EXPLORING THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE FROM AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE

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SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Arts in Social Work (MENTAL HEALTH)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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December 2010

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ii) ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

stories about your families, with me. Without your availability, this document would not have been produced.

Thank you! Ngiyabonga!

iii) DECLARATION

I hereby declare that 'EXPLORING THE FAMILY LIFE CYCE FROM THE AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE' is my work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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December 2010

iv) SUMMARY

How African individuals perceive the family life cycle, is the topic of this research.

This qualitative study was facilitated with two individuals. Constructivism was used to explore how individuals create their reality. The Person-Centred Approach was studied to understand the importance of the Self-concept in the individual, and the role played by perceptions created in an ever-changing environment. Systems theory helped understand the interaction of family members as a system (family), especially the creation of stability after a state of disequilibrium – in this case, transitions between stages of the life cycle. Only with one respondent were some differences identified compared to the Western view of the life cycle. It was thus concluded that the family life cycle can be used as a guideline during therapy, regarding difficult transitions people (including African people) have to make, for therapists working from both the Person-Centred Approach and the systems perspective.

Key Terms:

Families/individuals, constructivism, experiences, family life cycle, African perspectives, family/individual as system, family therapy, Person centred approach, environment, self-concept.

CHAPTER 1
THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A family has been defined by Elliot (1986:4) as

"a group based on marriage and biological parenthood as sharing a common residence and as united by ties of affection, obligation of care and support and a sense of common identity."

This unit undergoes some developmental stages in life, which are both biological and psychological. Erickson and Erickson (1982) present the complete major stages in psychological development of individuals. Bloom (1984), on the other hand, shows the family development from the social and physical environment. Kuper (1986:52) has mentioned that;

"*in every society, age is a social, not an absolute, concept, measured by artificial standards correlated more or less directly with major physiological changes of infancy, pre-puberty, adolescence, maturity and the menopause."*

Marriage, according to Hammond-Tooke (1993:117) "is the institution around which the whole society structure is locked." He continues to mention that "stability in these marriages is not related to the amount of bride wealth given, but rather the way marriage was locked into total structure". Hence, exploring the experiences and perceptions of the

individuals in families, will reveal how the individual experiences the family life cycle.

Carter and McGoldrick (1989:4) highlight that "family stress is often greatest at transition points from one stage to another of the family development process" – which sparked the reason for exploring family life cycle stages as experienced by African communities.

The following reasons compelled the researcher to investigate and explore the family life cycle from the African communities' perspectives – i.e. how the family/individual construct, perceive and experience these stages. Seeing that there was little information on this topic, that the family life cycle as outlined by Carter & McGoldrick (1989), the study was aimed at improving the social work service delivery and the effectiveness of its interventions with families. The theoretical and practical significance of the study has the following bearings:

- A growing number of African communities are utilising and accessing social work services for both individual and family counselling and therapy – more especially, through the employment assistance programme (EAP) or/and staff assistance on life-threatening illnesses (SALTI) provided by World Vision International – a non-governmental organisation for its employees and many other companies, i.e. banking institutions, policy companies, South African Airlines, government sectors, etc.

- The change in experiences and complexities that families have to deal with as they go through this family life cycle.

- The growing urbanisation of South Africa, to the extent that the interaction among its societies in the sharing of professional knowledge thus far, requires all social workers from every community to be more equipped and able to understand other communities' perspectives in this regard.

This indicates that the lack of literature on family life cycles in other communities could compromise the effectiveness of intervention processes, because the family life cycle from the African perspective has not been explored in depth. Carter and McGoldrick (1989) show that families could experience this family life cycle uniquely; however, most studies on the family cycle are on Western society, yet theories on families inform social work intervention. It is for this reason that exploration of how other ethnic groups, in Soweto, particularly, has constructed this cycle, and how these families perceive and experience the cycle, would be critical. The researcher used Carter and McGoldrick (1989) six stages of the family life cycle as a reference for the study.

1. 2 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The family is the primary context of human development, and the immediate environment that shapes the Self-concept of the person (Grobler, Schenck& Du Toit, 2003; Meyer, Moore &Viljoen, 1990). Tooke-Hammond (1993:128) mentions that the procreation of children is so important in families for their survival that "children were much desired, and no marriage was considered complete without them". The holistic development of the individual (physical, spiritual, emotional and social) is nurtured within a family.

West (1976:14) also highlight that kinships are very important in ordering day-to-day affairs. These authors also indicate that "premarital sexual activity with Xhosa-speaking people, began at an early age when young boys and girls attended parties together in the district" (West, 1976:14). They continue to mention that in their late twenties the subject of marriage became a serious matter, and suitable partners were sought. The Tswana-speaking people, on the other hand, according to West (1976:121) were encouraged marriage between first cousins. However, according to Joyce (2009:47) mentions that "strict customary laws govern the choice of spouse and marriage". The authors continues to mention that the wife had, of course, to honour and remain respectful of her husband, but was free to move back to her father's homestead if she was mistreated. Another aspect highlighted by the authors is that the Xhosa clan is full of magic, omens and taboos which outsiders cannot hope to comprehend(Joyce 2009:47). What Tyrrell & Jurgens (1983:161) had mentioned about marriage, under life and the home, is that "traditionally, the new bride leaves home to live with her husband's family, however, which has changed with contemporary families". The wife, according to the author, is always a minor, and in most issues the husband considers her his responsibility (Tyrrell & Jurgens, 1983:162).However, how families in the townships, where there is a mixed marriage, would experience families, is what the researcher wanted to explore.

The social work casework (working with family) module presented by Unisa, highlights the understanding of the individuals and families, but it also indicates that there is little theory on how an African family experience

their family's life cycle. In this study, specific attention was given to exploring *how an African family constructs, perceives and experiences the life cycle*. The following areas, which may have bearing on this study, were identified:

- Firstly, it is necessary to go through the **six stages of the family life cycle** discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), as a point of reference for this study. The research was based on the life cycle of two African individuals, in spite of the fact that there are several developmental stages that have been studied by other authors (Meyer et al., 1990; Erickson& Erickson, 1982; Santrock, 1996; and Bloom, 1984). The researcher believes that this cycle will be identified in all ethnic groups. The differences might be in the age groups of individuals. Other differences might be their perceptions of the different stages of the life cycle and the ways in which they deal with their experiences.

- Secondly, the question then raised is the ***philosophy*** from which these perceptions have been derived –how the family/individual understands their realities and how they come to have this understanding. The researcher intended to understand the African individuals, based on the constructivist philosophy which indicates that families/individuals construct the stages of the life cycle and that this is the manner in which this cycle is perceived by the individual or family. Furthermore, the construction of this life cycle needs to be understood by the social work profession, for better intervention.

- Thirdly, to gain information on the family life cycle of the individuals, the **_Person-Centred Approach and systems theories_** were explored. The former shows how individuals perceive their experiential world through the construction of Self-structure and the reorganisation of the Self as they deal with their realities. The latter describe how systems (and a family as a system) are formed, how the members interact with each other, and how, in the process, their values are built, and/or differences are experienced.

By exploring and identifying the aforementioned focus areas, the researcher assumes that more theory will be generated on the life cycle as lived by African families, thus adding value in service delivery. This will also enhance the level of professionalism in, and the effectiveness of, social work.

1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Bloom (1984:48) indicates that "a family is the functional unit that is universal and historical, but these units take many forms in specific cultures and times". Hence, studying families and individuals forms a major module of a social work programme. Schenck (2002:31) states that the aim of family therapy is to help the family to rearrange, reorganise and symbolise their perceptions and experiences, for healthy progress.

If working with families is important in the casework method of social work, it is critical to have African perspectives on the family life cycle.

However, Schenck (2002:31) indicates that the family life cycle described and used in the study guide for students, is based on typical Western families, due to a lack of literature on the family life cycle of other cultures. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to enhance social work knowledge in this multicultural South African society. Studies of other ethnic groups in this field are relevant in South Africa. This study means to help social work professionals to become aware of how other cultures perceive and construct their family life cycle.

The researcher decided to focus on two ethnic groups – the Tswana-speaking woman married to Xhosa man, and a Xhosa-speaking young adult, who were sampled from Orlando East, one of the townships of Soweto.

1.4 THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

The study was done in order to fill the gap in the existing family life cycle knowledge used in social work practice. Having decided to explore how an African family life cycle is constructed experienced and perceived; the following questions arose:

- The ethnic groups to be studied?

- And families/individuals to be interviewed?

For this qualitative research, where case studies were adopted, the researcher limited the study to two ethnic groups – i.e. the Xhosa-speaking family (respondent A is a Tswana speaker, married to a Xhosa

man).However, though the respondent speaks Xhosa, she originated from Rustenburg (a Tswana-speaking community) and the second respondent is a Xhosa speaking who grew up in Orlando. These two families/individuals were sampled from the township known as Orlando East, one of the oldest townships of Soweto.

1.5 THE METHODS OF STUDY

This was a qualitative study, and the researcher embarked on an exploratory method to determine how these African individuals have experienced the six family life stages. This research is a case study of three-generational families of the one selected ethnic group. This case study was compared with the Carter and McGoldrick cycle (1989), and learnt from the two individuals'/families' experiences in Orlando East.

The six stages of the family life cycle, i.e. *singlehood, couple, parenting, transformed by adolescent, middle life and later life stages,* were explored*.*

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

According to Vithal & Jansen (in De Villiers, 2004:17) "acknowledging limitations empowers the reader to appreciate what constraints were imposed on the study". For this study the researcher identified the following limitations:

- Ethical problems, especially on the selection of the strategy –i.e. case study, as they would be talking about their personal experiences, which might hamper their privacy. This did happen, hence the researcher

ensured that informed consent of participants was received prior to the study, to ensure confidentiality of the data and to minimise artificial data from the family (copy is attached).

- The lack of generalisation of the study to the entire population of a cultural group has been apparent, because only two families were interviewed.

- Validity of the results formed another limitation, as the families' behaviour was modified by the presence of the researcher.

1.7 CONCEPTS RELATED TO THE STUDY

To avoid some ambiguity, and to enhance the quality of the design, some concepts and them as used in this research are conceptually defined below –i.e. to provide more concrete understanding on the data collected. On the criteria for judging the quality of the design, Yin (1989:40) defines construct validity as" establishing correct operational analyses for the concepts being studied" – which is done below:

Africans: The *Concise Oxford dictionary* (1999:19) defines Africans as "a person from Africa, especially a black person".

"African" in this study refers to black communities that come from the Xhosa and Tswana groups. The family/individual A and family/individual B come from the Xhosa who reside in a township of Soweto, known as Orlando East. *of Contemporary English* (1995:333), a construct is *"*an idea formed by combining several pieces of information or knowledge".

"Construct", according to this study, means the formation of the abstract information of the mind.

Culture: The *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995:382)defines culture as "the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society".

For this study, culture means the way of life for that particular society – in this case, Xhosa people of Orlando East, Soweto.

Experience: The Concise *Oxford dictionary* (1999;406sv "experience") defines experience as "practical contact with and observation of facts or events" De Villiers (2004) defines experience as "events or activities that have happened that influence thinking and behaviour, to be aware of particular emotions or physical feelings". Boyd (in De Villiers, 2004:23) says experiences are "living through a situation, event or circumstance in time, which can be known reflectively and can be recalled".

In this study, "experience" refers to everything that the person has lived through in life, what has happened to him/her, and all the events or activities that a person has lived and can still recall.

Life cycle:"all the different levels of development that an animal or plant goes through during its life" (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 1995:932).

According to this study, the life cycle refers to six stages that each family/individual goes through, that are discussed by Carter and

McGoldrick (1989), starting from *singlehood, couple, parent, transformed by adolescent, mid-age t*o *late age stages.*

Perception: This is referred to as "the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses" (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1999:864). Zimmerman (in De Villiers, 2004) defines perception as "the quality, state or capacity of being affected by something external. It is a belief or an image you have as a result of how you see or understand the events'

In this study, perception refers to the mental interpretation of one's experiences, as well as one's creation of meanings.

Propositions: According to the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995:1315) proposition is "a statement that considered opinion or judgement"

Family: This is "a group of people who are closely related by birth, marriage or adoption", according to Rooney (in De Villiers, 2004).Schriver (in Schenck, 2002:29) identifies two main groups of families:

- *"[t]he family of origin.* This means a family of blood ties, vertical and horizontal, living and dead, geographically close or distant, known or unknown, but always psychologically relevant"

- *"[t]he family of intimate environment.* This family is seen as the group of people within which people have chosen to live".

According to Elliot (1986:4),*[t]his unit is widely thought of as a group based on marriage and biological parenthood, as sharing common residence and as united by ties of affection, obligations of care and support and sense of a common identity".*

In this study, the "family" means mother, father, children and extended members (grandparents, cousins, uncles, aunts, etc.) living and dead, geographically close or distant, and united by ties of relationships developed.

Self-Concept: According to Rogers (in Grobler et al., 2003:9), it means

"a portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the 'Self', an organised, fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationship of the 'I' or the 'me' ".

Meyer et al. (1990:379) state that "the Self refers to the person's view of him/herself, sometime used as core personality". Rogers (in Meyer et al., 1990:379) continues to say:

"[t]he SELF concept is the relationships of the "I" and "me" to others and to various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions. It is a gestalt available to awareness though not necessarily in awareness".

In this study, Self will mean the individual or /and the family as a unit and the understanding of themselves.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW OFPHILOSOPHY OF CONSTRUCTIVISM, PERSON-CENTRED AND SYSTEMS THEORIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE DISCUSSION

This chapter embarks on describing the background, knowledge and clarity on the problem under study. The better understanding of different theories on how reality is constructed will be of help at exploring how the life cycle is constructed from the African perspective.

Perspectives of constructivism (Fisher (1991), Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson (1967), Watzlawick (1984) and Bateson (1979) are examined, to understand how people or families construct their reality. The theory of Self-concept gives an understanding on perceptions and experiences (Grobler et al., 2003;Meyer, et al., 1990). The literature was explored to understand how perceptions are formed, how these perceptions are symbolised as reality, and how reality is experienced by the individual. Systems theory, as discussed by Keeney (1983), Bateson (1979), Minuchin (1974) and Jones (1993), also explores the relationship patterns formed by families, and how the individual gives meanings to his or her experiences. All these theories and various research findings are discussed in this chapter.

The discussion of the family life cycle, by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), is used to integrate these theories. A conclusion is drawn at the end of each discussion to introduce the next chapter.

2.2 CONSTRUCTIVISM EPISTEMOLOGY

2.2.1 Introduction

Constructivism, according to Fisher (1991), is a way of thinking about people, events and problems, which Bateson (1979) has termed as an epistemology (knowing about knowing). Watzlawick (1984a:24)states that "it is the way of identifying with other people's experiences, behaviour and choices they make, maintaining them as valid even when they are different from our own". How we get to know about things around us depends on our construction of these events. In addition, every individual or family constructs their own realities, and, most importantly, these constructions are context based(Watzlawick, 1984b). This further means that constructions result from mutual exchange of information through interaction with our environment. New information is construed in the process. It means that what had been real in the last century, might have changed now. Therefore, construction of reality is an ongoing process (Watzlawick, 1984a:16). As a result, Carter and McGoldrick (1989) present the family life cycle as an approximation, which cannot be absolute, and is context based – and that is the authors' construction.

Some of the principles and assumptions that govern the epistemology of constructivism are discussed below.

2.2.2 Principles that govern the epistemology

Fisher (1991) and Watzlawick (1984) discuss certain principles or assumptions on constructivism, to get a better understanding of how knowledge is generated by individuals or families.

(a) The construction of the truth

The *Truth,* according to the constructivism, is regarded as relative to the observing system, rather than being absolute. There is no objective truth (Bateson, 1979:27; Fisher, 1991:17). The truth about events or experiences is subjective to each individual or family. The truth, according to constructivism, is generated in interaction with the context. The truth is relevant to the observing system. This means that each individual would make their own truth of the family life cycle.

The truth is understood from the basis of that individual or family as they interact with their environment. Truthfulness depends upon consensus among like-minded observers (Watzlawick, 1984:17a). Hence, Fisher (1991) concurs that what the community has said or experienced about the truth, stands. Bateson (1979:29) states that events are unpredictable, or cannot be taken as absolute, because life issues are dynamic. Therefore, people construct their world by creating meanings through interaction with their environment. However, these meanings can change as one's perception and interaction changes.

(b) Construction of reality

What is reality, then? According to constructivism, a human relationship is not mechanical, that it can be understood scientifically; rather, it is dynamic, complex and coherent. *Reality* is also a result of (people's) construction through interaction as they understand what is real. Reality, according to constructivism, is the on-going unfolding of one's knowing. This means that everything one knows is filtered through one's own senses. Reality is constructed according to one's frame of reference. "We do not discover reality; we construct it through social discourse, through language" (Real, 1990:257).This is because people are active agents in constructing their reality, and hence, share some level of responsibility for their actions.

During interaction, individuals share and understand a glimpse of their realities. Then, the brain will make an image of that experience and form categories of these images on the basis of the fact that it is new or we already know about it (Grobler, 2009:2). We then make sense from what is communicated, and construct its meaning from our own frame of reference. Bateson (1979:30) states in one of his presuppositions that "the map is not a territory and the name is not the thing named", because meanings are men's perception and the meanings are their own reality. Grobler (2009:3) concurs that "all we know, are the images or ideas or perception we create during our interaction with the environment".

