to the next (Mukherjee, 1993). Even though some researchers may wish to use the findings of the study by transferring them to another research setting, this decision ultimately lies with the reader who will have to determine whether this is at all possible, and if so, under which conditions.

3.8.4 DEPENDABILITY

The term 'dependability' refers to the degree to which a reader can be convinced that the findings of a study did in fact occur in the way which was reported (van der Riet & Wassenaar, 2002). As a research team, we attempted to provide dependable research findings by engaging in an extensive process of peer examination (Maree & van der Westhuisen, 2007). We also had profound discussions with the principal investigator about the findings of the study. During these discussions, we reviewed and debated the findings of the study so that we were able to clarify any potential misinterpretations and to propose suggestions for further analysis. Going back into the communities where data was generated, in order to perform member checking activities (Appendix N), also played an important role in producing dependable research findings (Creswell, 2005).

The study dealt with human beings who offered up their time and some of their resources in order to share their experiences and views of well-being. Therefore, we needed to acknowledge that we were going to be dealing with a phenomenon which would keep changing as the participants adapted to new situations and challenges (Merriam, 2002). We also needed to be very aware that because the study made significant use of PRA principles, it would to a large degree be characterised by diverse creative interaction during the data generation phase (Mbongwe, 2014). Against this background, it may be difficult to replicate the current study, or obtain the same results as this study. However, should this study be replicated with the same participants using the same location, the audit trail which was created during the course of the study would be extremely useful as it provides a detailed account of all the methods, procedures and decision points used in conducting this research (Creswell, 2005).

Depth and rigour are added to this study by generating data making use of audio recordings (Appendix A), the use of verbatim transcripts in English (Appendix B) and the participants' mother tongue (Appendix C), as well as field notes and reflective journals (Appendixes F and P). By carrying out this auditing process we were able to produce a trustworthy report and a true reflection of the research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Silverman, 2000).

3.8.5 CONFIRMABILITY

The concept of 'confirmability' relates to the need to ensure that the research procedures and results of a given study are free from the personal biases of the researcher conducting the study (Poggenpoel, 1998; Seale, 1999). Confirmability is essential for any study and is at the forefront of concerns related to subjectivity in qualitative research (Ladkin, 2005; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Thus, the findings and interpretations of a study must be confirmable, and these findings and interpretations must reflect the experiences of the participants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher.

The IPR research team made use of crystallisation in order to reduce any potential personal bias and thereby enhance the confirmability of the study. Reflecting in a research journal, as well as thoroughly

documenting the transcription and data analysis stages of the study helped us in guarding against bias. We chose to involve other scholars throughout this study, especially while analysing and interpreting the data. Engaging the principal investigator to check and ensure that the interpretations and conclusions were supported by the data further increased the confirmability of the study. Likewise, the audit trail which the team had systematically created allowed us to trace the course of the research process one step at a time, reviewing all the decisions made and the procedures described, as the study progressed (refer to Appendix Q).

3.8.6 AUTHENTICITY

According to Whitemore, Chase and Mandle (2001), authenticity is related to the credibility of a study and involves the portrayal of research that reflects the meanings and experiences that are lived and perceived by the participants of a study. In the specific case of qualitative research, authenticity indicates whether descriptions and explanations correlate with each other. Thus, it is assessed in terms of fairness and implies catalytic, ontological and tactical authenticity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis & Dillion, 2003).

The goal of this study was to use participatory methods to describe, accurately, a social phenomenon in a way that the description correlated with and was a true representation of participants' views. We attempted to achieve authenticity by using a range of different perspectives, as well as by reporting on contradictions and conflicting values, addressing fairness in the process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). We asked participating community members at the two research sites to verify the themes which we had identified, making sure that their perceptions were understood correctly and were captured and reported accurately (see Appendix N). This procedure enhanced the ontological authenticity of the study as well. We also made use of both member checking and the audit trail in ensuring the authenticity of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

3.8.7 REFLEXIVITY

According to Richardson (2000), writing is "a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about yourself and your topic" (p. 923). It is a "personal tale of what went on in the backstage of doing research" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 741). It has been noted that by making notes or writing memos, the researcher will reap many benefits (Watt, 2007). Glesne and Peshkin (1992), Maxwell (2005) and Spradley (1979) see the process of note writing as the beginning of the analysis phase. Additionally, making notes can show the researchers some aspects of their thought process that they did not know existed (Elbow, 1999; Huff, 1999; Woods, 1999). Researcher need to analyse their thought processes (Glesne, 1999; Merriam, 1998; Russell & Kelly, 2002; Stake, 2013). This exercise will help them see what information they are gathering and to detect whether their thought processes inhibit their observations (Russell & Kelly, 2002). Researchers need to look at their own assumptions and behaviour, when conducting

research, to see how these can may impact an inquiry (Watt, 2007). Additionally, the audience gains a greater understanding of the researchers' thought processes and methods, when they share their observations and the criteria used to gather the data (Watt, 2007). The process of journaling offers insights into how a researcher thinks and how these thoughts were formed.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggest that reflection is crucial for anybody wanting to become a better researcher; a reflective journal provides a focal point for this activity. As a junior researcher in the IPR project, I was challenged by the fact that I tended to become preoccupied with acquiring the myriad research skills associated with conducting doctoral level research. I was tempted to delay the use of a research journal until after I had become more comfortable with what might be considered the basics of PRA, social constructionism and indigenous psychology as a theoretical framework. However, the discipline involved in following a reflective writing process which focused on the IPR project's research focus, as well as my own doctoral study's focus, led me towards a more sophisticated understanding not only of reflexivity, but also of all aspects of the research methodology that I adopted through this study (Watt, 2007).

As a junior researcher, I needed constantly to ask myself the question, "Whose side am I on?" Moreover, I needed to develop an awareness of the fact that societies and cultures are stratified, and power, resources and status are all distributed differently. Within the context of a PRA study, an awareness of power and status in the research setting formed an integral part of how I reflected on my role as co-researcher and as such, how I chose to conduct myself throughout the research process. In PRA the role of the researcher differs significantly from that of researchers in traditional social science research (Charles & Neil, 2007). In PRA, the researcher becomes one participant among several in a collaborative project, and the research participants are either fully in control or have a shared input into the process (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Researchers may have specialist expertise and knowledge, but their role is not as an elevated expert, but more as facilitators or 'resource persons'. In addition, in mainstream social science, research and action tend to take place separately, with the researcher less involved in linking research to action (Whyte, 1991). In PRA, there is no such distinction (Charles & Neil, 2007).

Writing in a reflective research journal was also integral to my research experience in that it served as a historical record of all the main decisions and events which occurred during fieldwork (Mouton, 2008). In view of this, I was able to use the research journal as a form of quality assurance as well.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I discussed the procedures which I followed and the way in which the research process developed over the duration of the study. I explained the paradigmatic approaches which directed the

way in which we carried out the investigation, as well as the strategies that we relied on in the generation and analysis of the data. Doing so assisted us in reaching the findings of the study.

Throughout this chapter, I reflected on the strengths and limitations of the methodological choices, as well as how we attempted to address these challenges. Finally, I explored the role of the researcher and the importance of reflexivity in participatory research, and gave careful consideration to the ethics of participatory reflection and action. Quality criteria applicable to this study were also discussed. In the next chapter, I present the results and findings of the research.

Over the course of the next two chapters, the results and findings for the two themes which emerged from the data are discussed in depth. I present both of the major themes that emerged during the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of the study in a separate chapter, per theme. The major themes are:

- ❖ Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being (Chapter 4);
- ❖ Human Pathways to Well-Being (Chapter 5);

In each of these chapters, I provide inclusion and exclusion criteria (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2003) for the subthemes and categories which emerged (Charmaz, 2000; Merriam, 1998). I authenticate and enrich the findings of the study through the use of participants' verbatim quotes in English and their home language, and I provide visual data and extracts from my research journal. I also reflect on the emergent themes in terms of the literature, to present findings in line with my research purpose. I expand on congruent findings, contradictory findings, as well as on instances when either my study or existing literature are silent on an issue. Finally, I present some insights on each of the identified themes.

For both of the major themes, I identified similarities and dissimilar ways in which the participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga voiced their experiences and perception of well-being, addressing the secondary research question *“What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”* Additionally, I compared the experiences and perceptions of well-being of the older and younger generations, as well as males and females at each site, in order to address the secondary question *“How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”* In addressing the aforementioned three secondary research questions, I was able to answer the final secondary question *“How can indigenous pathways to well-being contribute to an indigenous psychology on resilience?”*

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CHAPTER 4

THEME 1: DIMENSIONAL CONNECTEDNESS AS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Following analysis, two themes emerged: Theme 1: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being; and Theme 2: Human Pathways to Well-Being. Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the two themes of this study, as well as their subthemes and categories.

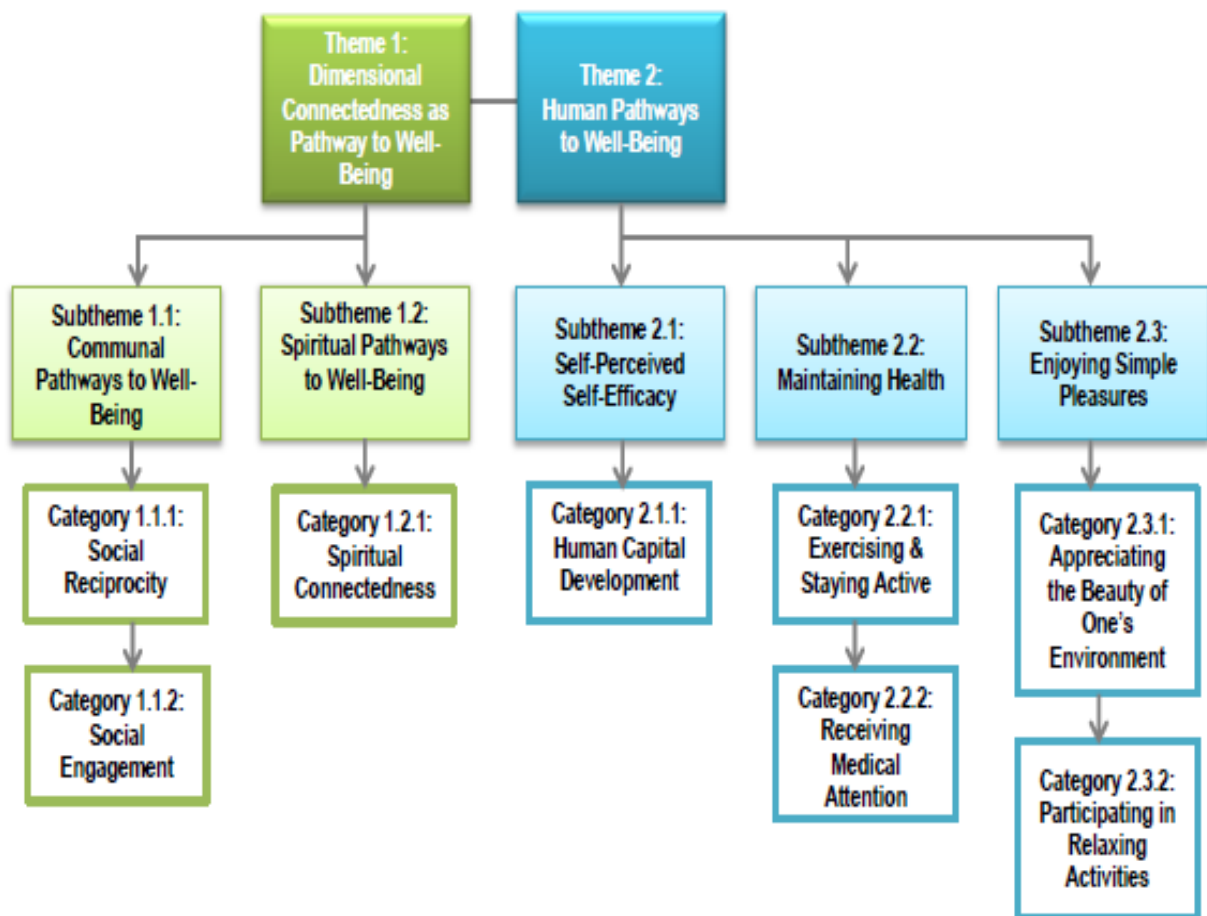


Figure 4.1: Overview of Themes for the Current Study

In this chapter I discuss the first theme (Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being) which emerged from the data pertaining to well-being. That discussion takes place from an indigenous psychology perspective. I also answer, in part, the two secondary research questions which guided this study. These are: firstly, “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?” and secondly, “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?” I add

to these answers in my discussion of Theme 2 (Human Pathways to Well-Being), discussed in Chapter 5. Throughout this chapter and the next, the objectives of the study which were discussed in Section 1.5: Purpose and Research Questions, are addressed. The objectives of the study are outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Objectives of the Study

Objective 1:	To identify indigenous psychology well-being themes on indigenous pathways to well-being which emerge when data is generated by participants living in high risk, high need environments who visually map and diagram what they perceive well-being to be
Objective 2:	To compare conceptualisations of indigenous pathways to well-being across cases of sample site, age and gender
Objective 3:	To discuss indigenous pathways to well-being in relation to existing Western and non-Western understandings of well-being
Objective 4:	To contribute to an indigenous psychology knowledge base on (South African) indigenous pathways to well-being using inductive, qualitative and participatory lenses

Theme 1 focuses on *dimensional connectedness* as *pathway to well-being*. I derived the term *dimensional connectedness* from indigenous well-being literature (Krippner, 2000; Lee, Oh & Mountcastle, 1992; Singh, 1999; Sue & Sue, 1999; Wing, 1998) which suggests that individuals exist in relation to their community, spiritual world and natural environment. By referring to Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being, I draw on data that pertains to different dimensions (such as the human, social, spiritual and/or environmental dimensions) tapped into as pathways to indigenous well-being. The term *well-being* refers to the state of 'health' that is experienced when different dimensions encompassing an individual's indigenous well-being system, interact harmoniously. *Pathways* denotes the methods, strategies, behaviours, thought processes and ideas that individuals access and mobilise in order to maintain or restore balance to the indigenous well-being system.

In this first theme, I focus on two dimensions of the indigenous well-being system which work together harmoniously to create a sense of well-being: *communal pathways to well-being*, and *spiritual pathways to well-being*. Collectively, these two dimensions comprise the subthemes for Theme 1. Figure 4.2 provides a mind map of Theme 1: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

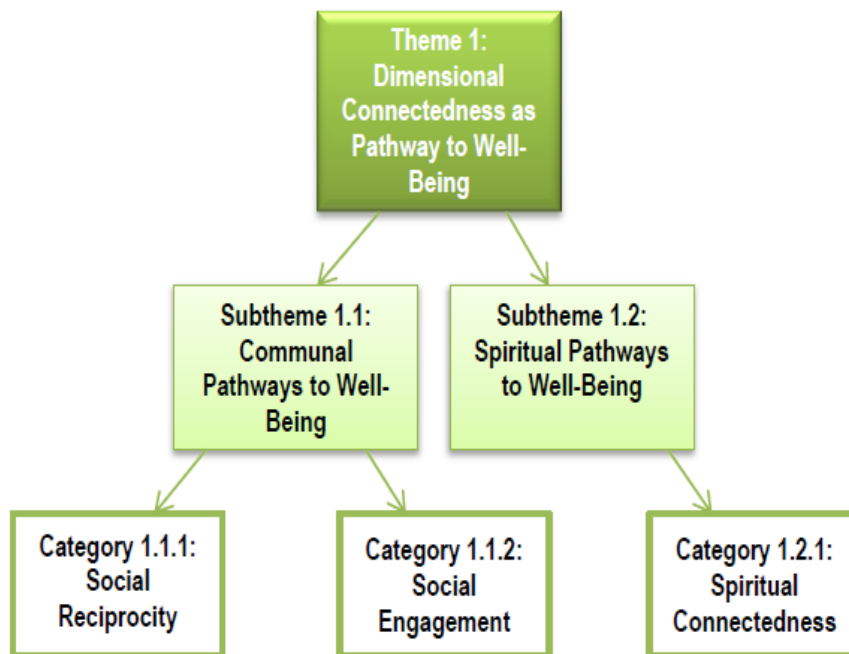


Figure 4.2: Mind Map of Theme 1: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being

Table 4.2: Summary of Subthemes and Categories pertaining to Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being

Theme 1: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being		
Subthemes & Categories	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1.1 Communal Pathways to Well-Being	This subtheme focuses on elements of the social sphere which participants accessed and mobilised in order to establish, maintain or restore harmony to their indigenous well-being system, so that they were able to experience well-being.	
1.1.1 Social Reciprocity	This category includes data related to the notion of interdependence, whereby participants gave and received support for the benefit of themselves and/or their community. Elements of Seligman's 'Meaningful Life' (2002) informed the degree to which certain social domains could be included in this category.	This category excludes data related to the notion of independence, whereby participants intentionally chose not to offer or accept support for their own or their community's benefit. Data related to social interaction with the sole purpose of experiencing positive emotions (Seligman's (2002) 'Pleasurable Life') were not included in this category.
1.1.2 Social Engagement	This category includes data related to maintaining a sense of peace and harmony in the community, as well as acting in accordance with the social and cultural norms and expectations of society, which ultimately affects the state of harmony of the indigenous well-being system. Elements of Seligman's (2002) 'Meaningful Life' informed the degree to which certain social domains could be included in this category.	This category excludes data related to the act of conducting oneself in a manner which serves to meet one's own goals and needs, but not those of the community and which ultimately affects the state of harmony of the indigenous well-being system. Data related to social interaction with the sole purpose of experiencing positive emotions (Seligman's (2002) 'Pleasurable Life') is not included in this category.

1.2 Spiritual Pathways to Well-Being	This subtheme focuses on the spiritual meaning systems that participants accessed and mobilised in order to establish, maintain or restore harmony to their indigenous well-being system, so that they were able to experience well-being.	
1.2.1 Spiritual Connectedness	This category includes data which focuses on a range of cultural and institutionally-based (relationship with a deity) spiritual beliefs, including various practices and rituals which participants observed.	This category excludes data on the spiritual and religious beliefs and rituals that participants observed and practised of their own accord, and not those which align with cultural, ethnic and social norms and which ultimately affect the state of harmony of the indigenous well-being system.

4.2 SUBTHEME 1.1: COMMUNAL PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

The first subtheme which emerged from the data on Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being refers to the notion that participants engage in various social relationships, activities and ways of life which serve to establish, maintain or restore balance to the indigenous well-being system. Engagement in these communal pathways aligns with the needs of the overarching indigenous well-being system and may lead to the experience of well-being, since this system, as a whole, would presumably be functioning in a state of equilibrium.

Within this subtheme, two categories emerged from the data that suggested ways in which a state of equilibrium within the indigenous well-being system could be achieved, so that participants were able to experience well-being: Category 1.1.1: Social Reciprocity; and Category 1.1.2: Social Engagement. Each of these categories will be discussed separately. Variability in the results for each category is given per group of participants that contributed to the generation of data (older men, older women, younger men and younger women), across the research sites (Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) and for the year in which data was generated (2012 and 2013). A synopsis of the findings of the study relevant to this subtheme concludes the section which addresses data that emerged on Communal Pathways to Well-Being.

The two categories which emerged from the data with regard to Communal Pathways to Well-Being shared similar variability rates: thus, Social Reciprocity was mentioned by 21 of the 32 groups and Social Engagement was mentioned by 22 of the 32 groups. Social Reciprocity will be discussed first, as literature (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Fozdar, 2008; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; King *et al.*, 2009; Shu & Zhu, 2009) suggests that social reciprocity may be a prerequisite for social engagement to take place.

4.2.1 CATEGORY 1.1.1: SOCIAL RECIPROCITY

The term 'Social Reciprocity' refers to the notion that in order to maintain a state of equilibrium within the indigenous well-being system, a complex interplay between being able to ask for and receive support in times of need, as well as being able to offer and provide support to others, is integral to the experience of one's own and others' well-being. The two subcategories of 'Social Reciprocity' are: 1.1.1.1: Social

Reciprocity as Giving Support, and 1.1.1.2: Social Reciprocity as Receiving Support. Table 4.3 outlines the variability of responses within the category 'Social Reciprocity' and provides some insight into the perceived importance of giving and receiving support as far as the state of the indigenous well-being system is concerned. The 'ticks' or 'check marks' which appear in Table 4.3 indicate instances where the different demographic groups across year and site provided positive responses in the Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) conversations with regard to social reciprocity as either giving or receiving support. The absence of a tick indicates that a demographic group was silent on the issue of social reciprocity as giving or receiving support.

Table 4.3: Variability Rates in Social Reciprocity Responses as one Communal Pathway to Well-Being

SUBTHEME 1.1: COMMUNAL PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING							
CATEGORY 1.1.1: SOCIAL RECIPROCITY							
Giving Support		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16	
2012	H	✓	✓	Silent	Silent		
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓		
TOTAL /4		4	4	3	3		14
Receiving Support		OM	OW	YM	YW		TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	Silent	Silent	Silent		
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2013	H	Silent	Silent	Silent	Silent		
	O	✓	✓	Silent	✓		
TOTAL /4		3	2	1	2	8	
Giving & Receiving Support		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16	
2012	H	✓	Silent	Silent	Silent		
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2013	H	Silent	Silent	Silent	Silent		
	O	✓	✓	Silent	✓		
TOTAL /4		3	2	1	2		8

An analysis of the responses provided by participants from the Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga research sites revealed both similarities and differences with regard to the Communal Pathways to Well-Being which participants at each site voiced. Table 4.4 addresses the first secondary research question ("What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?") as it pertains to Category 1.1.1: Social Reciprocity. In order for categories and subcategories to be deemed prevalent pathways to well-being at research sites, I decided, in accordance with the literature (see Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam,

2014) that half of the demographic groups of that participated in the Indigenous Pathways to Resilience project (IPR) (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community.

Table 4.4: Social Reciprocity as Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Communal Pathways to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Communal Pathways to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Social Reciprocity 1. Giving support	Social Reciprocity 1. Giving support 2. Receiving support 3. Giving and receiving support

Participants at both research sites (Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) regarded elements of social reciprocity as an important communal pathway to well-being in their community. Participants in Limpopo Province reported that ‘giving support’ was one of the primary communal pathways to well-being that they experienced. Participants in Mpumalanga reported that ‘giving support’, ‘receiving support’ and the combined philosophy of ‘giving *and* receiving support’ were important communal pathways to well-being in their community.