(c) Construction of knowledge

How do people get to know things, then?–"How to evolve", as Bateson (1979:4) puts it. ***Knowledge*** is created through experiences, and is an on-going interaction of individuals. When people interact and are engaged with one another and/or with their environment, knowledge is generated in the process. This is an on-going process of constructing.

During this recursive interaction, moment-by-moment, people tend to accommodate each other, and when differences evolve, their uniqueness is emphasised in the process. They adjust to each other's opinion, however, with vast levels of assumptions being created in the process – which, when challenged, can result in human interactional breakdowns (Fisher, 1991:19). The shifting or adjusting through re-construction, to accommodate each other, results in relationships becoming more complex.

(d) Construction of meaning

This epistemology here says people construct and reconstruct realities in interaction with their environment, and culture is created in the process. Thus, **meanings** are given to the events and experiences in people's lives. The active interaction of persons in their environment serves to generate meanings; even the way people decide to punctuate their thinking or images made in their minds, can create different meanings.

(e) Constructions that 'FIT'

The epistemology is justified by the principle that in the process of constructing their reality and truth, people tend to maintain and continuously perform those actions that fit with their environment as they perceive it. The tendency, though, is that individuals tend to repeat such actions in a given context as they find them fitting with their meanings and belief systems formed about them. As a result, people can know and can take responsibility for their actions, and at the same time keep an open mind for any changes. Fisher (1991:38) interprets the principle that people should rather "have an on-going hypothesis that is open to disconfirmation", when they are experiencing any knowledge and reality that is different from their own. A flexible stance should be maintained.

There is no right or wrong construction. Right and wrong are replaced by the concept or notion of "that which is useful" for the constructor at that point in time. Something which is useful today may not be so tomorrow. Usefulness is determined by each individual and/or family.

As an active participant, man can construct his own epistemology, which is taken further by the theory of Self-concept that follows below.

2.3 PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

2.3.1 Introduction

Human beings, according to the constructivist perspective, assume responsibility for their thinking, knowledge and for everything they do.

This epistemology states that people create the meaning of their world, and that reality can be reconstructed if it does not fit or is not useful. The epistemology has shown that people construct their reality and give meaning to events while in continuous interaction with their environment and others, reciprocally(Fisher, 1991). How these events are perceived and experienced is another subject that is discussed by the humanistic-phenomenological school of thought founded by Carl Rogers. This theory aims at explaining the relationship between the Self -concept, perception, environment and the experiences.

2.3.2 The theory as contained in 19 propositions

(a) About the author

Carl Rogers is the originator of the humanistic-phenomenological theory. His own life experiences have influenced his thinking. His childhood upbringing in a narrow-minded, conservative home, had hampered his development in the area of human relationships, thus "his theory, therefore, possibly as a consequence of his own deprivation, argues for 'wholeness' and the development of all potential." (Meyer et al., 1990:375).

(b) The structural elements

This theory is founded on 19 tentatively formulated propositions which are fundamental to this theory and the discussion below:

Propositions underlying Rogers's theory(Grobler et al., 2003:5-6).

1. *Human experiences at a conscious and unconscious level*

2. *Human perceptions*

3. *Wholeness/unity*

4. *Self determination*

5. *Needs and behaviour*

6. *Emotions*

7. *Frames of reference*

8. *The self*

9. *How our perception of our significant other influences the development of the self*

10. *Values, own and adopted from other people*

11. *Conscious experiences (which fit with the self) and unconscious experiences (which do not fit with the self)*

12. *Self and behaviour*

13. *Behaviour and unconscious experiences*

14. *Psychological tension*

15. *Reconstruction of self*

16. *Defence of self*

17. *Conditions for facilitation*

18. *Acceptance of self and others*

19. *Developing your value system*

According to the humanistic perspective, the organism (individual/family) has the need to maintain balance between three structural elements, i.e. *Self- concept*, *physical and psychological* functioning and *environment* (Meyer et al., 1990).

The Self-concept, according to the theory, is the picture the individual/family has about themselves or the family. ***Proposition 8*** defines Self-concept as;

"the portion of the total perceptual field that gradually becomes differentiated as the Self"(Grobler et al., 2003:9).*It is as organised fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perception of characteristic and relationship of 'I' or 'me' together with values attached to these concepts.*(Meyer et al., 1990:377).

This is how the family or/and the person would perceive themselves. This is actually the crux or cornerstone of this theory. The individual and a family would strive to maintain this element by filtering all the experiences that the person goes through, if they should be accepted or ignored (if the experiences are not threatening to the Self-structure); otherwise, they can be either denied or distorted if perceived as a threat to the Self-

structure(Proposition 11a,b,c and d). Hence, the aim of Roger's theory assumes that people and families, if they symbolise most of these experiences into their conscious level and restructure their Self-concept, tend to be more accommodative of others and themselves.

The second structural element is the organism, which Meyer et al. (1990) has defined as "[t]he total individual with all his physical and psychological functions, is the central figure, who interacts constantly with the dynamically changing world in which the person lives" (Meyer et al., 1990:377).***Proposition 1*** states:*"Every individual exists in a continually changing world of experiences which he is the centre."*(Grobler et al., 2003:44).

Though the definition of the family can change over time, the organism relies on their subjective perception of this definition, which is always real to them, and so are the life cycle stages they go through. It is always difficult to generalise about the individual's experiences. It is only the family/individual who can give an outsider a glimpse of what is going on inside their private world. Hence, the Person-centred approach therapy cannot be effective where the facilitator is prejudiced or biased. Furthermore**, *Proposition 2* states:**

"The organism reacts to the field of experiences as experienced and perceived and this perceptual field is the individual's reality."(Grobler et al., 2003:49).

This means that life experiences are the individual's own perceptions. How they see their world, and give interpretation of their encounters, are unique to that person. This means that our perceptions are our realities.

The third structural element is the environment. The phenomenal field, according to Meyer et al. (1990:377), is "the totality of all the individual's experiences, and includes both their perception of external objects and events, and also people they interact with". Hence, **Proposition 9** states:

"Because of interaction with the environment and particularly because of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of the Self is formed." (Grobler et al., 2003:13).

The response to the experiential world is that of the person/family as an organised whole –that is, with their perceptions, emotions, values, ideas, feelings, behaviour, needs, physical attributes, and the person in totality as a unique being. Hence, Grobler et al. (2003) emphasise that facilitators should be open to all dimensions of human nature, and not only focus on one aspect of the person. Hence, Egan (1990) highlights the importance of attentiveness during counselling– to be able to understand the client in totality.

(c) The development and protection of the Self

How the Self is developed and protected, is the question to be answered here. The formation of the Self-concept is explained in **Proposition 9**, which states that:

"Because of interaction with the environment and particularly because of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of the Self is formed."(Grobler et al., 2003:13).

As no one lives in isolation, this interaction includes the immediate environment, from the 'significant others' of the family to the social system, which includes the school, church and work. Thus, the Self is formed in interaction with our environment. Through our perceptions of the interaction with both the environment and, particularly, with other people, the Self-concept is formed.

This school of thought comes from the understanding that the environment plays both the facilitating and inhabiting role in the process of this development of the Self-concept. Those people that mean a lot to the individual make a mark in their lives.

 However, another fundamental aspect about this theory is that every person has one goal, i.e. the tendency to actualise all their potential – **Proposition 4**. This Self-determination which Fisher (1991) also recognises, is the practical recognition of the right and need of clients to freedom in making their own choices and decisions. The proposition states that:

"The organism has one basic tendency and striving –to actualize, maintain and enhance the experiencing organism the individual/family would strive to be the 'best' that one thinks he or she is."(Grobler et al., 2003:17).

This tendency is noticeable in the organism from as early as the infancy stage; however, sometimes the 'outsider' might have a different opinion of what is 'best' because the tendency is a subjective experience. The family/individual will ensure that what they think is right is maintained and protected from any threatening experiences. Even others' point of view is interpreted otherwise. Hence, Meyer et al. (1990) see the individual person as the central figure in the actualisation of their potential and self. Therefore, the authors suggest that the organism should be understood from his or her frame of reference and as a whole. **P*roposition 7*** suggests to the facilitator that *"the best vantage point of understanding behaviour is from the internal frame of reference of the individual."*(Grobler et al., 2003:68).

The best way to understand the individual's behaviour is to understand it from the point of view of the person. This includes what the family life cycle stages mean, because that is how the individual/family would have experienced them (stages).

Furthermore, the Self-determination notion thus provides guidelines for growth and development of the individual. This development includes the need for both positive regard from others, i.e. love, respect, appreciation, approval and the need for self-regard – in other words, feel good about oneself. Therefore, behaviour is a goal-directed attempt of the person/family to satisfy its needs as experienced in the environment and as perceived and accompanied by emotions.

Proposition5 states:

"Any behaviourwhether itis good or bad is directed towards maintenance and enhancement of the organism's physical and psychological need."(Grobler et al., 2003:58).

Behaviour is essentially purposeful endeavours by the individual/family to satisfy their needs as experienced in their lives. What people do is based on their interpretation of their experiential world (Proposition 1). Rogers (1987) states that the behaviour is determined by the person's subjective perception of their world and the meanings they attach to it. In addition*,* **Proposition 6** states:

"An emotion accompanies and in general facilitates such goal-directed behaviour, the kind of emotions being related to the perceived significance of the behaviour for the maintenance and enhancement of the organism."(Grobler et al., 2003:61).

Emotions accompany and facilitate purposeful behaviour; thus, Grobler et al. (2003) state that behaviour goes hand in hand with emotions, in terms of Self-preservation and Self-enhancement. Hence, the better understanding of any action will be from the individual/family's point of view.

(d) Comprehension of and dealing with experiences

As stated earlier, the central tendency of the person/family is to maintain their Self-concept in the midst of their continually changing experiential world. Hence, a wide range of experiences are manifested to the person,

and all need to be addressed accordingly by the individual or family, and in relation to their Self-concept.

As Grobler et al. (2003) highlight, these experiences manifest at both conscious and unconscious mind level. ***Proposition 11***shows that the individual/family deals with the experiences in the following ways:

Experiences which are not threatening to self are either

"symbolised, perceived and organised into some relationship to the Self, or ignored, because there is no perceived relationship to the Self structure at that time."(Grobler et al., 2003:23).

Yet, experiences that operate in the unconscious mind are often threatening to the Self-structure of the person. They are.

"Denied symbolization in the Self-concept or distorted symbolisation because they are inconsistent with the Self-concept".(Grobler et al., 2003:31).

The two important aspects here are the process of symbolisation of these experiences to be accommodated into the Self-concept as well as the relationship to the Self-concept (Grobler et al., 2003).

Grobler et al. (2003:24) mention that "the human being deals with much of his experiences by means of symbols attached to it. These symbols enable him to manipulate elements of his experiences in relation to one another, to project him/her into new situations to make a many predictions about his phenomenal world".

As indicated above, when the person has symbolised a particular experience (*Proposition 11 (a)*, that means the experience fits with the concept of the Self-structure (*Propositions 8 and 9*), and some experiences are ignored because the person cannot find any relevance of them to the Self-structure. However, threatening experiences are not properly symbolised by the individual, because they do not fit with the Self, and that is also the reason that these experiences operate in the unconscious mind of the individual/family.

(d) Relationship between experiences, perception and behaviour

Meyer et al (1991) also elaborate on the role played by the Self-concept in perception and experiences and the basic motives that underlie all behaviour. Hence, *Proposition 12* states that:

"most of the ways of behaving which are adopted by the organism, are those which are consistent with the Self-concept."(Grobler et al., 2003:28).

This means that behaviour is not only directed at need satisfaction (Proposition 5) – it has to fit also with the individual Self-perception.

However, even those experiences that do not 'fit' with the Self-concept and have not been symbolised (**Propositions 11 (c)&(d)**) still elicit behaviour, and since such behaviour comes from the unconscious mind and the person will ensure that they protect the Self-structure by behaving in an incongruent manner ("*congruent is the ideal in which the individual is open to and conscious of all his experiences and can incorporate them*

into his Self-concept"(Meyer et al., 1990:381) – i.e. Self-protection behaviour. As a result, according to **Proposition 13,**

"[b]ehaviour may in some instances be brought about by organic experiences and needs, which have not been symbolised. Such behaviour may be inconsistent with the structure of the Self, but in such instances, the behaviour in not 'owned' by the individual."(Grobler et al., 2003:34).

The reason for such a kind of situation is that some of the experiences are too threatening to the Self-concept for the person/family to allow them access to the conscious mind. Meyer et al. (1990) further discuss the matter that individuals can be incongruent, i.e. the condition when the experiences that are contrary to the Self-concept form part of the phenomenal field – which is the reason for the individual to deny or distort such experiences to fit into the Self-concept.

Proposition 16 further states that

"any experience which is inconsistent with the organisation or structure of Self may be perceived as a threat, and more of these perceptions there are, the more rigidly the Self-structure is organised to maintain it Self."(Grobler et al., 2003:40).

Proposition 4 highlights that the individual/family has a basic tendency are to maintain the Self. Therefore, all experiences can be perceived as a threat to the individual, and the more those experiences are, the individual will strive more to protect the Self from these threats.

In addition, such a situation is accompanied by psychological tension. *Proposition 14*states that:

"*psychological maladjustment exists when the organism denies awareness of significant sensory and visceral experiences, which consequently are not symbolised and organised into the gestalt of the Self-structure.   When this situation exists, there is a basic or potential psychological tension.*"(Grobler et al., 2003:36).

Thus, the Self, during our experiences, gets threatened, and as a result, some of these experiences are never symbolised, or are denied or distorted by the person. This situation may/can result in a person having psychological tension, due to what they think they are and what they have experienced. The Self gets dented or challenged, and the person is not aware of where the tension comes from, because that experience has not been symbolised.

(e) The role played by the 'significant others'

The actualising tendency discussed earlier, i.e. the tendency which is acknowledged as being the overriding motive, can also be hampered by another need for positive regard' by significant others, as the Self-concept of the individual may have incorporated values from significant others (Proposition 10)*. Proposition 10* states that:

> "*the values attached to the experiences and the values which are part of the Self-structure in some instances are values experienced directly by the organism and in some instances*

are values introjected or taken over from others, but perceived in distorted fashion, as if they have been experienced directly". (Grobler et al., 2003:65).

 Values attached to experiences and forming part of the Self may have been shaped by the individual/family' s own experiences, but may also be taken over from others and assimilated into the Self as if they have been experienced personally. Those values are often distortedly symbolised by the individual, and they can also determine behaviour. Rogers (in Meyer et al., 1990:381-382) mentions that "the values taken from others and distortedly symbolised as one's own are called 'conditional acceptance' because the significant person has laid down a condition for the individual."

(f) Optimally developed person

 According to this theory, the optimally developed person or family is a psychologically adjusted person/family, who has allowed a wide variety of experiences within their Self-concept, having maintained a balance between the Self and their own experiences, and, having realised all their potential, the following is considered:

Grobler et al.(2002:31-32) state that "*one of the most characteristic and perhaps one of the most important changes in therapy is the bringing into awareness of experiences of which, heretofore, the client has not been conscious.*"

In a therapeutic context, therefore, certain conditions for the facilitation are paramount – understanding of the person from their frame of reference, and, most importantly, creating the environment of unconditional acceptance for the individual, thereby creating a threat-free environment. The social work code of conduct also states that the client has the right to dignity, respect and confidentiality, which also nurtures the environment for Self-disclosure for the client (SA Council ..., 1978).

Proposition 17states that

"under certain condition involving primarily complete absence of any threat to the Self-structure, experiences which are inconsistent with it may perceived and examined and the structure of Self revised to assimilate and include such experiences."(Grobler et al., 2003:72).

According to Meyer et al. (1990), the individual or family are in a better psychological standing when they have allowed a wider spectrum of experiences into the Self-concept, thus giving them a state to know themselves and be able to utilise all their capabilities.

Grobler et al. (2003:72) therefore highlight that "in certain circumstances, especially ones that pose no threat to the Self, experiences that conflict with the Self (*Proposition 11*) can be symbolised and explored".

These conditions, according to Rogers (1987), can yield positive results during interviews with the client. In the atmosphere where the person is accepted unconditionally, is not judged, and is able to symbolise experiences that had been conflicting with the Self, they will then gradually

accept unsymbolised experiences to the consciousness (Grobler et al., 2003).

"[t]he ideal Self is the Self-concept the individual would most like to have" *(Meyer et al., 1990:379).*The ideal Self provides guidelines for growth and development; however, that stage will or can only be reached when the individual is able to symbolise most of the experiences*. Grobler et al (2003:76) state that "the new structure is able to symbolize a wide range of experiences".*

Proposition 15 states:

"[p]sychological adjustment exists when the concept of the Self is such that all the sensory visceral experiences of the organism are, or may be assimilated on a symbolic level into a consistent relationship with the concept of self."(Grobler et al., 2003:75).

The person becomes well adjusted (stress lessened) when most of their experiences can be symbolised congruently with Self-perception.