Social Reciprocity as Communal Pathway to Well-Being in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga were similar in the sense that **participants at both research sites regarded ‘giving support’ as an important pathway to well-being**. However, communal pathways to well-being differed between the two research sites in that **only participants in Mpumalanga regarded ‘receiving support’ as well as a combined philosophy of ‘giving *and* receiving support’ as important pathways to well-being**. ‘Receiving support’ and the combined philosophy of ‘giving *and* receiving support’ were not voiced as prevalent pathways to well-being by participants in Limpopo Province.

Table 4.5 addresses the second secondary research question (“How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”) as it pertains to Category 1.1.1: Social Reciprocity. As with the first secondary research question, half (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) of the demographic groups of IPR participants needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community in order for it to be deemed a prevalent pathway to well-being at research sites.

Table 4.5: Social Reciprocity as Communal Pathway to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Giving Support							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓ 100%	✓ 50%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 100%	✓ 100%	✓ 100%	✓ 100%
Receiving Support							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
- 25%	- 0%	- 25%	- 0%	✓ 100%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%
Giving and Receiving Support							
- 25%	- 0%	- 25%	- 0%	✓ 100%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 100%

Participants in Limpopo Province, representing the four demographic groups, all experienced ‘giving support’ (an element of Social Reciprocity) as an important pathway to well-being in their community. However, participants in Limpopo Province representing these four demographic groups did *not* regard ‘receiving support’ or the combined philosophy of ‘giving *and* receiving support’ (additional elements of Social Reciprocity) as important communal pathways to well-being in their community. Participants in Mpumalanga across the four demographic groups regarded all three elements of Social Reciprocity (‘giving support’, ‘receiving support’ as well as ‘giving *and* receiving support’) as important communal pathways to well-being. **Therefore, for the category ‘Social Reciprocity’, the primary difference between research site, age and gender was that only the subcategory ‘Giving Support’ was reported as a prevalent communal pathway to well-being by participants in Limpopo Province. All three subcategories of Social Reciprocity were reported as important communal pathways to well-being by participants in Mpumalanga.**

4.2.1.1 Subcategory 1.1.1.1: Social Reciprocity as Giving Support

Participants referred to instances in the past when they or their neighbours had required help. When asked “How do others needing help make you happy?” participants responded that they experienced joy when they were able to provide practical assistance to those in need. They specifically mentioned that creating opportunities for others, for example, to earn money, and personally volunteering in the community where help was needed, resulted in positive community engagement which affected the well-being of those involved. The following vignettes derived from verbatim transcriptions expand on the

participants' responses concerning ways in which providing practical assistance to others made them happy:

Janna (MP-2012; 4): You look the advice for you? From that person? And what advice would that person give you?

Gloria (MP-2012; 4): Sometimes you help in this house.

Janna (MP-2012; 4): Sometimes you help in the house, yes.

Gloria (MP-2012; 4): Because now I'm die, it is finished.

Janna (MP-2012; 4): So it makes you happy when you are able to help? Once that person has gone, because they need many help in the house, OK.

Lines 654-661

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Okay. We considered that question above (referring to the question Liesel wrote on the board: If a loved one pass away. How do you know that he/she had a good life?). We said, maybe the person was successful in running his/her business. The one that has passed away.

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): Okay, why is that important? There must be many reasons why that is important. Tell me why.

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Yes we can explain it.

Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Maybe he was helping around the community. Like if someone doesn't have a car.

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Yes to ask him to take him to the hospital. Yes. So if one of my family has passed away we will ask him to...

Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Contribute.

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): Contribute?

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Yes.

Lines 725-759

Photographs 4.1 and 4.2 display two community-based centres where community members in Mpumalanga go to engage with, and help those in need.



Photograph 4.1: Community Based Centre, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 4.2: Home Based Centre, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

Another means of providing support which made participants happy was their ability to contribute actively to solving large-scale community issues that affected the overall quality of life of those living in their village. Collaborating on different projects, developing community-based initiatives to address communal needs and assembling to discuss pertinent community issues all helped significantly in improving the morale and affective experiences of those who provided *and* received support. The following vignettes illustrate instances in which the community came together to address community-based issues with a view to improving the quality of life of people in their village:

Joyce (LP-2013; 1): They got a goat project.

Janna (LP-2013; 1): A goat project? And how does the goat project help the community?

Joyce (LP-2013; 1): When she have got maybe many goats she can give one, his neighbour so that he can have some. When that goat have got many, he give another one.

Lines 258-263

Didi (LP-2012; 1): Na vhadzulapo vhoshela mulenzhe kha uri huvhe na zwikolo ,nga maanda vhofunzeaho.

Even the community members played a role in bringing schools to the community, especially those who are educated.

Lines 232-235

Tebu (LP-2013; 4): And that person was so committed to the community. He also develop our community by doing these kind of things like build a crèche, with no payment.

Tebu (LP-2013; 4): And the other things, he's committed to the community by using his own mind. He was a hard worker. And the other thing is that he's

created by God and his mind is for God that's why he was a good person.

Lines 71-75

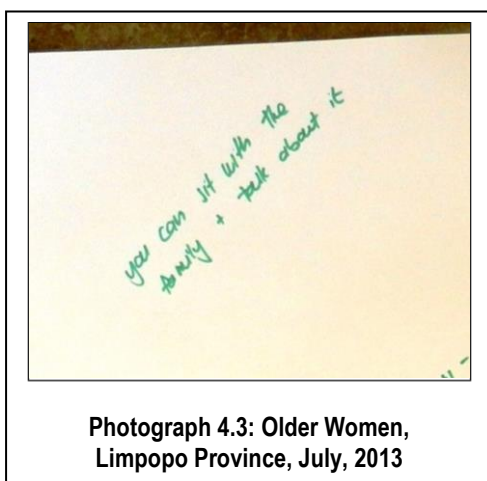
(YM-LP-2012):

They were given a picture of knobkerries and were asked to write how they intend to solve the problem of water in the future. It was evident that communal meetings are a very important way of solving problems. They usually come together with the headman who coordinates activities in the community. The headman brings people together and guides the decision-making process until community members are able to vote on the best decision to put into action. This is usually the most acceptable method of making decisions.

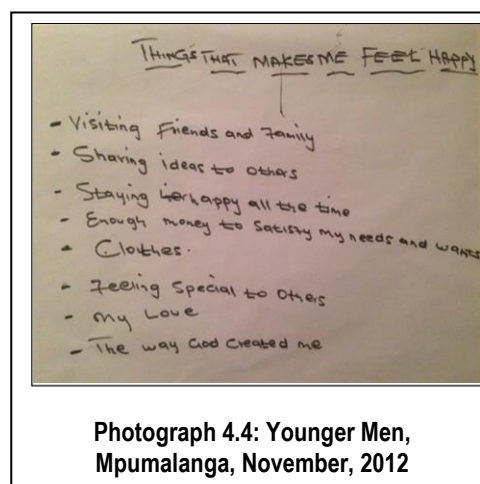
Lines 53-59

4.2.1.2 Subcategory 1.1.1.2: Social Reciprocity as Receiving Support

Many participants referred to the valuable role which others played in their lives when *they* needed help. Participants reported that their family⁹ was able to support them in times of need by helping them to solve problems, by providing them with a safe space within which they could voice their concerns, as well as empathising with their situation and offering guidance on how to cope with adversity. The access to all this support from the family improved the participants' well-being in the sense that it helped them to perceive their problems as manageable; this allowed them to focus on other areas of their lives which made them happy. Photographs 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5 provide examples where participants reflected on how help from their family contributed to their sense of well-being.

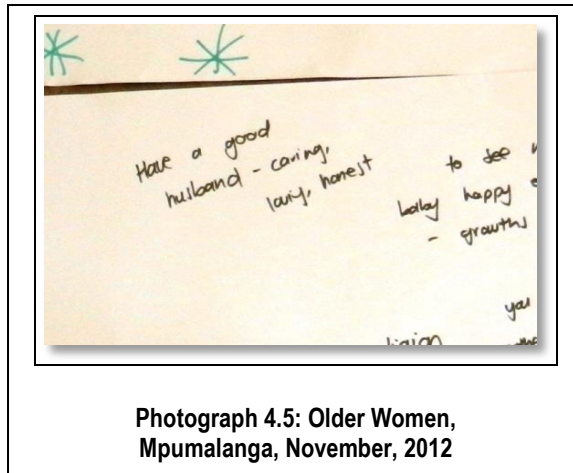


Photograph 4.3: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



Photograph 4.4: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012

⁹ In this study, 'family' referred to blood relatives with whom one may or may not live, as well as life partners such as a husband, wife, or an intimate partner with whom one is in a committed relationship.



**Photograph 4.5: Older Women,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**

The following vignettes taken from verbatim transcriptions of PRA conversations provide examples of how support from family members made participants happy:

Suzie (MP-2012; 4): *Have a good husband.*

Janna (MP-2012; 4): *And why does a good husband make them happy?*

Suzie (MP-2012; 4): *A good husband that has caring, loving, honest.*

Janna (MP-2012; 4): *Caring, loving, honest? OK.*

Lines 700-703

Janna (MP-2013; 4): *OK, what else do we have there?*

Sarah (MP-2013; 4): *To feel special to the one I love.*

Janna (MP-2013; 4): *What makes you feel special to the one you love? How would you know you're special to him?*

Sarah (MP-2013; 4): *He cares about me.*

Janna (MP-2013; 4): *How would you know he cares about you?*

Suzie (MP-2013; 4): *I will, I will like something which ... [indistinct].*

Lines 513-519

Janna (MP-2012; 3): *Ok. Is there anything else that you can do to solve a problem?*

Suzie (MP-2012; 3): *They say you can sit with the family and talk about it.*

Janna (MP-2012; 3): *Sit with the family and talk about it? Ok.*

Lines 509-511

Friendships which participants had developed with people living in their village also emerged as an important source of support which could be mobilised in times of need. Many participants indicated that being able to spend time socialising with friends¹⁰ in a setting where emotional support could be obtained, significantly affected their experience of well-being. Trust was an important aspect of

¹⁰ 'Friends' were regarded as members of the community that participants referred to often, where trustful relationships characterised by sharing, concern, acceptance and reciprocity had been built.

friendship which affected the level of emotional support which participants believed they could receive, as well as the degree to which such support could influence their well-being. The following verbatim quotes illustrate some ways in which relationships with friends impacted people's lives and resulted in happiness:

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): So I see the first one you said is: Meeting my best friends. Why is that important?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Maybe that was the last time I saw them, like when they are from Welkom. Something like that.

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): Anyone else?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Maybe they help me with money or something, because I am short of money.

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Also, sharing minds and ideas.

Lines 788-795

Marlize (MP-2014; MC): That dignity, yes, you're right. And how are your friends important? Why do your friends make you happy?

Obie (MP-2014; MC): I think friends make us happy because there are things you cannot share with your family or your mother. Maybe you can tell your friend.

Marlize (MP-2014; MC): OK so sometimes it's not comfortable to tell close personal things to a family member, but you still need to share with someone?

Obie (MP-2014; MC): Mm.

Marlize (MP-2014; MC): Then your friend can be that extra person that's going to assist you?

Obie (MP-2014; MC): Yes.

Lines 352-363

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): So I see the first one you said is: Meeting my best friends. Why is that important?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Maybe that was the last time I saw them, like when they are from Welkom. Something like that.

Marlize (MP-2012; 4): Anyone else?

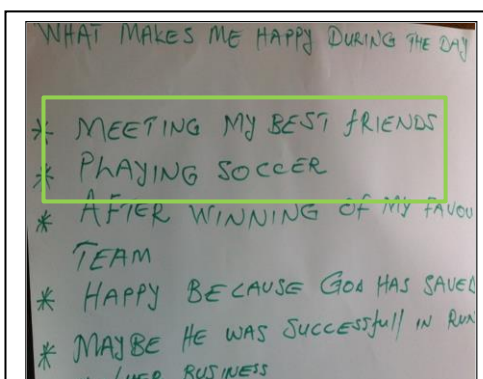
Tebogo (MP-2012; 4): Maybe they help me with money or something, because I am short of money.

Johnny (MP-2012; 4): Also, sharing minds and ideas.

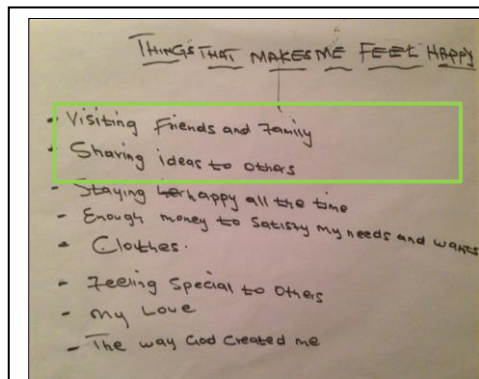
Lines 689-694

The friendships which participants had developed with each other were also evident in their PRA conversations, as well as their general interactions with each other. Photographs 4.6 and 4.7 illustrate the importance of socialising with friends as a means of improving well-being, while Photographs 4.8

and 4.9 show instances which were captured during the home stay visit in Limpopo Province where the close friendships which participants had developed could be observed.



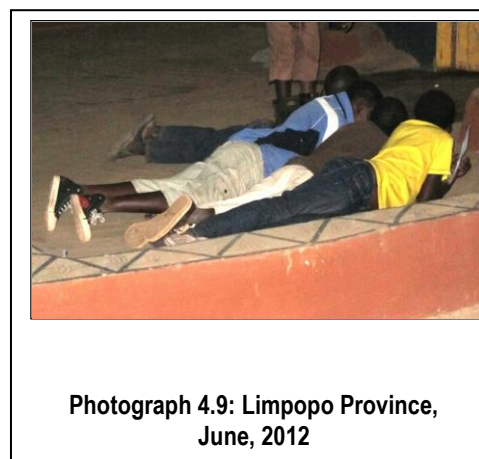
Photograph 4.6: Older Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 4.7: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 4.8: Limpopo Province, June, 2012



Photograph 4.9: Limpopo Province, June, 2012

Finally, participants regarded the support which they received from their local traditional and municipal authorities as contributing to their own, and their community's well-being. Participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity to receive guidance from the leaders in their community, village or municipality. The chief or headman (a term used interchangeably in both communities) of the village contributed to participants' well-being, because he helped villagers to solve their problems when they were not able to do so on their own. Additionally, he acted as a mediator and negotiator for the village when support was required from the municipality.

Having someone in the community who could establish and maintain a functional, professional relationship with the municipality was important to participants because the local municipality was regarded as the sole provider of basic infrastructural services for the sampled research sites. Participants reported that when these services were not available, members of their community were affected significantly, as was their well-being. The following vignettes and excerpts from co-researchers' field notes (in green) and verbatim transcriptions (in blue) illustrate how the chief in a village is able to use his authority to influence positively the well-being of his villagers:

Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *In the community we are happiest about the services that are being done by the government, especially the Department of Education because of scholar transport and lesser amount of school fees.*

Lines 522-525

Walter (LP-2013; 1): *At the head man's yard, that is where they receive motivations and attend their meetings under the control of the head man.*

Marlize (LP-2013; 1): *And what happens at the meetings?*

Walter (LP-2013; 1): *At the meetings is where they solve issues which is not good in the sense that they have to fix their certain village.*

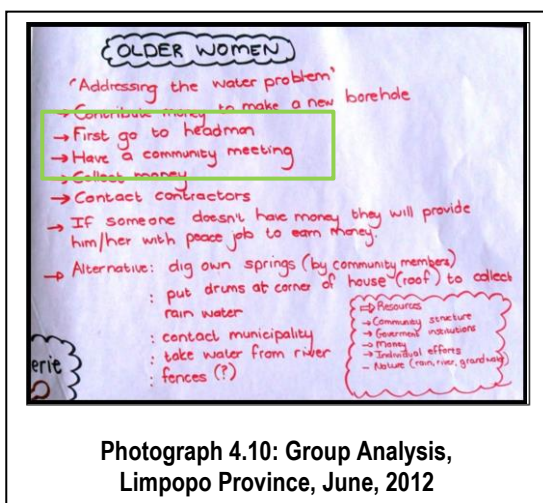
Lines 131-135

(YM-LP-2012):

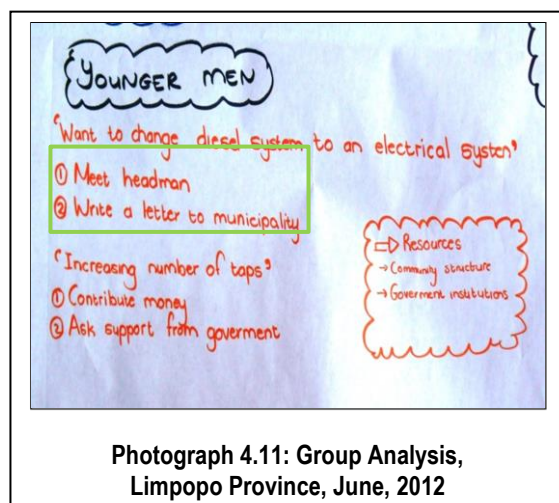
The participants emphasised the importance of living as a community by sharing things they have. They also did not rule out the importance of the chiefs and community elders. Hierarchy in the community among leaders was usually spelt [out] in decision-making. Most of the time, when explaining how they took a particular decision in the community, participants mention how they told the head of a household, how the head met the chief, the chief met the municipality etc.

Lines 60-65

Photographs 4.10 and 4.11 indicate instances when the traditional governance structures in a community contributed to their well-being. In Photographs 4.12, 4.13, 4.14 and 4.15, participants from Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga convey their reliance on the municipality to meet certain needs that affect their quality of life.



Photograph 4.10: Group Analysis, Limpopo Province, June, 2012



Photograph 4.11: Group Analysis, Limpopo Province, June, 2012

Table 4.6: Variability Rates in Social Engagement Responses as One Communal Pathway to Well-Being

SUBTHEME 1.1: COMMUNAL PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING						
CATEGORY 1.2.1: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT						
Creating Social Harmony		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	Silent	✓	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
TOTAL /4		4	4	3	4	
Acknowledgement of & Identification with Cultural Heritage		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	Silent	✓	
	O	✓	✓	Silent	Silent	
2013	H	Silent	Silent	Silent	Silent	
	O	Silent	Silent	✓	✓	
TOTAL /4		2	2	1	2	
TOTAL /8		6	6	4	6	22
						GRAND TOTAL /32

Participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga and across all four demographic groups (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) regarded Social Engagement as an important pathway to well-being. A total of 15 out of the 16 participating groups regarded Creating Social Harmony as an important pathway to well-being. Seven out of the 16 participating groups regarded Acknowledgement of and Identification with one's Cultural Heritage as an important pathway to well-being. Creating Social Harmony received a significantly higher frequency than Acknowledgement of, and Identification with one's Cultural Heritage, with 50% more participants considering social harmony as an important pathway to well-being. Table 4.7 addresses the first secondary research question ("What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?") as it pertains to Category 1.1.2: Social Engagement.

Table 4.7: Creating Social Harmony as Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Communal Pathways to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Communal Pathways to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Social Engagement 1. Creating social harmony	Social Engagement 1. Creating social harmony 2. Acknowledging and identifying with one’s cultural heritage

Participants in Limpopo Province reported that Creating Social Harmony was a significant communal pathway to well-being, while participants in Mpumalanga reported that Creating Social Harmony *and* Acknowledgement of and Identification with one’s Cultural Heritage’ were prevalent communal pathways to well-being. Communal pathways to well-being in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga were similar in the sense that **participants at both research sites considered it important to try to create ‘social harmony’ as a means of experiencing well-being**. However, **only participants in Mpumalanga regarded the ‘acknowledgement of and identification with one’s cultural heritage’ as an important pathway to well-being in their community**. Acknowledgement of and Identification with one’s Cultural Heritage’ was not considered to be a prevalent pathway to well-being by participants in Limpopo Province.

Table 4.8 addresses the second secondary research question (“How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”) as it pertains to Category 1.1.2: Social Engagement. As with the first secondary research question, half of the demographic groups of IPR participants (see Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community in order for it to be deemed a prevalent pathway to well-being at the research sites.

Table 4.8: Indigenous Communal Pathways to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Creating Social Harmony							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
100%	75%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Acknowledgement of and Identification with One's Cultural Heritage							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
50%	25%	25%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%

All four demographic groups in Limpopo Province reported that Creating Social Harmony (one element of social engagement) was an important communal pathway to well-being in their community. However, only the older participants as well as the female participants in Limpopo Province regarded Acknowledgement of and Identification with one's Cultural Heritage' as an important element of social engagement as a communal pathway to well-being in their community. These results differed from those in Mpumalanga, where all four demographic groups regarded Creating Social Harmony and Acknowledgement of and Identification with one's Cultural Heritage' as important communal pathways to well-being that are part of the concept of social engagement. **Therefore, for the category 'Social Engagement' the primary differences between research site, age and gender were that all demographic groups in Mpumalanga reported both subcategories as prevalent communal pathways to well-being in their community. The same was true of participants in Limpopo Province with the exception of the younger participants and male participants at this research site.**

4.2.2.1 Subcategory 1.1.2.1: Social Engagement as Creating Social Harmony

Participants in this study reported that they experienced greater well-being when there was an overarching sense of harmony in their community. When asked how they knew that there was harmony in their village, participants responded that social harmony was evident when the good values that parents and other adults and/or elders in the community invest time instilling in others are practised. Participants believed that by instilling and practising values such as honesty, trust and forgiveness, as well as the principles of other values (such as instilling peace and reducing conflict), they lead happier lives. In the following verbatim quotes, participants talk about the values that they practise, and how they affect their lives positively:

*Tiro (LP-2012; 4): Ndi mini zwine zwa ita uri vhathu vha oyu muvhundu vha takale?
What makes people of this village happy?*

Joe (LP-2012; 4): U funana nga tshashu, ahuna vhugevhenga, zwine ratoda rizwinewa nga tshifhinga. We love each other, no crime and we get our demand in time.

Lines 271-276

Marlize (MP-2014; MC): OK. OK, we spoke about having good manners. Why is it important that you can teach your children good manners and to have dignity?

Why does it make you happy when people have good manners and they have good dignity?

Musi (MP-2014; MC): I think it is important because it shows respect.

Marlize (MP-2014; MC): OK, ja it shows respect and respect is important in your community?

Musi (MP-2014; MC): Yes.

Lines 555-562

Janna (MP-2012; 4): Caring, loving, honest? Ok.

Suzie (MP-2012; 4): A good neighbour.

Janna (MP-2012; 4): A good neighbour.

Suzie (MP-2012; 4): No gossiping.

Janna (MP-2012; 4): No gossiping. And why is it important to have no gossiping?

Suzie (MP-2012; 4): It makes me feel bad.

Janna (MP-2012; 4): It makes you feel bad? Ok.

Lines 630-636

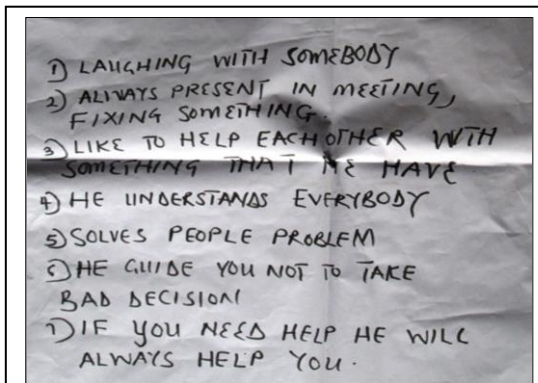
James (MP-2012; 3): When someone is also respectful and honest then such a person is a good person.

Raphael (MP-2012; 3): What do you mean by someone is respectful?

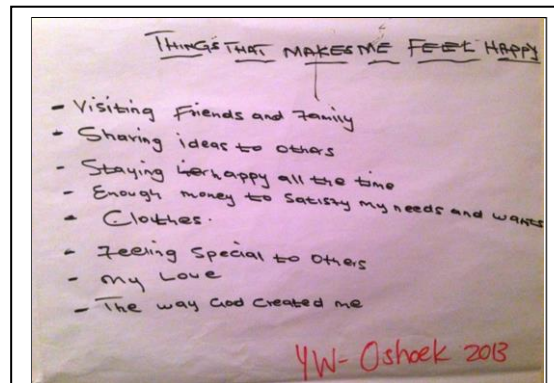
James (MP-2012; 3): When the person greets people, and asks them how they are feeling, say hello. Honest people do not gossip, they say the truth.

Lines 202-205

Photographs 4.16 and 4.17 capture how important community values were to participants of IPR. These photographs demonstrate that if people are to be happy, then they must feel that they have other people to turn to in times of need, knowing that these people are trustworthy and will show genuine concern for their problems.



Photograph 4.16: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2013



Photograph 4.17: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2013

Participants also reported that they saw evidence of social harmony in their community when villagers actively engaged in a process of learning and/or teaching others how to live in accordance with their group's cultural norms and expectations. This was an important part of living a happy community life in the sense that collectively, participants felt uplifted by various processes through which their culture was expressed. For example, some participants saw their spiritual beliefs as fundamentally interrelated with their cultural practices. They reported that by going to church, they learnt about appropriate and inappropriate social and cultural behaviour which should or should not be carried out in the community, because of its effects on those around them. For example, participants reflected on how going to church helps teach youth in the community to fear God and avoid the use and abuse of illegal substances. Going to church was also important to participants because it teaches community members values such as empathy and forgiveness, as clarified in the following verbatim quotes:

Hope (MP-2013; 4): Mina ngofundisa la basha ngoku saba nkulunkulu babaleke izidakamiso bayeke konke.

What would make me happy would be to teach the youth to fear God and to stay away from drugs and other bad things.

Lines 709-712

Stephen (LP-2013; 1): Kereke nayone ndiya vhudi ngauri I thusa uri muthu akone upfela vhanwe vhathu vhutungu na uvha na mbilu yau farela musi muthu o ukhakhela.

A church is good because it helps one to take care about other people and to have a forgiving heart when one has done wrong for you.

Lines 175-180

4.2.2.2 Subcategory 1.1.2.2: Social Engagement as Acknowledgement of and Identification with one's Cultural Heritage

Part of the experience of well-being which IPR participants conveyed was reflected in their belief in the importance of acknowledging and celebrating their cultural heritage. Teaching and spreading the ideas, customs and social and cultural traditions of their culture was central to their happiness because this provided the opportunity to ensure that their heritage was not forgotten. Participants reported that it was important to uphold and honour their heritage in an effort to preserve their culture for future generations. Some participants specifically believed that spending time with, and learning from other members of their family was central to this process. In the following vignettes, participants share ways in which they acknowledged their culture, as well as some of the reasons why doing so made them happy:

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK, so it's on both sides, hey? OK! Thank you for being honest!*

OK, then you guys told us that you really want to share your culture and you want to teach your culture also, and when you do that then you're happy. Is that true?

ALL (MP-2014; MC): *Yes.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *Tell me, is it sharing your culture only with people from outside or is it also sharing your culture with the little children and other people living in the village?*

Obie (MP-2014; MC): *Everyone.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *Everyone?*

ALL (MP-2014; MC): *Yes.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK so it's very important that everybody can know about your culture.*

Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): *As from now I want to learn from Nigeria.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK, yes from Raphael! And why is it important for you to share and teach your culture? Why do you want people to know about Siswati?*

Obie (MP-2014; MC): *No to know about your culture, ja. Like most of the time, some white people, when it's come to kill a cow, they use a gun. And us we not use a gun, we use a knife. So like it's very important to know the different culture.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK.*

Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): *We are experiencing a lot of things you know, from culture, from teaching each other. And sometimes I can get... maybe I will have fun with that culture. So, maybe I can teach this guy from... I can teach my culture. Maybe we gonna like it and have fun with it, so that I can go to her in Nigeria.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK, so it's also to have some new experiences?*

Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): *Yes.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *And to learn some new things but also that you can give someone else some new experiences hey? And then you said... what else?*

Obie (MP-2014; MC): *Especially when it comes to dance, I like to dance. Most of them, the cultures, when it comes to Sunday...*

Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): *Yo! I love it!*

Lines 406-440

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK, thank you! Ooh and this was a very special one... You said that for you, it's very important to know the history of your community and to know the history of your culture. Is that true?*

ALL (MP-2014; MC): *Yes.*

- Janna (MP-2014; MC): Why do you want to know the history of your village and your culture?
Hey? Why do you want to know that?*
- Musi (MP-2014; MC): I think it is important to know our history because it is important that
we must know where we are coming from, so that we can tell the next
generation about our history.*
- Janna (MP-2014; MC): And is it also important to share your history because you're proud of
your history?*
- Musi (MP-2014; MC): Yes.*
- Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): Like sometimes in our, maybe I've got a dream of becoming an
author. Even I can write about my community, the history of my
community.*
- Janna (MP-2014; MC): O, right! So that's another way that you can share your community?
Your culture, hey?*
- Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): Yes.*
- Janna (MP-2014; MC): If you know the history, then you can tell everything about your
culture, but if you don't know the history then you can only tell a little
bit, hey? OK, lovely!*

Lines 493-513

While driving through the villages of Mpumalanga, various attempts at preserving and honouring one's heritage were evident. Photographs 4.18 and 4.19 show a welcome sign at a special place in the community, as well as the tribal office where villagers go to learn more about their culture and their heritage.



**Photograph 4.18: Local School,
Mpumalanga, November, 2013**



**Photograph 4.19: Tribal Offices,
Mpumalanga, November, 2012**

4.2.3 LITERATURE CONTROL: SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS ON THIS SUBTHEME

The findings of this study confirmed the following notions on indigenous pathways to well-being as described in the literature:

- **Rallying together to make use of a variety of resources help individuals to take care of themselves and others** (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Cohen *et al.*, 2000; Cohen *et al.*, 1985; Ellis, 2007; Farid & Lazarus, 2008; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Siu & Phillips, 2002; Stewart *et al.*, 1992; Suh & Oishi, 2002; Yip *et al.*, 2007). Access to support through one's community enhances well-being because it provides individuals with a network of resources which can be used to cope with adversity (Cox, 2012; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998). Such access can also buffer stressful events (Berkman & Glass, 2000; Khumalo *et al.*, 2012; Malin & Maidment, 2003; Yip *et al.*, 2007).
- **Individuals experience greater quality of life when their environment is characterised by peace and harmony** (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Kitayama *et al.*, 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002). Avoiding conflict and establishing positive relationships with others results in a sense of security and inclusion in one's community, which in turn leads to well-being (Kitayama, 1994, 1998, Kitayama & Markus, 2000; Uchida *et al.*, 2004).
- **Staying true to the modes of behaviour, values and attitudes specific to one's cultural and historical heritage enhances well-being** (Constantine & Sue, 2006; Diener *et al.*, 2000; McCubbin, 2007; Oishi, 2000). Participating in activities, rituals and traditions specific to one's own culture fosters a sense of cultural inclusion that may lessen the negative impact of stress through the development of a strong sense of cultural identity, support and association with members in one's own cultural community (Bruchac, 1991; Bruchac & Caduto, 1991; Constantine *et al.*, 1986; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Hamilton, 1985).

The findings of this study were silent on the following notions on indigenous pathways to well-being described in the existing literature:

- **The importance of adapting to social role obligations and norms** (Lu & Gilmour, 2006; Uchida *et al.*, 2004).

4.3 SUBTHEME 1.2: SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

The second subtheme which emerged from the data on Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being refers to the notion that the understandings of various metaphysical levels of existence that one observes, also form part of one's indigenous well-being knowledge system (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Cook & Wiley, 2000; Garrett & Wilbur, 1999; Helms & Cook, 1999; Queener & Martin, 2001).

Within this subtheme, one major category emerged from the data which indicated specific spiritual meaning systems which are accessed and mobilised as pathways to well-being: this was category 1.2.1: Spiritual Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being. Within this category, two sub-categories emerged: Subcategory 1.2.1.1: Ancestral Beliefs; and Subcategory 1.2.1.2: Religion. These subcategories will be discussed separately. Variability in the results for each subcategory will be presented according to the different demographic groups which participated in IPR in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga during 2012 and 2013. The findings of the study as they pertain to this subtheme are presented at the end of Section 4.3.

4.3.1 CATEGORY 1.2.1: SPIRITUAL CONNECTEDNESS AS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

The term 'Spiritual Connectedness' refers to the participants' belief that by recognising and acknowledging their spiritual connections with different metaphysical levels of existence, or with religious deities as formal institutions (Falicov, 1999; Koss-Chioina, 1995; Myers, 1999), they would be able to experience well-being. Table 4.9 outlines the variability of responses within this category 'Spiritual Connectedness'. The 'ticks' that appear in the table indicate instances where the different demographic groups across year and site provided positive responses in the PRA conversations with regard to ancestral beliefs as a pathway to well-being, while the absence of a tick indicates that a demographic group was silent on this issue.

Table 4.9: Variability Rates in Spiritual Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being

SUBTHEME 1.2: SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING						
CATEGORY 1.2.1: SPIRITUAL CONNECTEDNESS						
Ancestral Beliefs		OM	OW	YM	YW	GRAND TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	✓	Silent	
	O	Silent	✓	Silent	Silent	
2013	H	Silent	✓	✓	✓	
	O	Silent	Silent	Silent	Silent	
TOTAL		1	3	2	1	
Religion		OM	OW	YM	YW	GRAND TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	Silent	✓	Silent	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	✓	✓	Silent	✓	
TOTAL		4	3	3	3	

Ancestral beliefs as one pathway to well-being related to spiritual connectedness, was reported predominantly by participants in Limpopo Province. In 2012, all but the younger women's group in Limpopo Province reported ancestral beliefs as being important to well-being, while in 2013, ancestral

beliefs were reported as an important pathway to well-being by all but the older men’s group in Limpopo Province. In Mpumalanga, the older women’s group that participated in 2012 reported on the importance of ancestral beliefs, while in 2013, the entire population of participants in Mpumalanga was silent on this issue. Participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga and across all four demographic groups regarded religion as an important pathway to well-being. With the exception of the older and younger women’s groups who participated in Limpopo Province in 2012, and the younger men’s group that participated in Mpumalanga in 2013, 13 of the 16 IPR demographic groups valued religion as part of their experience of well-being. Table 4.10 addresses the first secondary research question as it pertains to Category 1.2.1: Spiritual Connectedness.

Table 4.10: Spiritual Connectedness Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Spiritual Pathways to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Spiritual Pathways to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Religion 1. Christianity Ancestral Beliefs 1. Veneration of Ancestors	Religion 1. Christianity

Participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga regarded Christianity (religion as pathway to well-being) as an important pathway to well-being in their community. However, only participants in Limpopo Province reported that the veneration of ancestors (ancestral beliefs as pathway to well-being) was prevalent in their community when navigating and negotiating towards well-being. Therefore, spiritual pathways to well-being in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga were similar in the sense that **participants at both research sites regarded religion (specifically Christianity) as an important pathway to well-being**. Spiritual pathways to well-being at the two research sites were different in the sense that the **ancestral beliefs of participants were prevalent to participants from Limpopo Province, but not to participants from Mpumalanga**. Table 4.11 addresses the second secondary research question as it pertains to this category. As with the first secondary research question, at least 50% of the demographic groups of IPR participants (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community in order for it to be deemed a prevalent pathway to well-being at research sites.

Table 4.11: Indigenous Spiritual Pathways to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Christianity							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 100%	✓ 50%	✓ 100%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 100%
Veneration of Ancestors							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	✓ 75%	- 25%	- 0%	- 0%	- 25%

As evidenced by Table 4.11, participants in both Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga across the four demographic groups (older, younger, male and female participants) all regarded Christianity as an important spiritual pathway to well-being. All four demographic groups in Limpopo Province also regarded the veneration of ancestors as an important spiritual pathway to well-being. None of the four demographic groups from Mpumalanga reported that the veneration of ancestors was an important spiritual pathway to well-being in their community. **Therefore, for the category ‘Spiritual Connectedness’, the primary difference between research site, age and gender was that participants from all four demographics across the two research sites regarded religion as an important spiritual pathway to well-being, while the four demographic groups in Limpopo Province regarded ancestral beliefs as an important pathway to well-being.**

4.3.1.1 Subcategory 1.2.1.1: Ancestral Beliefs

Participants reported that their belief in, and engagement with, ancestral spirits was integral to their experience of well-being. When asked why elders and ancestors were important to well-being, participants reported that part of their cultural and spiritual belief system required that elders (and future ancestors) be honoured in a number of ways. Thus, if villagers are to lead a good life, they must adhere to the practices set out by their spiritual belief system. For example, participants believed that it was very important to ensure that burials of elders were carried out with dignity and respect. The act of burying one’s elders in that manner also contributed to the participants’ well-being because such practices align with the significant practices of creating social harmony in one’s community, and of acknowledging and identifying with one’s cultural heritage (as discussed in Category 1.2: Social Engagement).

Some participants reported that the act of burying the dead serves as an important lesson for children concerning how they should treat their elders. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for parents to teach their children and to tell them about their elders and their ancestors. This is an important process for parents in Vhenda communities as it is one way in which they can help their children remember the generations that went before them. In the following verbatim English and home language quotes, participants specifically refer to knowing where one's elders have been buried, remembering one's elders and teaching young children about their elders as important spiritual practices which result in their being able to live a good life:

George (LP-2012; 1): Ndi hune ravhulunga hone vhafu vhashu uri ri divhe uri ro vhulunga ngafhi vhathu vhashu, na lushaka lutevhelaho lu a kona uvhona uri vho makhuluwashu vho edela ngafhi, ufhira usokou vhulungiwa hunwevho.

It is where we buried our loved ones so to put a mark where they being laid and for the future generations so to know where their elders have been buried, rather than being buried elsewhere.

Lines 48-53

David (LP-2012; 1): The people use to bury people that are dead in the graveyard, we remember them when we see the place. The graveyard helps us to remember the people that are died for a long time.

Lines 31-33

Tiro (LP-2012; 1): It is important when they bury their dead one. It is important to see where the person is descended. Even with the upcoming generation grow up they can say: see grandmother is buried here, rather than just to bury them anywhere.

Lines 24-26

4.3.2 SUBCATEGORY 1.2.1.2: RELIGION

Participants reported that their relationship with a Christian God was an important pathway to well-being because of the effects which Christian teachings appear to have had on their community. For example, the older men in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga reported that by going to church and reflecting on Christian teachings, their community experienced a sense of peace brought about by a reduction in crime and other illegal activities. Participants also reported that through Christian teachings, they learned tolerance and forgiveness of others, as well as how to accept themselves as they are. The following quotes elaborate on how Christian teachings positively affect participants' communities:

George (LP-2012; 1): *I ita uri muvhunduni hu dzike, nau thivhela vhugevhenga, tshinwe hafhu vhutshilo avhu gumi fhana fhedzi, hu kha divha na vhutshilo tadulu vhune kereke i ari lugisela hone.*

It brings peace to the village people and eradicating crime and the other thing is that there is still a life after death for which the church helps to prepare us for in heaven.

Lines 14-19

Walter (LP-2013; 1): *Okay they say at the next one which is the church. If you are a person that goes to church you have a heart to forgive. But if you are a person that does not go to church that means that you do not have a heart to forgive any person when they have done something wrong to you. But if you always go to church then you have a heart to forgive.*

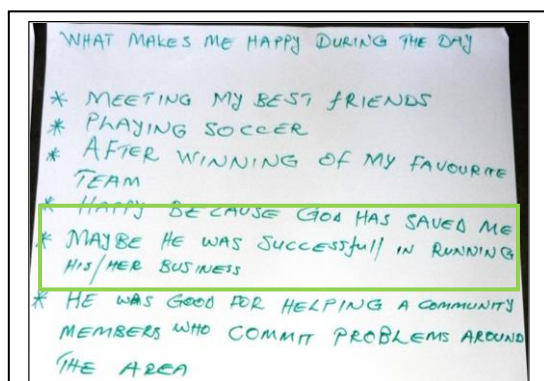
Lines 142-146

Faith (LP-2013; 1): *Ri guda utanganedza nau tanganedzana rine nga tshashu, ufunana nau funa Mudzimu ngauri lufuno lutea u thoma midini lwa swika na kerekeni.*

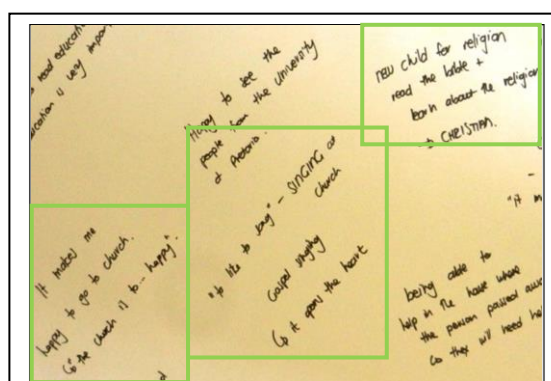
We learn to appreciate ourselves, to love each other and God because love must begin from our families until the church.

Lines 646-650

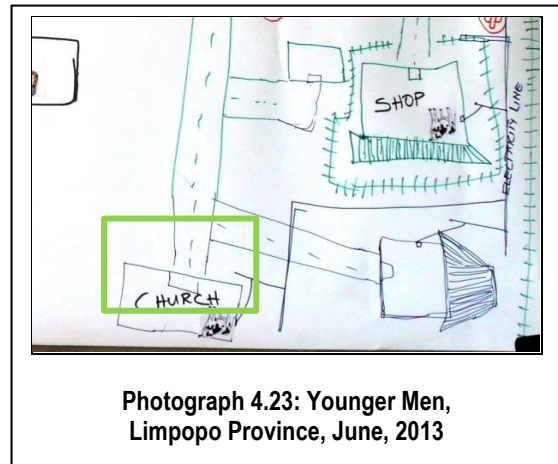
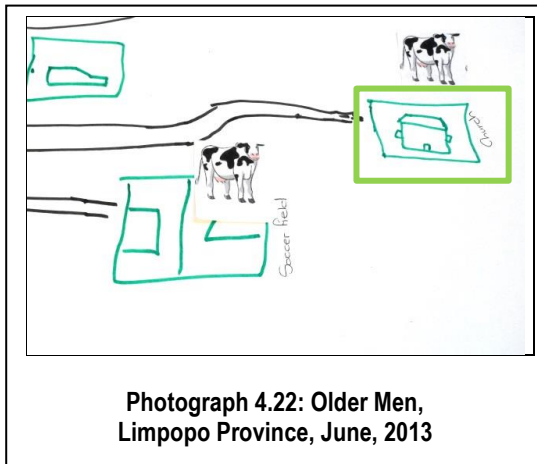
Photographs 4.20, 4.21, 4.22 and 4.23 provide visual images of the important role which Christianity and a relationship with Jesus Christ played in the lives of participants and their experience of well-being.



Photograph 4.20: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 4.21: Older Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Being able to call upon God in times of need provided participants with solace. Specifically, participants discussed how their belief in the blessings which they received from Jesus Christ, as well as their use of prayer in asking God for protection and support, helped them to feel as if they could cope. The following vignettes confirm the importance of prayer and communication with God as one pathway to well-being that falls within the realm of religion:

James (MP-2012; 1): The church is also good because we pray to God and receive blessing from God. There are many churches in this place.

Line 65-66

Safia (MP-2013; 1): The Church.

Lucia (MP-2013; 1): It is important for us because it is where you communicate with God.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): Why is it important to communicate with God?

Lucia (MP-2013; 1): It is important, because... I think we were created by Him.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): What do you get when you communicate with God? How does it help you?

Lucia (MP-2013; 1): Huh? I don't understand.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): What do you get when you communicate with God? When you go to church, when you pray... what do you get?

Lucia (MP-2013; 1): Blessings.

Lines 68-78

Finally, participants reported that they experienced well-being when they praised God for the works which He had done in their lives. For example, the older women in Mpumalanga and the younger men in Limpopo Province reported that through expressing reverence and adoration for Jesus Christ, they navigated and negotiated their way toward well-being:

Hope (MP-2013; 4): Bakhonze unkulunkulu bayeke yonke lento.

Also for me is that they should praise God and leave all other things.