The potential is that the optimally developed person will further accept him Self as he is, without seeking approval from others. He will start to trust his Self, rather than depending on existing codes, social norms and judgment of others – especially the significant others**.** ***Proposition 19*** has articulated that:

"as the individual perceives and accepts into his Self-structure more of his experiences, he finds that he is replacing his present value system-based so largely upon introjections which have been

distortedly-symbolised with a continuing organismic value process." (Grobler et al., 2003:81).

"Such individuals embark on a process of evaluation, continually testing and examining their values" state the authors (Grobler et al., 2003:81). Most importantly, this person will display greater understanding of others, too, and be able to accept them as separate unique individuals.

Proposition 18 maintains that:

 "when the individual perceives and accepts into one consistent and integrated system all his sensory and visceral experience, then he is necessarily more understanding of others and more accepting of others as separate individuals."(Grobler et al., 2003:79).

When the individual/family is able to symbolise most of their experiences and integrate them into total Self-concept, they will be able to say: "I know who I am (I am OK) and I allow others to be who they are (you are OK too)" (Grobler et al., 2003:79), even if others differ from them.

2.4 SYSTEMS APPROACH

2.4.1 Introduction

The above discussion has shown how experiences are being perceived, and how they, in turn, affect the individual/family Self and behaviour. The role of the 'significant others' is further discussed below, from the systemic approach. The systems approach has based its understanding on the family as a whole, with elements that are interrelated. The elements

always give each other feedback (Jones, 1993:6). This approach has formed its theory on the basis that people do not live in isolation (Minuchin, 1974:9). Minuchin continues to mentions that the "individual influences his context and is influenced by it in constantly recurring sequences of interaction".

The fundamental principles that govern this theory are discussed below.

2.4.2 Principles governing systems theory

(a) Wholeness

A system is perceived as "operating as a whole, as having parts that are related to its fellow parts, and a change in one part will cause a change in all of them and in the total system"(Watzlawick et al., 1967:123). According to Jones (1993:4), the wholeness means that there "is interrelation and independence in the behaviour of family members". This is interpreted as nonsummativity, which means that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

The wholeness of the system is further characterised by its parts giving and receiving feedback from each other and from the environment (Jones, 1993:4). The circularity of its communication or its interaction is reciprocally inseparable; as a result, the cause and effect cannot be distinguished in a system. Hence, the concept of equifinality means that results are not determined by initial conditions, but by the nature of the process of the system.

"The same consequences or end points may be reached from different starting points or triggers, since the organisation or process of the system is more significant than its initial condition or any identifiable 'cause'"(Jones, 1993:4). It further means that even though the system can get inputs from its members and environment, it decides on outputs.

(b) Binocular vision

The understanding of the family as a whole is elaborated by this principle, that understanding the family in its interaction (the pattern that connects it), "the sense of the whole system begins to emerge" (Keeney, 1983:37), which is termed as double description or binocular vision by this author. The understanding of the person or the family as a whole – that is, experiences, behaviour, feelings, values and their reciprocal interactions with each other and other systems, holistically, gives a broader version of the person and the family. It can also serve to create difference. Bateson (1979:70) highlights that "comparing data collected by one eye with the data collected by the other, improves resolution and gives more clarity, more information about depth", and, further, gives a higher level of understanding of that combined information.

(c) The map is not the territory

This principle states that in all thought or perception, or communication about perception, there is a transformation or coding between the report and the thing reported (Bateson, 1979:30). This means that when knowledge is constructed in the mind, the process of transformation and

classification takes places about the thing that is observed. For instance, a map is not the land it depicts, or the thing named, because there are meanings that are put to the thing beyond the name itself.

The perception given to the thing named is the individual's reality. People's description of their world is their own reality. Systems theory suggests that the understanding of people is only possible by understanding the maps or reality they have created.

(d) Second order cybernetics

This principle highlights the relatedness and connection of the observer to all that is observed. The relationship of the observer and the observed is of a reciprocal nature, and circular. Positions of the two (observer and observed) can be changed, and the initial order moves to the second logical typing. At the second order cybernetic, again, transformation becomes stable, and the system acquires another equilibrium or balance. This means that the observer cannot be separated from the observed –i.e. there is no objective reality or truth.

(e) Stability and change

The word "stable" implies that which is unchangeable, as Bateson (1979:62)states that "the stable object is unchanging under the impact or stress of some of the particular external or internal variables, or perhaps, that it resists the passage of time". However, the family/individual is the system with a self-corrective circuit, or is a self-maintenance in nature. The wholeness, with interrelatedness of its parts, of the family/individual

as a system, has to strive for stability when it goes through any change. Hence, second order cybernetics state that the nature of the system and its feedback mechanisms must be considered, as well as the nature of the input.

Stability and change are always present when two phenomena interact with each other. A system achieves stability in the process of change. The interaction can either be a bit of both symmetrical and complementary relationships. The symmetrical relationship is the interaction that has the same behaviour – i.e. what the right side does, will be done by the left side. This could be either a win/win or lose/lose situation. The complementary relationship, on the other hand, is the interaction where the right-side behaviour is not like the right side – the opposite behaviour is displayed. Difference is being introduced in the complementary relationship, which is necessary for change, and thus for enhanced stability in the system.

Stability and change are complementary aspects (dualism) that are essential for the maintenance of balance in the system. The system is capable of deciding on what stays and what needs to be changed, which means one (stability) cannot take place without the other (changes). Stability and change complement each other, though they may seem to be opposites. They form parts of a bigger, complementary whole.

Maturana (1975:316) elaborates on this principle (stability and change), that a living system is autonomous, with the feature of Self- reproduction – which he terms "autopoiesis". This system can be seen as an organisation

–that is, its identity (stable) consisting of a structure (changeable). Therefore, when change is introduced, it should only involve the structure, as change in the organisation would mean the disintegration of that system (its identity).

(f) Context

Furthermore, the system interacts with its environment (also described as its context). According to Watzlawick et al.(1967), observation of communication must include the **context** in which communication takes place. This context includes, but is not limited to, institutional external factors to communication. This principle is very important in understanding communication, as behavior needs to be understood within the environment in which it takes place (the context). The family communication behaviour would be understood differently from a different context – e.g. at home, in the bedroom, at the workplace, in the shopping mall, with friends, or when a person is alone.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE LINK OF THEORIES WITH

THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

3.1 INTRODUCTION ON THE LINKS OF THEORY AND CYCLE

Growth and development of a person and families is a universal happening, and inevitable. In the process, contraction (launching of children to independence or death) and expansion (welcoming new births, in-laws and grandchildren) occurs. This section aims at outlining the cycle the family goes through, with different experiences on transition. The stages of the family life cycle either add or subtract to the family unit, and, in turn, the family strives to maintain its harmony or balance in the process. The discussion expatiates on the tasks that are manifested and responsibilities expected during each stage, which often results in stressful experiences in the process for some families. Given that families/individuals are unique; these experiences might differ from one family/individual to the other. Hence, the researcher's interest was to explore how African individuals would experience and perceive their life cycle. This section first gives the definition of the family as a system. Change and stability are also explored, to find out how the family/system maintains their equilibrium. The six stages in the family life cycle discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) are explored in the light of the

three approaches discussed in the previous chapter. Lastly, the link between the theories and the life cycle is highlighted.

3.2 WHAT IS A FAMILY?

The definition of the family is expatiated in this section, to give a better understanding of these family life cycles. Several definitions are given to the 'unit' family. Elliot (1986:4) defines a family as;

''a unit consisting of the husband and wife and their children. This unit is based on marriage, biological parenthood, sharing a common residence and united by ties of affection, obligation of care, support and sense of common identity.

Schenck (2002:29), in her study guide, has presented two main groups of families:

i) *Family of blood has both vertical and horizontal living and dead, geographically close or distant, known or unknown, accessible or inaccessible, but always psychologically relevant.*

ii) *The family of intimate environment. This family is seen as the group of people within which people have chosen to live. In our context such a family group consists of two or more people who have made a commitment to share living space, have developed close emotional ties and share a variety of family roles and functions.*

Jones (1993:xviii) argues that the family constitute two parents through heterosexual marriage, with not too many or too few children. The mother

takes a role of a homemaker, while the man assumes a breadwinner's position. However, homosexual relations, adopted children not confined to marriage, or children not staying with parents, or extended or nuclear units, form other families; they also constitute a family.

Schriver (in Schenck, 2002:29) notes that "the traditional way of defining families 'excludes' more families than it 'includes". Elliot (1986:4), however, highlights the profound statement, with these variations on the definition of the family, that a "family is what a particular social group believes it to be, which is the result of mutual construction of knowledge and culture in the community".

Nevertheless, whatever the definition may be, all families move through time and go through some developmental stages and through the family life cycle. The researcher has explored this life cycle from an African perspective.

The actions and interactions within the family are what create complexities that are explored more in the life cycle. As shown by systems theorists, for instance, the interrelatedness and relationships of the family members is what the systems theory emphasises (Jones, 1993:3), while the structural perspective sees the family as the closed organisation with a certain structure which might require some alterations if it is deemed not functional (Minuchin, 1974:9). However, the movement and changes of the family over time, and the determination of its members or the unit to maintain its stability, sparked some interest in the researcher to explore how African individuals would perceive these experiences.

3.3 STABILITY AND CHANGE IN FAMILIES

According to the systems approach, the family can be defined as a system with interrelated parts or subsystems, and governed by certain kinds of relationships, which can be described as the pattern that connects these subsystems.   The family is further defined as a closed organisation which strives to maintain its autonomy, its identity or self. Keeney (1983:5) elaborates on this, in that the family strives to enhance or maintain its autonomy. (This can be linked to Rogers's **Proposition 4,** which states that "the organism has the basic tendency and striving to actualise, maintain and enhance the experiencing organism" (Grobler et al., 2003:17).   Every family ensures that its autonomy is maintained.   The maintenance of the family unit is very important – that is, for the preservation of the family identity.

Hence, this proposition can be best understood in conjunction with **Proposition 5,** that "behaviour is basically the goal-directed attempt of the organism to satisfy his or her needs as experienced in the field as perceived" (Grobler et al., 2003:58).

Furthermore, Roger's **Propositions 8 & 9** explore the formation and the definition of the SELF more, which is the process every family goes through.   The SELF of the family has been defined by Rogers's **Proposition 8** as "a portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the Self which is an organised, fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perception of characteristics and the relationship of the "I" and "ME"" (Grobler et al., 2003:9).

The Self of the family often has an impact on the behaviour of its members, and "every family imprints its members with Selfhood and sense of belonging" (Minuchin 1974:9). The constructivist defines **self** "as the system of qualitative constructs by which the individual/family knows what sort of person he or she is" (Fisher, 1991:180).

The Self is the stability of every family as a whole. However, when there is change in one member, it results in change to the whole family, because the parts and the relationship are inseparable. This is further discussed by Rogers's **Proposition 3** *that* "the organism reacts to its phenomenal field as a whole". In addition, the systems approach has termed this as nonsummativity, that a subsystem of the family alone is not a system, or that the elements of the system, added together, do not create the system (Watzlawick et al., 1967:125).The onus is on the family to change or maintain its stability. Hence, the system is said to be closed to information, as it will determine on its own what and how new information can be created and used. Stability of every family is its Self-maintenance.

According to the systems approach, families maintain their own identity through the feedback they receive from its members and from the environment. The family identity is its stability, and changes in the identity would result in the disintegration of the family or organisation. Rapid change is experienced by the family, or individual trauma or disorientation may result. However, change is important for the individual and family development and growth, as long as it can be handled by the individuals of

the family.   This is when the family structure changes to maintain the organisation.

However, the family goes through several developmental phases which are complex, and thus, according to Rogers's **Proposition 11**, the family, in its attempt to protect and maintain the Self, would either 'ignore' or 'symbolise' the experiences that operate in the conscious mind and are not threatening to the SELF structure

(**Proposition11 (a) or (b)**). However, some experiences of transition of the life cycle can be in operation on the unconscious level of the family experiential field, and such experiences can either be 'distorted' or 'denied' because they are incongruent with the Self of the family (**Proposition 11(c) or (d**). Hence, Maturana (1975) suggests that a family has to revisit the structure in such situations.

The observation made by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) is profound – namely, that family, as a system, is the only system whose relationships with its members are irreplaceable. This is a closed organisation whose autonomy has to always be maintained, less the organisation dies (Keeney, 1983). The structure has to be adjusted. Carter and McGoldrick (1989:7) state that "members are incorporated only by birth, adoption or marriage" and the authors further discuss that "these members can only leave the organisation through death, no matter how dysfunctional the member may be". This situation adds to complexities that are experienced by families and that might be stressful for them. In some cases, emotional

breakdown is experienced by families or (and) individuals when the family fails to adjust to such changes.

Carter and McGoldrick (1989) show that the family life cycle gives an understanding of each family's perception and experiences of the emotional ties from one generation to the next. The changes and complexities that each family has to deal with, as well as emotional, physical and relational stresses they go through during different transitions stages, are perceived differently by each individual. As to how the African individuals experience and perceive these stages, is what the researcher sought to explore.

3.4 THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

There are several aspects that are covered by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), which include predictable stages, changing patterns of the family life cycle, and the clinical perspective. For the purpose of this study, the different stages of the family life cycle in a three-generation family were explored. It should be noted that this family life cycle is not a linear process as discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), but is circular, and enables one to understand some of the emotional, physical and relational experiences a family could go through differently, during different transitional stages. These changes might probably involve different experiences for different members of the family and be different for different families (Schenck, 2002:31).

It is noted by Carter and McGoldrick (1989:13) that as the families negotiate entry and exit of other family members, or as they negotiate its expansion and contraction, more stress can be experienced. Hence, they strive to maintain the balance, and realign their relationships to support the entry, exist and development of family members in a functional way(Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:13). The stages discussed commence from the *Single adult, new couple, and new parents. transformed by adolescent, midlife and later life*.

3.4.1 Launching of a single adult

This is the stage where the young adult is launched to independence, without, however, cutting emotional ties with the family of origin. This first stage discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989:191) is termed '*in between' stage*. The young adult might have physically left home, according to the authors, but not have started their family of procreation. However, at this stage they are still attached to the family of origin emotionally, with a major task ahead of them, which is to be completely independent holistically, while ensuring that they do not lose the relationship and bond with their family of origin.

Santrock (1996:475) states that the adequate completion of the launching requires the young adult to separate from the family of origin without cutting off completely, or fleeing in a reactionary way to find some form of substitute or emotional refuge. Carter and McGoldrick (1989:191) continue by stating that the satisfactory resolution of this stage is also dependent on the family of origin, as to how the parents deal with separation, themselves. From the family viewpoint, "the young adult has to

be able to tolerate separation and independence, while remaining connected, tolerate differentness and ambiguity in career identity of adult children and acceptance of a range of intense emotional attachment and lifestyle outside the immediate family" (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:195).

The type of identity developed in the family, according to Rogers's *Propositions 8 & 9*, is at play at this stage. How the identity of the young adult is formed, according to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), has much bearing on challenges faced by this novice adult at this stage, as well as social influence which results from the cultural life constructed by the society whence the young adult originates.

The formation of the Self of the young adult is highly influenced by the interaction and the relationship with the family of origin's 'significant others' (*Proposition 9*). It can result in a healthy identity (an adolescent has undergone a crisis and has made a commitment), foreclosure identity (the adolescent has made a commitment but has not experienced a crisis), or identity diffusion (where the adolescent has not met a crisis and not made any commitment on life issues) (Santrock, 1996:392).

Erickson (in Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:192), has been criticised for his biased definition of identity of young women – to be based on their physical attributes alone, and of the man as being Self-expressive. However, for both sexes, autonomy and attachment are functional goals at this stage, which is captured by Rogers's (in Grobler et al., 2003:17) *Proposition 4 –*that of Self-determination.

The reality and culture that have been constructed in society as perceived by young adults, also has much bearing on the choices made by them. Hence, Carter and McGoldrick (1989:193) maintain that "human affiliation is just as important as Self-enhancement".

The novice adult has to make and live with his or her choices regarding occupation, love relationships, lifestyle and values. Hence, Carter and McGoldrick (1989) show that this period is the co-existence of two tasks: finding a balance between work vs. Self to expand ones' horizons and to create initial adult life structures that are to have roots and continuity. Hence, the young adult has to have an enormous reserve of courage, energy, tolerance, and willingness to take risks.

The basic tendency to actualize, and maintain and enhance the experiencing Self, i.e. Rogers's **Proposition 4**(in Grobler et al., 2003:17), is apparent at this stage. Carter and McGoldrick (1989:193) express that sometimes the young adult may short-circuit the stage by premature marriage, or by staying at home, or having a child before marriage. However, these are constructed realities which might be different from one community to the other – which is one of the reasons for exploring these issues from the African perspective.

Schenck (2002) has documented some responses from the 2004 fourth year students. It indicates that in other cultures the single adult seldom leaves home, and is regarded as a child until they are 21 or get married. This is also supported by the theory of adult development in Carter and McGoldrick (1989). The women's identity is developed around men, and,

as a result, women only leave home when handed over by their fathers to their husbands on their wedding day, in order to continue to care for the families – especially the men as receivers or beneficiaries for care.

3.4.2 The new couple

This second stage culminates from the marriage agreement made by two single adults. This is the joining of families through marriage. The stage comes about when the novice adult has presumably grown holistically, i.e. emotionally, physically and financially, and has now gained full independence from the family of origin, so that they are ready to start their own family.

Carter and McGoldrick (1989:209) indicate that this is the most complex and difficult transition of the family cycle, and often romanticized by wedding ceremonies. Some research reported by Gurin et al.(in Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:211), shows that women become more successful when single, and become more educated, holding important jobs, and they are less likely to want to marry – yet the opposite seems to be true for single men. Hence, the constructivism philosophy states that individuals construct their own truth.   The perception and experiences of these complexities of all the stages are what the researcher was interested in, to explore from an African perspective.

The authors continue to indicate that there is a lot of re-negotiating that has to be done by the family on issues that were initially defined individually – e.g. space, money, time, culture, tradition and relationships.

Hence, Santrock (1996) indicates that it is the stage for realignment with the extended families and friends, to include the spouse. However, should the couple or the subsystem fail to mutually reach a consensus on how they would spend their time, space or finances, the system tends to become polarised, in their views. Their family lifestyle would then be affected. More burdens (of having to take care of their children and manage their homes, while being active economic contributors), has been reported in women on changing roles. Hence, some single adults resort to cohabitation, or delay marriage or divorce, or do not marry at all. Others decide to engage in sex before marriage, or just have a child, or have a childless marriage, as a different way of dealing with these complexities. Santrock (1996:477) further highlights that marriage is usually defined as the union of two individuals, yet, in reality, is the union of two entire family systems and the development of a new, third system with its own identity. Hence, Carter and McGoldrick (1989) also highlight the impact on the couple, starting from the preparation for the wedding where the entire families from both sides want to be involved. The pattern is also established with the extended families; hence, the twosome have to negotiate new relationships with their parents, siblings, grandparents, nieces and nephews, and even friends and in-laws. The most challenging triangles are the ones that involve the mother-in law. Cultural differences are also another factor that cannot be overlooked in coupling. However, the experiences of an African family posed the most interest for the researcher.

3.4.3 The parents

The expansion of the new family continues at this stage. Children are born into the system – which also moves the system to another generational level and adds more responsibility for the couple. Becoming parents or families with children, is the third stage in the family life cycle. This stage is assumed through pregnancy, adoption or step-parenting, and poses a change in the system, to which it has to adapt and reconstruct the Self, and in a match of experiences that presents to them mainly how to raise children.

This stage is characterised by ways of finding what best fits for the couple after the child has been born. Schenck (2002) highlights emotional processes around the ability to accept the new member into the system, the adjustment of the marital system to make space for the children, joining in child rearing, and realignment of relationships with extended families, which are grandparents.

Carter and McGoldrick (1989) indicate that this stage is marked by having a child biologically, but its psychological and social outcomes might tend to outweigh the first. The reality constructed by the society about parenting and child rearing, and the identity or Self of the family comes into play at this stage. Carter and McGoldrick (1989)note that, contemporary young parents then opt for leaving their children to grow up with their grandparents or daycare centres. Dual-career parents are concerned with the safety of their children at daycare centres or with nannies. However, the HIV epidemic and high level of unemployment in different sub-Saharan

countries has also shifted this responsibility to relatives and fosters parenting. Furthermore, there is a large growing number of single parents in societies. As rightly put by Santrock (1996:478),"the excitement and joy that accompany the birth of the child is often followed by 'postpartum blues' (depression); the joy of intimacy comes with sorrow of exhaustion." Though this is the nodal event, it can create instability in the family in membership accommodation and functions. The challenges are manifested in terms of distance created between the couple, where it is reported by Santrock (1996) that fathers tend to be less sensitive to these extreme demands and would spend most of their time trying to make a lot of money to pay the bills.

Armstrong (in Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:237) has mentioned that at this stage, "marriage with children creates a collision of paradigms, which means that between espoused beliefs or attitudes of men and women and attitudes or policies of the older generations and work".

The reality and cultures that have been constructed by the community could come into play – namely, that women are child caretakers and fathers are expected to be breadwinners, which create challenges and tension in some families. Hence, according to Santrock (1996), couples with children find themselves having to create a balance between parental roles and Self-actualising aspirations as adults.

More issues could be created by the space, or lack of it, which the couple has created for their children. Sex, which has a challenge of privacy, the extended families' involvement (which in some cultures could be perceived

as collective responsibility), and sibling rivalry, are some of the other issues that are faced by the families with children.

3.4.4 Families transformed by adolescence

The families with adolescents represent the fourth family life stage, according to the Carter and McGoldrick (1989) family life cycle. As the system is being governed by the relationship (the pattern that connects), the change in one subsystem results in a change in the entire system, which is also emphasised in **Proposition 3,** that "*the organism reacts as the organised whole to this phenomenal field*"(Grobler et al., 2003:54).

The major emotional process of this stage is the search for identity by the adolescent. This is the SELF which Rodgers has defined in his **Proposition 8,** as "*a portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the Self....an organised fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristic and relationships of the 'I' or the 'me'*" (Grobler et al., 2003:9).

The SELF-structure that is created by all the members at this stage, is highly influenced by the interaction within the entire family – hence, the change in the whole system (**Proposition 3)**. Thus, the Self of the parents is also affected, and this indicates reciprocal influencing among members of the family, and the evaluational interaction with the significant others, which in this case are parents, siblings, grandparents, friends, school and church. The adolescents' Self or identity would be

reconstructed with the entire Self of other members – for instance, parents – and learn to be more flexible with household rules (***Proposition 9).***

 While the adolescent pushes to gain independence and autonomy, the parent unit is also required to create that environment for growth, while proportionally still being able to nurture the novice adult. Hence, Carter and McGoldrick (1989) state that it is the stage where the family is transformed from being that of a protective unit to the one that has to prepare the adolescent child for the world of adults.   Though the requirements from the system are the basic ones, it is said to be the most challenging stage for the family, and hence is termed the "*transformation of the family system in adolescence"* (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:255).

According to Santrock (1996:478), "the development of mature autonomy and identity is a process, transpiring over 10 to 15 years".   The rules and limits in the family are challenged.   According to Santrock (1996), the families are either more authoritative or put more pressure on the adolescent, or become more permissive and allow more freedom, with consequences for both ways.   Carter and McGoldrick (1989) have rightfully highlighted this shift also across generations. The authors indicate that this stage "is often parallel and coincides with changes in parents as they enter midlife and with major transformation faced by grandparents in old age"(Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:255).

The balance or stability of the family is challenged. This has been the case in other stages – for instance, when difference is introduced, that is, when the young adult gets married or the couple has their first child. The

difference that is introduced by the novice adult in the system, challenges the family to find means to restructure the organisation. However, stability often happens after a certain degree of confusion and disruption in the family, but not unless flexibility and adaptive approaches, as suggested by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) are adopted by the family in raising an adolescent. **Proposition 17** states that

> *"under certain conditions, involving primarily complete absence of any threat to the Self structure, experiences which are inconsistent with it may be perceived, and examined, and the structure of Self revised to assimilate and include such experiences."* (Grobler et al., 2003:72).

The change that is experienced during this stage by the family includes the following: the grandparents are aging, dying, or experiencing an illness, and may want to be cared for. Adolescents, on their part, search for independence, autonomy, responsibility, commitment, emotional support, psychosocial support - outside the family unit, however, which is more challenging for the family.

The tasks also include the rapid physical growth of the adolescent, sexual maturation during puberty and, mostly, the conflicting social expectations about sexual roles and norms of behaviour by the family, school, peers and the media (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989). However, the ability to make decisions depends on the environment the family creates for the novice adult and his or her Self-determined nature.

The healthy resolution of the challenges of this stage is, according to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), adopting the parental style of having flexible family boundaries and modulating parental authority to promote greater independence and developmental growth for the adolescent. It is the understanding that autonomy for the adolescent means gradually being responsible for one's decisions, while still feeling the security of parental guidance.

The socio-cultural factors also have a role to play in the development of the adolescent, which includes social class, education, ethnicity, sex, community expectations and HIV/AIDS.   Hence, in some instances, pseudo-adults are develop, or teenage pregnancies come about, and early assuming of adult responsibility is experienced, or early marriage or cohabitation could come about too.

3.4.5 Midlife families

The midlife stage is the fifth stage discussed in Carter and McGoldrick (1989), entitled *launching children and moving on*. The authors highlight three aspects in this stage, and an intergenerational approach has been adopted:

- Marriage function

- Inclusion of in-laws and grandchildren

- Resolving relationships with aging parents

The marriage function has to be reconstructed at this stage. More time with each another becomes a possibility, which depends on how the marriage was constructed in the first place, as Carter and McGoldrick (1989:290) put it: "marital bond regains prominence." As more of their children move out, either going to tertiary education (college/university) or seeking employment, the family has to be able to usher them successfully by being able to maintain that emotional bond as the physical separation increases. Sachram(in Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:291) mention that during this stage the couple could experience more freedom, independence and marital satisfaction. However, death, illnesses and a high rate of divorce is encountered at this stage.

The second major task during this stage is to accept a multitude of exits (when children move out and get married) and entries (when new members are born into the family either through having sons/daughters-in-law or grandchildren) into the family systems (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:286). Harkins (in Carter & McGoldrick, 1989) highlights that, happiness in wives is having all their children successfully independent when they were expected to do so. Yet, for men, the career path becomes an important thing at this stage. The choices made by the young adults could also be influenced by the family of origin. Other families will give the young adult liberty to make their choices in terms of career and marriage; yet, with some families, that is done through the aspirations of prior generations.

It is at this stage that the family also experiences both contraction when their children are launched out and expansion when they have to incorporate other family members (grandchildren, sons/daughters-in-law).

It is also shown that at this stage the birth of the fourth generation shifts everyone in the line of responsibilities – i.e. children become parents, siblings become aunts and uncles, and parents become grandparents. Grandparents in some societies are known as authority figures that help the parents to socialise their children (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989:297). However, in HIV/AIDS-ravaged societies, the grandparents have become primary caregivers. Santrock (1996) also points out that it is at this stage of the life cycle that the family plays an important role in linking generations and, simultaneously, adapting to midlife changes.

The other challenging task of the stage has to deal with 'unfinished businesses with their elderly parents, who are now frail, and rely on their children for medical and emotional support.

The death of their spouse heightens that responsibility, and that becomes the major transition for the middle-aged person, according to Carter and McGoldrick (1989:298). According to Santrock (1996), the mother and her daughters have stronger relationships during their adult years than other dyads.

If the Self of the family was created around children, this change could threaten the Self of the couple. Erickson (in Carter& McGoldrick, 1989) has termed this stage as *generatively vs. stagnation*. As indicated earlier,

any unresolved issues at earlier stages of development could result in stagnation of the marriage at this stage, and the individual never being happy with their achievements in life.

3.4.6 The Family in later life

This is the last stage, according to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), which is marked by the task of having to accept a shift in the generational role by the senior citizen. The issues, reported as myth by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), are that elderly persons have no families, that their children do not care about them, and that they are abandoned by their children in homes for the aged. Yet, family relationships continue throughout later life.

This is the stage characterised by ill-health, aging, death and facing singlehood, but also the age of imparting wisdom to the younger generation. Schenck(2002) summarises the emotional processes of this stage, taken from Carter and McGoldrick, that the elderly are faced with disabilities and death, which in most cases end with the death of the spouse that leaves the partner single. The aging parent has shifted the generational roles, from being the caregiver of the family to be cared for by children or grandchildren. Carter and McGoldrick (1989:312) put it that how the family copes with this stage, depends on the type of relationships created over the years, and the ability of the system to adjust to losses and new demands.

Widowhood is another adjustment that is also an issue of concern for the senior citizen at this stage, which is marked by the remaining partner

having to grieve over the loss. The situation could be aggravated when the widow(er) loses his or her home, or experiences financial problems which, in turn, could affect their independence. The elderly have to maintain their own couple functioning in the face of physiological decline. Carter and McGoldrick (1989) express retirement as being a significant milestone and adjustment for the marital pair. This stage has the major task of retirement. Santrock (1996) states that retirement alter a couple's lifestyle, requiring adaptation; hence, the elderly would have retired from work - and community involvement, sometimes.

However, grandparenthood has become one of the greatest experiences for older adults. Mead (in Carter &McGoldrick,1989:317) comments on how a person suddenly becomes involved at a distance in things that used to be 'hands-on', due to being 'transformed by one's own child". Carter and McGoldrick (1989:317) state that "grandparents and grandchildren may enjoy a special bond that is not complicated by the responsibilities or obligations and conflict inherent in the parent-child relationship".

3.5 THE LINK OF THE LIFE CYCLE WITH THE PERSON-CENTERED PERSPECTIVE

The view of the life cycle from the Person-centred approach is now discussed, to understand the emerging of Self from the Person-centred approach.

The **young adult**: has a Self – an identity which emerges from all experiences, including perceptions, needs, behaviour, emotions and values. It is formed in interaction with significant others which include all

the family members. Hence, the independence of the novice adult is counted on their family of origin, as to how they perceive this autonomy.

The **couple** still includes the individual Self of both husband and wife, but this Self expands in interaction with the other – i.e. from man/woman to husband/wife, and then also son- or daughter-in-law in interaction with their in-laws.   However, there is also the couple's Self which is created by them – their identity as a couple, not just two individuals. The couple's Self also interacts with significant others, including the in-laws. However, they are still individuals with their own perceptions, needs, emotions, behaviour and values.

When **children are born**, each individual Self again has to be reconstructed to include being a mother or father. Now, another Self also has to be created for the couple – namely, being parents – as well as all the selves mentioned above.   Also, a family Self will develop, which includes all the members. This could include the extended family. The Self of the in-laws also changes in interaction with the child, becoming grandparents.

During the time when the family has pre-adolescent children, their selves also change. The first time the child goes to school, or to a party, or on a date, could mean greater independence for the child.   This is also part of **adolescence**, where both the parent's Self and the child's Self are changing. The former have to see themselves as parents of children who are growing up. They need to become ready to let go, while the latter have

to test their growing independence, without losing the relationship with the parents and the rest of the family.

In the **later stage** there are also many changes to the Self. The grandparents may become weak and like the children of their children, the parents become grandparents and the children parents – thus, full circle: the cycle of life. The changes mentioned above are all related to the Self of all the people concerned.

Any of these changes may threaten the Self (of one or more members of the family/couple or the family/couple as a whole) and thus be denied symbolisation, creating stress and defensive behaviour. However, the Self can be, and is, reconstructed continuously. As we live in a continuously changing experiential world, and the Self emerges from these experiences, it follows that the Self is also changing; it does not just happen when the young adult is launched.

The Self also develops in interaction with significant others, whose Self is also changing. In addition, others are added on, or leave (through death or divorce), which may also require reconstruction of the Self.

The life cycle is a tabulation of major changes which can occur in the lives of individuals and families. The Person-centred approach facilitator needs to be aware of what might happen to the selves of these individuals, couples and families during these changes. However, it also reminds facilitators of the uniqueness of all people, and that whatever they are experiencing, must be understood from their frame of reference.

3.6 STABILITY, CHANGE AND MAINTENANCE OF SELF VIEWED THROUGH THE LIFE CYCLE

The systems theory has showed the interrelatedness of the system, which is the family and its subsystem which, in turn, is its members, which is presented as the wholeness. The connectedness of its parts suggests that in order to be able to understand the family's perceptions, every member's experiences need to be taken into consideration. The principle of double description indicates that understanding of the family cannot be done only from one angle but from different angles – which are its members. This is the principle of 'a map is not a territory', because the experiences of each member can be coded and processed differently.

As a result, when young adults find their independence, that shift in the family can be perceived and experienced differently by all the members of the family. The welcoming of the new member into the family through marriage also brings about changes in the entire family. When one family experiences the exit of one member, with the other family it will be entry of the new member, and that change will be experienced differently.

The connectedness of the family could be strengthened as the system moves toward raising children, where the children grow between two families, or the relationship can be weakened and result in divorce – which also brings about a change in the system. Moving through the stages of the life cycle, some changes are experienced by the system as well as by its members, and thus some stability has to be created throughout.

Stability and change is another crucial aspect that the individual may strive for. The maintenance of that balance is critical for the survival of any person, and to understand how the two respondents experienced that, is discussed here.

Stability or balance was a crucial theme that the researcher wanted to explore, and to understand how the individuals maintain balance and continuity in the process of change which is inevitable. The transitional points discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) and the changes of the Self, discussed earlier, have shown some changes experienced in a family, which then threatens the type of Self that has been formed by the family or individual. The question could then be asked: How would stability be maintained by the family or the individual?

The **young adult:** when they have resolved the changes brought by the experiences, some stability is then reached. They then find balance in being independent and being able to make decisions on their own, and live with any consequences. More values are incorporated into the Self, as well as new experiences; hence, they then find it 'okay' to share their life with another person.

The **couple** is the stage whose instability might have been created by having to understand (the couple) each other's perceptions and experiences about the stage. Through the interaction, as they try to understand the realities of marriage, the couple has to find a Self for their newly formed unit. The birth of **the children** in the family will also creates some changes which were not experienced before. The reality that the

child is raised by the entire family, i.e. grandparents, in-laws and all, will come with their own construction of how a child has to be raised that can result in instability with the couple. The couple will have to find balance during those changes in the process. Hence, the systems theory indicates that stability cannot be fixed.