Lines 717-719

Portia (MP-2013; 4): *Loko kukhulunywe u make Unkulunkulu kuphela waziyo inhlupheko zethu.*

What our mother here has said is true that only God knows our suffering.

Laura (MP-2013; 4): *Angeke ubehappy, angeke ube right ungamukhonzi unkulunkulu.*

You will not be happy if you do not worship God”

Lines 739-745

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Same thing applies to the high school there. Coming to churches there, I just believe that it is for socialism.*

Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *God is one.*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *To socialise, to get together for tat two hours to know each other. Enjoy praise God and after that you go home.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Okay, but you don't go (referring to previous conversation).*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Laughs. Sometimes, sometimes.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Okay, so you say church helps with socialising.*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Yes.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *People come together.*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Yes.*

Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *Praising God.*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Praise God.*

Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *Come together and praise God and if they not...*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Why is it important for them to praise God? Because I assume if they go to God they believe in God. They say yes there is a God.*

Tebogo & Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *Yes.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Why is it important for people to know God and to praise God?*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *It is a belief, it is just a belief. Say somebody, not everybody pray for God. You know Indian people they are praying something like, maybe, what do we call them? Pakistan. They want to believe that is their God. Something like the table. They just want to pray to that God. So it is just a belief. God is there and you believe that maybe if you pray, God will help you. If you are unemployed, if I pray maybe I can get some job.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *It is almost like it gives you hope?*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *It gives you hope. Just to keep you busy.*

Lines 304-329

4.4 LITERATURE CONTROL: SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS ON THIS SUBTHEME

This study confirmed the following spiritual notions on indigenous pathways to well-being, as described in the existing literature:

- **Religion plays an important role in the experience of well-being** (Arku, 2010; Delle Fave *et al.*, 2011; Farid & Lazarus, 2008; Musgrave *et al.*, 2002). A belief in God provides individuals with a higher power to whom they can give their problems when they are not able to solve them on their own (Frame, 2000; Helms & Cook, 1999; Organista & Muñoz, 1997; Queener & Martin, 2001).
- **Belief in traditional, meta-physical levels of existence helps individuals to navigate and negotiate their way towards well-being** (Applewhite, 1995; Barnes, 1998; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Falicov, 1999; Garrut & Wilbur, 1999; Heinrich *et al.*, 1990; Koss-Chioina, 1995; Myers, 1999; Shimabukuro *et al.*, 1999; Vontress, 1991). In order to experience well-being, it was necessary to protect the self by strengthening one's own resistance, as well as that of one's family to withstand harm and establish and maintain balance with one's surroundings. Therefore, it is important to take measures to maintain health on the conceptual, symbolic and spiritual levels (Cocks & Møller; 2002; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998).

4.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REGARDING COMMUNAL AND SPIRITUAL CONNECTEDNESS AS INDIGENOUS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

4.5.1 FINDINGS SIMILAR TO EXISTING WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON WELL-BEING

- This study is similar to existing Western psychology approaches (Keyes, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Singer, 1998, 2000, 2006; Samman, 2007) that suggest that **being integrated into one's community makes people happy**.
 - In this study **every demographic group** (referring to age and gender) **at both research sites** regarded a sense of belonging to their community, as well as the comfort and support received from their community as important to their happiness.
- In the same way as Western sociology (Bartram, 2011; Helliwell, 2003; Lucas *et al.*, 2003; Sullivan, 1996; Wilkinson, 1991) and health approaches (Bierman & Clancy, 2001; Birditt & Anotnucci, 2008; Fung *et al.*, 2009; Lee Wha *et al.*, 2008; Loucks *et al.*, 2006; Lyyra & Heikkinen, 2006; Wong *et al.*, 2014) to well-being found that social support is an integral part of the experience of well-being, so too did participants in the current study regard the social

support which they received from their family, friends and larger community as positively affecting their well-being.

- Every demographic group (gender and age) regarded receiving social support as important to their well-being.
- Like Samman's (2007) alternative Western approach to well-being, participants in this study regarded **religion as an important part of their happiness**.
 - This finding was universal to the current study because **every participating demographic group** in IPR (gender and age) at **both research sites** (Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) reported that they lived happier lives when they actively engaged in spiritually-meaningful practices.

4.5.2 FINDINGS SIMILAR TO EXISTING NON-WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON WELL-BEING

- This study is similar to existing non-Western well-being approaches (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Farid & Lazarus, 2008; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Malin & Maidment, 2003; Suh & Oishi, 2002; Yip *et al.*, 2007) that suggest that **engaging in reciprocal relationships increases well-being**. I found that participating men and women across various life stages regard the consideration of, and contribution to the lives of others as an important element of social support. Moreover, I found that being able to give and in turn, receive support appears to significantly affect the well-being of people living in high risk, high need rural communities.
 - All **four demographic groups** which participated in IPR (referring to age and gender) **at both research sites** (referring to geographical location) considered reciprocal relationships important to their happiness.
- As seen in studies conducted by Siu and Phillips (2002), Constantine and Sue (2006) and Cox (2012), **affective support is an important communal component of well-being**. I found that participants relied on their family and friends for well-being. Having supportive family and friends helped participants adjust their outlook and subjective interpretation of their environment when confronted with hardship and adversity. Like Khumalo *et al.*'s (2012) study, I found that marriage, or engagement with an intimate life partner may serve as an important source of emotional support which contributes to the experience of well-being.
 - In this study, affective support was a **universal dimension of well-being**. It was **reported across age and gender**, as well as **research site**.
- Similar to existing non-Western studies on well-being (Constantine & Sue, 2006; Cox, 2012; Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014; Ellis, 2007; Siu & Phillips, 2002), **instrumental support affected participants' well-being**. I found that participants flocked together to make use of their combined resources in order to take care of themselves and their families.

- Instrumental support was indicated **across age and gender**, as well as **geographical location**.
- With reference to Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study, **harmony with others is an important aspect of health and well-being**: I found that people living in non-Western, indigenous and rural South African communities believed that avoiding conflict and fostering positive relationships with friends, family and other community members resulted in a sense of security, as well as a sense of belonging. For the older generation of people living in high risk, high need areas in South Africa, part of this process called for a certain level of respect to be upheld and enforced within their community. Teaching good values such as honesty, trust and forgiveness, as well as instilling a sense of peace in the community also played an important role in creating social harmony among members of the communities studied.
 - Every **IPR demographic group** (referring to age and gender) at **both research sites** (referring to geographical location) reported that harmony with other community members was important for well-being.
- In agreement with the findings of certain indigenous psychology studies (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Diener *et al.*, 2000; Oishi, 2000), **acknowledging cultural identity and heritage positively affected life satisfaction**. Thus, I found that awareness and recognition of the cultural values and practices that are important to a given culture and society significantly affect the well-being of people living in rural, resource-constrained communities in certain parts of South Africa. Engaging in culture-based creative arts practices (such as song, music, dance and dressing in traditional cultural attire), as well as spending time with, and learning from other members of one's family and community were central to the process of identifying with and acknowledging one's cultural heritage.
 - Cultural identity and heritage were regarded as important for well-being by **all the demographic groups** that participated in IPR in **Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga**.
- As seen in non-Western studies conducted by Constantine *et al.* (2004), Queener and Martin (2001), Musgrave *et al.* (2002), Delle-Fave *et al.* (2011), Arku (2010) and Samman (2007), **religious beliefs play an important role in spiritual pathways to well-being**. I found that men and women of differing ages value the ability to call upon God in times of need. Specifically, I found that individuals rely on their belief that God will bless them and protect them, as well as offer them comfort and support during times of hardship.
 - **Religion was an important part of well-being across gender, age and geographical boundaries** in this study. It was therefore considered a **universal well-being dimension** for IPR participants.

- The findings of several indigenous psychology studies (Applewhite, 1995; Barnes, 1998; Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Falicov, 1999; Garrut & Wilbur, 1999; Heinrich *et al.*, 1990; Koss-Chioina, 1995; Myers, 1999; Shimabukuro *et al.*, 1999 & Vontress, 1991) were that **traditional forms of spirituality where individuals believe in meta-physical levels of existence may lead to healing and well-being within the South African context**. My findings were comparable; thus, individuals living in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga believed that the acknowledgment of ancestors (as well as future ancestors) played a significant role in their experience of well-being.
 - Participants in **Mpumalanga were silent** on this issue. However, participants across **age and gender in Limpopo Province** reported traditional forms of spirituality as important for well-being.
- In much the same way as Cocks and Møller (2002) found that communication with elders is an important indigenous spiritual pathway to well-being, I found, also, that **in rural, high risk, high need, African contexts, communities (and individual community members) believe that it is important and necessary to take measures on a spiritual, symbolic level (such as making offerings to ancestors)**; this is in order to strengthen one's own, as well as one's family's resistance to harm, as well as to maintain balance with one's surroundings.
 - This finding was only applicable to **men and women of varying ages in Limpopo Province**.
- My findings were similar to those of Cock and Møller's (2002) study: **I found that participants adhered to both Christianity and traditional belief systems** In this light, participants in the current study agreed with those in Cock and Møller's (2002) study that it was possible and appropriate to accept Christianity and the rituals of the church, while at the same time recognising ancestors and making sacrifices to them.
 - This finding was only relevant to **participants across age and gender in Limpopo Province**.

4.5.3 FINDINGS THAT CONTRADICT EXISTING KNOWLEDGE ON INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

- In contrast to some non-Western studies on well-being (Lu & Gilmour, 2006; Uchida *et al.*, 2004), **participants in the current study were silent on the issue of needing to adapt to social role obligations and norms, as well as fulfil religious obligations in order to experience well-being**. Moreover, participants were silent about the need to realise interdependent achievement goals (such as bringing happiness and pride to one's parents) in order to ensure group welfare and social harmony and to experience well-being.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I reported on the findings of Theme 1: Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being that emerged following the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of this study. I made use of the participants' verbatim quotes in their home language together with translations into English, as well as visual data and extracts from my research journal to enrich and authenticate the results presented. Moreover, I expanded on findings in the current study that were in accordance with the literature and I pointed out findings that seem to contradict the literature reviewed. Finally, I provided new insights into indigenous communal and spiritual pathways to well-being. In Chapter 5, I present the next theme of this study: "Human Pathways to Well-Being".

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CHAPTER 5 THEME 2: HUMAN PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss the second theme which emerged from the data: Human Pathways to Well-Being. I answer in part, the two secondary questions which guided this study: these are, firstly, “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?” and secondly, “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being, compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?” In the title of this second theme, the term *human* was derived from indigenous psychology literature (Choi & Choi, 1994; Markus & Kitayama; Suh, 2009) which references the role that individuals or humans play in their own and others’ experience of well-being. By referring to Human Pathways to Well-Being, I draw on data that pertains to different aspects of human life (such as the experience of pleasure and/or meaning) which may be tapped into as pathways to indigenous well-being.

As in Chapter 4, the term *well-being* refers to the state of health that is experienced when different dimensions encompassing the indigenous well-being system interact harmoniously. Similarly, the term *pathways* denotes the methods, strategies, behaviours, thought processes and ideas that individuals access and mobilise in order to maintain or restore balance to the indigenous well-being system. In this chapter, I posit that Human Pathways to Well-Being may be regarded as a third dimension which interacts with and affects the indigenous well-being system. Figure 5.1 provides a mind map of the subthemes and their respective categories as they pertain to Theme 2: Human Pathways to Well-Being. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the subthemes and categories mentioned above, together with the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

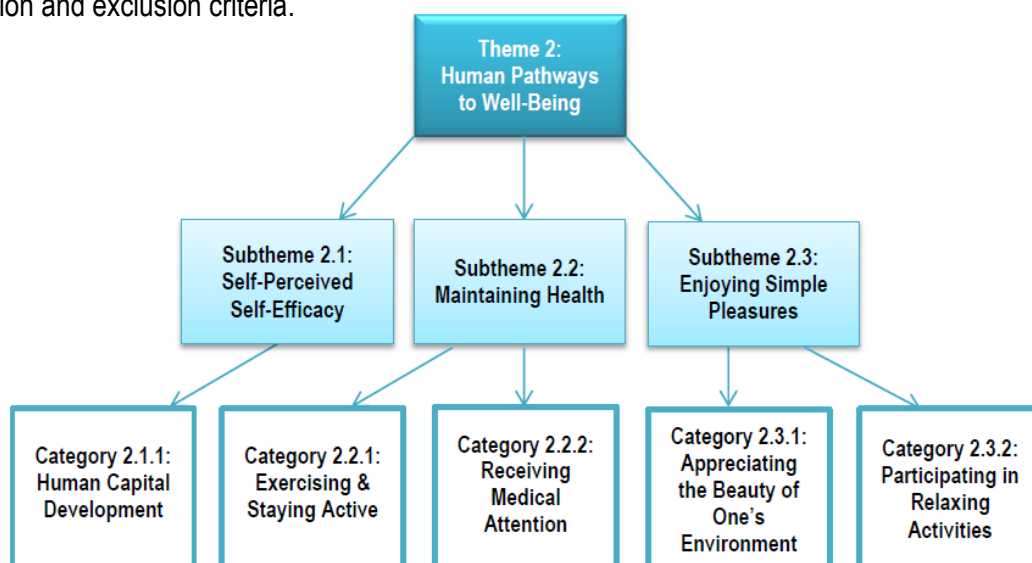


Figure 5.1: Mind Map of Theme 2: Human Pathways to Well-Being

Table 5.1: Summary of Subthemes and Categories pertaining to Human Pathways to Well-Being

Theme 2: Human Pathways to Well-Being		
Subthemes & Categories	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
2.1 Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy	This subtheme focusses on participants' need to experience themselves as useful people, who feel a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives.	
2.1.1 Human Capital Development	This category includes data related to knowledge or skills which participants regard as important for them to learn for their own and others' benefit. Elements of Seligman's (2002) 'Engaged Life' informed the degree to which certain activities could be included in this category.	This category excludes data related to knowledge or skills acquired by participants for the sole purpose of becoming employable or earning an income.
2.2 Maintaining Health	This subtheme focusses on participants' reports that in order to experience well-being, it is necessary to maintain a certain level of health.	
2.2.1 Exercising & Staying Active	This category includes data related to the notion that in order maintain adequate levels of health, it is necessary to participate in physical activities which result in a stronger body and healthier organs.	This category excludes data related to alternative practices which may lead to improved health (such as seeking medical attention or resting).
2.2.2 Receiving Medical Attention	This category includes data related to the idea that in order to stay healthy, it is necessary to seek medical attention and advice when one feels unwell or is ill, and includes references to both modern and traditional medical/medicinal practices	This category excludes data related to alternative practices which may lead to improved health (such as following a healthy diet and exercising).
2.3 Enjoying Simple Pleasures	This subtheme focusses on participants' belief that part of the overall experience of well-being is the ability to appreciate and enjoy simple pleasures in life (such as dancing, singing and spending time with others).	
2.3.1 Participating in Relaxing Activities	This category includes data related to the idea that engaging in pleasurable activities such as dancing and singing increased a positive affect which leads to well-being. Elements of Seligman's (2002) 'Pleasurable Life' informed the degree to which certain activities could be included in this category.	This category excludes data related to pleasurable activities which participants may engage in, where the primary purpose of engagement is not to increase positive affect. For example, engagement in activities with a view specifically to developing the self and utilising signature strengths (Seligman's (2002) 'Good Life').
2.3.2 Appreciating the Beauty of One's Environment	This category includes data which focuses on participants' appreciation of the beauty within their natural environment, and its effect on their well-being.	This category excludes data referring to an appreciation of the environment based solely on the resources (and their uses) available within that environment.

5.2 SUBTHEME 2.1: SELF-PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY AS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

The first subtheme which emerged from the data on Human Pathways to Well-Being refers to the notion that in order to experience well-being, individuals need to perceive themselves as useful people, and should feel a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. Within this subtheme, one category emerged from the data that suggested ways in which self-efficacy may be experienced and which may

subsequently lead to well-being: that was Category 2.1.1: Human Capital Development. All 16 demographic groups which participated in IPR reported that human capital development was an important human pathway to well-being. Category 2.1.1: Human Capital Development will now be discussed and a synopsis of the findings pertaining to this category is presented at the end of Section 5.2.

5.2.1 CATEGORY 2.1.1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

The term ‘Human Capital Development’ refers to the notion that in order to experience well-being, it is necessary to equip oneself with knowledge or skills which could be used to the benefit of oneself, others and the community at large. The two subcategories of ‘Human Capital Development’ are 2.1.1.1: Education; and 2.1.1.2: Agricultural Productivity. Table 5.2 outlines the variability of responses within the category ‘Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy as Human Capital Development’. The ‘ticks’ which appear in the table indicate instances where the different demographic groups across year and site provided positive responses in the PRA conversations with regard to human capital development, while the absence of a tick indicates that a demographic group was silent on this issue.

Table 5.2: Variability Rates in Human Capital Development Responses as one Human Pathway to Well-Being

SUBTHEME 2.1: SELF-PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY						
CATEGORY 2.1.1: HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT						
		OM	OW	YM	YW	GRAND TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
TOTAL		4	4	4	4	

An analysis of the responses provided by participants from the Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga research sites revealed similarities and differences with regard to human capital development as pathway to well-being. Table 5.3 addresses the first secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.1: Human Capital Development. In order for categories and subcategories to be deemed prevalent pathways to well-being at research sites, half (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) of the participants in each of the demographic groups (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community.

Table 5.3: Human Capital Development as Pathway to Well-Being Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy as Pathway to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy as Pathway to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy 1. Human capital development	Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy 1. Human capital development

As shown in Table 5.3, participants at **both research sites (Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) regarded human capital development as an important self-perceived self-efficacy pathway to well-being** in their community. No differences in self-perceived self-efficacy pathways to well-being were reported between the two research sites.

Table 5.4 addresses the second secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.1: Human Capital Development. As with the first secondary research question, half (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) the demographic groups of IPR participants (older men, older women, younger men and younger women) needed to voice a given category or subcategory as an important pathway to well-being in their community in order for it to be deemed a prevalent pathway to well-being at the research sites.

Table 5.4: Human Capital Development as Pathway to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Human Capital Development							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 5.4 indicates that participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga representing all four different demographic groups (older, younger, male and female participants) all experienced ‘human capital development’ as an important self-perceived self-efficacy pathway to well-being in their community. As in Table 5.4, no differences were reported between the different demographic groups with regard to human capital development. **There was consensus that human capital development was an essential pathway to well-being at both research sites.**

5.2.1.1 Subcategory 2.1.1.1: Education

Participants reported that the opportunity to receive an education makes them happy because they believe that obtaining an education would result in a better future. Additionally, participants believe that obtaining an education would afford them the opportunity to develop skills which may make them more employable, or which may lead to promotion within the work place. The following verbatim quotes describe how receiving an education may promote a better life and increase well-being:

- Joyce (LP-2013; 1): *OK, etshi ndi mini?
OK, what is this?*
- Rea (LP-2013; 1): *It is the building for skills development.*
- Joyce (LP-2013; 1): *Ndi ngani iya ndeme?
Why is it important?*
- Rea (LP-2013; 1): *Ndiya ndeme ngauri vhathu vhaya gudisiwa zwithu zwofhambananaho sa u runga zwiambaro, uita fenitshara, na welding na vhufhati.
It is important because people are being taught different skills such as weaving clothes, do furnitures, welding and building.*
- Joyce (LP-2013; 1): *Ndi ngani vhatshi toda ubveledzisa matshilo avho?
Why do you want to develop your lives?*
- Rea (LP-2013; 1): *Zwi thusa uri rine na vhana vhashu ri kone udisikela mishumo ya zwanda nga rine vhane, ende zwi rifha tshelede.
It helps us and our children to be able to create jobs for ourselves, and we get money.*

Lines 586-602

- Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Moving to the primary school. This is our local primary school so everyone has to go to school.*
- Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *It was built in 1979.*
- Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Yes, 1979. So everybody has to go to school.*
- Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *So why is it important for you that children to go to school? What do they need?*
- Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *It is development skill. Development.*
- Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *Development.*
- Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Because we need some leaders tomorrow. Future leaders. You can't be a leader without going to school.*
- Johnny (MP-2012; 1): *We need also people who are educated. This time you can't be behind with technology.*

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *And I believe if you want to be a pastor you have to go to school. Because you have to practice what you preach.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Yes that is important. I agree.*

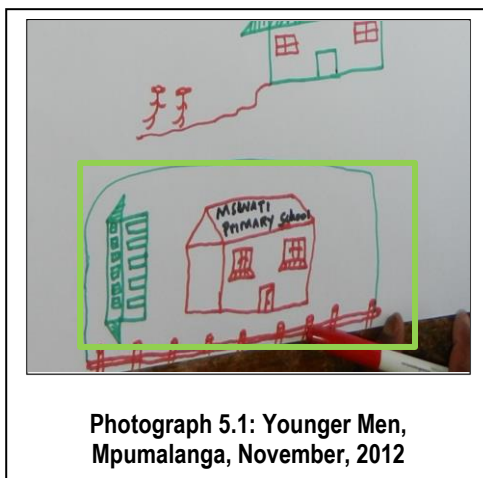
Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *You can't lead people without school.*

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): *Ja, that is important.*

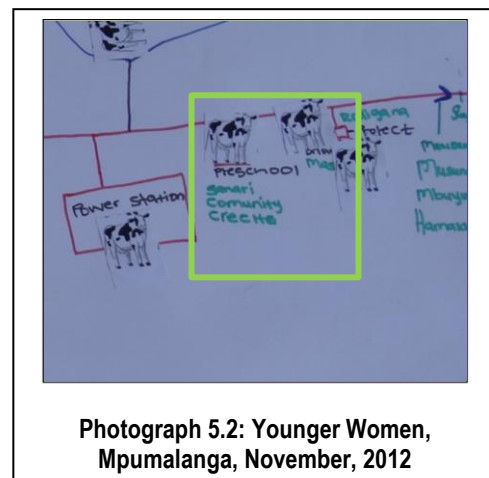
Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): *Same thing applies to the high school there. Coming to churches there, I just believe that it is for socialism.*

Lines 318-336

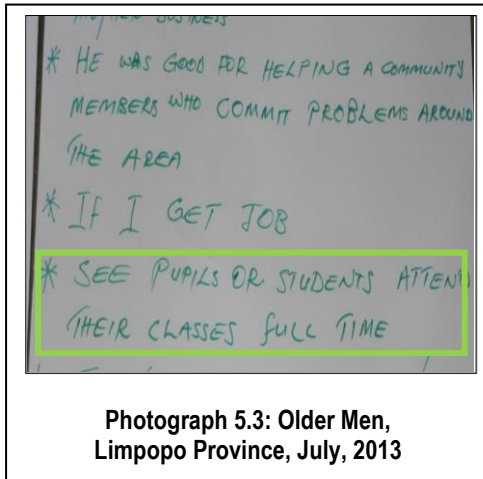
Participants reported that an important part of 'Education' as human pathway to well-being was the ability and opportunity to provide an education for their *children*. At both research sites, participants discussed their belief that without an education, there would be nothing worth striving for in their community. Furthermore, they recognised that their children would not be able to lead the lives that they wished to pursue, without a comprehensive education. Parents experienced joy when they were able to educate their children and provide them with opportunities to lead better lives. Photographs 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 provide examples of some of the institutions that educate children in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga and highlight the importance of receiving an education.