Raising **an adolescent** also requires a complementary life in the midst of difference. When the parent have just mastered raising a child, a pre-adolescent child emerges in the family, and some balance has to be sought by the family to be able to accommodate the novice adult.

The **midlife** is characterised by the learnings that have been accumulated in the process of the growth of the family. The stability of the midlife person is sought from the experiences that have been symbolised during the years. However, unresolved issues with the younger generation and the generation before can bring about imbalances brought by the stage.

A fit is sought at this **late stage;** the person has to come with terms with what has been achieved throughout the years, and how he or she is going to live his or her last days on earth. This is the stage where stability has to be sought on the basis of the relationships established through the years.

Further, the constructivist epistemology shows that reality and the truth are individuals 'reality, which can be reconstructed. As indicated, that construction is actually an on-going process.

Systems theory, according to Jones(1993:4) has adopted the idea of a family as an open system that is paraphrased as a system in exchange of

matter with its environment, presenting import and export, building up and breaking down its material components. According to Watzlawick et al.(1967:139), the nature of the system and its feedback mechanisms must be considered, as well as the nature of the input (equifinality). The feedback mechanism seems to be the important element in the system, to ensure stability. Affirmed by Jones (1993:6), feedback is a circular interaction which offers an explanation of how human systems remain stable.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The family life cycle was presented in a linear fashion, as though life takes that format. However, interaction in the family is circular and thus dynamic, to the extent that stressful moments are experienced throughout life. Sociopolitical and cultural factors also add to those complexities, and this sparked the interest of the researcher to explore this cycle from an African individual's perspective.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH FINDINGS

The methodology defines the practical way in which the researcher goes about doing research (Timm, 2003). This chapter discusses the method adopted by the researcher, and the process used to gather the information from the respondents. The chapter therefore covers the techniques and instruments used for collecting the data. The presentation of the data is also outlined. The ethical considerations are discussed, as well as the demographic information about the site where the study was conducted.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND RATIONALE FOR ITS CHOICE

Grinnell (1993:448) defines research design as "a plan of procedure for collecting and analyzing data to investigate a research question or test a hypothesis". Again, Grinnell (in De Vos, 1998:19) further defines research as "a structured enquiry that utilises acceptable scientific methodology to solve problems and creates new knowledge that is generally acceptable". Though, according to the Person-centred approach, one cannot generalise people's experiences, due to their uniqueness and individuality. For this study, the researcher aimed to learn about the individuals' life cycle experienced from their frame of reference. A systematic way was sought to explore how African people construct, perceive and experience the family life cycle.

The approach is therefore qualitative, as the researcher was of the opinion that qualitative research was best suited to explore matters such as people's experiences and interaction. A combination of both exploratory and descriptive methods was used, because the area under study was meant to explore people's subjective experiences and behaviour.

The qualitative research method was not only a data-collecting activity, but also a theory-generating activity, since there was little information on how other African communities construct, perceive and experience their family life cycle.

Hence, the qualitative approach was used, because the posed question was of a humanistic and scientific nature. This approach was chosen to provide in-depth data about family members' ways of constructing their realities, their perception and experiences they had had/were having in different family life cycle stages.

The qualitative research approach attempts to capture human experiences – which this research intended to do. Hollaway and Wheeles(in De Villiers, 2004) refer to qualitative research as a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live.

4.3   RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Qualitative research methods include participant observation, direct observation and unstructured or intensive interviewing, according to Rubin and Babbie (1992:358). Timm (2003:49) states:

"*The approach involves studying and collecting a variety of empirical material, case study, personal experience, introspective life story interview, observational historical, international and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals lives.*"

Yin (1989:13) concurs that the case study is one of the several ways of doing social science research, and is the preferred and relevant strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed. Like Grinnell (1993), Yin (1989) also stresses that case studies are complemented by two other types of instruments, i.e. exploratory and descriptive. Hence, the researcher chose the case study method for understanding how other African individuals construct, perceive and experience their family life cycle. Unlike structured interviews in which specific questions are asked, unstructured interviews allow the participants to give an account of their emotions, opinions and perceptions, and their behaviour concerning the phenomenon under study, without a list of questions, or utilising any of the researcher's prior experience or information (De Vos et al., 2005:293). De Vos et al. (2005:292) see the unstructured interview as a "conversation with a purpose".

However, there are limitations to this strategy, as reported by Yin (1989), one being a lack of vigour, where the researcher might be seen as being passive, and with some bias – more so when a PCA (Person-centred approach) theory guides the direction. The process is, however, non-judgmental for the participants. It is also criticised for lacking basic

scientific generalisation. Often, a small number of participants or cases are used, thus making it difficult to generalise to bigger populations, which was the case with this study. Generalisation can be made to theoretical propositions, not to populations (Yin, 1989).

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

As the researcher was conducting a qualitative research, some interviews were planned with two individuals who were sampled from Orlando East.

These were selected through a purposive sampling method, which was a snowball method, in which the researcher relied on the referrals made by the community regarding the prospective individuals to be interviewed. The two selected respondents were represented by an elderly person aged 65 years, and a single young adult aged 19 years. Three visits were done with the elderly person, and two with the young adult.

The tape recording and transcripts (note and pencil) were two instruments that were used during the gathering of the information. These instruments were used in order to allow the researcher to concentrate on the interview process.

4.5   ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical issues were taken into consideration during the data collection process, which included the following:

i) **Harm to experimental subjects**

As De Vos (1998:25) states, the onus is on the researcher to ensure that the respondents are protected against any form of physical discomfort. In adhering to this guideline, after realising that the elderly respondent had just been discharged from hospital, the researcher visited her at her home where, during some of the interviews, she could relax on her bed when the need arose. The young adult respondent, however, preferred to visit the researcher at her workplace. That is where the first interview was conducted.

ii) **Informed consent**

Signing the consent form was another ethical measure taken by the researcher with both respondents. During the introduction of the researcher, it was also highlighted that participation was voluntary, and that the information would be publicised, and permission was sought to do so.

iii) **Violation of privacy**

This aspect was also highlighted, as it involves the right of the respondents to their self-determination and confidentiality. According to the nature of the research, that of sharing of personal lives, and adhering to this ethical aspect, the researcher did as follows:

- The information shared was done in an environment that was secured, according to the respondent; hence, the elderly person was interviewed at home and the young adult in the private office of the researcher.

- The respondents' names were kept anonymous, and written consent was sought to be able to link the responses and the participants and their experiences.

iv)   Release and publication of information

Strydom (in De Vos, 1998:32) warns that "the findings of the study must be introduced to the reading public in written form". The ethical obligation in this is that the researcher had captured correctly and accurately all the information that was gathered. Any deception was avoided, as that might also have misled and misrepresented the respondents.

v)   Debriefing of respondents

The researcher had to go back, especially to the elderly participant, to rectify some misperceptions, as she kept on mentioning to her children that the social worker had come to 'check' her living conditions.

4.6 DATA PRESENTATION

The themes that were of focus were based on the literature study, as discussed in Chapter 3, which spoke about understanding the relationships and the transitions that African individuals experience during the stages. Though the researcher used these classifications as a way of understanding how African individuals perceive, construct and experience their life cycle, the researcher's approach in collecting the data was not prescriptive. The respondents were free to discuss whatever they were willing to talk about. As noted by Egan (1990:79):*"The issue is not social*

influence but whether the communication between helper and client is meaningful to the client, whether it contributes to his or her enlightened Self-interest."

Though the researcher intended gathering information about the respondents' perceptions of the life cycle, the researcher was, however, conscious that respondents are also active participants in their environment, and that they should be given the liberty to talk about what matters to them at that time.

In order to make the research findings easier to read, the researcher grouped the findings into themes, and each individual theme is discussed separately.

The researcher therefore had the following themes to explore, and then compared them with the Carter and McGoldrick (1989) life cycle:

o BACKGROUND Information

o LIFE CYCLE stages experienced by the respondent, and their comparison to Carter and McGoldrick life cycle

o SELF-STRUCTURE of the family/individual

o STABILITY/CHANGE experienced by the family/individual

4.6.1 Respondent A

i) Background information

Mrs R was the first respondent interviewed. At the time of the interview, she was staying at her maternal home, which she occupied after the divorce from her husband in 1969. The husband later died in 1987, at the age of 62. Mrs R went to stay at her parent's home, with her mother (her father had already died in 1958), with five children who were born into the marriage. The oldest child was 15 years old, followed by a 13-, 11- and 9-year-old, and a baby of 1 year old. The mother supported the respondent in raising these children. Mrs R's mother later died, in 1984, and at that time she had already moved to Rustenburg. She willed the house to the respondent; thus, she felt secure living in it.

"*Nobody will ever take me out of this house, not even my children, because this is my mother's house*".

The first interview was not long, as the respondent had just been discharged from hospital and had neighbours who had come to pay her a visit. However, she managed to share information about herself. The next session was for planned a week later, and during the interaction this was discussed:

This is an elderly woman born in 1932.She is Tswana-speaking and from Rustenburg (the Mokoena clan) where the family originates, who speaks Xhosa, which is her marital language, and she then came to settle in Johannesburg. She was married to Mr R, who was seven years older than

her. Mr R was born in 1925. This couple, who met in Sophiatown, got married in 1951, and Mrs R had to stay with her in-laws in Orlando East (one of the first townships of Soweto),together with her husband – as was expected from the culture then created. Mrs R mentioned that her in-laws were Xhosa-speaking (the Radebe clan), and it was expected from her to practice the Xhosa culture – which she did, because she also wanted to fit in.

What the respondent shared about the relationship with her husband was that he was working as a presser in Johannesburg, and that they used to travel together to and from work every day, as she was also working in Johannesburg, as a seamstress. Hence, the couple met each other on the train commuting from work. According to the respondent, Mr R made it a point that after marriage Mrs R had to spend most of her time at home rather than be with her friends, as had been the case before they married. She also mentioned that her husband seemed to be cleverer than herself, which, according to the respondent, was because he was older than her.

"Here is our wedding photo, and you can see that my husband was a clever person".

How Mrs R experienced and dealt with the responsibilities of being a mother, wife and an employed woman, was not detailed by the respondent. However, she spoke mostly about her children, probably because she had spent most of her life raising her children as a single parent.

What emerged during the interaction with the respondent was that she became an additional child within the home of her in-laws; her role was to take care of her in-laws, including the husband, both socially and emotionally.

The respondent then went on to talk about her children, and mentioned that she had lost her firstborn child at the age of five months (1952), and a year later (1953) she had miscarried her second child. It was not clear whether she received support and involvement from the husband during these losses. She mentioned that she dealt with the pain together with the in-laws, from whom she received emotional support during these losses. The respondent's mother was supportive during that time of bereavement. Some cleansing (which is a customary way of closure when a person has lost a loved one, i.e. during any loss) was done by the in-laws, which, according to the respondent, worked for her, to bring about closure of the sad experiences.

Nevertheless, the couple had six surviving children. The eldest girl, **Aa,** was born in 1954, followed by another girl, **Tk**, in 1956. However, **Tk** died in 2007. The firstborn son was **Gd,** born in 1958, who was given the clan name (**Bhungani**), whom the respondent kept on referring to as the family overseer. The other sons were **Gfr** and **Ad,** born in 1960 and 1968, respectively.

With the partner she met in 1972, Mrs. R gave birth in 1973 to her lastborn daughter, **Gc**, who grew up in Rustenburg where the respondent was born (her family of origin). According to the respondent, it was convenient for

Gc to stay in Rustenburg, as the child's father was also from there. However, **Gc** stayed with Mrs. R's mother, who had advanced in age by that time. (The family seemed to have had two homes, one in Rustenburg and one in Soweto – which is a common situation in the township).

When exploring the children's whereabouts at the time of the research, all her children had gained their independence – which took place long after the husband (Mr. R) had left her. Of all the children, only one (**Gfr)** was officially married (to **Mg)**, and the other children had left and found partners with whom they were staying (cohabiting) as families. However, **Tk** and **Gfr** died in 2007 and 2009, respectively.

Bogs is the respondent's only grandchild(borne by **Tk)** who is currently staying with the respondent, together with his girlfriend and their two-year-old son – i.e. the respondent's great-grandchild. **Tiis** stays with his parents in the outside room, while the other grandchildren reside with their parents.

In describing her relationships with her children, the respondent was perceived as being supportive and caring as a parent. Her responsibility to care for and support her children seems to have been extended to her grandchildren, as was illustrated when her grandson came to ask for money from the respondent during one of the interviews.

However, at some stage, on another visit, the respondent introduced me to two of her other children (**Gfr** and **Gc**) who had moved in with her. The reason for this was that the marriage of **Gfr** had dissolved, while **Gc** came

back to stay with her mother after the death of her father (respondent's second partner) and after the grandparents had also died (respondent's mother in 1984, and her father in 1958). **Gc** came back with her 11-year-old son, **Mk**.

In total, the respondent had six grandchildren, **Bogs** and **Mk** (**Gc**'s son) were staying in the house with the respondent, while **Tiis** was staying in the outside room with his parents, and three other children were staying with their parents in another township. She also had one great-grandchild. (Genogram attached).

During the first interview, the respondent had just been discharged from hospital, and was complaining that her children were not being supportive, but, instead, wanted financial support from her.

"My children think of me as a fidelity car"(metaphorically, which means she just supplies money).

Yet, she was very supportive of **Gfr** and **Gc** when they came to stay with her.

"I am glad that my children came back alive, because nowadays in relationships, one partner gets killed. **Gfr** died six months later, in 2009.

The respondent also showed that she had a healthy relationship with her neighbours, who visited her when she was back from hospital. She also mentioned that she participated in church activities.

Attached is her genogram:

ii) Life cycle stages of the respondent, compared to the Carter and McGoldrick life cycle

The respondent is at a later life stage, but her experiences of the whole life cycle are discussed here.

Launching of a single adult

When exploring the respondent's stages, according to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), what emerged was that the respondent got married early in her novice life stage. She was 19 years old, and according to the authors, at this stage the novice is usually given an opportunity to master independence from the family of origin. One can conclude that her single adult stage was short-lived, as Carter and McGoldrick (1989) mention that some young adults tend to short-circuit the stage through premature marriage. Though she was employed, but still staying with her family of origin, nothing was said in terms of acquiring any qualification and building on her career, except that she worked as a labourer in a sewing factory, where she was a seamstress.

It was at the novice stage that the respondent started her own family of procreation, as her first child was born when she was 22 years of age (after experiencing the death of an infant when she was 20 and a miscarriage at the age of 21). According to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), the young adult finds balance between work and Self and expanding a career path, at that age.

People of this age group may be influenced by people's perceptions of their culture created by society; hence, the social expectations of the young adult at that time might have taken this early marriage as the way to be. However, this has been a noted difference when compared to Carter and McGoldrick (1989).

In addition to this short-lived stage, when the couple was supposed to be launched towards independence, the interviews indicated that the respondent moved from her family of origin, with her husband, to live with the in-laws as a couple. The launching, which is usually characterised by independence and physical separation from both families of origin, as discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), never happened for the respondent. However, after the separation and subsequent divorce from her husband, she returned to her childhood home, where she stayed with her mother (as earlier indicated, the father had already died in 1958), who later went back to Rustenburg where she died in 1984.

The New Couple

The couple's life was shared through photos of the wedding ceremony, which links with Carter and McGoldrick (1989). As indicated by the authors, contemporary couples are dual workers. The respondent was employed, as well as her spouse, when she was married. However, according to the respondent, her negotiation of time, space and finances (which is usually done by partners (spouses)) was done by the in-laws on behalf of the respondent. Their life as a couple was defined according to what the in-laws were expecting from them.

She believes now that she was persuaded by her partner to marry because she was too young to decide otherwise at that age. What was also revealed was the number of sacrifices that she had made. Over and above her youth stage, she had to sacrifice caring for her parents or to be easily available to them as a single person. Yet she also sacrificed being an independent couple, as they lived by the rules of her in-laws. She also sacrificed her time with her friends, as most of her life and time now revolved around her husband, children and in-laws. She initially sacrificed being a mother, as decisions regarding child rearing were taken by her in-laws. As indicated earlier, the respondent never had time of her own until she returned to her parent's house.

The defining of the new system with its identity, which is discussed by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), was experienced differently by the respondent. The couple decided to follow the culture which was practised then, by aligning themselves to the identity of the in-laws, which was perceived by the respondent as the right thing to do. As the authors indicate, cultural differences cannot be overlooked at this stage (as at any other stages); hence, the respondent's need at that time was to practise her husband's culture in terms of how the children were to be raised. Nevertheless, the culture constructed was through the interaction of the community lived at that time, and continually changing to meet the needs of the people. In spite of all the sacrifices she made, the marriage ended in divorce in 1969, and the next stage, i.e. the parent stage, was experienced as a single parent.

The Parent

The first child was born at age 22, as indicated, and prior to that age, i.e. at 20, she had lost a five-months foetus in 1952, and a year later she had experienced a miscarriage. The respondent had had six children, lost one in 2007, and recently also lost a son (in 2009). As she had been a single parent for much of the time, she was able to develop her own parental style, and was known as a 'strict parent' by her children.

How divorce impacts on families, besides the state of disequilibrium that comes with it, depends on the life stage the family is at – for example, the age of the children born in that system (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989).

The respondent seemed to have spent most of this stage raising and caring for her children, both financially and emotionally. Initially, the couple had found it exciting to have the children, and the father and in-laws were involved with the parenting duties – as indicated by the clan name bestowed on the eldest son. However, all the children became the respondent's responsibility after her divorce. The respondent's response about the role of the father regarding the children after the divorce was a bit vague.

Transformed by Adolescence

When exploring the experience of raising adolescent children, what is highlighted by the authors is that the most practical and manageable way to raise adolescents is that the family has to, on the one hand, maintain a safe environment for the adolescent child, while also developing ways to

allow greater freedom of expression and exploration that are also needed by the adolescent child (Carter &McGoldrick, 1989). Although the respondent initially followed the parenting ways of her in-laws, she developed her own way of being a parent after her divorce.

Though the rules and limits in the family were challenged by the children at this stage, the respondent indicated that her children knew the limits. However, **Gd** was the first child who decided to leave home and move in with his girlfriend.

Midlife stage

According to Carter and McGoldrick (1989), the midlife stage is characterised by three aspects:

- Marriage function (though the respondent was already divorced during this stage)

- Inclusion of in-laws and grandchildren

- Resolving relationships with aging parents

 At this stage the young adults are launched; hence, this stage is sometimes called the 'empty nest'.

According to the respondent, only one of her children, the second son, **Gfr,** got married. The inclusion of his parents as the in-laws started during the *lobola* negotiations (payment of dowry), which were followed by the engagement party, termed as the 'acceptance of the groom's family'. The

in-laws became the extension of the respondent's life, which confirms the expansion of families, mentioned by the authors.

The respondent's role at this stage changed to include being a mother-in-law. However, the respondent did not only become the in-laws to her daughter-in-law-to-be; she also became a grandmother too, as one child was then later born into that marriage. Her grandchild from **Tk** also had a child, and the respondent became a great-grandparent – which brought the third generation into this system.

The exit that is spoken about by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) took place through the marriage of one son, and cohabitation (no formal traditional marriage took place) that was practised by other children. The additional new entries or additions to the family came about through the grandchildren and the daughter-in-law.

Resolving issues with aging parents was another aspect of this stage. t was at this stage that the respondent resumed her responsibility to care for her mother (her father had already died when the respondent went back home), whom she left when she got married. However, this happened at the time when the respondent had separated from her husband (i.e. in 1969 – the reason for separation was not disclosed.

The authors indicate that it is at this stage when the family links up generations, while adapting to midlife changes. In the case of the respondent, she had an opportunity to reconnect with her family of origin, and with her children and grandchildren, while dealing with her singlehood.

As the divorce made it possible for her to stay with her parents, the respondent dealt with her singlehood, and entered into another relationship and conceived her sixth child, **Gc,** in 1973. That happened when she was 41 years old, the prime of her adult stage.

Late life stage

The idea reported by Carter and McGoldrick (1989) that the late stage is lived by loners, does not apply to this respondent, who has had her children and grandchildren staying with her. Also, although she has retired from formal employment, she is still engaged in community activities as an active member of the church.

Nevertheless, there are similarities with what Carter and McGoldrick (1989) discuss, in that the stage is characterised by ill-health, aging and facing singlehood. The respondent had been hospitalised for multiple sicknesses related to aging, such as high blood pressure, sugar diabetes and muscle cramps, all of which she had to deal with alone. However, she ascribes all her sicknesses to ancestral powers.

Another difference between the respondent and Carter and McGoldrick(1989) was on the shift of roles, where the respondent was supposed to be cared for by her children. Instead, she has to take care of them. What was observed from the respondent was that her role as the caregiver has been extended to this stage. She still has to provide shelter for her children and grandchildren, and support them financially. Hence, she would express comments of resentment about her children who, she

believes, only love her for her money. The habit of making sacrifices for others has even been extended to her retirement stage, where she continues to care for her children and grandchildren both emotionally and financially, even in her old age stage.

iii) The Self-structure that was presented by the respondent

Grobler et al. (2003:9) state that the "Self implies all the experiences of the person, which simply means that all our experiences are part of who we are".

The authors, quoting Rogers, further define the Self as

"*a portion of the total perceptual field gradually becoming differentiated as the Self, organized fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perception of characteristics and relationship of the "I" or "me".*

The data gathered shows that respondent A has constructed a certain perception of who she is in relationship to her family and the society she comes from. This is affirmed by ***Propositions 8 and 9*** which talk about the Self and how it is formed through evaluative interaction with one's environment and significant others.

According to respondent A, she perceives herself as a caring primary caregiver and the protector of her own family, which has been more exposed since the divorce from her husband. This role has continued, as the relationships with her children continued even after launching them.

However, she displayed ambivalent emotions when stating her experiences as primary caregiver in the present life cycle.

"In spite of the fact that I have been hospitalised, my children still expect that I have money to give them….do they think I was working in that hospital? However, as a mother I am the only person left for them."

Her two other children, **Gd** and **Gc,** came back home, and she was glad that they came back to live with her. She nevertheless showed some resentment that her children never achieved full independence, as they still need her now, rather than her relying on them at this late stage in her life. This depicted an element of having a feeling of being used by her family.

In contrast with the assumption of Carter and McGoldrick (1989) that late age is characterised by retirement from parenting one's children, the respondent's responsibility has been extended to her late age stage. Although the respondent has maintained a Self of a mother and caregiver since she got married, it seems that at this later stage in her life, some part of her would like to be the one who is taken care of by her children. Such a mental battle can result in psychological tension (***Proposition 14)***if not dealt with**.**

The Person-centred approach indicates that the optimal development of the individual is assumed when more of the experiences are symbolised into one's consciousness. The respondent demonstrated flexibility. When

she got married, she could fit with being a 'child' to her in-laws, but after the divorce, she was able to become a single parent – an adult who took care of her children. ***Propositions 1, 8 and 9 –*** namely, that we live in a world of changing experiences, including with significant others, and the Self thus also changes, as it is derived from our experiences. This flexibility allowed her to move through the various stages of her life cycle, without getting trapped in one stage – except, perhaps, the parenting stage.

iv) Stability created and maintained by the respondent after transitions

Stability or balance has been a crucial theme the researcher wanted to explore, to learn how families or individuals maintain the balance and continuity in the process of inevitable change. The Self-maintenance nature of the system, that keeps it stable under any impact or stress, was explored for respondent A.

The pattern formulated by the respondent in dealing with change, was explored, to understand how stability was maintained in the midst of change. Again, Maturana (1975) mentions that the family usually changes the structure, not the organisation (i.e. the way things are done, but not necessarily their identity).

What emerged from the interviews with the respondent was the expansion of roles/identities that she assumed when she got married. Though she did not mention whether she perceived being forced to work, she

nevertheless decided to continue working, and stayed as an employee. She also had to become a wife, mother and daughter-in-law. She had to balance her time to accommodate all the significant others in her life, that included her mother, her children and in-laws, when she was still married.

She maintained her Self-structure of being a caring and supportive parent, even when both the husband and the partner had died; this she managed with the help of her mother.

After the divorce, the respondent was able to continue to work for her children until she was able to launch every one of them to independence. In spite of cultural differences, she managed to fit in her husband's cultural practices – i.e. being the Tswana from Rustenburg with a Xhosa husband.

The respondent was able to create and maintain relationships overtime, such as with her husband, in-laws, and her family of origin, her children, a partner, and her church. She maintained that until her husband and in-laws died, when she moved back to her childhood home, thereby regaining her previous stability. She had cared for others all her life. She has maintained that Self as a caring person until her old age stage.

4.6.2 Respondent B

i)   **Background information**

The second respondent is a 20-year-old young adult. This young adult, at the time of the interview, was residing with her maternal grandmother, together with her mother, younger brother **Siz** (18), and half-sister **Nth**(7). The respondent had registered to study for a BA in psychology with the University of Johannesburg. She had been one of the candidates acknowledged for her academic achievements by the local NGO. Only the top four learners from ten nominees were awarded registration fees, and the respondent was in the top ten. Through her request and motivation to the NGO, she was granted a registration fee as well.

She is the eldest daughter of a deceased45-year-old father called **Ss,** and currently stays with her 43-year-old mother **Gr**. Her parents separated while she was still in primary school, and they later divorced in 1999. **Ss** died in a car accident in 2006, and the respondent and her brother were staying with him at that time.

Due to the status of her mother, who was not employed, their custody had been given to her father, who had a house in a suburb of Johannesburg. It wa**s** during that time that her mother met another partner, and her half-sister, **Nth,** was born. The respondent had been visiting her mother over weekends.

The respondent reported how her father had died in a car accident, and the body was only discovered the next day. She mentioned that both families (paternal and maternal) decided that they (with her brother)

should now stay with her mother at her maternal mother's place in Soweto.

She mentioned that both her parents supported her in her studies; hence, she had been doing well since primary school. Though she liked spending time with her friends, and most of them were boys, she made it a point of still doing her schoolwork. She further mentioned that even when they would talk about relationships (boyfriends or girlfriends) with her friends, she was not ready to have a child at that stage. She would prefer to adopt a child, rather than have one of her own.

As she was admitted to the university, she was going to stay at home, because she preferred to be with her family and help her mother to take care of her siblings.

The grandmother, **Np,** a 69-year-old divorcee, had four children – two boys (respondent's uncles) from her first marriage, and two girls (respondent's mother and aunt) from her second marriage. The respondent's mother is the eldest from the second marriage. The youngest is **Pk,** who is 39 years old with a 17-year-old daughter, **Kg** (respondent's cousin) and an 11-year-old boy by the name of **Lv**. Hence, the respondent also spoke about her extended family and the relationship she has with her aunt and cousins, with whom they were staying at her maternal grandmother's house. There is also a cousin (from the uncle's side) who is married and resides in the North West Province, whom the respondent often visits during school holidays. Otherwise, her cousins are like friends to her, as some are her age. Though they have their own shack in the

yard, they are a big family who help each other in all aspects, emotionally and financially.

Genogram is attached:

ii)   Present life cycle stage of the respondent, and Carter and McGoldrick life cycle

The second respondent is a young adult who has just completed Grade 12 and has been accepted at the University of Johannesburg to do a BA in psychology. The only stage that has been discussed is the ***single young adult,*** which is the stage the respondent is experiencing now.

Launching of a single adult

This is 'in-between' stage, as labelled by Carter and McGoldrick (1989), is characterised by a lot of friends the respondent has made for herself, as she indicated that she enjoys spending time with them. However, she is still committed to her family of origin, which is the balance she has created for herself. In accordance with the ideas of the authors, the respondent has developed her own value systems during her identity search. She mentioned that she practices the Rastafarian religion, towhich none of her family members belong. She is pursuing her career, which is also alluded to by the authors.   Though she indicated that she is involved in relationships, she is not in a position to start her own family, which corresponds with the authors' argument about this stage that the novice

adult is not yet at the stage of starting their own family of procreation, even when they establish their independence. Santrock(1996:475) states that;

"*the adequate completion of the launching requires the young adult to separate from the family of origin without cutting off completely or fleeing in a reactionary way to find some form of substitute or emotional refuge.*"

The respondent, on the other hand, indicated that she would prefer to stay with the family of origin while studying, rather than to stay at the university residence or renting a place of her own – a bit contrary to what the theory is saying; she still wants to maintain the emotional bond with her family, as stated by the authors.

The financial dependency might be subtle in the definition of the launching an adult, when known as the "in between" stage, where the individual is a child, but moving towards being an independent adult. The respondent had nevertheless shown some elements of responsibility and autonomy when she went out on her own to seek financial assistance for her studies.

iii) The Self structure as presented by the respondent

The Self of respondent B appears to be that of a self-determined, hard worker. She perceives herself as a role model to her siblings. She also sees herself as an achiever in her community, by being acknowledged as the matric top achiever.

At the same time, she perceives herself as a protector of her siblings, consisting of her brother of 18 years and her half-sister aged seven (7),

which was revealed as her responsibility as the eldest child in the family, and she indicated that it is something she has chosen to do.

However, she also sees herself as an obedient daughter, who does what her mother asks of her. This can be linked to the perception that she is not yet ready to have a child of her own, as she is in some ways still a child herself.

According to Grobler et al. (2003:9), the Self means the person's conception/perception/experiences) of who they are, which includes one's experiences. She sees herself as a fighter in life, having to emerge in a divorced family and survive with the financial support of her grandmother's pension fund, but yet succeeded to the university. The self-motivated personality and determination to set standards for her siblings was emphasised by her statement that:

"I remember getting 1% in an Afrikaans paper but my mother and teachers encouraged me to work harder, and it paid off. Now I am counted as one of the top learners in my school."

iv) Stability created and maintained by the respondent after transitions

After the divorce, some stability was created by living with her father and her brother, while still seeing her mother on weekends.

"The decision made by the court favoured my father to gain the custody of us, because he was employed and had a stable accommodation."

After the death of her father, she was able to move in with her mother (and her brother), and regained the relationship with her grandmother, thus still providing a sense of a family. Although the father does not provide anymore, the grandmother still partially fills this role; as a result, she was not left destitute.

Although she graduated from school to university, she is still studying, and still living with her mother. Although she relates to her friends outside of her home, she still maintains a close relationship with her family and still does what her mother wants her to do. She is not yet totally independent, but she is still involved in being partially responsible for her siblings.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The interpretations of this study are based on the data gathered during the interviews held with the two respondents. Based on the objective of this study– namely, to explore how African individuals contrast, perceive and experience the life cycle, in comparison to the Carter and McGoldrick (1989) family life cycle, the findings are described below.

5.2 IDENTIFIED ISSUES

The study indicates that the stages of the life cycle of the respondents mostly corresponded WITH the ideas of Carter and McGoldrick (1989). However, three differences emerged from respondent A's experiences:

- The experience of independence

- Formation of the independent couple stage

- Completion and closure of launching of children

a) **The experience of independence**

What was revealed was that respondent A only experienced her independence, as discussed by the authors, after her divorce (which took place eighteen years after marriage). As indicated, her autonomy came late in life, whereas the authors discuss that this stage of being independent from the family of origin is reached even prior to marriage.

However, what was experienced by respondent A was the opposite; instead, she had to stay with her in-laws after marriage, when they were [supposed] to stay as a couple independent from extended families. What the authors mention, in terms of two independent single people coming together, did not happen early in the marriage. Instead, she had to share her life with the in-laws, and most of the major decisions of life, including the responsibilities that she could have taken on her own or with her husband, as a couple - i.e. how she would spend her time, money or household chores, were experienced with the in-laws.

b) Formation of the independent couple stage

In addition to the first aspect discussed above, respondent A did not have a chance to create a separate couple, or a nuclear family, with her husband. Instead, she moved in with the in-laws where the whole family resided, until they divorce. The authors indicate that the couple stage, which is the most challenging stage, requires a lot of renegotiations to be made by the couple. The experience of respondent A, however, had been different. The negotiations were made as an extended family, not as a couple. Another challenge is the formation of the identity of the new couple unit , which, in the case of respondent A, was experienced differently, but as a couple they (she) had to define themselves/herself in relation to the in-laws' definition of the family.

c) Complete launching of the children

The last highlighted difference that emerged, was the return of her children after they had been launched. The launching process was never completed or was never a closed process, according to the experiences of the respondent. At the late stage, when she was expecting to be cared for by her children, her role as a caretaker continued, because two of her children came back to stay with her, besides the one who pitched a shack in the yard and the grandchild with whom she shared the house. Hence, her experiences of the late stage were characterised by resentment and ambivalent emotions, because part of her was happy to be with her children, while the other part of her was overwhelmed by the prolonged responsibility of taking care of her children – which had financial implications as well.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The conclusion can be drawn that in spite of the differences in the case of respondent A, it seems that the life cycle could be useful to become aware of life transitions, from an African perspective. This could be useful for facilitators working with individuals and families from different theoretical perspectives.

In terms of the Person-centred approach, the specific stage could be an indication of identity formation and maintenance thereof (**Proposition 4**). The situation that brings changes, or experiences that do not fit with the Self-structure, and changes that are not symbolised (**Proposition 11 (c)**

and (d) could be seen as threatening to the Self or identity of both the individual Self and the Self of the family as a whole, and the more the change is perceived as threatening to the Self, the more the individual or family will strive to protect the Self-structure (**Proposition 16**).

In the situation where the Self is unprotected and unsymbolised, and experiences are not brought into the conscious mind, psychological malfunctioning may prevail (**Proposition 14**). In the case of respondent A, where she continued to define her Self-structure through the interaction with the in-laws (**Proposition 9**), it might have resulted in her not reaching an optimally developed Self-structure where individual differences (**Proposition 18**) would be considered. The respondent's situation in terms of her relationship with her husband and the in-laws, ended in divorce. However, the Person-centred approach reminds the facilitators that all individuals are unique and will experience themselves uniquely (**Proposition 2**). The life cycle and the changes it might imply are experienced by the individual and the family in their own way. Changes can therefore not be generalised, and people's perceptions of themselves – the changes and stages – still need to be viewed from their frame of reference (**Proposition7**), to avoid any psychological tension of the individual (**Proposition 14**). Conditions for facilitation for change are therefore important for the facilitators, to enable the individual or family to symbolise most of the unsymbolised experiences (**Proposition 17**).