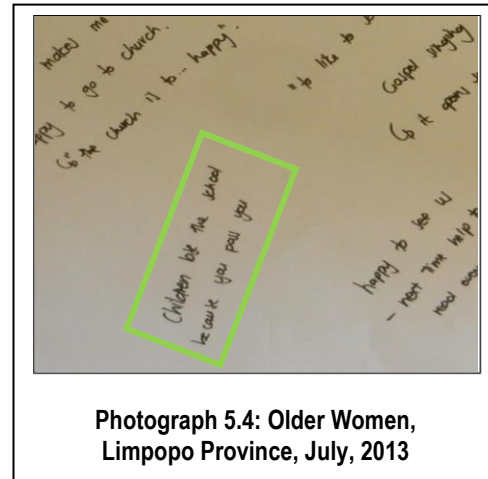
Photograph 5.1: Younger Men, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 5.2: Younger Women, Mpumalanga, November, 2012



Photograph 5.3: Older Men, Limpopo Province, July, 2013



Photograph 5.4: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013

The following vignettes are taken from participants' verbatim transcriptions (in blue) and the co-researcher's field notes (in green): these notes elaborate on how providing opportunities for one's children to become educated, made participants happy:

Gladys (LP-2012; 1): *They said the school helps their children to have more future so that they will get educated because at school they are learning how to write and how to read in different languages.*

Lines 13-15

Winnie (MP-2012; 1): *It is important for our children to get education, so that is why this is very appropriate, because without education our children can have nowhere to go.*

Lines 59-61

(OM-LP-2013):

Primary school: that is where the children get education. It makes everything they can't reach to be reached (like a job and post-school training). They learn new things.

Lines 111-113

Safia (MP-2013; 1): *It covers the house so the house doesn't get damaged.
Okay did we miss anything?*

Thando (MP-2013; 1): *Pre-school.*

Safia (MP-2013; 1): *Why is that an important one?*

Thando (MP-2013; 1): *Because... If you have the children, the small ones, and you want to go to work. You take that children to the pre-school and you go to work and after work you go and fetch the child.*

Lines 146-152

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *Ok. Now I'm going to give you some cows and I want you to stick a cow next to everything in the community that is good. So if there is*

something in your community that is helping you or that is making life good for you, or is making you happy, then you put a cow by that thing. Ok? Like that. And then after you have pasted the cows, I will ask you why.

Ok now I want you to tell me why are these thing good things in your community? So let's start with this one. What is this again?

All participants: School.

Janna (MP-2013; 1): The school? Ok. So why is the school a god thing in the community?

Thuli (MP-2013; 1): Educated.

Janna (MP-2013; 1): Because you get educated?

Portia (MP-2013; 1): Ja and...

Janna (MP-2013; 1): And why is it good to get educated? Why do you want to get educated?

Portia (MP-2013; 1): To learn something like... To learn something.

Lines 61-74

Finally, participants reported that in addition to the impact which education may have on improving their future, being able to learn provided them with mental challenges which made them feel stimulated. In particular, participants reflected that being able to learn new things about others' lives and being challenged by hearing others' perspectives on societal and community issues both led to feelings of engagement. Additionally, the mental stimulation that comes from engaging with interesting people about different topics helped participants to feel as if their lives were relevant and that they had something to contribute to their community. The following quotes illustrate how the opportunity to learn provides participants with mental stimulation which enhances well-being:

Didi (LP-2012; 4): Ndo takadziwa ngau vhona makhuwa vhoi dalela ubva mashangoni a nnda.

I was happy when I saw the white people visiting us from overseas.

Gladys (LP-2012; 4): U amba na vhatu vha fhano hayani navha mashango a nnda zwo fhambana ngafhi?

Is there a difference when you talk with local people compared to people from overseas?

Didi (LP-2012; 4): Azwi fani zwia fhambana, ri awana tshikhala tshau alusiwa muhumbuloni ngau vhudzisiwa dzi mbudziso.

There is a great difference, it gives us an opportunity to grow and learn while you asking us questions.

Lines 382-393

- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *Yes, less crime. Moving to entrepreneur. Everyone could if he wants to own his business or her business to start own business.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *What is good about starting you own business?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *People are believing that most of the time they must have a job. So some of them like myself believe I don't believe in going to find job I believe in myself to do it. So the government is having those funds to pay those to start their own business.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *It is a sense of believing in yourself?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *Yes believe in yourself other than going somewhere and looking for the job.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *Okay.*

Lines 366-374

- Kaone (LP-2012; 4): *We were so happy today because we spent the day together here at Tshulu. Asking us questions that sharpen our mind, and the way you treated us. You treated us very well. We wish to spend the day together again.*

Lines 206-209

- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *Ja. So the space is making you happy as well.*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *Yes. And our place is good for tourism.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *Does it make you happy for the tourists to come and see the place?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *Yes yes. That is job opportunities because once they come here. That is why we talk about entrepreneurship. You can take your own house and make accommodation for tourists.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *Yes. I see. They will pay.*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): *Yes they will pay because they are using your accommodation.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): *Okay and then transportation?*

Lines 384-414

5.2.1.2 Subcategory 2.1.1.2: Agricultural Productivity

When asked “Are there any other things that you do (besides educating yourself) that make you feel as though you are competent and your life has purpose?” participants responded that their ability to farm crops gave meaning to their lives in a number of ways. In particular, harvesting their own crops made them feel as if they were an important part of their family, because it implied that they were able to provide their family with food in the face of poverty and a limited (or lack of) income. In this sense, growing one’s own crops also helped participants to save money because it implied that they did not have to spend money unnecessarily buying fresh produce in nearby shops; it also alleviated some of the

stress of needing to survive on a very low income. In some instances, harvesting their own crops also provided an income for families in the community because they were able to sell their fresh produce at nearby markets. In the following vignettes, participants elaborate on how growing and harvesting their own produce helped them to lead engaged, meaningful lives where not only their own happiness and quality of life was affected:

- Janna (MP-2012; 1): And tell me about the fields.*
- Winnie (MP-2012; 1): A lot of the community members here, they are dependent on farming. So these are their fields where they have got their maize, and at the end of the day they take their maize to the depot so they...*
- Janna (MP-2012; 1): So do they provide the depot with the maize and then they're getting money? How does it work?*
- Winnie (MP-2012; 1): No they are not selling it.*
- Janna (MP-2012; 1): Oh they are not selling it; it's for themselves, for their families?*
- Winnie (MP-2012; 1): Yes, but sometimes people who has got market they come and buy maize and they go and sell it. So it's for eating, but also for commercial purposes.*
- Janna (MP-2012; 1): For commercial purposes?*

Lines 41-53

- Safia (MP-2013; 1): Okay, the next cow?*
- Lucia (MP-2013; 1): Field.*
- Safia (MP-2013; 1): Okay, why is it a good thing?*
- Lucia (MP-2013; 1): Because it provides us with food.*
- Safia (MP-2013; 1): If you didn't get food from the field where would you get it from?*
- Thando (MP-2013; 1): We must go to the town and you must use a lot of money. But here, it's free!! Mahala!! Fresh. Free and fresh.*

Lines 83-89

- Lucia (MP-2013; 1): Ebutsini Cultural Village.*
- Safia (MP-2013; 1): Okay, why is that important to you?*
- Lucia (MP-2013; 1): It's important because sometimes when we need information on agriculture, or tradition or environment... Something like that.*
- Safia (MP-2013; 1): Okay, tell me what kinds of information you get there? You said traditional, environmental. What about the environment. Give me one example.*
- Lucia (MP-2013; 1): The trees. That we don't know. The trees.*

Safia (MP-2013; 1): Anything else? What other information do you get there?

Lucia (MP-2013; 1): About our culture. And tourists.

Lines 94-102

Finally, some participants reported that being able to farm crops promoted feelings of competence and purposefulness because they could use this skill to benefit their community at large. For example, in one instance, participants reflected on how they often gave some of their crops to community-based initiatives that feed orphaned and vulnerable children. In another instance, participants reflected on how agriculture and in particular cultivating and harvesting crops was used to teach people in the community a skill that could be mobilised to find employment. In both these examples, being able to share their knowledge and expertise on farming made participants feel engaged, competent and valuable to their community. The following vignettes taken from participants' verbatim transcriptions (in blue) and a co-researcher's field notes (in green) substantiate the value of being able to share one's knowledge and expertise as part of the process of living a meaningful life:

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): We are moving to farming.

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): And what does that do for you? What do you get from it or how does it help you?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): We do get food here.

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): Food?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): Yes and job opportunities.

Marlize (MP-2012; 1): Job opportunities?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): Even maybe skills. Because sometimes there are training.

Johnny (MP-2012; 1): Like workshops?

Tebogo (MP-2012; 1): Workshops.

Lines 284-293

OM-MP-2013:

Garden – there is a group of women who run a garden to help feed the orphans so that they can have something. The women also benefit from the garden. Sometimes they sell the cultivated food in order to buy some more seeds for the next year.

Lines 90-93

Marlize (MP-2013; 2): Okay. What was the plan that you came up with. What did you do?

Vusi (MP-2013; 2): We wanted them to help us raise funds for starting our own business.

Marlize (MP-2013; 2): And what was that business?

Vusi (MP-2013; 2): Farming.

Marlize (MP-2013; 2): Farming specifically?

- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): Yes.
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): *Now tell me, how do you run that now that you started the business? How do you manage that?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): *We do have funds from other companies. After that we employ people.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): Okay.
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): *And we do have market.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): *I remember last year you said you didn't have market.*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): *Yes. Now we are supplying them with vegetable, tomato something like that.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): *So you sell it to them?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): Yes.
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): *And with the money you make there? What do you do with that?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): *To have more acres. Let's say this time you are farming you have cabbage only. Next time you will be farming tomatoes.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 2): *And has that worked so far?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 2): *For now it is good.*

Lines 201-220

5.2.2 LITERATURE CONTROL: SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS ON THIS SUBTHEME

This study revealed new insights into the notion of human capital development as pathway to well-being. These insights are:

- **Farming and agricultural productivity may form a useful part of conversations and interventions where the focus is to increase well-being and quality of life.** In addition to the benefits which farming may have for subsistence and commercial purposes, the application of a person's agricultural skills to enhance feelings of competence and purposefulness may positively influence that individual's well-being.

The findings of this study confirmed the following notions on indigenous pathways to well-being as described in the existing literature:

- **Education and learning are critical to the experience of well-being and affect the degree to which individuals experience themselves as engaged** (Hinks & Gruen, 2006; Khumalo *et al.*, 2012).
- **Perceived competency and ability significantly affect quality of life and level of well-being** (Lee *et al.*, 1999; Sotgiu *et al.*, 2011). Accomplishment for personal pleasure and the ability to identify and make use of one's own signature strengths (Seligman, 2002) play an

important role in ensuring that individuals reach their potential as far as is reasonably possible, for the betterment of themselves and others.

- **Agricultural productivity is an important pathway to well-being in rural settings** (Arku, 2010). Farming may provide individuals with an important source of subsistence, as well as commercial opportunities. Additionally, agricultural expertise may be used to teach people in their community, various skills which could be mobilised to find employment.

5.3 SUBTHEME 2.2: MAINTAINING HEALTH AS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

The second subtheme which emerged from the data on Human Pathways to Well-Being refers to the notion that maintaining a certain level of health is integral to the experience of well-being. This subtheme included data related to the participants' belief that in order to experience well-being, it is necessary to maintain or acquire a certain level of physiological health which would result in optimal physical functioning. Within this subtheme, two categories emerged from the data that suggested ways in which one could maintain appropriate levels of health. Fourteen of the 16 participating IPR groups regarded Category 2.2.1: Exercising and Staying Active as an important health-related pathway to well-being. Twelve of the 16 IPR groups reported that Category 2.2.2: Receiving Medical Attention was an important health-related pathway to well-being.

Table 5.5 outlines the variability of responses within the two categories forming part of this subtheme, and provides some insight into the perceived importance of physical activity and access to medical attention in maintaining one's health. The 'ticks' or 'check marks' which appear in the table, indicate instances where the different demographic groups across year and site provided positive responses in the PRA conversations with regard to exercising and staying active. The absence of a tick indicates that a demographic group was silent on that issue.

Table 5.5: Variability Rates in Exercising and Staying Active and Access to Medical Attention as Means of Maintaining Health

SUBTHEME 2.2: MAINTAINING HEALTH						
CATEGORY 2.2.1: EXERCISING & STAYING ACTIVE						
		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	Silent	✓	✓	✓	
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	Silent	
	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	
TOTAL /4		3	4	4	3	14

CATEGORY 2.2.2: Receiving Medical Attention						
		OM	OW	YM	YW	TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	Silent	Silent	
	O	Silent	✓	✓	✓	
2013	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	✓	Silent	✓	✓	
TOTAL /4		3	3	3	3	12

The responses provided by the participants from the two research sites revealed similarities and differences with regard to maintaining health as pathway to well-being. Table 5.6 addresses the first secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.2: Maintaining Health as Pathway to Well-Being. In order for categories and subcategories to be deemed prevalent pathways to well-being at research sites, half (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) of the demographic groups of IPR participants needed to voice a given category or subcategory as being an important pathway to well-being in their community.

Table 5.6: Indigenous Maintaining Health Pathways to Well-Being Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Maintaining Health Pathways to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Maintaining Health Pathways to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Maintaining Health 1. Exercising and staying active 2. Receiving medical attention	Maintaining Health 1. Exercising and staying active 2. Receiving medical attention

As evidenced by Table 5.6, participants at both research sites (Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) regarded both categories of maintaining health (‘Exercising and Staying Active’ and ‘Receiving Medical Attention’) as important human pathways to well-being in their community. **At least 50% of the participants at both research sites considered that it is important for them to maintain a certain level of health if they were to experience well-being.** Table 5.7 addresses the second secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.2: Maintaining Health as Pathway to Well-Being.

Table 5.7: Indigenous Maintaining Health Pathways to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Exercising and Staying Active							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
100%	75%	100%	75%	75%	100%	75%	100%
Receiving Medical Attention							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
100%	50%	75%	75%	50%	100%	75%	75%

The data presented in Table 5.7 indicates that **participants from Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga and across all four demographic groups (older, younger, male and female participants) all regarded exercising and staying active, as well as receiving medical attention as important pathways to well-being** that are related to maintaining health. A synopsis of the findings for this subtheme is presented at the end of Section 5.3.

5.3.1 CATEGORY 2.2.1: EXERCISING AND STAYING ACTIVE

The term ‘Exercising and Staying Active’ refers to the notion that in order to maintain adequate levels of health, one must participate in physical activities which result in a stronger body and healthier organs. Participants at both research sites reported that exercise and physical activity significantly increased their level of well-being because it provided them with a constructive way in which to manage their stress levels. For example, participants reported that when they felt particularly stressed or had had a bad day, going to the communal sports field for a run or to play soccer with their friends helped them to release excess tension and it increased their experience of positive emotions. The following vignette illustrates how physical activities such as playing soccer contribute to reducing the stress levels of participants and helps them to relax:

- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): Entertainment centre keeps everyone fit.*
- Mpho (MP-2013; 4): Exercise.*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): And it keeps everyone busy.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): And why does it make people happy to be busy?*
- Vusi (MP-2013; 4): Stress less.*
- Marlize (MP-2013; 4): Oh that, OK. It is true, hey.*

Lines 413-418

Thando (MP-2013; 1): Everywhere.

And the grounds. Stadium.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): Why is it a good thing?

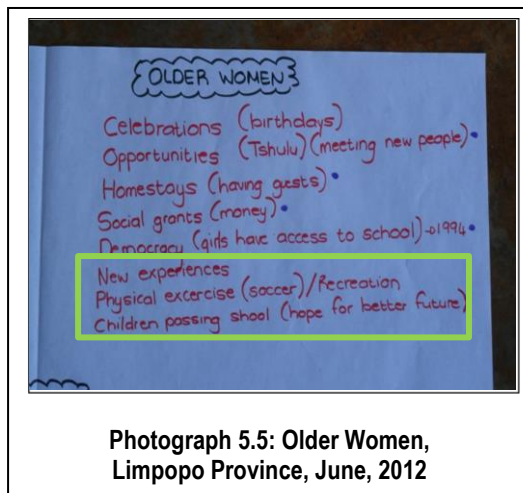
Thando (MP-2013; 1): We are going to exercise, and play, become fit and healthy and physical what-what.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): You said exercise and play and what else?

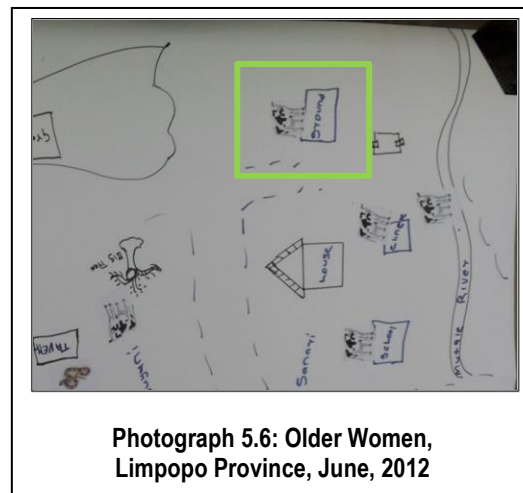
Kele (MP-2013; 1): Knowing each other and making friends; become happy.

Lines 126-132

Photographs 5.5 and 5.6 demonstrate the important role that exercise and physical activities such as soccer plays in helping participants to cope with stress. Specifically, these photographs indicate the use of land (labelled as ground on the community map) where villagers are able to exercise and they highlight the recreational slant of their engagement in physical activity as one human pathway to well-being.



Photograph 5.5: Older Women, Limpopo Province, June, 2012



Photograph 5.6: Older Women, Limpopo Province, June, 2012

Participants also reported that exercise and staying active influenced their well-being in the sense that it helped them to stay fit. This was important to participants because it ensured a certain level of functioning and productivity which was essential for surviving in a high risk, high need and adverse environment. The following verbatim quotes acknowledge the benefits of increased energy levels and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle for well-being through engaging in soccer and other sports at local sports fields. Additional benefits which are mentioned in this quote pertain to weight loss and increased positive affect:

Gladys (LP-2012; 4): She is so happy when playing soccer.

Janna (LP-2012; 4): OK, what is it about soccer that makes her happy? Why is that a happy thing for her to do?

Gladys (LP-2012; 4): She said that to play soccer is very interesting because she will lose weight and she will be gaining lots of energy and her life will be getting healthy.

Lines 612-617

Thando (MP-2013; 1): Everywhere. And the grounds. Stadium.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): Why is it a good thing?

Thando (MP-2013; 1): We are going to exercise, and play, become fit and healthy and physical what-what.

Safia (MP-2013; 1): You said exercise and play and what else?

Kele (MP-2013; 1): Knowing each other and making friends; become happy.

Thando (MP-2013; 1): And to become healthy and exercise.

Lines 139-146

David (LP-2012; 2): I like to play soccer; anytime I play or watch soccer I am happy. I like to play it every day.

Raphael (LP-2012; 2): What about you Luca?

Luca (LP-2012; 2): If I go to other village and play with my friends I am happy.

Lines 176-179

5.3.2 CATEGORY 2.2.2: RECEIVING MEDICAL ATTENTION

The term 'Receiving Medical Attention' refers to the view that in order to stay healthy, one should seek medical attention and advice when feeling unwell or ill. Participants reported that in order to remain healthy, they relied on the medical attention which was available in their community. Access to health care was important to participants because they relied on a clean bill of health to be able to contribute to their community and to carry out their daily tasks. Participants reported that it was important for them to be healthy enough to perform daily responsibilities such as farming for subsistence; after all, they depend on the outcomes of these activities in order to survive. Being unable to carry out these responsibilities affected participants' well-being significantly. The following vignettes elaborate on how good health is a prerequisite for conducting community and family responsibilities, and how carrying out these responsibilities improves well-being:

Janna (LP-2014; MC): You told me that the clinic is very important. It is important that you have got somewhere to go when you are sick, is that true?

Paula (LP-2014; MC): Uri rho muvhudza na zwauri kiliniki ndiya ndeme nga maanda, ndizwa ndeme uri vhavhe na fhethu hune vhaya musi vhatshi lwala, ndi zwone naa?

ALL (LP-2014; MC): Eeh.

Yes.

Janna (LP-2014; MC): *Why is it important not to be sick, why do you want to be healthy?*

Paula (LP-2014; MC): *Hupfi ndi ngani zwizwa ndeme usa lwala, Ndi ngani vhatshi toda udzula vhenamitakalo yavhudi/vho takala?*

Linda (LP-2014; MC): *Ndi ngauri mutakalo wavhudi uya nyagea kha muthu.*

It is because a good health is required to every person.

Lines 563-575

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *There was many things to do with your health and to do with your body; and you said for you it is very, very important that your body is healthy. I want you... Before we talk about what is making your body healthy, I want to know why is it important for you to look after your body? Why must you be healthy here in Steynsdorp and Mpumalanga?*

Obie (MP-2014; MC): *I am thinking it is good to have a healthy body.*

Most of the time you can't get sickness, when your body is healthy.