In terms of the systems theory approach, too much change and too little stability can also be perceived as threatening to the organisation of the

system (individual or family). Again, too frequent changes, with little time to form stability, can disorganise the system. The principle of wholeness shows that instability would not be experienced by only one member of the family, but by the entire family. The principle of nonsummativity also alludes to the fact that it is not about one member of the family alone, but the entire system that experiences that threat. In addition, this change will/should involve the structure, not the organisation (identity) of the family/individual; otherwise, that would mean the disintegration of the system (Maturana, 1975).

However, changes are not linear and outcomes of changes are equifinal, depending on the organisation of the system. For example, respondent A did not experience the changes of the stages as described by Carter and McGoldrick (1989). She was able to create some form of stability throughout the cycle, during the process of change. What is noted is that individuals all experience some kinds of change in their lives. Thus, change is inevitable, and tension may result when stability cannot be reached.

Facilitators cannot predict or expect specific changes from individuals or families. Facilitators are reminded that change towards the creation of stability requires a double description vision of the interaction of the family. The punctuations of sequences of events also implies, or the facilitators, that people are unique, and everyone's experiences and perceptions of the situation need to be taken into consideration, because of different punctuations of events – which is subjective. This also reminds facilitators

of the circular relationship between the observer and the observed, and how they influence each other.

One can conclude from what was revealed by the study, that the family life cycle can be used for as a model for therapy, which can be used by therapists from both the Person-centred approach as well as the Systemic perspective.

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ANNEXURE: A Consent form signed by **respondents**

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I…….on this………………….day of …………………….2009

Hereby consent to:

- being interviewed by G.L. Shange on the topic " Family life cycle ..."
- follow-up interviews, if necessary
- the interviews being audio taped
- the use of data, derived from these interviews, by the interviewer in the research report, as she deems appropriate

I also understand that:

- I am free to terminate my involvement or to recall my consent to participate in this research at any time I feel like it.
- Information given up to the point of my termination of participation could, however, still be used by the researcher.
- Confidentiality will be maintained by the researcher, and my identity will not be linked to information.
- More that one interview may be necessary.
- No reimbursement will be made by the researcher for information given, or participation in, this project.
- I may refrain from answering questions, should I feel these are an invasion of my privacy.
- By signing this agreement, I undertake to give honest answers to reasonable questions and not to mislead the researcher
- I will be given the original copy of this agreement, on signing it.

I hereby acknowledge that the researcher has

- Discussed with me in detail the purpose of this research project.
- Informed me about the contents of this agreement.
  In co-signing this agreement, the researcher has undertaken to
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy regarding the participants' identity and information given by the participants.
- Arranged in advance a situation time for an interview to take place.
- Safeguarded the duplicate of this agreement.

Participant…………………….**Researcher**…….................…

Date…………………………………

ANNEXURES: B

Interviews conducted with the respondents:

Rationale for their section:

Two respondents Mrs. R and Ms N, has been selected from the community of Orlando East a township where the researcher is involved in for community work activities. The referrals had been received from the one of the international NGO which facilitates Community activities in the area. Where Mrs. R has been the Nutrition project beneficiary and Ms N a recipient of the Best student Award, which is one of their Education projects.

First interview with Respondent A

The first visit was during the day (around 12noon) at the respondent's home. On arrival, there were several neighbours at Mrs. R.'s place and the conversation was about welcoming her back home as she had been discharged from the hospital. I came with one of the development worker, who works with the respondent's family (the one who referred the respondent to the researcher)

Researcher: (Sanibonani! (*Acted asone of the neighbours, and allow the neighbours to interact with the respondent and after they had left*) Unjani gogo, Mina ningu Gugu Shange, ngisebenza la e Orlando, enhlangaweni ethuthukisa umphakathi, eyaziwa nge World Vision

ngiyafundela i Social work ne UNISA, bengithanda ukufunda ngomndeni,
u Mandla, (*reminding her one of the community development workers
who often visits   her, and who is my referrer*) ungilayele kuwe.
Bengingathanda ukwazi ngempilo yomindeni, angazi ukuthi ugogo
angangivumela yini ngifunde ngomndeni wakhe na?

Mrs. R: Ngiyamazi u Mandla, uyazi, uma esesibhedlela isikhathi eside,
ugcina ungasazi buntu, la e lokishini.   Ngiyajabula kubasekhaya,
nalabantwan' abahluphayo besebacabanga ukuthi ngizofa, ngishiye umuzi
yami, balayekile.Ngike ngaphumula yibo, bacela imali njalo, ngathi ngiyi
bange labo, noma bacabanga ukuthi ngiy' fidelity guard mina, noma,
bengisebenza esibhedlela?

*(We then get inside the house (four roomed house i.e. kitchen, dining
room and two bedrooms)*

Researcher: Ngiyabonga gogo, ncesi, ukuzwa, ukuthi bewusesibhedlela.
Ngiphethe I tape recorder, ngingazi, ukuthi ngingayisebenzisa na? Ngine
fomu bengingathanda ugogo angigcwalisele lona (*then I went through
the consent form*).   Uvumelekile ukukhuluma noma luphi ulwimi, mina,
ngikhuluma isiZulu, ingabe ugogo ukhuluma luphi ulwimi?

Mrs. R: Kusebenza no Mandla yini? Akakutjelanga ukuthi labantwana
bami bayahlupha?

Researcher: Cha gogo, kepha ngimchazele ukuthi ngithanda ukusebenza
ngomndeni unesizukulwane esithathu, wase ungitjela ngawe.   Nginga
thanda ukubazilabantwana bakho (*she then showed me wedding
pictures and some of the children's engagement pictures*)

Mrs. R: (*took me to her dining room, and pointed their wedding photos on the wall*) Lo ngumyeni wami um Xhosa, ohlakaniphile, be sishada la! Thina siyathetha isi Xhosa (Xhosa-speaking) kepha mina ngingu Tswana wase e Rustenburg, ngi khuluma isi Tswana.

Researcher: Umuhle bo! Kulengubo yakho yomshado, nengubo yinhle, kunini la? Uthi, umkhulu, ngu Xhosa, nawe soyakhuluma isi Xhosa? Uphi umkhulu manje?

Mrs. R. Lo clever, mina ngiphuma e Rustenburg,   sabonana e Sophiatown sase sihlala la e Orlando. Sowashona ngo 1987.Kepha la yindlu kamama wami, sowashona naye, ngase ngibuyangizohlala la. Na labntwana ngeke bangixhoshe ku lendlu, ngeyakithi.Empeleni, akekho umuntu ozongikhipha kulendlu, yifa lami leli.

Researcher: Yini, ngathi bayakuthukuthelisa labantwana, baye ngingathanda ukubazi, bangakhi, bahlalaphi bona?

(*One of the 6 year old child came in and asked for money*)

Mrs. R: Uya, bo! Ngumzukulu wami lo! Uyise indondana yami yokugcina, uhlala kulomkhukhu ngaphandle, nentombi yakhe.Ufuna imali je kimi. (*the child asked for R1 to buy some sweets*) Uya bo!! Bonke bangibona nje, ngathi ngihlala ngine mali. (*the child left, after she has given him that R1)*

Researcher: Mmm…. bosangitjela ngo mshado, nishade nini?

(*Compiling a genogram at the same time*)

Mrs. R: Sashada 1951. Hhu bengincane kakhulu nasishada, bengina 19.Phela lomXhosa bekakhulile, yingakho afune sishade masinyane

kangaka. Sacela abangani bethu baba yizitolomisi.Kwa kushadelwa ka Ndabazabantu.

Researcher: Kwa Kuhle?

Mrs. R: Yebo, angithinina nazi ukuthi kuse Home Affairs.

Researcher: Manje, Ekhaya khona, anizange nigide?   Bathini Ekhaya nawuthi uyashada umncane kangaka? Nitholana kuphi vele namkhulu?

Mrs. R: Njengobe besengishilo, besengisebenza e Jozi, ngithunga, yena e femini, sigibela sonke I sitimele, kulapho sabonana khona.   Emva komshado, besihlala kubo, naba zali bakhe nabantwana bakubo, khona la e Orlando opozitithi le strati. (*Pointing not far from where we were)*

Umtwana, lokucala wa shone nakane zinyanga ezi yisihlanu nje, kuphela, bekuyintombazana.

Researcher: Ncesi, kwaba buhlungi mosi lokho, kanti futhi bo wusemncane nangalesiskhathi!

Mrs. R: Ngancendwa umamazala, kanti no mama wami, wangiceda kakukhulu, kuthi ngikwazi ukundlulisa lobuhlungu.   Uthini, ngoba, nowesibili isisu sachithela ngo 1953, ngase, ngithola intombazana ngo mnyaka olandelako.

(*she took me to the small bedroom and showed me the picture of her great grandchild*)

Lo, ngumzukulu ka Tk, ongasekho, ngihlala no yise, walo mntwana, akekho manje, uyo uvakshele e Limpopo) uTk naye sowashona ngo 2007, kepha wangisheyela u Bgs ongi phe isizukulwane.

Researcher: Kuhlungu ukuzwa lokho…..U Tk, kwaba yingane youkuqala eyaphila?

Mrs. R: ubonile abomakhelwane bami kuthi balusizo kangakanani. Banigikhuthaza kakhulu nangilahlekelwa ngu Tk. Phela mini ngi yilunga elikhulu esontweni.Ngisota la e Roma, bayangikhuthaza kakukhulu.Ukuthi nje angisakhoni ukuya njalo ngoba sengilhulile.Sekuyakhathaleka nanje.

Researcher: Kuhle ukuzwa u kuthi nibambisene nabo makhelwane. Gogo, Bengicela kukushiya namuhla.Uzokhona ukuphumula.Ngibongile ngolwazi, kepha Bengicela ukubuya futhi nge viki elelandelako, kunjani loko?

Mrs. R: Bengifuna uku lala, lala, manje, abo makhelwane, bazobe bangihlola. Ngibongile nami ukungivakeshela. Ubobuye phela!!

I left and she then took a rest.

Second Interview with Respondent A

The purpose of the second visit was to continue with the information on her life in marriage and children and anything which she needed to talk about that day. This visit took place a week later.

This time, on my arrival, she was cleaning her kitchen. She was all by herself in the main house. The outside shack seemed to be locked, as there was no one around.

Researcher: Sawubona gogo. Unjani namhlanje?

Mrs. R: Cha ngibancono wonke amalanga, wena unjani. Awukakhohlwa ingconco yethu?

Researcher: Cha, gogo, Ngiyamkhumbula ukuthi phela ugcine ungitjela ngabantwana bakho. Ngisakhumbula na ngo Bogs oso kuphe isizukulwane. Ubuyile yini e li Mpopo?

Mrs. R: Yebo, usemsebenzini manje. Bengisakutjela ngokulamana kwabo.

Researcher: Yebo, nokuthi abanye bandlula emhlabeni, banje bengithanda ukwazi, ukuthi umkhulu yena, wenzanjani uma naye alahlekelwa abantwana? Kwakunzima mosi?

Mrs. R: Ucabanga ukuthi amadoda ayabuzwa ubuhlungu? Angithi bathi indoda ifela phakathi, naye angibazi ukuthi beka buzwa yini ubuhlungu.

Researcher: Oh, u Gd, nabese nayipha isibongo sakubo?

Mrs. R: Yebo, phela bo Radebe laba?

Researcher: Oh, ngiyezwa.

Mrs. R: Munye phela umntwana yami, owashada, u Gfr, uhlala nomndeni wakhe e Palmsprings. Abo Gd bahamba bazihlalelela nazintombi zabo.Bana bantwana yebo, kepha, abashadanga. U Aa, yena wahamba bese u Gc unengane yomfana ena 12 years.

(Gfr, then died in 2009....during the compilation of this thesis)

Researcher: Bekunjani ukuhlala nabasemzini?

Mrs. R: Hha, angifuni nokuyicabanga leyo. Ngesingami, ngabe, sema kancane saze sathola indawo yethu. Uphenduka untwana phela lapho.Uzwa ngo mama zala ukuthi wenzani nini? Ngikhumbula nokuthi

uba untwana a lahla inyongwane, kwa kufuneka siyimbele phansi, lapho kuphambana izindlela khona, bese uyahamba, unga bheki emuva.

Researcher: Kwa kuphatha kabi, kuthi a wuhlalanga no mnyeni wakho nje, ucale umizi wakho? Manje bewenza njani uma unga phathekanga kahle emzini? Bokuvumelekile yini ukushada usemcane?

Mrs. R: Hhayi phela bewungeke ushaye umendo ngetje? Umshado, phela yisibusiso esivela ku Nkulunkulu, ngoba uba uwala, kungenzeka ungasasitholi. Uwuthi ngilale lale kancane, sizochubeka ngomuso!

Researcher: Ngiyabonga ngesikhathi sakho. Ngibongile kakhulu. Ngizo buya, nge viki elilandelako.

Mrs. R: Kulungile mtanami.

I left, and after had compiled the information in terms of the themes identified; however, I had to return after a week to fill in some missing information, which included:

- *How come she had to come and stay at her mother's place,*
- *When did she moved in*
- *Where was her mother then*
- *Who decided that Gc should stay at Rustenburg, with who?*
- *How were the wedding ceremonies done which included the payment of the bride wealth/lobola.*

Third interview with Respondent A

I arrived in the afternoon the following week as per the arranged appointment with her, and on my arrival she was now with two other guests.

Researcher: Unjani, u gogo namhlanje? Nngiyabona kuthi unezivakashi namhlanje.Ingabe ngifike ngesikhathi esikahle yini?

Mrs. R: Cha ufike kahle, laba abantwana bami, bazongibona, kepha nabo beza nezikinga zabo. Lo ngu Gc, ubuyile, ake umfunele umsebenzi bo! Ufundele umsebenzi wobu security. Ngiyabonga ukuthi abantwana babi baye kimi, bangaze, bafele e mazweni.

Researcher: ngiyajabula ukumazi go, (*went to shack hands with her*), ngiyabona, ugogo uyafuna ukuthi ngabe ngiyaceda lapho. Asithembe, uzo cubeka naye afune, nangizwa okuthile ngeke ngingathuli.Lomunye ubani gogo?

Mrs. R: Lo ngu Gfr, umntanami, uphose wayofela le kude. Ngiyabonga ukuthi ukhonile ukubuya Ekhaya mase kasa thola ukuthi sekuzima emzini.Phela labafazi, bavele bakubulale nje. (*to the son*) Lo ngu Gugu, ufunda ngemindeni, wase ukhetha umndeni wami. Nani senizoqubeka nimtjele ukuthi nakhula njani, nokuthi nifunani lapha?

I had to explain again my visits again to the children and that they are not forced to talk about anything which they are not comfortable with, I am just learning about families;

Gfr: Siyajabula ukukwazi, sisi. Mina ngo wesi si thupha, ngamasibomu.Ukhona usisi owadlula asasemncane.Ngiza emva kwakhe. (*He went to get more pictures of his engagement ceremony*). Bengi

thembisa la, ngumkamu lona.Kepha-ke, sengibuyile Ekhaya, akulungi kahle.

Researcher: (*tried to sympathizes with him, but difficult whether to be empathetic and to what extend*) Ngiya bonga ngezithombe, zinhle kakhulu. Manje, bekwenziwani, ngaphambi ko kuthembisa? Benikhipha amalobola? Nikhiphe kubani? Kanjani?

Mrs. R: and Gfr; yebo phela kuyalobolwa.

Mrs. R. Beba khipha kimi phela.Phela u baba bese kashonile ngaleso sikhathi. Ngacela izihlobo nabangani kuthi bangicede.Kwakukuhle impela.

Gfr: ubaba, phela yena yaziluzisa inmyama, ngoba wabe sekahlukanisile no mama. Wahamba loyo wazitholela omunye umuntu, kuthiwa be bahla e Jabulani

Researcher: Mm……

Mrs. R: Sa hlukana naloyo ngo 1969, yiko ngabese ngi buya Ekhaya, ngizohlala no mama wami.

Gc: Mina yiko kwafuneka ngihlale e Rustenburg, ngoba ubaba wami phela uphuma khona.

Researcher: Mm…. (*Looking at the respondent to elaborate on what the youngest daughter had said about having her own father*)

Mrs. R: Ngazitholela umuntu mina nagihlukanisa no Radebe, ngase ngithola u Gc

The two children then left us we continued with the conversation.

Researcher: Oh, Ngiyabonga, ngabe yinto yanini leyo gogo?

(*The respondent was a bit reluctant and reserved when talking about the divorce and meeting Gc's father, which made it hard to explore further*)

Mrs. R: u Gc, ngamthola ngo 1973, ubaba wakhe wase Rusternburg, sabonana ngo 1972. (*but she was not as open as before when she was sharing about the other life with her children)

(The family shared some family pictures during the conversation)*

Researcher: Ngiyabonga, ukwazi, nokubona abantwana bakho. Wafika nini ukuzohlala la Ekhaya? Bebakuphi abazali bakho?