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *OK and why do you want to make sure that you're not getting sick?*

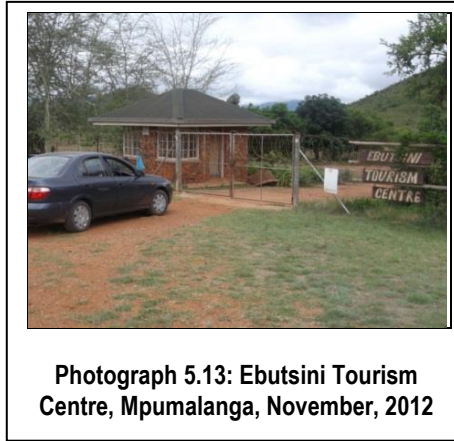
Obie (MP-2014; MC): *I think you must exercise, you go to the clinic and check what can you do, and try to get some information.*

Janna (MP-2014; MC): *And what is going to happen if you sick? What then?*

Vuyo (MP-2014; MC): *You gonna die!*

Lines 12-26

Visual data generated during PRA conversations portrayed the role of those modern medical institutions such as clinics and hospitals in the community which are accessed by participants and other community members in order to stay healthy. Photographs 5.7, 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 depict the ways in which participants access health care in their community as part of their general strategy to maintain health and live a happy life.



5.3.3 LITERATURE CONTROL: SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS ON THIS SUBTHEME

The following notions on indigenous pathways to well-being, as indicated by existing literature studies, were confirmed by the findings of this subtheme:

- **Physical health forms an essential component of the experience of well-being** (Cole & Bellavance, 1997; Cuijpers & Schoevers, 2004; Delle Fave *et al.*, 2011; Howell *et al.*, 2011; Harris & Barraclough, 1998; Harvey, 2014; Johnson, 2014; Marmot, 2005; Saz & Dewey, 2001; Schmidt & Strong, 1997; Schulz *et al.*, 2002; Sotgiu *et al.*, 2011; Stephens *et al.*, 2005; White, 2001; Wulsin *et al.*, 1999). An individual's level of health affects his or her productivity which then impacts quality of life. Engaging in health-promoting physical activities also helps people to manage stress.
- **Access to medical attention is an important pathway to well-being** (Cocks & Møller, 2002; Constantine *et al.*, 2004). People need a clean bill of health to carry out daily tasks and responsibilities. Access to modern (Barnes, 1998; Falicov, 1999; Garrut & Wilbur, 1999; Heinrich *et al.*, 1990 & Pourat *et al.*, 1999) and traditional (Cocks & Møller, 2002; Constantine *et al.*, 2004) medical services significantly contributes to an individual's ability to maintain adequate levels of health.

5.4 SUBTHEME 2.3: ENJOYING SIMPLE PLEASURES AS PATHWAY TO WELL-BEING

The final subtheme which emerged from the data on Human Pathways to Well-Being refers to the notion that in order to experience well-being, one needs to appreciate and enjoy simple pleasures in life. Within this subtheme, two categories emerged: 2.3.1: Appreciating the Beauty of One's Environment; and 2.3.2: Participating in Relaxing Activities. Variability in the results for each category is given per group of participants that contributed to the generation of data across research sites and year in which data was generated (2012 and 2013).

These two categories which emerged from the data pertaining to Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being shared similar variability rates. Participating in Relaxing Activities was mentioned by seven of the 16 groups. Appreciating the Beauty of One's Environment was mentioned by eight of the 16 IPR groups.

Table 5.8 outlines the variability of responses for these two categories. The 'ticks' which appear in the table indicate instances where the demographic groups participating in IPR provided positive responses in PRA conversations with regard to the value of socialising with others, participating in relaxing activities and appreciating the beauty of one's environment. The absence of a tick indicates that a demographic group was silent on this issue.

Table 5.8: Variability Rates in 'Enjoying Simple Pleasures'

SUBTHEME 2.3: ENJOYING SIMPLE PLEASURES						
CATEGORY 2.3.1: APPRECIATING THE BEAUTY OF ONE'S ENVIRONMENT						
		OM	OW	YM	YW	GRAND TOTAL /16
2012	H	Silent	✓	Silent	✓	
	O	Silent	Silent	✓	Silent	
2013	H	✓	✓	Silent	✓	
	O	✓	✓	Silent	Silent	
TOTAL		2	3	1	2	
CATEGORY 2.3.2: PARTICIPATING IN RELAXING ACTIVITIES						
		OM	OW	YM	YW	GRAND TOTAL /16
2012	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	O	Silent	Silent	Silent	Silent	
2013	H	✓	Silent	Silent	✓	
	O	Silent	Silent	Silent	✓	
TOTAL		2	1	1	3	

Responses provided by participants from Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga revealed similarities and differences with regard to enjoying simple pleasures as human pathway to well-being. Table 5.9 addresses the first secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.3: Enjoying Simple Pleasures.

Table 5.9: Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being Voiced by Inhabitants in Two Rural, Resource-Constrained Communities in South Africa

Secondary Research Question #1: “What are the indigenous pathways to well-being voiced by inhabitants in two rural, resource-constrained communities in South Africa?”	
Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being at Limpopo Province Research Site	Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being at Mpumalanga Research Site
Enjoying Simple Pleasures 1. Appreciating the beauty of one’s environment 2. Participating in relaxing activities	Enjoying Simple Pleasures 1. Appreciating the beauty of one’s environment

Participants in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga differed with regard to the simple pleasures which they regarded as important pathways to well-being. In Limpopo Province, participants reported that they participated in relaxing activities in order to strive towards well-being. Participants at both research sites reported that appreciating the beauty of one’s environment was an important pathway to well-being.

Table 5.10 addresses the second secondary research question as it pertains to Subtheme 2.3: Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being. As with the first secondary research question, half (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Merriam, 2014) of the demographic groups of IPR participants needed to voice a given category or subcategory as being an important pathway to well-being in their community in order for it to be deemed a prevalent pathway to well-being at research sites.

Table 5.10: Enjoying Simple Pleasures as Pathway to Well-Being in Terms of Age and Gender in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga

Secondary Research Question #2: “How do indigenous pathways to, and the nature of well-being compare in terms of age and gender in these two communities?”							
Limpopo Province Research Site				Mpumalanga Research Site			
Appreciating the Beauty of One’s Environment							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
75%	50%	25%	75%	50%	25%	50%	25%
Participating in Relaxing Activities							
Older	Younger	Men	Women	Older	Younger	Men	Women
✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
75%	75%	75%	75%	0%	25%	0%	25%

All four demographic groups (older, younger, male and female participants) in Limpopo Province reported that Participating in Relaxing Activities was an important pathway to well-being in their

community. However, none of the demographic groups in Mpumalanga shared this view. With regard to 'Appreciating the Beauty of One's Environment' as an indigenous pathway to well-being, all demographic groups except for the male participant group in Limpopo Province and the younger participant group in Mpumalanga reported that the aesthetic value of their natural environment contributed to their experience of well-being.

The results of this study suggest that **appreciating the beauty of one's environment may be a universal pathway to well-being related to the enjoyment of simple pleasures. Participating in relaxing activities may also be an important pathway to well-being, although this pathway does not appear to be as prevalent as others which pertain to the enjoyment of simple pleasures.**

5.4.1 CATEGORY 2.3.1: APPRECIATING THE BEAUTY OF ONE'S ENVIRONMENT

Participants reported that they were happiest when surrounded by the beauty of their natural environment; for example, the flowers, mountains and birds. The sense of space which participants felt in their community, as well as the beautiful trees that surround their houses also resulted in positive emotional experiences. The following verbatim transcriptions show how a beautiful environment made participants happy:

Walter (LP-2013; 4): *It makes the community happy. He says the other thing which makes him happy is when he is dreaming about flowers, trees and mountains. It makes him happy. Even when moving around seeing flowers, trees and mountains it makes him happy.*

Lines 268-271

Thuli (MP-2013; 1): *Lenyoni iyasebenza emfuleni uhleli nomuntu wakho. This bird works well when you are sitting with your loved one by the river.*

Lucy (MP-2013; 1): *Ishaya ingoma emnandi. It chirps out a beautiful song.*

Marlize (MP-2013; 1): *Why is the bird important?*

Ruth (MP-2013; 1): *Ihlabelela kamnandi. It sings beautifully.*

Thuli (MP-2013; 1): *It is singing nicely. It makes you happy when it sings?*

Lines 332-341

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *Get what? Fresh air?*

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *So what is this? Grass house.*

Lucy (MP-2013; 1): *Angazi eyotshani vele.*

I don't know it's made of grass though.

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *Hut, rondavel?*

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *So you go to the hut, rondavel for fresh air? Yes.*

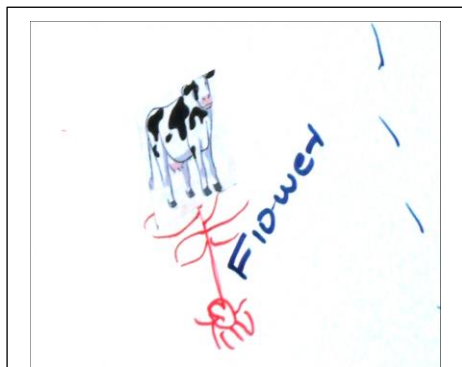
Janna (MP-2013; 1): *Why do you need fresh air?*

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *Why should you go there for fresh air? Then you rest you need fresh air.*

Janna (MP-2013; 1): *So you rest there it gives you fresh air and you feel better?*

Lines 241-228

The appreciation which community members felt toward their natural environment was also portrayed through their community maps and mealie posters which they drew as part of various PRA conversations facilitated by the research team. In Photographs 5.14 and 5.15 the older women in Limpopo Province express their desire to live in an aesthetically pleasing environment, given the positive way it makes them feel about their lives.



Photograph 5.14: Older Women, Limpopo Province, June, 2012



Photograph 5.15: Older Women, Limpopo Province, July, 2013

5.4.2 CATEGORY 2.3.2: PARTICIPATING IN RELAXING ACTIVITIES

The term 'Participating in Relaxing Activities' refers to the view that by engaging in activities such as dancing, singing and playing soccer, participants experienced increased positive affect which led to well-being. Participants reported several activities that they engaged in which made them happy; these included dancing, relaxing, holiday camps for children, swimming and watching soccer. The following quotes elaborate on the pleasurable activities which participants engage in, in order to improve their quality of life:

Kaone (LP-2012; 4): *We were happy when you come to visit us in our village.*

Kaone (LP-2012; 4): *We danced the Gomera dance once you visited us at Maluzawele.*

Safia (LP-2012; 4): *We danced...?*

Kaone (LP-2012; 4): *We taught you how to dance the Gomera.*

Safia (LP-2012; 4): *The traditional dance?*
Kaone (LP-2012; 4): *Yes...We feel so happy when we are together.*

Lines 189-196

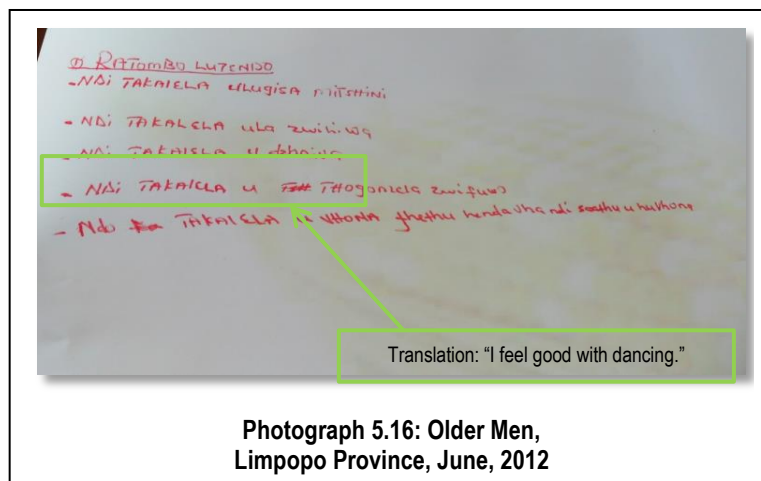
Kaone (MP-2012; 1): *Yes... And then the camp.*
Safia (MP-2012; 1): *What camp is it?*
Kaone (MP-2012; 1): *If we want to come and spend the holiday with our loved ones or with your friends.*
Safia (MP-2012; 1): *What can you do there?*
Kaone (MP-2012; 1): *Swimming and playing and see animals.*
Safia (MP-2012; 1): *What can you play?*
Kaone (MP-2012; 1): *Anything, you can play anything.*
Safia (MP-2012; 1): *Okay, that's nice.*

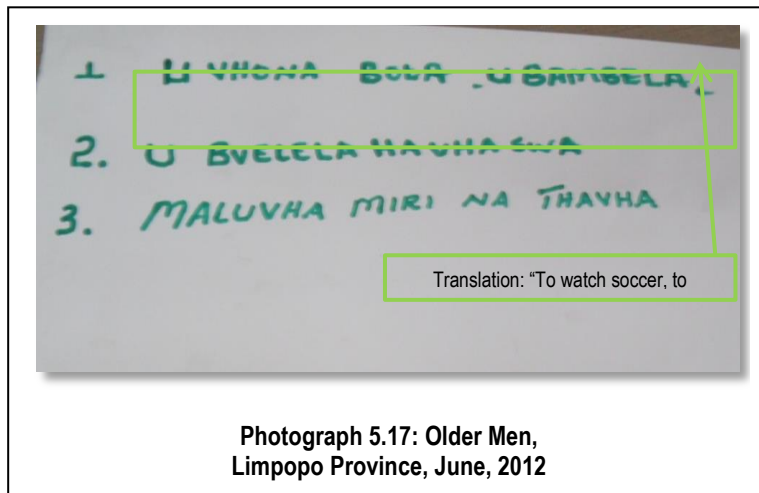
Lines 82-90

Walter (LP-2013; 4): *He is happy while he is working. Because while he is building he will be building his own capacity. And also watching soccer on TV and watching it locally. And even the whole community they like watching soccer. Soccer is what makes them happy.*

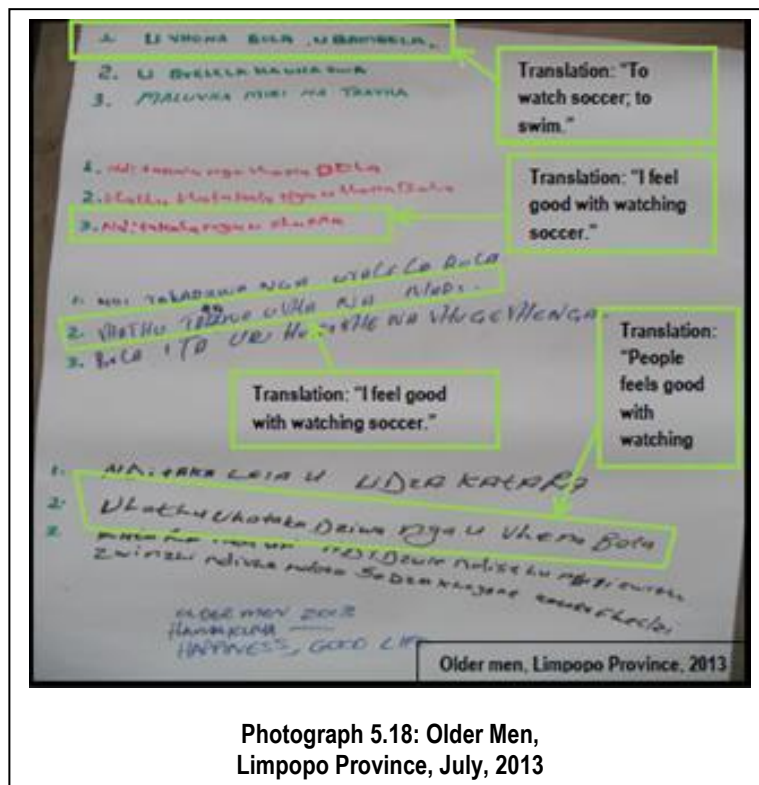
Lines 274-277

Photographs 5.16, 5.17 and 5.18 confirm the importance of participating in relaxing activities in order to experience positive emotions.





Photograph 5.17: Older Men, Limpopo Province, June, 2012



Photograph 5.18: Older Men, Limpopo Province, July, 2013

5.4.3 LITERATURE CONTROL: SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS ON THIS SUBTHEME

The findings of this study confirmed the following notions on indigenous pathways to well-being, as indicated in the findings of studies in the literature:

- **Hedonistic pleasures such as socialising, participating in relaxing activities and appreciating natural environments make people happy** (Arku, 2010; Constantine & Sue, 2006; Gloria Rodrigues, 2000; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Pflug, 2009; Utsey *et al.*, 2000).
- **Non-material environmental aspects (such as attractive fauna and flora) affect emotional the state positively** (Berkes & Folke, 1994; Rigby *et al.*, 2011). Living within an environment that provides cultural, spiritual and recreational opportunities improves mental health and enhances a person's subjective sense of culture and place (Rigby *et al.*, 2011).

5.5 SUMMARY OF SIMILARITIES, CONTRADICTIONS AND NEW INSIGHTS IN THEME 2, CHAPTER 5

5.5.1 FINDINGS SIMILAR TO EXISTING WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

- In accordance with the observations made in studies conducted by Ryff (1989), Ryff and Singer (1998, 2000, 2006), Ryan and Deci (2001) and Seligman (1991, 2002), **participants in this current study regarded self-perception of personal competence as an important pathway to well-being**. I found that participants revelled in experiences that afforded them a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives. These experiences made them feel as though their lives served a bigger purpose than just surviving from one day to the next.
 - This finding was reported by **participants across gender, age and geographical location**.
- In the same way as Samman (2007), White (2001), Harvey (2014), Cuijpers and Schoevers (2004), Saz and Dewey (2001) and Wulsin *et al.* (1999) proposed that physical health may be an important pathway to well-being, **participants in this study also reported that physical health formed an important aspect of their well-being**. I found that in particular, health was vital to the participants of this study because it afforded them a certain level of productivity, which in turn affected their quality of life.
 - Physical health was an important pathway to well-being at **both research sites** and to **participants in each IPR demographic group**.
- As seen in several Western well-being approaches (Diener, 1984; Keyes, 2007; Seligman, 2002) **experiencing positive emotions is an important pathway to well-being**. In this study, participants reported that they experience positive emotions when they are able to relax (in various ways) and when they are able to appreciate the beauty of their environment.
 - This finding was **universal across age, gender and geographical location**.

5.5.2 FINDINGS SIMILAR TO EXISTING NON-WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

- As seen in Arku's (2010) study, **farming and agricultural productivity is an important pathway to well-being in indigenous, rural communities in South Africa**. I found that people living in rural South African communities (in Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga) rely on farming in order provide food for their families, as well as to generate an income.
 - Farming for subsistence and commercial purposes was a **universal dimension of well-being** in this study. It was reported by **participants across age, gender and geographical location**.

- Similar to Arku's (2010) study, **farming was important to the participants of this study.** Farming benefited the community through initiatives such as growing produce to feed orphaned and vulnerable children. Moreover, farming and general agricultural activity contributed to the development of community members; it enabled them to learn new skills which could be mobilised in order to seek employment or bring meaning to one's life.
 - **All participants across age and gender, as well as geographical location** shared consensus on the importance of farming to their happiness.

- Similar to Hinks and Gruen (2006) and Khumalo *et al.*'s (2012) findings, **opportunities for development was a pathway to well-being for participants in this study.** I found that participants believed that education could act as a gateway to a better life, through the opportunities which it offered (for example, in terms of the development of new skills, employability and the opportunity to earn a higher income). Moreover, education provided the opportunity to engage in cognitive activities which helped individuals to feel challenged and stimulated.
 - Opportunities to develop (such as through education) was reported by **all participants (across age and gender) at both research sites (geographical location).**

- Cocks and Møller (2002) and Constantine *et al.*'s (2004) studies showed that **traditional remedies and medicines were an additional health-related indigenous pathway to well-being.** Similarly, I found that for the older men in this study, traditional, cultural healing practices, such as the use of herbs and mutis, were regarded as important for the treatment of ailments and illnesses. Participants in this study did not elaborate on the specific types of illnesses which muti and herbs could be used to treat.
 - This finding was unique to the **older male participants at the Mpumalanga research site.**

- In agreement with the findings of work by Stephens *et al.* (2005), **participants recognised that their physical health was affected by their ecological system.** Participants reported that their health was often affected by the medical services available in their village, as well as their ability to access (for example, through transport) these services. Health services were an important pathway to well-being for participants because they afforded them the opportunity to maintain adequate levels of health and in doing so increase their quality of life.

- This finding was **universal across age, gender and geographical location**.
- As found in some non-Western studies (Arku, 2010; Constantine *et al.*, 2006; Pflug, 2009), **spending time with others by participating in social activities was an important pathway to well-being**. Socialising increased participants' experience of positive emotions (the 'Pleasurable Life' (Seligman, 2002)). I found that people faced with adversity rely on and value the time that they spend with other members of the community. Participants in this study reflected that engaging in fellowship with others, engaging in various sporting activities, as well as socialising at the local tavern all provided the opportunity to spend time with others in their community.
 - Participants across **all four demographic groups** (referring to age and gender) and **geographical location** regarded socialising with others as an important pathway to well-being.
- Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.* (2004), Pflug (2009) and Lyubomirsky, King and Diener (2005) found that **enjoying simple pleasure with others or on one's own is another important human pathway to well-being**. Similarly, I found that participating in fun or relaxing activities such as dancing, singing or playing soccer significantly enhanced the quality of life of participants.
 - Enjoying simple pleasures as pathway to well-being was reported by **participants at both research sites across age and gender**.
- This study supported the findings of Berkes and Folke's (1994) study to the effect that **the environment within which one lives may provide many non-material benefits which positively affect the experience of well-being**. Similarly, I found that for participants, the opportunity to spend time in nature and appreciate the beauty of one's environment is an important pathway to well-being. Specifically, participants in this study referred to their appreciation of fauna and flora in their environment, as well to their appreciation of the sense of space which they felt within their villages.
 - This finding was **common among the older and female groups** at both research sites.
 - This finding was **unique to the male group in Mpumalanga** and the **younger group of participants in Limpopo Province**.

5.5.3 FINDINGS THAT CONTRADICT EXISTING WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

- In conflict with Suh's (2009) findings, **participants in this study were silent on the role of internal traits, values and emotions in the experience of well-being**. Rather, they focussed on the traits and values that were important to their community, and emphasised the

collective emotional climate which the community experienced in the face of risk and adversity.

5.5.4 FINDINGS THAT CONTRADICT EXISTING NON-WESTERN KNOWLEDGE ON PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING

- In contrast to the findings of some non-Western studies (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998), **participants in this study were not necessarily motivated by self-actualisation.** I found that for those participating in IPR, the opportunity to realise oneself or to develop one's distinct potential was not a priority in the overall experience of health and well-being. Similarly, and in contrast to the findings of Singelis' (1994) study, participants in this study did not regard their personal well-being as a higher priority than the well-being of the community as a unit.
- In conflict with the findings of Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study, **participants of IPR did not explicitly pursue happiness or make a concerted effort to avoid jeopardising their happiness.** Rather, they regarded happiness as a result of a number of interrelated factors, some of which they were not always able to control. In this sense, the lives of those who participated in this study could not be regarded as entirely independent as suggested in Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I reported on the findings of Theme 2: Communal Pathways to Well-Being. These findings emerged following the thematic analysis and interpretation phase of this study. I made use of the participants' verbatim quotes in their home language, together with translations into English, as well as visual data and extracts from my research journal to enrich and authenticate the results presented. Moreover, I expanded on findings in the study which were in accordance with those in the literature and also identified findings that seemed to conflict with the literature. Finally, I provided new insights into indigenous communal and spiritual pathways to well-being. In Chapter 6, I answer the primary research question of the study and provide suggestions for further research, practice and training.

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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

I have argued that the literature on well-being appears to be dominated by studies conducted in North America and Europe. As documented in Figure 1.1 presented in Section 1.2 of Chapter 1, I wanted to contribute to a knowledge base of indigenous psychology by using this lens to study well-being as a positive adaptation outcome in resilience. To do this, I systematically studied well-being through an inductive, non-Western and indigenous lens in two rural South African contexts. These contexts were appropriate spaces in which to study pathways to resilience as both are characterised by high risk and high need, where chronic, cumulative adversity is present, and where inhabitants have a non-Western, indigenous worldview. An inductive data generation method allowed me to obtain an insider's (indigenous) perspective on well-being as opposed to measuring participants' well-being deductively against existing Western and non-Western perspectives. Figure 1.1 is also presented in this chapter as a convenient reference in overviewing the study before the findings are presented.

The findings of this study should be read against certain delimitations. IPR data are cross-sectional (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This implies that the data generated are specific to the sampled populations at specific points in time. Thus, the findings of this study do not account for all the variables influencing indigenous knowledge on resilience and well-being in high risk, rural settings (Mann, 2003). Transferability is limited due to the small sample of cases selected for IPR (Hays, 2000; Willing, 2008). The sampling method employed by IPR (convenient sampling) resulted in a sample biased towards rurality, unemployment, women and youth. Those excluded insights in IPR comprise non-Western, indigenous views of individuals who are employed, or who live in urban environments, who are male and, the older generation.

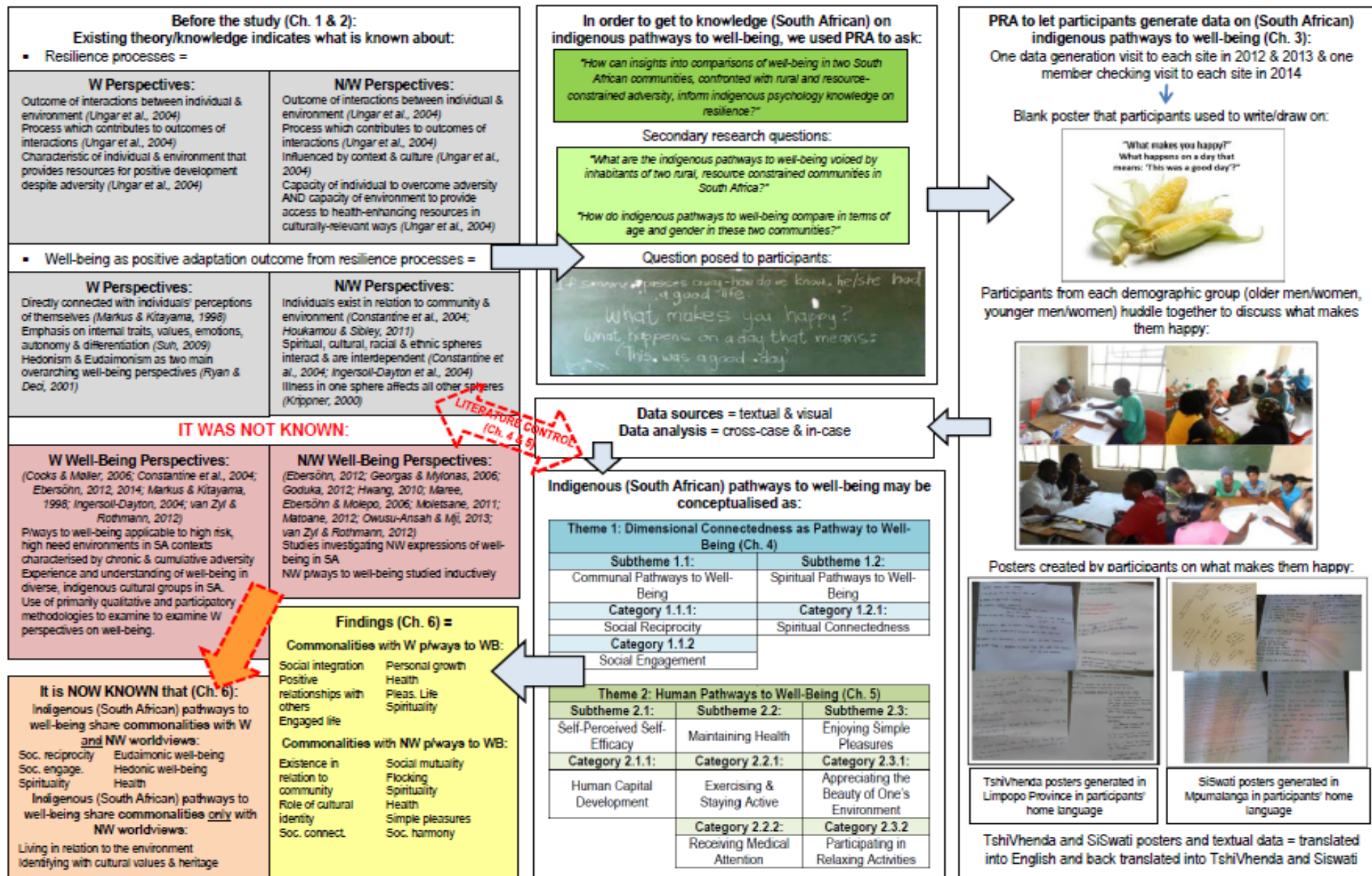


Figure 1.1: Overview of the Research Process (Chambers, 2013; Constantine et al., 2004; Houkamau & Sibley, 2011; Ingersoll-Dayton et al., 2004; Krippner, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Suh, 2009; Ungar et al., 2004)

6.2 ANSWERING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The secondary research questions for this study were addressed in Chapters 4 and 5. In this section, I summarise the implications of the findings relating to those two secondary research questions. I also address the primary research question.

6.2.1 INSIGHTS INTO HOW COMPARISONS OF INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS TO WELL-BEING MAY INFORM INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY KNOWLEDGE ON RESILIENCE

Figure 6.1 provides a graphic representation of the insights derived from the study. This study contributes to literature on well-being by confirming commonalities between sampled South African non-Western populations and existing Western and non-Western well-being perspectives. I found that in the two sampled research sites, **well-being comprised certain *universal* pathways** discussed below. Here, the term ‘universal’ signifies pathways to well-being evident in the existing literature and this study regardless of worldview (Western or non-Western). I also **identified pathways to well-being in the South African samples that are specific to non-Western studies only**. In the following sections, I discuss these similarities and differences. I also discuss pathways to well-being indicated in the current study that were unique to non-Western well-being approaches.

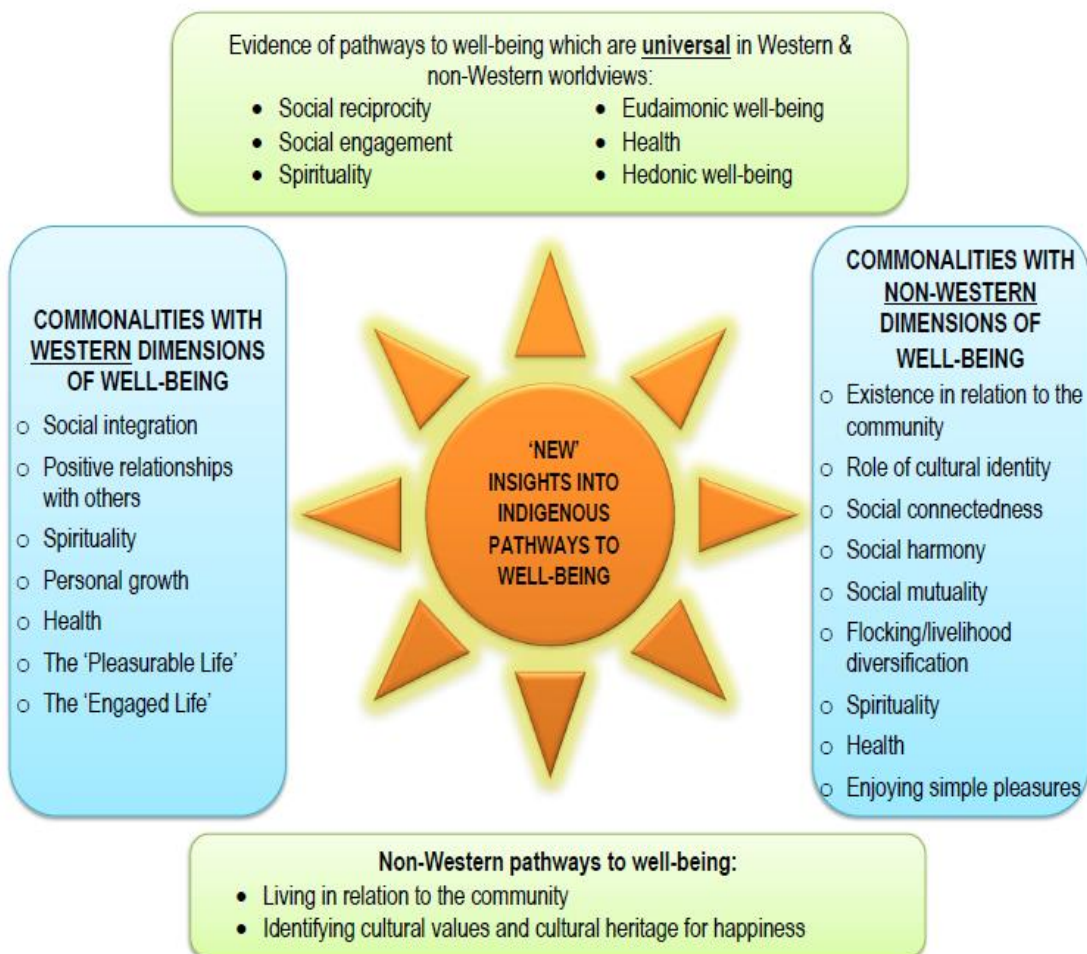


Figure 6.1: New Insights derived from the Study

6.2.1.1 Similarities and Differences with Knowledge on Western Pathways to Well-Being

Similarities and differences which this study shared with existing Western pathways to well-being are indicated in Figure 6.2. As stated, I found similarities between sampled South African indigenous well-being and existing Western pathways to well-being. Similarities with Western views on well-being include: social integration, positive relationships with others, personal growth, spirituality, health, the pleasurable life and the engaged life.

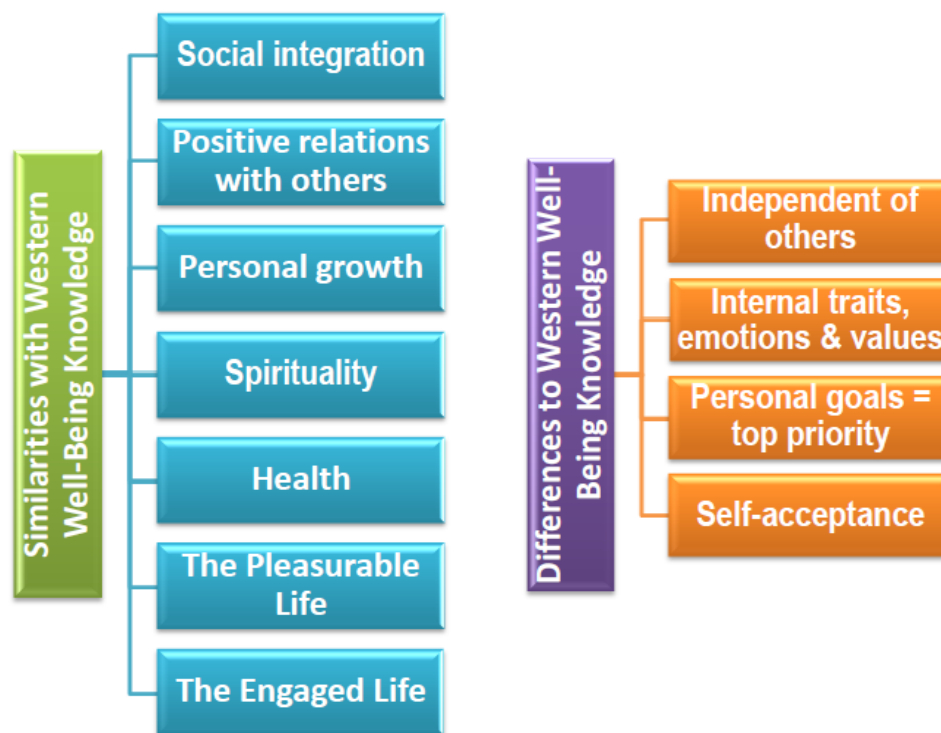


Figure 6.2: Similarities and Differences with Existing Western Knowledge on Well-Being

Current Western knowledge on well-being regards ‘Social Integration’ as an important pathway to well-being (Keyes, 1998). This term ‘social integration’ refers to feeling a sense of belonging and being able to receive comfort and support from one’s community (Keyes, 1998). ‘Social integration’ was evident in the current study through the importance which participants assigned to the process of giving and receiving support.

Two Western positive psychological functioning pathways (eudaimonic well-being) (Ryff, 1989) were also indicated in this study: ‘Positive Relations with Others’ and ‘Personal Growth’. The term ‘Positive Relations with Others’ refers to the ability to establish and maintain warm, trusting personal relationships. Data from the current study supported the notion of ‘Positive Relations with Others’ because participants emphasised the value of social relationships in experiencing happiness. ‘Personal Growth’ implies that an individual seeks challenges and has insight into his or her own potential. Additionally, ‘Personal Growth’ implies that individuals strive for a sense of continued development. In

the current study, participants cherished opportunities to learn and develop themselves because they believed that in doing so, they would be able to live happier lives.

Samman's (2007) notion of religion or spirituality as one alternative Western pathway to well-being was indicated in this study. Samman (2007) explains the link between spirituality and well-being as well-being which is derived from spiritual, religious or philosophical beliefs. In this study, the importance of spirituality for well-being was indicated through the participants' beliefs that engaging in ancestral and religious practices would give their lives meaning. Another pathway to well-being identified by Samman's (2007) alternative approach to Western well-being, physical health, was also evident in the current study. Western literature, as well as this study, argues that establishing and maintaining adequate physical health is important for happiness. Participants in this study stressed the importance of physical health because it directly affected their productivity and quality of life.

The findings of this study are similar to Seligman's (2002) orientations to happiness framework. The pleasurable life (which refers to the enjoyment of basic pleasures) was evident in this study through participants' reports that engaging in relaxing, pleasurable activities made them happy. The engaged life is achieved by discovering unique virtues and strengths and using them creatively to enhance one's life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The engaged life was evident in this study through participants' conversations which highlighted their desire to experience themselves as useful people who feel a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives.

The findings of this study *differed* from the body of existing Western well-being knowledge in four primary ways. Western literature on well-being suggests that individuals need to live independent, metaphysically separate lives to experience well-being (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, 1998). However, in this study, participants reported that it was their interdependence that made them happy. Interdependence in the current study is indicated by the theme 'Dimensional Connectedness'. The notion of dimensional connectedness suggests that individuals exist in relation to their community, spiritual world and natural environment.

This study also *differed* from existing knowledge on well-being from a Western worldview with regard to the emphasis that is placed on the value of distinctive internal traits, values and emotions in achieving happiness. Western approaches to well-being (Singelis, 1994) highlight the experience of autonomy and differentiation from others as ways of achieving well-being. Western psychology's focus on realising one's own goals in order to be happy is related to the idea of autonomy and differentiation. However, in the current study, participants reported that the welfare and priorities of their community took precedence over their own needs and desires. This finding is indicated in the categories 'Social Reciprocity' and 'Social Engagement'.

Finally, existing Western knowledge on well-being stresses personal acceptance (Ryff, 1989) as an important aspect of positive psychological functioning (eudaimonic well-being). Participants in the current study were *silent* on this issue.

6.2.1.2 Similarities and Differences with Knowledge on Non-Western Pathways to Well-Being

The similarities and differences between existing non-Western psychology knowledge on well-being and the current study are outlined in Figure 6.3. I found that similarities on well-being were evident in the South African sample from a non-Western worldview and what is known regarding non-Western well-being. These similarities with non-Western well-being knowledge are: existence in relation to the community, the role of cultural identity, social connectedness, social harmony and social mutuality. Flocking, spirituality, health and enjoying simple pleasures were also non-Western pathways to well-being confirmed by the current study.

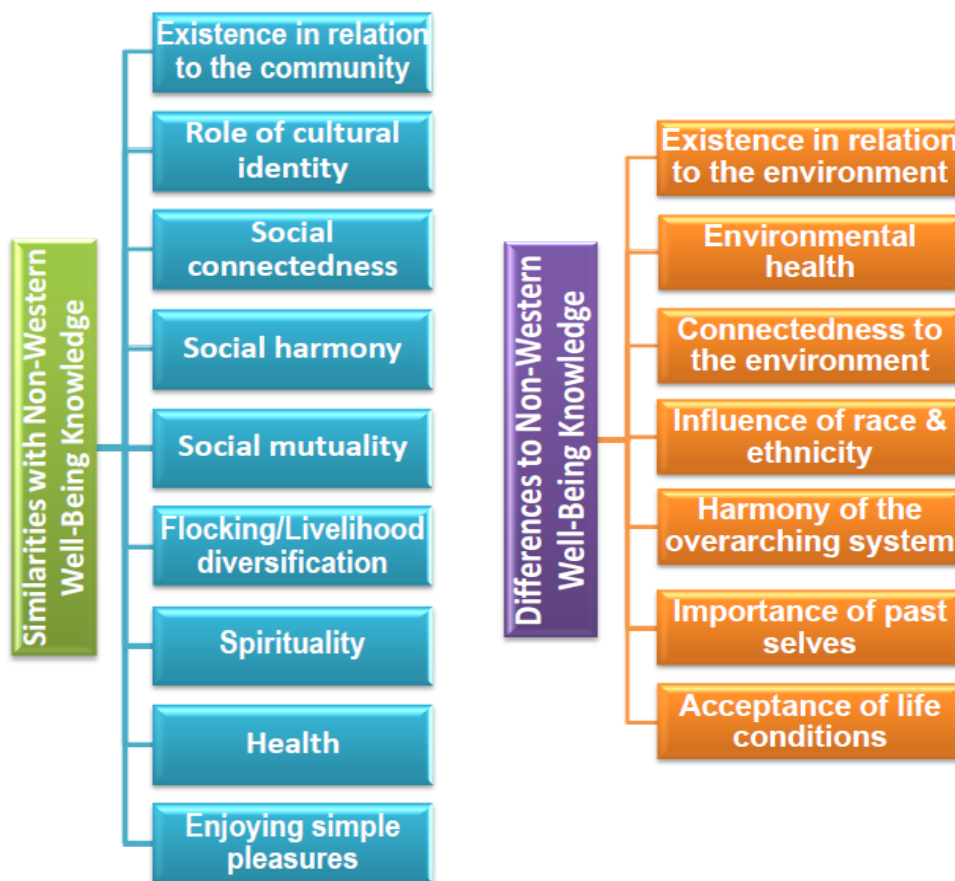


Figure 6.3: Similarities and Differences with Existing Non-Western Knowledge on Well-Being

Non-Western well-being literature suggests that individuals should not be regarded as being distinct from or isolated from their community or environment (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Pflug, 2009). This view is confirmed by the current study. Participants in this study reported that their happiness was **integrally connected to the welfare of their community**.

The role of **cultural identity** is highlighted in non-Western studies of well-being, as well as in the current study. According to the literature, cultural identity is seen to affect, inform and filter through each facet of an individual's life (King *et al.*, 2009). Likewise, in this study, participants reported that the ways in which they acknowledged and identified with their cultural heritage played an important role in how happy they were.

- Social connectedness (Constantine *et al.*, 2004), social harmony (Fozdar, 2008), social mutuality (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004) and flocking (Ebersöhn, 2012, 2014) and livelihood diversification (Ellis, 2007) are related concepts that appear in the non-Western literature on well-being. These terms were defined and discussed in Chapter 2. Social well-being as defined in the non-Western literature is indicated in the subtheme 'Communal Pathways to Well-Being'. Both categories of this subtheme, 'Social Reciprocity' and 'Social Engagement', align with current non-Western knowledge related to social well-being.
- This study supports the existing non-Western well-being approaches which discuss spirituality. The non-Western literature suggests that the spiritual meaning system that individuals observe may lead to increased well-being (Daaleman *et al.*, 2001; Kim *et al.*, 2004). In this current study, participants reported that their relationship with a Christian God and/or their ancestors provided them with a belief system that gave them hope and helped them to live meaningful lives.
- Health is regarded as being important for happiness in this study and this is in accordance with existing non-Western well-being approaches (Elliot-Schmidt & Strong, 1997; Sotgiu *et al.*, 2011). More specifically, non-Western well-being knowledge regards health as important for well-being because it is linked to productivity. This finding is confirmed by the current study and is discussed in the subtheme 'Maintaining Health'.
- The ability to enjoy simple pleasures is the final pathway to well-being in non-Western approaches which was indicated in the current study. This study and Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*'s (2004) study both found that engaging in pleasurable activities helped individuals to stay relaxed and address stress in constructive ways. The subtheme 'Enjoying Simple Pleasures' discusses this similarity.
- In some instances, the findings of this study *differed* from the existing non-Western knowledge on well-being: Refer to Figure 6.3 for a summary. Usually, characteristics of well-being through an indigenous lens include existence in relation to the environment, environmental health, environmental connectedness, harmony of the overarching system, livelihood diversification, the importance of past selves and acceptance of life circumstances. However, these were *not evident* in data in the current study (Note that this knowledge on well-being was discussed in Chapter 2). It is suggested that further research could usefully investigate, in some detail, the silences on these characteristics that were revealed in this

current study: Recommendations for such work are presented in Section 6.3.1: Suggestions for Future Research at the end of this chapter.