Mrs. R: Ngabuya uma kuphela umshado wami. Phela ubaba wami beseka shonile ngalesi'khathi.Phela umama wanginceda kakhulu ukukhulisa labantwana.Futhi bengisebenza ngalesosikhathi, bengizobashiyaphi labantwana?

Researcher: Umkhulu, sengisho ubaba wakho yena wandlula nini emhlabeni?

Mrs. R: Ubaba yena washona ngo 1958. Umama sahlala wazwe wabuyela e Rustenburg, ukuhle ukuthi namantwana bese bakhulile.

Researcher: Nibonga ukungipha ulwazi olunganka ngomndeni wakho. Bengicela indlela. Ngizobuya futhi nangomso!

Mrs. R: hhawu kanti uyakwazi ukuthethe nawe.

Researcher: Hhawu gogo, usho ukuthi ngingahlulwa nguwe uzalelwe ebatswaneni?

Mrs. R: Cha phela mina nga gana la ka Radebe, beyingeke indlela yokuthi ngingahlala ngingakhulumi lesi Xhosa sabo.

Ungasilahli phela, so kumnandi ukwazana, ubuye futhi.

Researcher: ukhona umuntu okhuluma ulwini lunye la e lokishini, phela sikhuluma zonke izilimi lezi.

Mrs. R: Yebo, phela ngeke ulale ngendlala, uma wazi izilwimi eziningi.

Researcher: Yebo gogo, sengicela indlela. Usale kahle, Ngiyabonga futhi ngesikhathi sakho. Baphi bo Gc, ngicela ungivalelisele kubo.

Mrs. R: Kulungile, uhambe kahle.

I then left.

……………………

Forth interview with the Respondent A

The last interview was short, because the respondent was now not feeling well, at the same time, she was now wearing some traditional attire (sangoma cloths) and she had lost a bit of weight.

Researcher: Ugogo unjani namuhla. Bengithi angikuhlole futhi?

Mrs. R: Ngiyaphila, kuthi nje bengi bonene nabaphansi kulamalanga. Bengihlola nalento yala bantwana yo kuphelelwa umuzi.Kepha kungcono ngoba babuye kimi, kunokuthi bafele kude.

Researcher: Mm….. Baphi bona bo Gc, namuhla?

Mrs. R: usayofuna amatohho, u Gfr yena usa bingelela abangani bakhe la e lokishini.

Researcher: Bengithi angikuhlole, ngikugxole nanokuthi kuthi sengi bhale kangakanani, indaba yethu.

Mrs. R: akuphileki namuhla. Kepha abaphansi bathi sengizophila, yiko lokhu bangiphe lebhayi.

I read through and shared the information that she had been sharing with me, then I left.

First interview with Respondent B

The interview took place in the researcher's office, it happened immediately after the awards giving event.

Researcher: Unjani sisi. Mina ngu sis' Gugu, ngifunda ne UNISA, bengingathanda uku funda ngawe, ngomndeni wakho, ngenza I social work. Ngiya kuhhalalisela ngo kusebenza kahle bo!

Miss Nn: Ngiyabonga, angina kinga! Mina ngingu **Nn**, ngihlala la e Orlando, no mama mi.

Researcher: Mani phela, ngicela ungigcwalisele le fomu, I consent form. Ungakhuluma nangoba yini okhulukekile ukukhuluma ngayo..Bengicela uku tape recorder ingcogco yethu.Ngizobhala eye information phansi, ngithemba ukuthi kulungile kuwe?

Miss Nn: Cha, anginakinga (she then completes and signs the consent form) Njogobe bengishilo, ngihlala no mama wami ka gogo ozala umama.

Researcher: Ngiyabonga! Kusho ukuthi ujabulile kakhulu umama uma uphase kahle kangaka. Kepha bowufund kuphi?

Miss Nn: yebo ujbulile, empeleni no baba wami yiko lokhu bekakufuna ngami. Mina ngiphuma e Silelekele High.Ngihlulwe yila bafana nje

kuphela, yiko nje ngibe wesithathu, kepha, ngizitholele nami kumantombazane ase sikolweni.

Researcher: cha wenze kahle kakhulu, manje uyofundela ini?

Miss Nn: ngithanda I psychology, ngichabanga ukuthatha yona manje, ngoba ngiyathanda ukusebenza ngabantu

Researcher: niybona! Uthi ubaba nguye okugcugcuzele kuthi uphase? Uphi manje, uyazi, ukuthi wenze njani?

Miss Nn; cha, ubaba sowashona, kudala nyana. Ngiyamkhumbula ngoba bekangikhuthaza lomuntu,.

Researcher: Hhawu!! Ncesi, yinto yanini lelyo

Miss Nn: besihlala naye, no buti wami omncane le ema subaphini. Lomuntu wafa kamuhlungu.Ungamangala ukuthi samthola ngelanga elilandelako ukuthi akasekho.Nabasho bathi banthola emontweni yakhe sekashonile.Thina samthola e maphoyiseni, beku ngo 2007.Yiko phela kwamela size la ka gogo.

Researcher; Mm… ngubani owa nquma ukuthi nize la ka gogo, ungithi beningaya ku gogo ozala ubaba?

Miss Nn: yebo, phela babona kuncono ukuthi umama naye athole ithuba lokusikhulisa. Bavumelana bonke ukuthi sibuye kumama, ngoba phela, besinokuvakasha ku mama, akuzange kube yinkinga kubuya kumama.

Researcher: Oo! Ngiyabonga.Ubaba bekathanda ukuthi nifunde ne?

Miss Nn: Kakhulu!! Ngikhumbula ngelilenye ilanga nginya phasinga I Afrikaans, wangikhuthaza, ukuthi ngifunde, ngizo phasa.Chabanga, nje ukuthola 1%, kufana nokuthi awenzanga lutho mosi lapho.

Researcher: yebo (smiling) cha! Kusho ukuthi nawe ke usebenza kanzima.Uyazimisela ngesikolo sakho.

Miss Nn: Yebo, yingakho nami ngizitholele nje la esikolweni. Ngiyethemba kuthi ngizochubeka kalonyawo nase univesi.

Researcher: ngikufisela njalo. Nesikhathi sethu sesiphela, singakachubeki ungigxoxele ngempilo ya lapha kagogo, neyakho nje, njengo muntu omusha.Bengicela sichubele ngo lesithathu, uba kuthola isikhathi?Ngiyabonga ngesikhathi sakho.

Miss Nn; kulungile, ngizokubona ngolwesithathu,

She left and the next meeting was organised three days later, in the same office. That meeting the researcher was going to explore her life as a young and the nature of her relationship with the family.

Second interview with Respondent B

Researcher: Unjani sisi?

Miss Nn: ngiyaphila, usele kanjani ngalela langa

Researcher: Hha! Ngimi okufuneka ngibuze wena phela bokumnandi ngo Msombuluko. Batheni Ekhaya, nawu fika nezindaba ezingaka?

Miss Nn: Bebajabulile, kakhulu, yikho loku, ukuthi umama akakhonanga ukuza kuzongibongela, kepha ujabulile kakhulu.

Researcher: Bewusangitjela ngo mndeni wakho la e Orlando!

Miss Nn: Yebo, ngihlala no mama lapha ka gogo. Sabuya uma ke sweleka ubaba ngo 2006.Ngoba besinokuvakasha ka gogo, bukulula ukuthi, sibuye ka gogo.

Researcher: OHo, Ngiyabonga. Kwabanjani nje uku suka ema subaphini, kuzohlala elokishini?

Ms Nn: Hha, bewungekho umehluko kangakho, phela besijwayele ukuza e lokishini. Kepha futhi, umuntu wathola ithuba lokuba na bangani, ngoba besivakashelana njalo.

Researcher: Mm…nenzani nabangani? Ngoba thina bo mama sazi ukuthi nina nikhuluma ngama relationships, kunjalo?

Ms Nn: Yebo!! (Laughing) phela se ku stage salokho. Kepha ngesinye isikhathi, sisuke sikhuluma nje ezethu zama ntombazana. Yiko nje ukuthi, nab o sthandwa bese nabo bafuna leso sikhathi esinaso.

Researcher: Nawe unesithandwa?

Ms Nn: Yebo! Kepha angikho ezindabeni zaba ntwana hhayi manje.Ngingafane ngithole umtwana kuma home.

Researcher: Umuntu onjani isithandwa sakho?

Ms Nn: ufana nami, uyi Rasta njengami. Naye uya understand ukuthi abantwana yinto yokuqgcina for thina. Ngingafane ngikhulise aba ntwana bakithi.Futhi no mama wami sowusenzele usisi omncane.Kumnandi ukuba naye u Nth, noma afuna yonke I attention nje.

Researcher: Uyabathanda aba ntwana bakini ne?

Ms Nn: kakhulu! Yiko nje, ngizo fane ngihlale e khaya nokuthi ngiye e resi, ngoba ngifuna kuba siza ukuthi ba qubeke kahle nga ma studies abo.

Researcher: Ekhaya bobani enihlala nabo futhi?

Ms Nn: kunabo mzala esicishe silingane nabo, amantwana baka mamncane **Pk**, kuno **Kg**, loyo, sinaye kulomngenge wethu.

Researcher: Ungakanani ugogo. Uthi animphathisi inhloko nje (smiling)?

Ms Nn: Ugogo wami una 69, singanhlupha kanjani, ngoba nguye osisupotako. Phela umama wami, akasebenzi.

Researcher: Umamncane yena?

Ms Nn: naye akasebenzi.   Abo **Siz** no **Lv** yibo laba abangahlupha ugogo, ngo bathanda ukuhamba ebusuku.

Researcher: umkhulu uphi yena?

Ms Nn: bahlukana no gogo. Kunabanye abantwana baka gogo bo malume base shadweni ka gogo wokuqala. Bese umama no mamncane base mshadweni lomusha.   Kuno mzala wethu ehlala e North West esinokumvakashela sometimes.

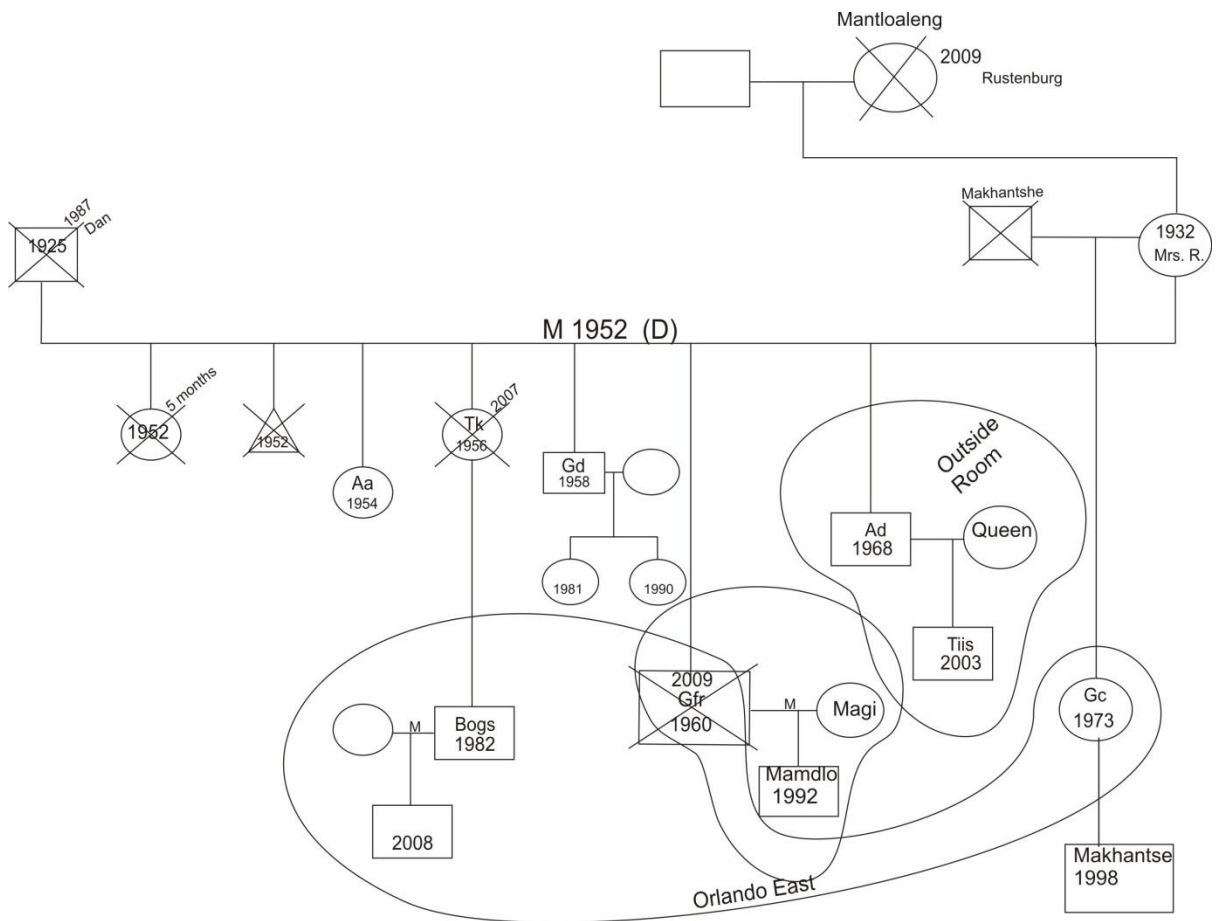**Researcher**: kusho ukuthi aba zala bakho bafana nabangani bakho. Niyazwana la Ekhaya?

Ms Nn: yebo, maybe kwenziwa nokuthi ugogo uya zwiwa la e Orland. Ngeke phela bese siba yihlazo kuye.

Researcher: Ngiyabonga ukuthi, uyawuthanda umndeni wakho.   Ngiya bonga kakhulu ngesikhathi sakho.Sengifundile ngabantu abasha emndenini yabo.Ngithanda ukukufisela impilo enhle nkuqubeka kahle nexifundo zakho.

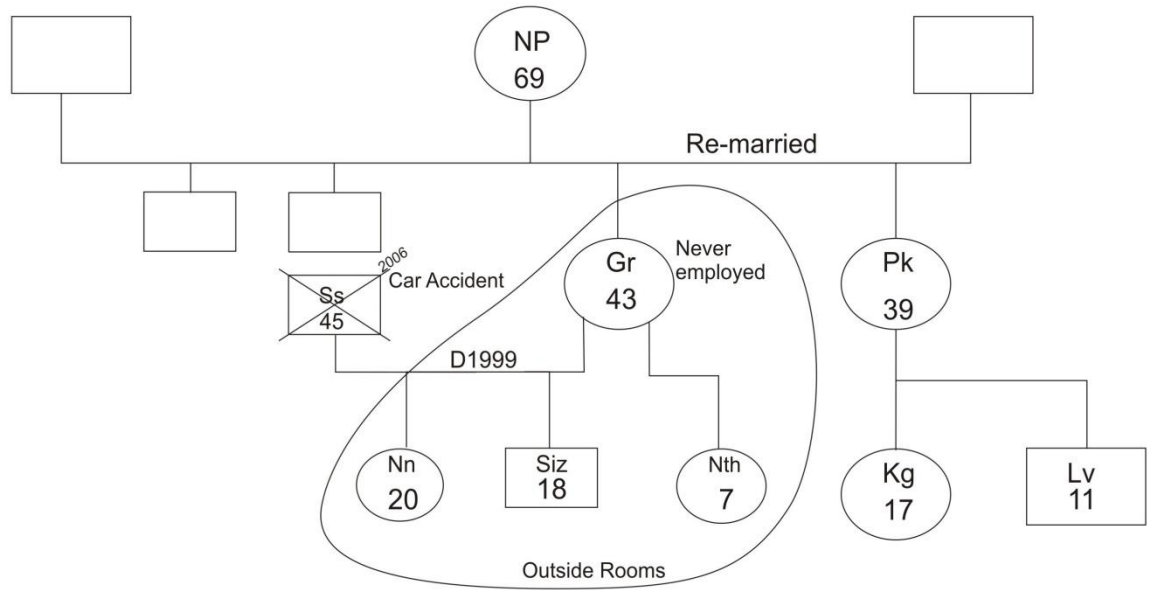**Ms Nn**: Kubonga mina ukuthola ithuba lokukhuluma ngo mndeni wami.

Bengingazi ukuthi sidingana ngalendlela Ekhaya.

Mantloaleng
2009
Rustenburg

Makhantshe

1932
Mrs. R.

1987 Dan
1925

M 1952 (D)

5 months
1952

1952

Aa
1954

Tk
1956
2007

Gd
1958

1981   1990

Outside Room

Ad
1968

Queen

Tiis
2003

Gc
1973

2009
Gfr
1960

M

Magi

Mamdlo
1992

Bogs
1982

M

2008

Orlando East

Makhantse
1998

KEYS

- ☐ Male
- ⊠ Deceased Male
- ◯ Female
- ⊗ Deceased Female
- ⧖ Miscarriage
- M Marriage
- Children
- 1958 Year Born
- Year Died
- D Divorce

KEYS

☐	Male
⊠	Deceased Male
◯	Female
⊗	Deceased Female
⧅	Miscarriage
M	Marriage
⚇	Children
⊙	Year Born
⊘	Year Died