6.2.1.3 Universal Western and Non-Western Pathways to Well-Being

In common with the findings of Sotgiu *et al.* (2011), Delle Fave *et al.* (2009), Cox (2012) and Vella-Brodrick *et al.* (2009), the findings of this study may suggest certain universal (Western and non-Western) pathways to well-being. Those universal pathways to well-being, as well as pathways unique to either Western or non-Western approaches to well-being are outlined in Figure 6.4.

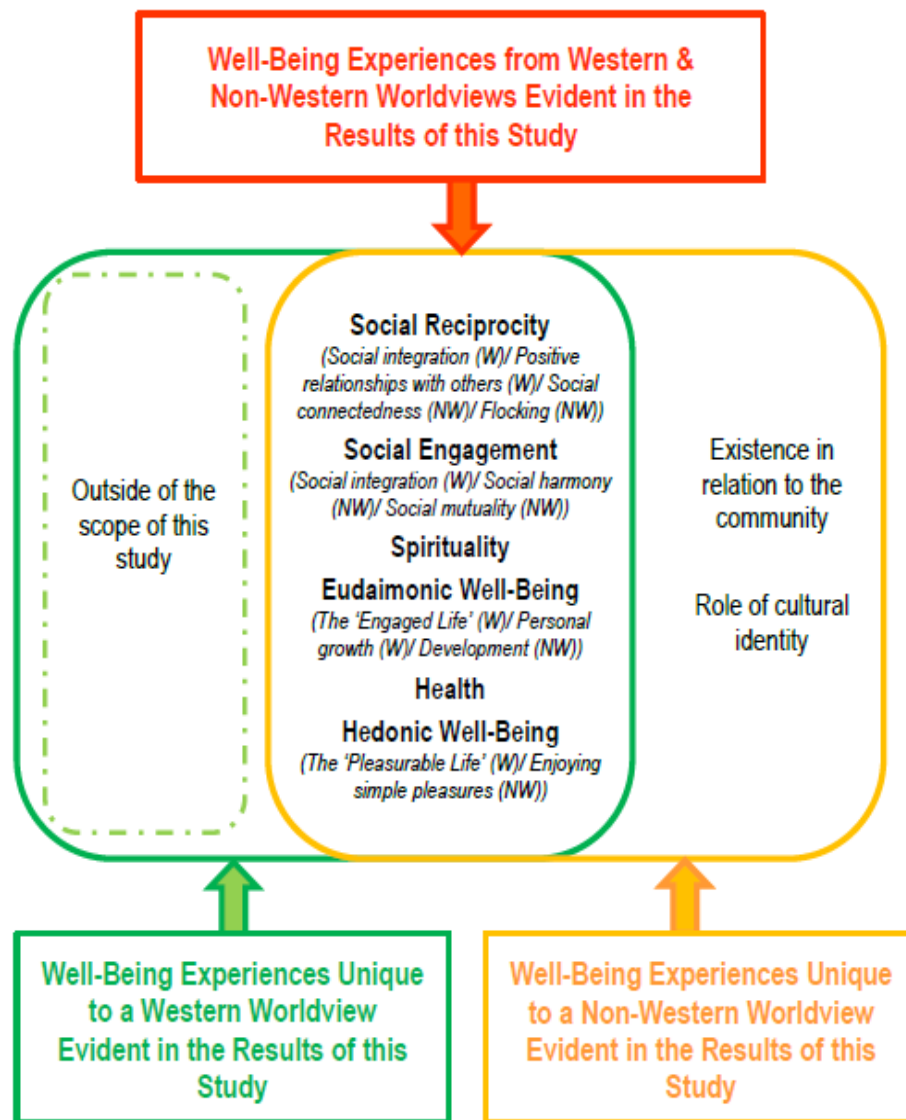


Figure 6.4: Similarities and Differences in Perspectives on Well-Being

‘Social Reciprocity’ is evident in both Western (W) and non-Western (NW) literature on well-being. In the context of literature reviewed for this study, the term ‘social reciprocity’ referred to the view that happiness could be achieved when a person receives comfort and support from the community (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Keyes, 1998; King *et al.*, 2009; Ryff, 1989).

Specific Western and non-Western pathways to well-being, from existing well-being approaches that were evident in the current study were: social integration (W), positive relationships with others (W), social connectedness (NW) and flocking (NW). These pathways are indicated and discussed under the subtheme 'Communal Pathways to Well-Being' in Chapter 4. This subtheme forms part of the first theme of the study: 'Dimensional Connectedness as Pathway to Well-Being'.

'Social Engagement' was also evident in Western (W) and non-Western (NW) perspectives of well-being. Here, 'Social Engagement' referred to feeling a sense of belonging in one's community, as well as experiencing and maintaining harmony in the community (Fozdar, 2008; Keyes, 1998; King *et al.*, 2009; Pflug, 2009; Sotgiu *et al.*, 2011). Western ('Social Integration') and non-Western ('Social Harmony', 'Social Mutuality') aspects of social engagement are indicated in the middle column of Figure 6.4 in italics. These aspects are also indicated and discussed in the subtheme 'Communal Pathways to Well-Being'.

Western and non-Western approaches to well-being both stress that a strong sense of spirituality is important for well-being. Similarly, in this study, it was found that access to, and connections with, metaphysical levels of existence influenced participants' perceptions of support and quality of life. The subtheme 'Spiritual Connectedness' in Chapter 4 addresses spirituality as pathway to well-being.

Western and non-Western literature suggests that self-development, competency and a sense of purpose lead to well-being. In Figure 6.4, these pathways to well-being are indicated in the middle column of the diagram and fall under 'Eudaimonic Well-Being'. The specific Western (W) and non-Western (NW) pathways to well-being which fall under 'Eudaimonic Well-Being' are presented in italics. These aspects are: 'The Engaged Life' (W), 'Personal Growth' (W) and 'Development' (NW). The similarities between Western and non-Western approaches that discuss eudaimonic well-being are presented and addressed in the subtheme 'Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy'. This subtheme falls under the theme 'Human Pathways to Well-Being' which is discussed in Chapter 5.

Western and non-Western approaches to well-being both stress health as a pathway to well-being. Health was also important to participants in this study because it increased productivity and quality of life. Health-promoting practices such as seeking medical attention and maintaining an active lifestyle ensure that individuals stay healthy and happy. Health as pathway to well-being is presented in Chapter 5 under the subtheme 'Maintaining Health'.

Finally, Western and non-Western literature suggests that engaging in activities which promote the experience of positive emotions affects well-being. Figure 6.4 uses the term 'Hedonic Well-Being' to indicate knowledge from Western and non-Western literature which speaks to this concept. The Western notion of 'The Pleasurable Life' and the non-Western notion of 'Engaging in Pleasurable

Activities' were evident in the findings of this study. These two pathways to well-being are discussed under the subtheme 'Enjoying Simple Pleasures'.

6.2.1.4 Differences in Knowledge on Western and Non-Western Pathways to Well-Being indicated in this Study

Figure 6.4 shows that certain non-Western, indigenous pathways to well-being became especially evident in this study. These indigenous pathways to well-being are: a) existence in relation to the community; and b) the role of cultural identity in well-being.

This study highlights the finding that the sampled South African participants live in relation to their community. This finding is well supported by the literature on the well-being perspectives adopted in African American contexts (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Constantine & Sue, 2006), as well as Hispanic (Constantine *et al.*, 2004), South African (Cocks & Møller, 2002), Turkish (Gergen *et al.*, 1996), Indian (Gergen *et al.*, 1996), New Zealand (Gergen *et al.*, 1996), Japanese (Kitayama *et al.*, 2000), Thai (Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004), Chinese (Lu & Gilmour, 2006; Shu & Zhu, 2009) and native Australian (Pflug, 2009) contexts. This view is addressed in Subtheme 1.1: Communal Pathways to Well-Being and encompasses both categories of this subtheme ('Social Reciprocity' and 'Social Engagement').

In common with Korean (Uchida *et al.*, 2004), Aboriginal (Malin & Maidment, 2003) and Native Hawaiian (McCubbin, 2007) cultural contexts (as well as those mentioned above), the South African sample also emphasises the importance of identifying with cultural values and cultural heritage for happiness. The South African samples showed that it was more important to adhere to values, rituals and traditions of their society than it was to experience happiness personally. With regard to creating social harmony, South African participants in this study associated well-being with acknowledgement and honouring of cultural obligations at the expense of the self. The role of cultural identity is addressed in the current study in the category 'Social Engagement'. This category falls under the subtheme 'Communal Pathways to Well-Being' and is discussed in Theme 1: 'Dimensional Connectedness to Well-Being'.

6.2.1.5 Situating the Results within the Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks of the Study

In this section, I use findings to adapt the initial conceptual framework I presented in Chapter 2 (Section 2.5: Conceptual Framework). I changed the conceptual framework of the study to show the significance of spiritual, social and human pathways to well-being, as well as the silences in the findings with regard to ecological pathways to well-being; these silences became evident in the South African samples.

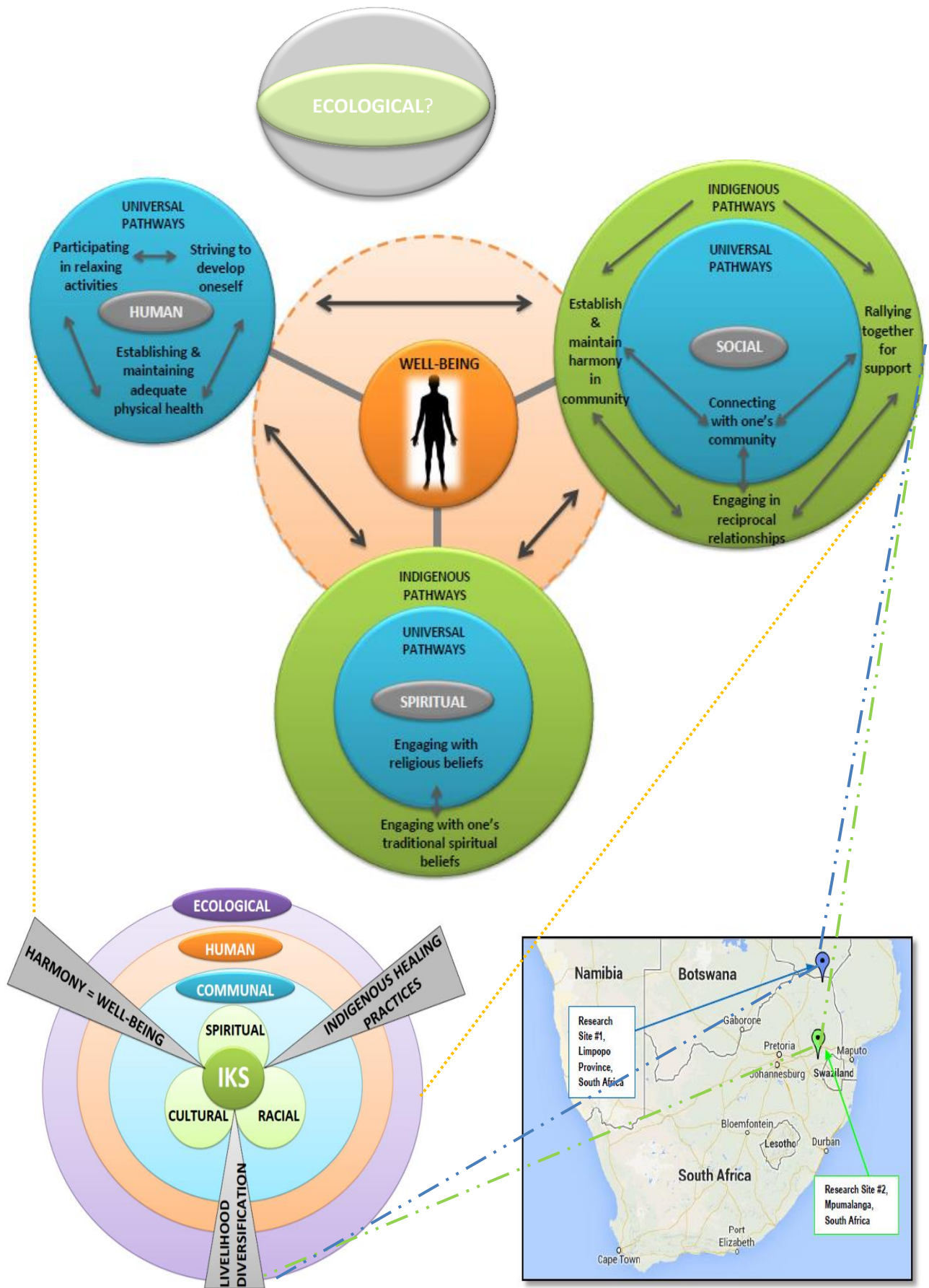


Figure 6.5: Indigenous Pathways to Well-Being through People, Spirituality and Objective Health

I opted to illustrate the interconnected aspects of well-being found in this study by plotting three systems (which signify pathways to well-being for sampled South African populations) around an individual. These three systems are the human, communal and spiritual systems; these represent human, communal and spiritual pathways to well-being identified by the study. Each of these systems is fundamentally important and connected to the individual.

The proximity between the different systems and the individual indicates the significance of a particular system for well-being. As in the case of existing non-Western knowledge on well-being, communal and spiritual pathways to well-being appear to be more significant given the non-Western notions of connectedness and interdependence which have already been discussed (Constantine *et al.*, 2004; Ingersoll-Dayton *et al.*, 2004; Pflug, 2009). Human pathways, while important, are located slightly further away from the individual because in this study, participants put the well-being of their community before their own well-being. The grey circle that appears on the periphery of the diagram represents ecological pathways to well-being and the findings of this study were silent on this matter.

Each system comprises a small inner circle which denotes 'universal' pathways to well-being for that system. The larger outer circle represents distinctive non-Western pathways to well-being for that system. Universal and indigenous pathways to well-being within each system are thought to interact with each other, as well as with pathways in other systems. Together, interacting universal and indigenous pathways to well-being within each system may be used to predict or anticipate pathways to well-being that comparable populations may follow.

"Connecting with One's Community" represents the only universal social pathway to well-being identified by sampled South African populations. This pathway links directly with the category "Social Connectedness". "Establishing and Maintaining Harmony in the Community" and "Rallying Together for Support" link directly with the category "Social Engagement". "Engaging in Reciprocal Relationships" links with the category "Social Reciprocity". Together, these three pathways comprise the indigenous pathways to well-being which certain South African populations may navigate and negotiate towards.

"Engaging with One's Christian Beliefs" was the one universal spiritual pathway to well-being identified while "Engaging with One's Traditional Spiritual Beliefs" was the one non-Western spiritual pathway to well-being identified. These two spiritual pathways to well-being are thought to be equally important and work together to the degree that an individual may experience spiritual connectedness and well-being.

No distinctive non-Western pathways to well-being were identified in the 'human' sphere, indicating that while human pathways to well-being are important, they may not be integral to the well-being of non-Western communities. 'Participating in Relaxing Activities' is directly linked to the category "Participating in Relaxing Activities" and "Striving to Develop Oneself" is directly linked with the category "Human

Capital Development”. “Establishing and Maintaining Adequate Physical Health” is linked to the subtheme “Maintaining Health”.

To summarise: insights into comparisons of indigenous pathways to well-being have been gained from studies in two South African communities confronted with rural and resource-constrained adversity. These insights may add to the body of indigenous psychology knowledge on resilience through engagement with, recognition and exploration of prevalent non-Western pathways to well-being (indigenous healing practices, livelihood diversification, social engagement, flocking and social harmony). The recognition of pathways to well-being that appear regardless of worldview (physical or objective health, the enjoyment of simple pleasures, self-development, spirituality and social connectedness) may add further to that body of indigenous psychology knowledge on resilience by highlighting the high degree of similarity (in terms of well-being) which exists between people living in Western and non-Western, indigenous contexts.

6.3 SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, I make suggestions for future research and for practice and for future training of health professionals.

6.3.1 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this study suggest that future research may include the following:

- This study could be replicated by extending the sample to include:
 - Individuals with permanent, temporary, full and/or part-time employment;
 - Individuals living in urban and peri-urban South African settings;
 - Individuals with an individualistic worldview;
 - Individuals from different age cohorts;
 - Other rural regions in South Africa;
 - Studying how children and adolescents (below the age of 21 years) experience and perceive well-being.
- An in-depth inquiry into conceptualisations of well-being in high risk and high need South African communities.
- Secondary analysis of the data to form a conceptualisation of ‘indigenous well-being’ in South Africa.
- Exploration of the concept of positive adaptation with non-Western South African communities characterised by chronic and cumulative adversity.
- An in-depth investigation into the nature of and pathways to well-being in South African communities characterised primarily by an individualistic worldview.

- In-depth studies of the assumption of interconnected and interdependent nature to well-being identified in this study: in other words, human, communal and spiritual pathways to well-being.
- Exploration of the environment or an individual's socio-ecological system as possible pathway to well-being.
- Exploration of AmaSwati and VhaVhenda conceptualisations of resilience and well-being.
- Analysis of indigenous well-being data through a lens of:
 - Poverty
 - Rurality
- Further research in terms of the relationship between the socio-political context of South Africa and the nature of well-being.
- An investigation of the concept of flourishing as part of non-Western pathways to resilience.

6.3.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FUTURE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The concepts of social harmony and social engagement could be used to assess an individual's level of integration with society. Additionally, levels of social harmony and social engagement could be used to assess the degree to which an individual's happiness is related to acknowledgement of and adherence to certain social expectations.

The concepts of flocking and livelihood diversification could be used to assess individuals' awareness of viable social support networks and resources in the community. Additionally, exploration of these concepts could help to inform related intervention strategies which aim to enable individuals to mobilise support resources in their community. Acknowledging, understanding and exploring indigenous healing practices which individuals rely on during periods of illness may also be used in the assessment of well-being in South African populations. For example, it may be necessary to ask participants whether they consult with traditional healers or engage in traditional healing rituals in an attempt to improve or maintain their health. Indigenous healing practices may form an integral part of therapeutic interventions if clients believe in their importance and efficacy.

I recommend that the broad constructs of communal, human and spiritual pathways to well-being, regarded as interconnected, interdependent concepts, be included in the training of healthcare professionals in a variety of fields. Training could include exploration by student psychologists (for example) of the facets of human (development, competence, health and happiness), communal (social reciprocity and engagement) and spiritual (Christianity and ancestral beliefs) pathways to well-being which this study identified. From an indigenous psychology perspective, it may be important for student psychologists to learn how to identify important interconnections between these three pathways to well-being. This may result in a good and in-depth understanding of why for example, individuals engage in

certain interactions, relationships and behaviours. This understanding may help student psychologists to make meaningful recommendations for well-being interventions.

Explorations of human, communal and spiritual pathways to well-being could include spending time with members of various communities, learning about the aspects of communal, human and spiritual well-being that are important to them. Working with individuals from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds in an assessment and therapeutic context, where one objective is to understand and enhance well-being, could provide valuable practical experience for people wishing to work in a variety of different fields (for example, nursing, social work, community psychology, educational psychology and counselling). Through an indigenous psychology lens, health professionals may benefit by spending time reflecting on which aspects of their observations are universal to well-being and which aspects are specifically non-Western. An ability to distinguish these may be helpful in explaining an individual's experiences to others. Some behaviours and beliefs will appear to be founded on common sense as far as the general population is concerned; however an ability to explain certain unique non-Western pathways to well-being, which a certain individual values, may empower family, friends and colleagues to support that individual.

Health professionals could also benefit by learning more about how their own, and others' cultural values and heritage affects the way in which they understand, approach and work with their clients. While worldview was not a dominant factor affecting the nature of well-being in this study, the distinct cultural elements which were identified (for example, identification with and acknowledgement of one's cultural heritage), show that healthcare professionals should invest time in learning about the unique cultural and ethnic groups with whom they are likely to work in the future. In this light, health professionals should be encouraged to examine their own cultural beliefs and biases with regard to what may or may not constitute a happy individual.

Finally, health professionals should take care not to make assumptions about what makes clients happy based on their own geographical location, age, gender or assumed worldview. As this study has shown, there appear to be more *similarities* than differences concerning the things that make people happy. Knowing the difference between what is *likely* to make people happy and what actually *does* make people happy starts with a few simple, yet important questions. Employing strong interviewing skills and posing questions and activities to people in a way which makes sense to them may make the difference between the superficial information which one is likely to obtain whenever practitioners approach their clients with pre-conceived ideas of how they experience well-being, and the rich, detailed information which people are likely to offer when they feel as if somebody is really listening.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Audio Recordings of PRA Activities

Appendix B:

Verbatim Transcriptions of Audio Recordings in English

Appendix C:

Verbatim Home Language Transcriptions Translated into English

Appendix D:

PRA Visual Data

Appendix E:

Field Notes of Research Process

Appendix F:

Data Analysis Code Book

Appendix G:

Planning Schedule for Research Site Visits

Appendix H:

Template for English and Home Language Transcriptions

Appendix I:

Cross-Case Data Analysis Process

Appendix J:

Thematic Data Analysis Process

Appendix K:

Member Checking Process

Appendix L:

Visual Data Analysis Process

Appendix M:

Research Journal

Appendix N:

Audit Trail of Research Process